



Spring, 2013, 45.5x204 inches, oil on canvas, by **Hank Pitcher**

Sullivan Goss – An American Gallery

Hank Pitcher: The Long View

By **Kerry Methner, PhD / CASA**

SEVERAL WAVES OF KUDOS are due artist, teacher, and activist Hank Pitcher. Recently his proposal for a 40 foot wide mural titled, *The Good Land*, was accepted for the lobby of the new Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital. Look for it to be installed sometime in summer 2014.

“Recording the most elemental issues of life in Southern and Central California for over 40 years has imbued Hank’s whole life’s work with a depth not often seen,” noted Jeremy Tessmer, Gallery Director at Sullivan Goss. “His painting is grounded in real life in California.”

Pitcher’s new, larger format paintings continue this recording, and also signal a shift for Pitcher, who is one of a few local painting icons responsible for steering the Central Coast’s ideas of its outdoor-self over the decades of his career. Pitcher has begun working this large, in part due to another development - his new studio on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

The venue offers him the luxury of stepping back some 20 feet from his work... for a long view.... bringing up another reason to congratulate this prolific master - an upcoming display of some of the work completed in his new studio. The exhibition, *The Long View* will open at Sullivan Goss – An American Gallery on October 3rd, 1st Thursday, and run through February 2nd.

The exhibition will include 23 pieces in all, with the mural *Spring* as a focal point.

“The title of this exhibition refers to the horizontal format,” Pitcher noted. “One of these paintings [*Spring*] is 17 feet wide. It is peripheral but also involves space near and far away. I think this comes partially from growing up surfing alone or with just a few other people in the water. I needed and wanted to be aware of what was going



Last Light, 2013, 8x16 inches, oil on board, by **Hank Pitcher**

on around me.”

But being aware doesn’t mean his work looks like a replication of the landscape. It offers an experience of a moment in time, full of quiet light and color.

“The main idea behind this exhibition is Hank’s long term view of this particular part of the state. He knows it all so well now, that he doesn’t have to paint every single detail to make the subject clear. These land and sea scapes are pared down to the essential icons of the scape, and then those icons are pared down even more. This comes from a deep understanding of the underlying structure of the California landscape and its essence. That is his main strength,” explained Susan Bush,

Curator of Contemporary Art at Sullivan Goss. “*The Long View...* also references his long term commitment to this particular landscape. He’s looking back again and again at the same sites and after four decades this becomes a long view, and a more practiced and polished view of landscape, that is very personal to Hank.”

Pitcher has been painting seriously for over four decades. He currently lectures at UCSB’s College of Creative Studies, where he has served since 1971. Early on, he befriended Paul Georges on the east coast and later Paul Wonner, making him an unlikely bridge between two distinctive post-abstract figurative styles.

“These are views that I have been looking at for a long time, and return to again and again. I have been making paintings of two of the views in this exhibition since the Eisenhower Administration. I think these paintings also end up being about time and timelessness. The longer I look at

something the more it becomes about what it is than what is, was, or will be.”

The gallery is located at 7 East Anapamu Street in Santa Barbara. The opening reception will take place from 5 to 8pm on October 3rd. For info call 730-1460 or visit: www.sullivangoss.com



Hank Pitcher



Coal Oil Point Twilight, 2012, 12x24 inches, oil on canvas, by **Hank Pitcher**