



HAYSTACK

MOUNTAIN SCHOOL OF CRAFTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ellen Wieske named Interim Executive Director of Haystack Mountain School of Crafts

Deer Isle, Maine – The Haystack Mountain School of Crafts’ board of trustees and staff are delighted to announce Ellen Wieske as our Interim Executive Director at Haystack—the first woman to hold this position in the School’s seventy-two year history. She began her new role effective April 16, 2022. We are thrilled that she will be in the lead role during this pivotal time for our organization as we navigate both a leadership transition and the reopening of the School following two years without a full season of programming, impacted by the global Coronavirus pandemic.

Wieske has deep experience at Haystack, having served in numerous roles at the School for more than twenty-five years—Deputy Director since 2017 and Assistant Director from 2005–2017. Wieske has overseen programming, facility/maintenance operations, studio assessment and improvements, scholarship/fellowship and residency reviews, taught workshops for the School’s summer workshops and high school programs, worked on Haystack’s 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, and is currently working alongside staff and trustees in a comprehensive planning process for the School’s campus. Her history of work at Haystack and extensive experience in the craft community has been integral to the organization and its growth.

Ellen was first introduced to Haystack when she came to the School as a technical assistant for Gary Griffin, her MFA Professor at Cranbrook Academy of Art. She started working for Haystack after graduation.

*“I fell in love with the ocean, the school, the community both on and off campus.
In that first summer I also found the love of my life, my wife, Carole Ann Fer.”*

Ellen Wieske is an American artist, metalsmith, goldsmith, curator, educator, author, and an arts administrator. Primarily a metalsmith, Wieske is highly celebrated and known for her wire and tin work. She received a BA from Wayne State University and an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, both in Michigan where she was born. Wieske has taught workshops nationally and internationally. She has shown her work in solo and group exhibitions and is represented in collections nationally including the Farnsworth Museum. A recipient of the prestigious Maine Arts Commission Functional Craft Fellowship, she is

the author of *The Weekend Crafter: Wirework: 20 Wonderful Wire Projects to Coil, Bend, Twist & Stitch* (Lark Books) and her work has been included in a number of other publications.

A longtime Deer Isle, Maine resident, Wieske established *dowstudio* showroom studio/gallery, with wife, potter Carole Ann Fer, which they owned and managed for more than 15 years. She is a member of Society of North American Goldsmiths and has served on their Board of Directors.

“Ellen Wieske embodies the very best of Haystack. Her recognition in the field of craft and the connection she has with our communities, both near and far, make her the ideal person to lead the School during this period of time. Ellen believes deeply in Haystack’s mission and has been instrumental in shaping our broader vision of connecting people through craft. As Deputy Director she helped guide the School through the pandemic and was a driving force in designing online programming that served new audiences and expanded our reach as an organization. She has also been an advocate for increasing equity across all aspects of our programs and operations, and the result of that work can be seen in countless ways. I have learned a tremendous amount from working with Ellen and could not imagine a better person to serve in the role of Interim Executive Director. Haystack will be in excellent hands.”

Paul Sacaridiz, Haystack’s fourth Executive Director (September 2015–April 2022)

Haystack is committed to building upon our recent successes and working to meet the objectives laid out in our Strategic Plan which places equity at the core of our work, and with the goal of expanding the ways we define and represent the field of craft. The Haystack Board of Trustees have launched the search for a new Executive Director. Updates about the search process will be provided to the public at various times throughout the process and over the next months.

ABOUT HAYSTACK

The Haystack Mountain School of Crafts is an international craft school located in Deer Isle, Maine. Founded in 1950 as a research and studio program in the arts, Haystack connects people through craft, provides the freedom to engage with materials, and develops new ideas in a supportive and inclusive community. Serving an ever-changing group of makers and thinkers, we are dedicated to working and learning alongside one another, while exploring the intersections of craft, art, and design in broad and expansive ways.

Follow us online: haystack-mtn.org | [@haystack_school](https://www.instagram.com/haystack_school)

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