



## Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## THE DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS

MAY 7 - JUNE 28, 2015



**SANTA BARBARA, CA** – For the 1st THURSDAY in May, Sullivan Goss will present an exhibition that focuses on the art of **strong women modernists** active between 1915 and today. The exhibit will have a particular focus on Santa Barbara modernists like **LYLA HARCOFF** (1883-1956) and **GRACE VOLLMER** (1884-1977), but it will also feature a fine selection of works by East Coast modernist **BETTY LANE** (1907-1996). The gallery will round out the selection with the works of important California modernists and a few contemporary artists whose works share some of the iconoclastic spirit of their predecessors.

It was once unseemly for women to travel alone. It was once difficult for them to get professional training. Making art could get in the way of being a wife or a mother. Selling art meant that making it was a job – this when it was still a radical idea for women to earn an income. Modern art – whether Post-Impressionist or totally abstract – was in itself radical. So what did these women do? They found ways to get good training. They traveled to Europe, to Mexico, and elsewhere; Dorr Bothwell went by herself to Samoa in 1928! They worked to establish an identity beyond the words “wife” or “mother,” even though many of the artists in this exhibition were both. They made work that pushed the limits of good taste. They chose to pursue the modern, the new, the avant garde. The nerve!

***THE DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS*** celebrates that nerve.

An exhibition curated around gender is necessarily contentious. Is there any point to an exhibition that focuses on women artists? Doesn't such an exercise perpetuate a difference that feminism seeks to erase? It is a good question, and one without an easy answer. Sullivan Goss has never particularly focused on gender diversity, and yet finds that **nine out of fourteen** of its contemporary artists are women, but only six out of its eighteen estates are women. So, this exhibition focuses on a historical

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period in which women braved an indifferent and/or hostile art world in increasing numbers. It recognizes their talent, their courage, and the likely role these Independents played in creating a world where a gallery like Sullivan Goss can “accidentally” claim such a strong representation of art by women today.

Artists included in the exhibition: MABEL ALVAREZ | DORR BOTHWELL | PHOEBE BRUNNER | MARGE DUNLAP | LYL A HARCOFF | SOPHIE HARPE | NELL BROOKER MAYHEW | ANGELA PERKO | EDNA REINDEL | ELISE SEEDS | HENRIETTA SHORE | NICOLE STRASBURG | DOROTHY WINSLADE | BEATRICE WOOD

Come to the opening. Visit, explore, collect! 1st Thursday, May 7th from 5 - 8pm.