



**REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
Directed by Perri Peltz and Geeta Gandbhir**

DEBUTS ON HBO MONDAY, JUNE 9

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For Immediate Release

REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
IS A MOVING, DEEPLY PERSONAL LOOK AT THE
LIFE AND CAREER OF THE ESTEEMED FIGURATIVE PAINTER

In 1945, painter Robert De Niro, Sr.'s work was included in the Autumn Salon at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery alongside the work of Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and others. The following year, De Niro had his first solo exhibition at Guggenheim's gallery, an extremely prestigious honor for a young painter. He continued to show at the highly regarded Charles Egan Gallery throughout the 1950s, but his career began to slip out of the critical spotlight. In the ensuing decades, he struggled to achieve the recognition that he desired.

A 2014 Sundance Film Festival Selection, the HBO Documentary Films presentation REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR. is a deeply moving portrait of the painter told by those who knew him best. The film will debut on HBO on Monday, June 9 at 9:00 p.m. ET.

Actor Robert De Niro, Jr. reads from his father's letters and journals and provides his own moving recollections of his father's personal and professional struggles as part of his own mission to honor and preserve his father's legacy and artwork. The film weaves together archival family footage and interviews with art experts, artists who worked alongside him, the artist himself and most affectingly by his son.

At the heart of the film is the beautiful work of Robert De Niro, Sr., which

will be exhibited at the DC Moore Gallery in New York City from June 6 to July 11, coinciding with the HBO debut. These vibrant paintings remind us that art movements can be so powerful that they can obscure the work of talented artists who don't fit a certain genre.

In *REMEMBERING THE ARTIST*, Robert Storr, Dean of the Yale University School of Art, scholar and critic Irving Sandler, art advisor Megan Fox Kelly and fellow artists Albert Kresch and Paul Resika explain how De Niro, Sr.'s professional career fell in and out of step with the American art scene – a scene that changed drastically throughout his lifetime. In the early 1930s, avant-garde European artists escaped the politically charged atmosphere at home for teaching positions in the U.S., exposing young American art students to the newest trends in European art. One of the most important of these teachers was Hans Hofmann, an abstract expressionist painter who set up schools in New York City and Provincetown, Mass., where an entire generation of young American artists studied. De Niro, Sr. studied in both Provincetown and New York with Hofmann, who called him one of his most promising students ever.

De Niro, Sr.'s two shows at Guggenheim's Art of This Century followed. At a young age, he had found his artistic voice and was greatly admired by his colleagues. He was part of the celebrated New York School of artists who were well known during the 1940s and '50s. His paintings blended abstract and expressionist styles with a representational subject matter, bridging the divide between European modernism and abstract expressionism.

De Niro, Sr.'s initial success was short-lived, as his painterly work was increasingly overshadowed first by the American Abstract Expressionist painters and later by the emergence of Pop Art and Minimalism. As the art world embraced these new trends in the late 1950s and early 1960s, more traditional painters like De Niro were marginalized. De Niro went to Paris to immerse himself in the art of the masters and enliven his own work and career. But the art market of post-war France offered him little opportunity. He returned to the United States and continued to paint, teach and exhibit until his 1993 death from prostate cancer on his 71st birthday. As revealed in the film, he found solace writing about his dreams and struggles in his journals, hoping that one day, his work would be afforded the critical acclaim he longed for.

REMEMBERING THE ARTIST also traces De Niro, Sr.'s personal story from his childhood in Syracuse, NY, where he felt misunderstood by his demanding father, to his marriage to fellow up-and-coming painter Virginia Admiral, whom he met at Hofmann's school, to the birth of his child, Robert De Niro, Jr. in 1943, and to his unacknowledged homosexuality. When De Niro, Jr. was a toddler, his parents separated; they would, however, always remain close. As De Niro, Jr., grew up, he observed his father's career disappointments and bouts of depression. De Niro, Jr. movingly talks of the irony of dealing with the early days of his own success as an actor while taking trips to France to try to help his father, literally carrying paintings under his arm from gallery to gallery. Robert De Niro, Jr. has remained committed to honoring his father's legacy after

his death, maintaining his art studio as it was when his father worked there so that his children will appreciate their grandfather's work.

REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR. was directed by Perri Peltz and Geeta Gandbhir and produced by Perri Peltz. Rudy Valdez served as director of photography and Geeta Gandbhir served as editor. Music is by Phillip Glass. Supervising producer is Sara Bernstein. Executive producers are Sheila Nevins and Jane Rosenthal.

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS
REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT – PERRI PELTZ

When we first met with Robert De Niro and he expressed interest in making a film about his father; we were intrigued. As we began the research process, we realized there was a larger story than an autobiographical tale about the father of one of the world's most famous actors.

The story of Robert De Niro, Sr. reflects a critical moment in the history of American modern art. His story allowed us to put a face on the seismic changes that were taking place, as figurative art was being displaced first by abstract painting and later by the pop art movement. Because of this shift, figurative painters like Robert De Niro, Sr. fell into relative obscurity – never quite gaining the recognition he garnered at the start of his career and the recognition art historians feel he deserved.

Like so many other artists, De Niro, Sr. produced a tremendous body of work but was unable to sustain the public attention that would provide lasting fame. De Niro, Jr.'s desire to tell his father's story is more than a loving tribute. It is a deeper look into the world of modern art and an investigation into how the forces that determined the path of one artist's life, ultimately influenced another – his own.

Robert De Niro is known as the “actor's actor” and interestingly his father was considered the “artist's artist.” As many of the people we interviewed recounted, art was his driving force – his end all and be all. Robert De Niro, Sr.'s brilliant start as a painter and stunning reviews were a testament to that force. But as we learned, that attention was short lived.

Can this change be blamed on the shift in the art world – from Europe to the United States? Was it the sudden entrance of the dynamic, turbulent pop art movement? Or was it personal – that De Niro, Sr.'s own inner struggles that made it difficult for him to adapt to the ebb and flow of the changing landscape of the art world? Ultimately, it is up to the audience to decide.

One thing is for sure, we are certain that the artwork speaks for itself – it is both beautiful and unique. But De Niro's legacy is not his alone, it's a testament to so many artists who's talent is not reflected by the attention they received in their lifetime, but in the work they leave behind, and the memories of those who loved them and honor them to this day.

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS
REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

In Order of Appearance

Robert De Niro
Son

Megan Fox Kelly
Art Advisor

Robert Storr
Dean, Yale University School of Art

Albert Kresch
Artist

Brad Ellis
Nephew

Irving Sandler
Art Historian

Paul Resika
Artist

Drena De Niro
Granddaughter

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS
REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
FILMMAKER BIOS

Perri Peltz (Director/Producer)

Perri Peltz is a documentary filmmaker and public health advocate who began her career as a television news journalist. Her film REMEMBERING THE ARTIST: ROBERT DE NIRO, SR. will debut on HBO June 9. Perri also directed the highly acclaimed HBO documentary “The Education of Dee Dee Ricks,” which explores the disparities in the United States health care system through the lens of an unlikely friendship between two women battling breast cancer. She is currently working on a documentary about recidivism in the United States prison system.

Prior to directing and producing documentaries, Perri spent much of her career as a television news journalist. Her last position in television was as an anchor and reporter for WNBC-TV and NBC News, where she focused on issues relating to poverty and health. She joined WNBC in 1987, serving as a reporter, then as a co-anchor, of the weekend editions of “Today in New York” and the evening newscasts. She went on to serve as a contributor for NBC’s “Dateline” and as one of the first anchors at MSNBC. A news correspondent for ABC’s “20/20” from 1998-2000, Perri won numerous awards, including several for her reporting on the misdiagnosis of melanoma. She also worked at CNN as a reporter and anchored the award-winning show “CNN.com.” While at CNN, she reported a story about a chess team from a public school in the South Bronx that became national chess champions. Inspired by their story, Perri produced the feature film “The Knights of the South Bronx,” starring Ted Danson, based on their improbable accomplishment.

Both in and outside journalism, Perri has pursued her passion for public health and medicine. Since 2009, Perri has been the host of “Dr. Radio Reports,” a one-hour weekly program about public health issues for the Sirius-XM Network. Her contributions to public health advocacy have been honored by the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center and the American Cancer Society. She continues to serve on the boards of the Medicare Rights Center and Single

Stop USA.

Perri holds a Bachelor of Science from Brown University and a master's degree in Public Health from Columbia University, where she is presently a Doctoral Candidate. A lifelong New Yorker, Perri resides in New York City with her husband and three sons.

Geeta Gandbhir (Director/Producer/Editor)

Geeta Gandbhir has over 20 years of experience in film and television. She has been nominated for three Emmy® Awards and has won two, and the films she has edited have been nominated for the Academy Award® twice and won once. In total, her films have won four Peabody Awards. Most recently, her HBO documentary “Which Way Is the Front Line From Here?: The Life and Time of Tim Hetherington,” with Sebastian Junger, has been shortlisted for the 2014 Oscars®.

Current projects with directing and producing partner Perri Peltz include the HBO documentary REMEMBERING THE ARTIST: ROBERT DE NIRO, SR., which will debut on HBO June 9., a documentary film on rehabilitation in national prisons and a film on female UN Peacekeepers.

Her other recent notable works include the POV film “Take It From Me” on welfare reform, directed by Emily Abt, the PBS series “African American Lives with Henry Lewis Gates” and the four-hour HBO documentary series “When the Levees Broke” for filmmaker Spike Lee, for which she won an Emmy® Award for Best Editing, “What’s Going On: The Life of Marvin Gaye” for PBS American Masters, Amy Rice and Alicia Sams’ feature documentary “By the People: The Election of Barack Obama” (executive produced by Edward Norton and released by HBO) for which she won her second Emmy® Award, and “Music By Prudence,” a documentary produced by HBO and director Roger Ross Williams, which won the 2010 Oscar® for Best Short Documentary. Most recently, she completed the feature-length documentary “Budrus” by Just Vision Films, the directors and producers of the award-winning film “Control Room,” which won Silver at the 2010 Berlin Film Festival and The Special Jury Mention Prize for Best World Documentary at its US premiere in the 2010 Tribeca Film Festival. She has worked on a number of films for HBO, including Spike Lee’s follow-up to “When the Levees Broke” entitled “If God Is Willing and Da Creek Don’t Rise” for which she was nominated for an Emmy® Award, and a film on breast cancer entitled “The Education of Dee Dee Ricks,” with director Perri Peltz, which premiered at the 2011 Tribeca Film Festival, Joe Brewster and Michele Stephenson’s film “American Promise,” which won the Jury Prize at Sundance in

2013, and “God Is the Bigger Elvis,” which was nominated for the 2012 Academy Awards®. She worked with author and Academy Award®-nominated director Sebastian Junger on a film about image-maker Tim Hetherington who died in Libya in 2011, entitled “Which Way Is the Front Line From Here?: The Life and Time of Tim Hetherington” and with Whoopi Goldberg on a film about the comedian Moms Mabley, titled “Whoopi Goldberg Presents Moms Mabley.” She also consulted on Jehane Noujaims’ film “The Square” and Josh Fox’s “Gasland 2.”

Geeta has also taught documentary filmmaking at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Program.

HBO *DOCUMENTARY* FILMS
REMEMBERING THE ARTIST ROBERT DE NIRO, SR.
ROBERT DE NIRO, SR. BIOGRAPHY

ROBERT DE NIRO, SR. was part of the celebrated New York School of post-war American artists. His work blended abstract and expressionist styles of painting with traditional representational subject matter, bridging the divide between European modernism and abstract expressionism.

EARLY LIFE and EDUCATION

Born in 1922 in Syracuse, New York, De Niro showed artistic promise at a very early age. Beginning at age 11, he attended art classes at the Syracuse Museum for four years, where he was provided a private studio to paint independently. In the summer of 1938, he studied with artist Ralph Pearson in Gloucester, Mass. From there, he went on to study at the renowned Black Mountain College under Josef Albers from 1939 to 1940. While Albers’ highly analytical approach to painting did not appeal to De Niro’s more instinctive style, the experience and international perspective of the Bauhaus master nonetheless left a lasting impression. De Niro then studied with Hans Hofmann in New York and at his Provincetown, Mass. summer school through 1942. There he met fellow student Virginia Admiral, whom he married in 1942. Hofmann’s teaching, focused on abstract expressionism and Cubist formalism, had a strong influence on De Niro’s development as a mature artist.

FAMILY

De Niro and Admiral surrounded themselves with an illustrious circle of friends, including writers Anaïs Nin and Henry Miller, playwright Tennessee Williams and Robert Duncan, the editor of *Ritual*, a literary magazine for which Virginia worked. The couple separated shortly after their son, Robert De Niro, Jr., was born in 1943.

CAREER

In 1945, De Niro was included in the Autumn Salon at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery on 57th Street in New York. Reviews of the exhibition praised the work of De Niro, as well as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. He had his first solo exhibition at Art of This Century the following year. De Niro had a series of solo exhibitions in the 1950s at the Charles Egan Gallery in New York, which exhibited the work of Willem de Kooning and other early abstract expressionist artists. By the mid-1950s, De Niro was regularly included in important group exhibitions such as the Whitney Annual, the Stable Annual and the Jewish Museum.

From 1961 to 1964, De Niro traveled to France to paint in Paris and in the surrounding countryside. Collector Joseph Hirshhorn purchased a number of the artist's paintings and works on paper during this period from gallerist Virginia Zabriskie, who represented De Niro at the time. They are now in the permanent collection of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. In 1968, De Niro was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

LATER CAREER

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, De Niro continued to exhibit in museums and galleries throughout the United States, including New York, San Francisco, Kansas City, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. He taught at several art schools and colleges including Cooper Union, the New School for Social Research, the School of Visual Arts and Michigan State University.

Robert De Niro, Sr. died in 1993 in Manhattan at the age of 71.