



Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 2016

JEAN SWIGGETT: *Strange as it Seems*

May 5 - July 3, 2016



SANTA BARBARA, CA – Sullivan Goss – An American Gallery will present its second exhibition from the Estate of San Diego artist **JEAN SWIGGETT (1910-1990)**. Comprising ten works in pencil, colored pencil, and oil made between the early 1950s and the late 1970s, *Strange as it Seems* looks at how the artist's uncanny ability to reproduce reality in drawing and painting was coupled with his eccentric choices in subject matter. The results are simultaneously fantastic and realistic.

His still lifes and figure paintings, some more traditional than others, seem filled with private interests and personal codes, which decades after his death, are now sometimes inscrutable. In an era in which total abstraction dominated in the form of Abstract Expressionism and irony was ascendant in the form of Pop Art, Swiggett was a sincere Realist. Nevertheless, his work prefigured the art world's eventual return to the figure, to frank content, and finally, to Realism. Swiggett will show with Susan McDonnell, another fantastic Realist of the next generation.

Jean Swiggett was born in Franklin, Indiana and moved to Long Beach when he was two. Attending Long Beach Community College, Chouinard Art Institute, and San Diego State University, Swiggett finally graduated with an unusual double major in art and mathematics. During the 30s and 40s, he painted or assisted on forty murals for the W.P.A. and others. In 1939, Swiggett earned his M.F.A. from USC, participating in the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco the same year. In 1944, he began his long teaching career at his alma mater, San Diego State University. Swiggett's development followed an unusual path. Various experiments with Modernist styles of painting ran parallel with another carefully drawn body of Magical Realist works that includes highly realistic renderings of Pop subjects. In the late 60s and through the 80s, Swiggett made a pronounced move towards figurative realism with obscure art historical references, mythical symbolism, and magical imagery. Sullivan Goss – An American Gallery represents the Estate of the Artist.

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