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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFFINITIES:

Sister and Brother Susan and Peter Hoffman

Present Their Work at the Southern Vermont Arts Center

MANCHESTER, VERMONT – The Southern Vermont Art Center, located in Manchester, Vt., will present the work of Susan Hoffman and Peter Hoffman at the Elizabeth de C. Wilson Museum and Galleries from July 28 through August 26, with an opening reception on July 28 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

For over forty years, the sister and brother artists have each developed distinctive visual languages working with fabric and wood. Susan, a fiber artist, creates large quilts that hang as paintings, while Peter constructs three dimensional wall pieces employing equal parts sculpture and painting. Although the two work independently, an uncanny dialogue emerges from both the form and spirit of their art.

Both artists find music motivational in their visual creations, and share a jazz-like improvisational approach to art, not pre-planning through drawing, but from the very beginning working directly with their materials. Peter comments that his technique is “strongly rooted in an intuitive process ... more often than not I start with a blank slate, trusting that something will unfold as the process moves forward.” Susan states that, “Fabric has musical resonance that inspires me. I begin each piece with a canvas of air, following an inner inkling, even a thirst, for a particular group of fabrics.”

Another commonality in the artists’ approach is the use of “storied” materials. Susan says she prefers to “recycle fabrics that already have a history. I have a palette that is

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AFFINITIES: Susan and Peter Hoffman at the Southern Vermont Arts Center

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endlessly rich with associations both personal and cultural, as well as in the formal considerations of value, hue and texture. I lay the pieces of fabric down on the floor like a brushstroke; eventually, the scraps are brought together into a new whole cloth — it is this alchemy I am after.” Peter says that his use of primarily wood shapes to build wall pieces “might best be described as sculptural painting, resulting in pieces that have a sense of randomness and balance simultaneously, with both the forms and the colors creating multiple spacial relationships.”

Shown together in the inspirational Wilson Museum galleries, designed by Hugh Newell Jacobson, Susan and Peter Hoffman’s bodies of work demonstrate affinities in ways that are rare and exciting.

The Southern Vermont Art Center is open to the public and admission is free of charge. More information can be obtained from the artists’ website, www.hoffmanaffinities.com.

Susan Hoffman • Peter Hoffman: AFFINITIES

July 28 – August 26, 2018

Tuesday–Saturday: 10 am – 5 pm; Sunday: 12 - 5 pm

Opening Reception: Saturday, July 28, 4 – 6 pm

Southern Vermont Art Center

Elizabeth de C. Wilson Museum and Galleries

930 SVAC Drive Manchester, Vermont 05254

Phone: (802) 362-1405 – www.svac.org

Press materials, including photographs, are available at www.hoffmanaffinities.com/media/

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ARTIST STATEMENTS

Peter Hoffman

“During my time in New York City, I made painted wood sculptures reflective of the urban environment, often drawing on the geometry and repetitive patterns of buildings and streets. I left Manhattan for the Hudson River Valley in 1987, and began a process of converting an old dairy barn into both a home and studio.

Once in the country, the more natural rhythms of the surrounding landscape began to enter the fabric of my sculpture. The strong geometry of earlier work gave way to a more organic approach, where the creation of pieces became far more intuitive, having no strong pre-conception of outcome.

Rather than milling wood for a sculpture, as in earlier work, I began to draw upon large reserves of cast-off pieces from my woodshop, combining them together to make larger abstract assemblages that act as three-dimensional canvases on which to paint. Color is an essential component of my sculpture, and is not approached as being secondary to the form. I feel a work is done when all of the smaller pieces within the larger whole seem to be held in a perfect kind of balance, and that all of the forms and color interact to create multiple layers of movement. And if a sculpture is successful, it has a way of diminishing internal dialogue to become something more experiential.”

Susan Hoffman

“Fabric is compelling as a medium because from birth to death it is something every human being lives with intimately. Across the planet, rich or poor or in between, fabric is part of everyone's life, day and night.

I taught myself how to make a quilt in 1970 while a high school senior. Quickly becoming restless with patterns and templates, I began exploring what else the medium was capable of. In 1973, I had a revelation: I was an artist and quilt making was my medium. My parents weren't thrilled, but I had found my calling.

Despite the naysayers, by 1975 my work was being exhibited in museums and galleries. And there were others exploring quilts as art.

While rooted in the quilt tradition, my approach to quilt making is painterly. I lay scraps of fabric on the floor like brush strokes. I prefer to recycle fabrics that already have a history. This palette is endlessly rich with associations both personal and cultural, and equally rich in the more formal considerations of value, hue and texture.

I hand quilt the pieced front, a meditative process. As I draw with the thread, the pieced front, the middle batting layer, and the backing are sandwiched together, which breathes life into it. The quilt becomes a *bas-relief* as the shadows and play of light created by the quilting stitches make subtle hills and valleys that work in counterpoint to the piecework.

The finished quilt speaks to the body, mind and spirit conveying warmth both literally and figuratively. It is this alchemy I am after.”