

New York Exhibition

## CAROL WAINIO

### RECENT PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS

In collaboration with Trépanier-Baer Gallery

March 29 – May 25, 2024



Carol Wainio, *Direction Home*, 2022, Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 60 in.

Arsenal Contemporary Art New York is pleased to present a solo exhibition of recent paintings and drawings by Carol Wainio, in partnership with Trépanier-Baer Gallery, Calgary, Alberta.

As if emerged from the fever dream of an abstract painter, Carol Wainio's pictures blend history, ecology, traditional children's literature and children's art, into a single unified surface. She employs superimposition, palimpsest, and layering in her pictures, as well as a variety of formal juxtapositions — virtual collage, incongruous symbols, accidental defacement, and childish scribbles — to evoke the hybrid emotions that are unique to her richly allusive practice.

Born of Finnish immigrant parents, Wainio's family lore of repeated displacements and invasive neighbors have infused her work with a strong interest in history, a subject she has studied at the graduate level. Her recent pictures are formally and thematically consistent with earlier work, while the confidence of maturity has increased their complexity with assured paint handling. Wainio interweaves evermore elaborate landscapes and vignettes from the fables that we have traditionally taught children in the West, stories of magic, anthropomorphism and cruelty. Her use of found commercial iconography implicates the larger culture, while her incorporation of found children's drawings introduce a dream-like poignancy to an urgent message slowly delivered.

Although she paints in acrylic, Wainio's palette and facture alternate between the somber wood tones of the oil-based old masters, and the cheerful, faded color of vintage commercial imagery from the dawn of mechanical reproduction. The succession of historical styles and pictorial idioms acts as a metaphor for the dire multigenerational legacy of climate change, species extinction, and humanitarian emergencies.

Wainio is broadly represented in major Canadian museum collections and is the recipient of numerous prestigious distinctions, notably the Governor General's Award in the Visual and Media Arts, a career defining honor for a Canadian artist. She lives and works in Ottawa and Montreal.

This is Wainio's first solo exhibition in New York.

**Carol Waino** was born in Sarnia, Ontario in 1955, She studied at Halifax's storied Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) in 1976, at the height of the school's fame as a bastion of advanced training for intellectually ambitious artists. Known for its emphasis on conceptual rigor as a basis for serious contemporary practice, NSCAD's interdisciplinary curriculum and stellar faculty encouraged critical thinking as an artistic virtue. Waino went on to pursue history at the University of Toronto, and graduate studies at Concordia University in Montréal from which she obtained an MFA, and where she began to focus her practice on painting.

**Trépanier-Baer Gallery** is a leading Canadian art gallery based in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Founded by Yves Trépanier and Kevin Baer in 1991, the gallery specializes in contemporary art and supports senior and mid-career artists including Vikky Alexander, James Carl, Chris Cran, Christian Eckart, DaveandJenn, Alicia Henry, Chris Millar, Luanne Martineau, Kent Monkman, Evan Penny and Carol Wainio. It also presents the work of promising emerging artists, most recently the sculptor Jen Aitken. The gallery also advances research and showcases the work of historical modern artists such as Marcel Barbeau, Oscar Cahén, Marion Nicoll and Fred Herzog. TrépanierBaer is a member of the Art Dealers Association of Canada (ADAC) and the Association des galeries d'art contemporain (AGAC).

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