

Neil Nagy

Biography

Neil Nagy was born in 1941 in the East Los Angeles community of El Sereno amongst the Mexican culture, of which its buoyant joyfulness and bold colors would greatly influence his future artistic sensibilities.

In the early 1960s Nagy gained exposure to the art of the Bay Area Figurative Painters Manual Neri and Nathan Oliveira as an Art and Design student at San Jose State College. The laid-back attitude of the period resulted in a lighter and more humanist interpretation of the severe existential Northern European styles. This, along with the explosion of Abstract Expressionism, informed Nagy's style and work. In 2006 he was selected for an important "Bay Area Figurative" exhibition where he showed alongside Diebenkorn, Park, Oliveira, and others.

Nagy's focus became steeped in figurative expressionism, in which he used the human form in mild abstractions to articulate spiritual and physical existentialism. For him, the single human form was the most powerful means of delivering works of poignant beauty that also carried intense emotional messages.

Although the figure remains central, the paintings continue to evolve, expressing considerations occupying the artist's mind from ancient Chinese and Mayan history to contemporary figurative art. Recently, Nagy's work has been inspired by explorations of the cultural influence of Japan on the postwar modern art world and the exquisite, meticulous art of calligraphy.

- 1941 Born Neil Frank Nagy in El Sereno, East Los Angeles to Frank and Doris Nagy
- 1952 Was encouraged by 5th grade teacher to draw and paint during academic lessons
Miss Lynn also taught Neil to use her letterpress printing machine.
- 1955 Attended La Habra High School and drifted through with major interests in football, cars, and motorcycles
Continued to draw and paint on everything from club jackets to his bedroom walls
- 1959 Accepted to San Jose State College and majored in Industrial Design with minor in Art.
- 1960 Spent free time in San Francisco in the fringes of the hippie movement and discovering the new art of the Bay Area Figurative painters

- 1961 Apprenticed at Design Studio on Fridays and spent the weekends haunting the museums and the North Beach galleries
Graduated with Honors at the top of his class
Was selected one of four superior graduating west coast seniors by the Industrial Design Society of America
- 1965 Married Barbara Young-Fothergill. Marriage lasted 20 years.
Raised 3 daughters, Deborah, Mary, and Elizabeth who gave seven grandchildren.
- 1966 Moved to Seattle, WA to work for Walter Darwin Teague, the largest design firm in the world at the time.
Assigned to run a satellite office inside The Boeing Company with Industrial Design responsibility for all 737 corporate customers
The job required extensive foreign travel and allowed access to art museums all over the world.
He discovered and was influenced by the work of Rembrandt, Constable and Turner as well as Japanese art
- 1972 Returned to Southern California and became a partner in a start- up company (designed and produced airline freight handling equipment)
- 1976 Founded Nagy Design, Inc. An industrial design consulting firm
Continued to attend life drawing workshops and studied painting at Los Angeles Harbor College, El Camino College and Otis College
- 1985 Began extensive travels in Central Mexico, visiting such cities as Oaxaca, Mexico City, Zacatecas, and Guanajuato. Was influenced by the Mayan and Olmec art and cultures.
Studied at the Instituto Allende in San Miguel de Allende
- 1988 Explored Belize by Jeep and visited several archaeological sites.
- 1990 Explored Laguna Isabel and Rio Dulce Guatemala in a sailboat.
- 1992 Built a studio on his home in Palos Verdes, CA.
- 1994 First solo show at The Lydon Fine Art in Chicago, IL.
- 1995 Installed a gas fired kiln on his Palos Verdes property. Worked on high fired stoneware sculpture.
- 1996 Joined Left Bank Gallery in Laguna Beach, CA and had several solo shows there.
- 1997 Worked on a series of "Works in Process" comprised of simultaneous drawing, painting and sculpture.

The series was shown at solo exhibitions at Angels Gate Cultural Center in San Pedro and the Portland Craft Museum in Oregon.

- 1999 Joined Learsy Gallery in Palm Desert, CA.
- 2001 Bought a home in Palm Springs, California, but maintained his painting studio in San Pedro.
- 2006 Participated in a Bay Area Figurative retrospective at The John Natsoulas Gallery in Davis, CA
- This seminal exhibition featured virtually every Bay Area Figuerist from David Park forward.
- Representation by The Hart Gallery in Palm Desert, CA.
- 2009 Representation by Hohmann Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA.
- 2010 Neil Nagy & jd hansen, "Painting and Sculpture" Hohmann Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA.
- Solo exhibition, Works on Paper "The First Hour" Hohmann Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA.
- 2013 Solo exhibition, "Azuma" Hohmann Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA
- 2015 Solo exhibition, "New Paintings" Hohmann Fine Art, Palm Desert, CA
- 2016 Palm Springs Fine Art Fair, Hohmann
- 2018 Art Palm Springs, Hohmann
- Neil Nagy Retrospective, Hohmann Fine Art, The Vintage Golf Club