

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Carrie Chen Gallery Announces A Perfect Echo: NANCY HAGIN & STEPHEN NICCOLLS

(Great Barrington, MA-- January 1, 2023) The Carrie Chen Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition *A Perfect Echo: NANCY HAGIN & STEPHEN NICCOLLS* from January 28 to March 25, 2023. *A Perfect Echo* shows two long-established local artists who have exhibited throughout the country, while forming deep roots in the Hudson Valley and Berkshires communities. Hagin's contemplative still lifes combine Niccolls' kinetic oil paintings in a fascinating pairing. A private reception will be held on Saturday, January 28, from 3-5pm. Spaces are limited; email at [info@carriechengallery.com](mailto:info@carriechengallery.com) to RSVP.

Hagin works in one of the oldest visual genres, yet her paintings are far from the ostentatious *pronkstillevan* which are associated with still life painting in popular imagination. Her paintings feature delicate fabrics, lush flowers, and traditional domestic objects, beautifully rendered with painstaking detail. Unexpected inclusions, such as an abacus, a model airplane, a cacti, or the head of a child's doll, adds subversive humor and modernity to time-honored subjects. The most important--yet, by nature of its subtlety, perhaps the most overlooked-- aspect of Hagin's work is her technical mastery of light, texture, and the realist style. Her paintings display care and adroitness rarely seen today.

Niccolls' paintings, too, have a self-assured quality. He rejects the histrionics of some abstract work, instead prioritizing phenomenal luminosity and a color palette of blues, grays, greens, and ochres. Complex layering and scraping techniques allow for extraordinary texture and for Niccolls' signature gentle glow. Conscientiously imperfect composition and balance of soft-cornered geometric shapes adds powerful energy to each piece.

Chief curator and gallery owner Carrie Chen comments: "The two artists clearly intend to show stillness in their paintings. Nancy is a master realist painter, but her paintings also have a mysterious atmosphere. The viewer is left with a puzzle which they are grateful to have the chance to solve. In contrast, Stephen uses a subtle color palette, layering techniques, and abstraction which challenges visual perception. Two distinct genres inspire similar feelings."

Though the pairing of two artists with such distinctive styles may seem an unconventional choice, viewing their works together leads to a richer experience. Hagin and Niccolls share a color palette, an emphasis on light, and a meticulous approach to craft. Niccolls views his work not as purely abstract, but as inspired by many sources-- landscape, portraits, collage, and still life. Similarly, Hagin considers the major challenge of her artistic process to be that of composition, describing each painting as "a puzzle to decipher certain visual situations." With a ruminative style reminiscent of Cézanne or Morandi, Hagin and Niccolls' paintings reward patient, careful viewing.

Nancy Hagin was born in New Jersey, USA, in 1940. She received a BFA degree from Carnegie Mellon University in 1962 and an MFA from Yale University in 1964. She then went on to teach at the Maryland Institute of Art in Baltimore, the Pratt Institute, Fashion Institute of Technology, and the Cooper Union, retiring in 2006. Hagin participated in several group shows in the DC/ Baltimore Area before her first solo show in 1975 at the Terry Dintenfass Gallery in New York City. As well as exhibiting throughout the country, from 1980 to 2015, she had nineteen solo shows at the Fischbach Gallery in New York. Hagin has won a Fulbright grant, a New York State grant, and two National endowment grants. In 1992, she was elected to the National Academy of Design. She splits her time between New York City and Hudson.

Stephen Niccolls attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and received both his BFA and MFA from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Over the last decade, he has exhibited at museums and galleries throughout New York state, including recent solo shows at the Woodstock Artists Association, and Vassar College, and John Davis Gallery in Hudson. He has been awarded the Phelan Award, the Purchase Award from the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, and the Albany Mayor's Prize.

## About the Carrie Chen Gallery

The **Carrie Chen Gallery** is located on Main Street in Great Barrington, MA. The gallery showcases talented artists, both from the Berkshires and Hudson Valley and from around the world. These artists work in a wide range of styles and mediums yet are united by their integrity and innovation. We support and share their visionary work with audiences. The gallery follows this mission with exhibitions, lectures and readings, public installations, and collaboration. Gallery hours are Wednesday to Saturday, 11-5 by appointment only. [www.carriechengallery.com](http://www.carriechengallery.com)

Due to the current surge in COVID-19 cases, gallery occupancy will be limited at the opening reception for this exhibition. For the safety of our community, visitors must provide vaccine records and must be properly masked at all times in the space.

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### Image Captions

Stephen Niccolls, *Seer*, oil on canvas, 14 x 11 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=ql350oee3rxtpwio8w2u3y0vp4tc8r>

Stephen Niccolls, *Naxos*, oil on canvas, 24 x 18 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=ghwem0j7t1vlt6tvowqsqyst3ka7ev>

Stephen Niccolls, *Sneaker Flux*, 2022, oil on canvas, 37.5 x 34.25 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=izbm282sd45sjyrrzi7md9gm0ld5cq>

Nancy Hagin, *Birds*, 2022, watercolor, 41 x 29 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=42jz0voi93am97w6uajv4engau5re2>

Nancy Hagin, *Satin Star*, 2013, watercolor, 42 x 30 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=qaa6jhyultihmn1fv3xyftydkuhxya>

Nancy Hagin, *Threes*, 2000, acrylic on canvas, 32 x 32 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/a-perfect-echo-nancy-hagin-and-stephen-niccolls?itemId=huxtddd7g0udcdmqodpo3wuehtl71y>