



## Sullivan Goss

AN AMERICAN GALLERY

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# THE LIFE & ART OF LEON DABO

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**SANTA BARBARA, CA** – Sullivan Goss is pleased to announce the gallery's first retrospective exhibition from the Estate of Leon Dabo (1864-1960). Since the gallery acquired the artist's estate from a private owner in Manhattan in late 2010, the New York Times has written up the discovery and the gallery has published two books on the artist. *The Life & Art of Leon Dabo*, however, is the first show to tell the full story of the artist's life with examples from five of the major periods of the artist's career.

Leon Dabo made his living early on doing decorative art and design for interiors, especially the interiors of churches and synagogues.

Starting around the turn of the century, however, he began to actively seek a living as a fine artist with an increased focus on easel painting. He found his earliest success as a **Tonalist**, a painter who restricted both the contrast and the hue of his paintings of New York and the Hudson River Valley. A string of successful shows across the US and abroad confirmed him as one of America's pre-eminent painters in the Tonal tradition.

In 1910, he joined his friends from the Ashcan School in showing at the **Exhibition of Independent Artists** – a pivotal exhibition for loosening the National Academy of Design's grip on what could be considered good or important. Later, he joined his Ashcan friends and other progressive artists in forming the Association of American Painters and Sculptors to mount the International Exhibition of Modern Art, better known as "**The Armory Show.**" In fact, the organizing meetings for the Armory Show were held in his studio. A few years later, he would help form **The Pastellists**, a group of leading American artists devoted to pastel as a primary medium for fine art.

With an almost fifteen year string of increasing fame and exhibition opportunities, Dabo stopped to join the Army, serving as an officer in World War I. His career languished a bit, but by the early 1930s, he was back in the swing of things with a body of **Symbolist floral still lifes** in both oil and pastel.

World War II caught him at age 75 in Paris with 300 works of art and a Jewish wife. His palette grew darker and his paint application more passionate and even violent. It wouldn't lighten until the end of the war, though he found great success in a 1941 exhibition entitled *When I Last Saw France*.

After the war, his palette lightened and expanded to encompass a full rainbow of hues. His brushstroke loosened and he happily painted Provence, showing in an tribute exhibition to Cézanne.

Each phase of his career will likely become a focused exhibition in the future and the gallery plans books for a number of these. *The Life & Art of Leon Dabo*, however, offers a preview of things to come and the first chance for scholars and collectors to see the full breadth of work from an estate that's been privately held for fifty years.

A video about the exhibition can be seen online at:

[http://www.sullivangoss.com/exhibits/SGTV\\_LEONDABORETROSPECTIVE/](http://www.sullivangoss.com/exhibits/SGTV_LEONDABORETROSPECTIVE/)

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