

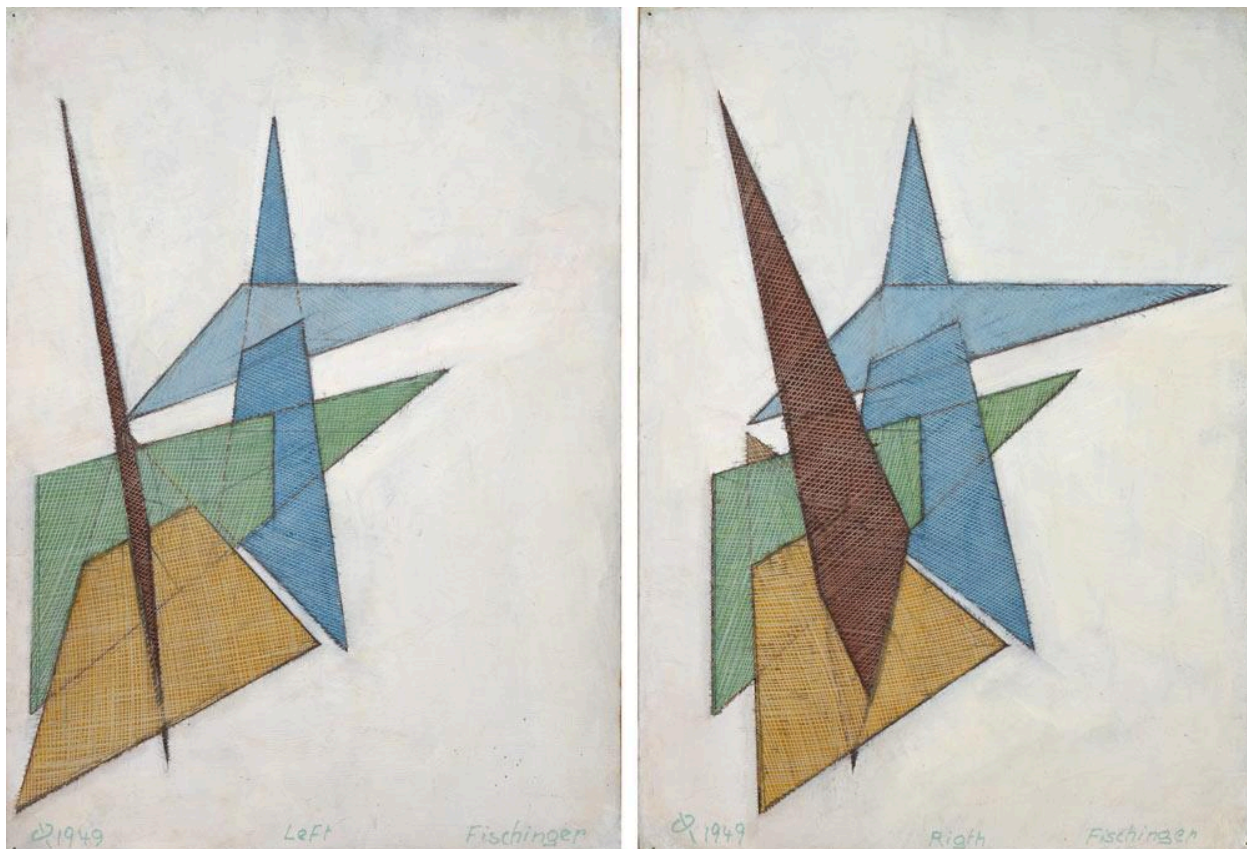
Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 25, 2024



LEFT BRAIN / RIGHT BRAIN

THE MARRIAGE OF ART & TECHNOLOGY

AUGUST 30 - OCTOBER 21, 2024

OPENING RECEPTION: 1st THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH | FROM 5-8pm

SANTA BARBARA, CA - One of the oldest ideas in Western culture divides the human spirit into two exclusive and contradictory parts – one associated by the Greeks with Apollo and the other with Dionysus. One part is rational, objective, linear and oriented towards perfection and the future. The other part is intuitive, subjective, instinctual and focused on pleasure in the present moment. This dichotomy maps unevenly to create a number of binary concepts in Western thought, including the notion of *left* and *right* brain thinking. To simplify, you're either a scientist or an artist; you can't be both. It's an old idea and it has proven useful, it just isn't true. At least, it isn't *always* true.

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In honor of the **Getty's Pacific Standard Time Art project, ART & SCIENCE COLLIDE**, Sullivan Goss will present an exhibition of works that examine the role of technology and rational problem solving in the creation of works of art. The oldest work in the show will date to 1949; the newest, to this week.

On entering the exhibition, visitors will see paintings by two painter/filmmakers with engineering backgrounds: **OSKAR FISCHINGER (1900-1967)** and **CHRIS PETERS**. Fischinger's art responded to his interest in spirituality, especially in the ways that it was impacted by discoveries in physics and astronomy. He will be represented in part by one of his rare stereo paintings, twin paintings that can combine into one new work by hacking the way the human eye focuses. Chris Peters has been using Artificial Intelligence to inspire paintings since late 2018. Between September of 2018 and May of 2019, Peters added his own lines of code to an open-source **DCGAN** (Deep Convolutional Generative Adversarial Network) and got his own data set of landscape painting images from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century to train the computer about landscape painting. He then built a supercomputer at home and ran the program to find out what **A.I.** could make out of the tradition of landscape painting. Finally, he chose his favorites and painted them in oil on Belgian linen. The largest and most successful of these will be shown for the first time. Chris will also show two paintings suggested by Stable Diffusion, an online platform to generate imagery from text prompts. Cerebral but beautiful, their works hope to inspire curiosity, wonder, and perhaps even love.

Nearby, visitors will encounter paintings and sculptures by architect/painter **ROBIN DONALDSON**. Donaldson was a painting major at U.C.S.B. before he went to the Southern California Institute for Architecture (SCI-ARC). His work on the "Hill House" in Montecito has made him an icon in his field. Somehow, Donaldson works painting into the creative process that feeds his architecture. A dense abstract of gesture, color, and vectors laced with formerly descriptive numbers create **an aesthetic out of schematic information**. The inscrutable logic of his **CNC fabricated sculptures**, meanwhile, are likely to leave audiences intrigued, but also perplexed. Their form comes from a visual language created for a wall screen in a private home currently under development.

Art made using machines is a persistent motif throughout the exhibition.

Among the preeminent practitioners known well to regular gallery goers, **LYNDA WEINMAN** stands out. WEINMAN uses 3D software programs and 3D plastic and ceramic printers to make sculptures of dazzling, almost magical complexity. She will be represented by brand new sculptures as part of the gallery's determined effort to document her rise as a major force in the field living here in our backyard. She is joined by **ALEX RASMUSSEN**, whose innovative designs and art machined from aluminum are then anodized in subtle colors and hand finished to manipulate light and perception. He is an heir to the **Light & Space movement** born in Southern California in the 1960s and 70s. It takes a literal factory to make one of his works, as it does for **one of L.A.'s original "Finish Fetish" artists, LARRY BELL**. Bell is represented here by an abstract image suggestive of an alpine lake that is made in a vacuum chamber where electric current and oxygen turns alloys into vapors that form thin, chromatically dense films on heavy paper. Across the room, Sullivan Goss will exhibit a special seven foot tapestry called *The Big Platter* made on a uniquely complex Jacquard loom in Belgium for **JOHN NAVA**. Nava is a consummate Realist known for his exquisite craftsmanship and his deep love of art historical images. *The Big Platter* references the composition of George Seurat's Pointillist masterpiece, *A Sunday on La Grande Jatte* in an image of contemporary Californians enjoying themselves at the beach in Ventura. Nava uses digital

cameras, Maya 3D software and oil paints to compose images that he then translates into a file that a loom can weave.

The exhibition is rounded out by three stainless steel sculptures by **KEN BORTOLAZZO**, a sculptor known for kinetic and traditional abstract sculpture that celebrates the machine aesthetic as well as more humanistic values like play. His sculptures *Bolt* and *Flame* could both be taken allegorically. In Greek mythology, Prometheus stole fire from the Gods invoking the idea of technological peril. For some, creativity retains this aura of divine or mysterious origin. In this formulation, Ideas are said to just come to artists, like a bolt from the sky. The truth is that Ken's art is part engineering and part inspiration. He works with a machinist's tools and solves technical problems, but all in service of our delight.

Technology in art has always caused some measure of cognitive dissonance. Many seem to want Apollo and Dionysus to stay in their lanes. This exhibition hopes to challenge a dichotomy that isn't relevant for everyone and to celebrate those artists who use technology creatively to do what good art does: make us feel, make us think, and keep us in a state of wonder and awe.

Image credit:

OSKAR FISCHINGER (1900-1967) *Stereo No. 49*, 1949 | 12.75 x 18.75 inches | oil on panel