

VALERIE CARBERRY GALLERY

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*Ellen Lanyon and Philip Pearlstein:
Objects/Objectivity
September 16 - November 5, 2011*



Valerie Carberry Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Ellen Lanyon and Philip Pearlstein. Contemporaries and friends, the two artists share a passion for antiquing and collecting, and the objects they discover together have figured prominently in each artist's work since the 1980s. The occasion of the present exhibition is a celebration of their shared pursuit of the vintage and unique—paintings that feature the spoils of their treasure hunts at flea markets and shops around New York. Each artist has chosen six paintings by the other that most strongly express the function of the object in each artist's oeuvre.

Born just two years apart (Pearlstein in 1924 and Lanyon in 1926), the artists came onto the art scene in the early fifties when abstraction was in vogue. While each experimented with it, both soon rejected abstraction for figuration. An interesting parallel in the careers of Lanyon and Pearlstein is that they each had early experience in graphic design and illustration, developing an exacting eye for representation born of meticulous, sometimes protracted, observation. Such attention to detail puts both artists' work squarely in the realist camp yet their approach to representation shows that realism and objectivity are not such straightforward concepts.



Philip Pearlstein has concentrated on the realistic depiction of the figure (more specifically, the nude model in the studio) for the past 50 years. His work is most strongly characterized by unexpected postures and unusual perspectives in his figural compositions. Pearlstein's radical cropping of the figure and his forceful positioning of the viewer brought a modern point of view to an age-old painting subject and represents a major achievement in 20th century painting. Art historian Patterson Sims has described the artist's work, regardless of specific content, as being about the careful observation and rendition of objects. Thus, as Pearlstein incorporates objects from his personal collection of folk art and ephemera into his work, the combinations of the models and his objects serve as "tantalizing tests of his -

painterly skill and means to complicate and intensify his compositions."

Ellen Lanyon, linked early in her career to the Chicago School of Imagists, has painted from found imagery and objects since the 1960s. The objects serve to fuel her painter's imagination and often take on the role as surrogate for the figure. Like Pearlstein, she faithfully portrays her objects (or curiosities as she likes to call them), but in so doing, Lanyon allows the magic of the object to come forward-- breathing life into inanimate objects and imbuing them with distinct personalities. She explores the potential of strange juxtapositions in her compositions, always leaving a bit of mystery for the viewer.

A full color catalogue of the exhibition including an interview conducted with the artists by Irving Sandler will be available from the gallery for \$15.

Valerie Carberry Gallery is open to the public 10-5, Monday through Friday, and 11-5 on Saturday. For additional information regarding the gallery, upcoming exhibitions, or reproductions, please contact Susan Beagley, 312-397-9990.

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Top-right:

Ellen Lanyon, *Hanafuda*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 inches

©2011 Ellen Lanyon, courtesy of the artist

Bottom-left:

Philip Pearlstein, *Mickey Mouse, White House as Bird House, Male and Female Models*, 2001, oil on canvas, 60 x 72 inches

©2011 Philip Pearlstein, courtesy of Betty Cuninghame Gallery, New York, NY