

Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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CALIFORNIA ON MY MIND

OCTOBER 1 - NOVEMBER 22, 2021

THE GALLERY REMAINS OPEN SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. TO COMPLY WITH MUNICIPAL RULES, THE GALLERY CURRENTLY REQUESTS THAT VISITORS WEAR A MASK.

SANTA BARBARA, CA - For the month of October, Sullivan Goss will present an exhibition of historic and contemporary paintings, drawings, and prints by artists from Southern California that highlight the history and mythology of our region. Many of the Gallery's clients divide their time between Santa Barbara and their second homes in other cities strewn across the continent. As Summer turns to Fall, they begin to think about returning to the warmer weather and slower pace of life that Santa Barbara offers. *California on my Mind* calls them to do just that.

The exhibition is grounded by historic works by artists like **Henry Chapman Ford (1828-1894)**, **John Sykes (1859-1934)**, **Lockwood de Forest (1850-1932)** and **Colin Campbell Cooper (1856-1937)**. Ford made his way to Santa Barbara from Chicago in April, 1875, becoming the city's first important resident artist of the American period. Sykes came here from England in about 1890. De Forest started wintering in the area in 1902 and Cooper made his way here from New York in 1921, joining the growing ranks of important artists to call the city home. Each artist found something to love and an audience who shared their love. For Ford and Sykes, it was the Santa Barbara mission – and indeed, the whole mission chain that fired their imagination. For De Forest and Cooper, it was the possibility of painting outdoors all year round.

Between the landscape and the built environment, the stage is set. We get the big dramatic view of the whole coastline in **Julika Lackner's** *Twilight 70* and a certain strange and seductive idea of a Santa Barbara dream home in *Sun Bathers* by **Frank Kirk**. **Dave Lefner's** perfectly carved linoleum blocks produce a picture-perfect neon sign called *Star Lite, Star Brite* – an allusion to both stargazing and the celebrities who call the area home.

For a totem of a different stripe, we turn to **R. Nelson Parrish**. That same fetish for finish that

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inspires Lefner keeps Parrish striving to balance the charm and accessibility of time-worn wood with the inscrutable mystery of his blue racing stripes that radiate that California cool.

Mary-Austin Klein and **Hank Pitcher**, meanwhile, paint stylistically distinctive views of the beaches that they return to ritualistically. For Pitcher, it is a daily commitment to Coal Oil Point – the beach closest to UCSB, where he teaches. For Klein, it is the beach at More Mesa where she and her husband walk their dog when they are in town.

From **Holli Harmon** and **John Nava**, we get a California mythos. Nava paints a young woman in a black bikini whose contorted pose recalls an ancient Greek sculpture of the Goddess of Love known as the Aphrodite of Rhodes. Harmon gives us a layered fantasy of the relationship between people and California grizzly bears before the area was colonized by the Spanish. That brought the hunting of bears in great numbers for meat which turned the relationship from a reported conviviality into the tragedy of antagonism and then extinction.

The exhibition is finished with the last of the Summer blooms by **Meredith Brooks Abbott** whose painterly vision of wild roses adds a sweet poignancy to the changing of the seasons.

ARTISTS INCLUDED: Meredith Brooks Abbott, Colin Campbell Cooper, Lockwood de Forest, Henry Chapman Ford, Holli Harmon, Frank Kirk, Mary-Austin Klein, Julika Lackner, Dave Lefner, Susan McDonnell, John Nava, R. Nelson Parrish, Hank Pitcher, John Sykes