

Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TEXTURAL & BIOMORPHIC • ABSTRACT & CONCEPTUAL
CLAY, WOOD, FIBER, PAPER & METAL

ORGANIC

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JUNE 25 - AUGUST 23, 2021

THE GALLERY IS OPEN FOR VISITATION.

SANTA BARBARA, CA - For its big Summer exhibition, Sullivan Goss will open an expansive and enveloping exhibition of Modern and contemporary art made from clay, wood, fiber (textile), paper, and metal. While these media are typically associated with **craft**, the artists in this exhibition are more interested in abstract imagery and/or conceptual practice. Many of the artists in the exhibition have MFAs. **Biomorphic** shapes and hand-formed or natural **textures** predominate. The content, meanwhile, runs the gamut.

ORGANIC doesn't present a school or a theory so much as a zeitgeist. **Textiles and ceramics, in particular, have been rising in prominence in Contemporary art for years now – especially among younger collectors.** Biomorphic shapes and irregular textures are also ascendant. From the cellular structure of Pierre Cardin's famous "Bubble House" in Cannes (recently offered for sale for \$350M) to the Serge Mouille lamps that seemed to sprout from the walls of Brooklyn brownstones overnight, the appeal of "natural" or "organic" forms seems to be experiencing another peak. In the Modern era, the fascination with shapes and materials that speak to nature is a recurring idea that dates back to the Art Nouveau and Arts & Crafts eras of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Something about the Modern era seems to call us back to nature.

Works in this exhibition nod to the Arts & Crafts era in the form of decorative panels painted around 1940 by Santa Paula artist JESSIE ARMS BOTKE (1883-1971) and presented in a folding screen that demonstrates a stunning feat of wood joinery and incised water gilding by CARLETON KIRKEGAARD as well as in an exquisite spinning cabinet with glass shelves and vines in marquetry by PAUL SCHURCH, whose exotic woodwork and super-luxe marquetry designs are in demand around the world. Both are local to the area.

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The **midcentury modernists** associated with these ideas in this exhibition are HARRY BERTOIA (1915-1978) and SIDNEY GORDIN (1918-1996), both of whom are particularly collected for their direct metal sculptures. Their works in the exhibition date from 1959 to 1977. A wall-hanging wood sculpture by CHARLES ARNOLDI from 1974 rounds out the offering.

With that said, most of the work in the show is contemporary.

Ceramics here are represented by LINDA and JAMES HAGGERTY, PATRICK HALL, NATHAN HAYDEN, BRAD MILLER, CHRIS RUPP, and LYNDA WEINMAN. Nathan Hayden teaches at Santa Barbara City College. Chris Rupp teaches at Westmont. Lynda Weinman, Patrick Hall, and the Haggerty's all operate out of the new Clay Studio in Goleta, California. Brad Miller, of L.A., has devoted most of his four decade career to nature based abstraction in ceramics, wood, and even paper. He is represented in this exhibition by three ceramics and two works on paper.

Fiber arts are represented here by STEPHANIE DOTSON, NATHAN HAYDEN, ELISA ORTEGA MONTILLA, MINGA OPAZO, SOMMER ROMAN, HANNAH VAINSTEIN, and the YARN BOMBER (Stephen Duneier) – each of whom brings distinctive visual sensibilities and ideas to textiles. From Minga Opazo and Sommer Roman, the Gallery will be showing a number of “**soft sculptures**.[®]” The exhibition will also feature weavings that are intended as wall-hanging sculptures by Opazo, Vainstein, and Dotson. Hayden and Montilla use textiles for very different reasons, but their work resonates with each other. **Abstract Surrealism** – long thought to be an interstitial movement on the way from Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism – is a persistent leitmotif for both, as it is for many in the exhibition.

Among these, SUSAN McDONNELL is perhaps the standout. Normally, she is a highly-refined Magical Realist painter, but during the pandemic lockdown, she made a number of abstracted watercolors covered in tiny ink circles that recall cellular structures. NEIL GOODMAN’s *Cloak* is another work that seems to have a significant amount of Abstract Surrealist influence. Archetypal shapes that recall primitive tools or perhaps an ancient pictographic language are cast in bronze and hang together in a form that almost suggests a taxonomy. Brad Miller’s twin monochromatic works on paper, both part of a series called *Bifold*, have a similar energy. NATHAN HUFF’s dreamy and mysterious wood sculpture and painting on paper further develop the theme.

While most of the artists in this exhibition are wedded to traditional notions of craftsmanship – to wit, hand-wrought – three of the artists in the exhibition employ industrial or technological processes to the creation of their works of art. Lynda Weinman designs her ceramics in 3D computer software and “prints” them in clay using a 3D Potterbot. ALEX RASMUSSEN designed his anodized aluminum ocean surface using software and had it made using the cutting edge fabrication technology at Neal Feay company in Goleta. R. NELSON PARRISH uses bio-resin to encase wood with subtle gray stripes that relate to the zone system that Ansel Adams perfected for metering complex landscape photography. All three are **pushing the idea of “organic” into the future.**

Again, to visit the gallery during the months of July and August will be to be enveloped in an aesthetically coherent installation of over fifty works of art that celebrate craft materials, Nature, and abstract and conceptual art. The Gallery is excited to welcome people in to experience it for themselves.

ARTISTS INCLUDED: Charles Arnoldi | Harry Bertoia | Jessie Arms Botke | Stephanie Dotson | Neil Goodman | Sidney Gordin | James Haggerty | Linda Haggerty | Patrick Hall | Nathan Hayden | Nathan Huff | Susan McDonnell | Brad Miller | Elisa Ortega Montilla | Minga Opazo | R. Nelson Parrish | Alex Rasmussen | Sommer Roman | Chris Rupp | Paul Schurch | Hannah Vainstein | Lynda Weinman | Yarn Bomber (Stephen Duneier)

TO LEARN MORE, visit: <https://www.sullivangoss.com/exhibitions/organic>