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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carrie Chen Gallery Announces *HORIZON WITHIN: Arlene Santana Thornton, Julie Shapiro and Sandra Harper*

(Great Barrington, MA. – January 13, 2022) The Carrie Chen Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition *HORIZON WITHIN* from January 22 – February 27, 2022. Featuring recent works by Arlene Santana Thornton, Julie Shapiro, and Sandra Harper, *Horizon Within* calls attention to the artists' practice of meeting their subjective internal experience with the landscape that inspires them. A public reception will be held on Saturday, January 29, from 3 – 5 pm. Images for reproduction are listed below with captions and links for download.

Arlene Santana Thornton, Julie Shapiro, and Sandra Harper each describe landscape, water, and nature's mystery as inspiration in their creative process. As the horizon is the perceived boundary between the earth and sky, the works included in this exhibition pay homage to the space where the artists' subjective experience meets the natural world. Shapiro's paintings and mixed media work evoke the ebb and flow of nature, while Santana Thornton's paintings capture the underlying mystery, essence and memory of a place. Harper maintains a direct connection to nature using materials sourced from the land and by working from observations of human interaction with nature.

Each of the artists brings their unique perspective, evoking the elusive human experience of individual perception. Chief Curator and Gallery Owner Carrie Chen comments that "I am struck by the shared focus and deep connection of personal feelings and experiences with nature that these artists share. They capture the originality of the horizon in the pattern, color, and texture that, with their broad imaginations, ground the viewer in the assurance of the natural world."

Shapiro's expressive handling of paint, form and color convey a bold energy and fluency with her media. Her broad marks and textured surface have an undeniable presence that evoke the light, space and motion of the landscape. Santana Thornton described her process, stating, "I sometimes paint what I imagine to be hidden beneath it all, always seeking an essence." This sense of mystery is present in her elegant canvases where veils of color and tone hint at hidden layers beneath the painted surface. Interested in the passage of time and human interaction with nature, Harper's work in this exhibition includes her botanical portraits and seaweed compositions as well as a series of paintings inspired by the movements and tracks left by Maine clamdiggers at low tide.

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 record and must be properly masked at all times in the space.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Arlene Santana lives and works in the Hudson Valley. She completed a BFA at Florida International University in Miami, and then moved back to New York City for graduate studies in Art and Humanities at New York University. She has also studied at the Art Students League of New York with Richard Pousette-Dart, and lived and worked for five years in Italy in the Rome, Veneto, and Tuscany areas, while painting and studying art, culture, and Italian language at the Dante Alighieri School in Rome. Arlene Santana's paintings and drawings have been exhibited in over fifty group and solo shows in museums and galleries in Europe and the United States, including The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Viscaya Museum, and The Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, and are included in many private collections. Ms. Santana has received many awards including the Adolf and Esther Gottlieb Individual Artist Grant for 2018.

Julie Shapiro is an artist, working in painting, printmaking, drawing and collage. She has exhibited her work in New York, Seattle, Dallas, the Berkshires and other locations in between. Her abstract work is influenced by experiences in her geographic surroundings, as well as a wide variety of experiences and ideas, words and visuals that cross her path. The attention to the unique possibilities of material and color within each medium is essential to the development of individual pieces. Shapiro has been the recipient of grants and residencies including a Pollack Krasner Grant, most recently a Martha

Boschen Porter Fund Grant and residencies that include Yaddo, Virginia Center for Creative Arts and Connecticut Center for Printmaking. Her work is included in public and private collections. Julie Shapiro currently lives and works in Monterey, MA. Originally from nearby Stockbridge, MA, she grew up in Santa Monica. She received her BA in studio art from University of California, Santa Cruz, attended the Yale Norfolk Summer School of Art, and received her MFA in painting/printmaking from Yale University. She taught and received tenure at SMU in Dallas, TX and subsequently taught at Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. She has been a guest artist and critic at schools throughout the country.

Sandra Harper is an artist and writer living in New York City and Marfa, Texas. She attended Cal State Northridge in Los Angeles, where she made large-scale sculptures, and the School of Visual Arts in New York City. She has combined her art practice, mainly painting and drawing, with her interest in plants. She worked as a market gardener, first near Hudson, NY and later, beginning in 2006, in Marfa, Texas, where she started a regional farmers' market, published a monthly gardening blog, and contributed articles and essays to the local paper and regional academic journals on gardening, habitat, ecology and indigenous histories of the Northern Chihuahuan Desert. In 2013 she began collecting seaweed on the eastern end of Long Island and creating collage abstractions on paper. More recently in Marfa she began The Plant Project, making pulp from yucca leaves, sculpting forms and making paintings. During the pandemic she continued this work on Maine's central and easternmost coasts, working with plant material and producing paintings, sculpture and assemblage of found objects. Sandra Harper's work has been shown in galleries and art spaces in Tribeca, the East End of Long Island, Shelter Island, Rockport, ME and Marfa, Texas.

ABOUT THE CARRIE CHEN GALLERY

The Carrie Chen Gallery is located on Railroad Street in Great Barrington, MA. The gallery showcases talented artists locally and globally working in a wide range of style and media. We support artists and share their visionary work with audiences by remaining at the integrity of innovation. The gallery follows its mission through comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations and collaboration. Gallery hours are Thursday - Sunday, 11am - 5 pm. www.carriechengallery.com

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Image Captions

Arlene Santana Thornton, *Braille Painting*, 2020, oil on wood panel, 24 x 24 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=jbp0fbfdsgrotzo8j342cfxkfeqh6d>

Arlene Santana Thornton, *Untitled River Series*, 2018, Oil on canvas, 30 x 30 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=67vt550i5w6gpi6fbv5rotb0qh4fz2>

Sandra Harper, *Untitled*, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 15 x 19 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=dzh2alt1pzfwkqu9qewav93ki5gv1>

Sandra Harper, *Untitled III*, 2019, seaweed on paper, 24 x 32 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=2ltjrdx6hguvvic7u5g8ng99a25saq>

Julie Shapiro, *Morning Wakeup*, 2021, mixed media with paper on panel, 10 x 8 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=ygljrlb53maqj277917tq88mbfmzqk>

Julie Shapiro, *Thought*, oil on canvas, 42 x 40 inches

Image File: <https://www.carriechengallery.com/horizon-within?itemId=77t5jo5ri9jw02z8zag4vazy219j7x>