

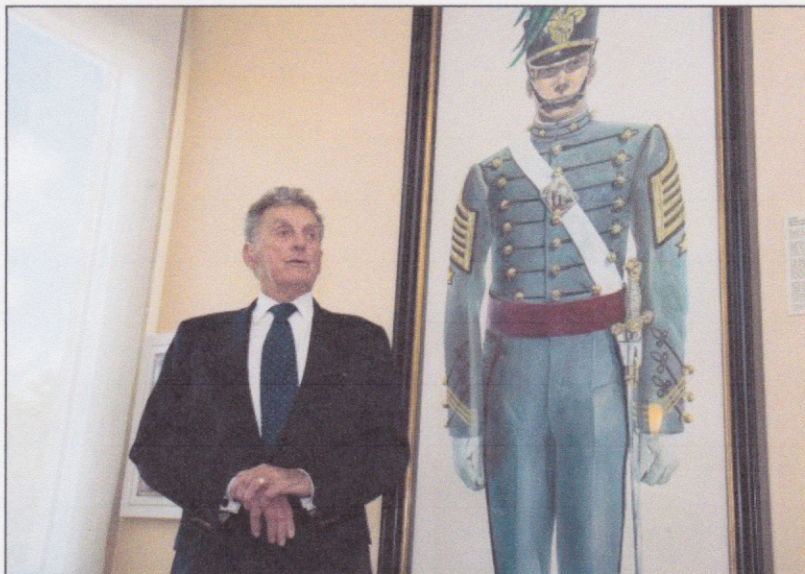
Homepage > News Archives > Article

Historic artwork donated to West Point Museum by famed Pop artist.

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By **Marlana L. Cook (West Point Museum)**

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Local Hudson Valley artist Don Nice discusses his painting "Cadet" at the presentation to the West Point Museum, Aug. 19 (U.S. Army photo by Anthony Battista/released.)

WEST POINT, N.Y. -- The West Point Museum was donated an oil on canvas painting titled "Cadet" from local Hudson Valley artist Don Nice Aug. 19.

Nice is recognized for his oversize paintings of iconic American motifs and classic symbols of American culture in a genre known as Pop art. Cadet dates to 1971 and measures almost ten feet tall.

Nice's painting of a cadet wearing the First Captain's uniform, while painted from life, is not meant to be a portrait of an individual. Instead the artist intended to represent every cadet through this painting. He sought to capture the embodiment of what it means to be a cadet, an enduring iconic symbol in American culture.

Today the context of this painting is very different compared to when it was painted, in the midst of the Vietnam War. At that time, Americans were disillusioned by the long, drawn out war and the billions of dollars that had been spent fighting it. In mid-1971, with the release of the Pentagon Papers, sentiment soured even further leading Americans to question the accountability of their government and their military. Considered within this narrative this painting would have been quite controversial at the time.

The curator of art at the West Point Museum, Marlana Cook, said, "The West Point Museum is delighted to receive this wonderful painting into its collections. It is a fantastic piece that will help to inspire the cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and allow them to reflect on the ideals of being a cadet and a member of the Long Gray Line. We are grateful to Mr. Nice for donating this artwork to the West Point Museum, and we would also like to thank, Mr. Barnabas McHenry and Mr. Jeff Cunningham for their support in placing this painting on display at West Point."

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