



GEMINI G.E.L. AT JONI MOISANT WEYL

Robert Graham

Born:

Mexico City, Mexico, 1938

Robert Graham studied art at the State University of California at San Jose (1961-1963) and the San Francisco Art Institute (M.F.A., 1964). Throughout his career Graham's work has essentially addressed one subject: the nude female figure, rendered in great detail. By 1966, after experimenting with low-fired ceramic clay, he began employing flesh-colored wax to create small tableaux of nude sunbathing women, separated from the viewer by Plexiglass boxes and domes. None of the figures was more than six inches high and each exhibited careful, veristic polychrome detail.

In 1971 Graham began casting his meticulous nudes in bronze. His Venice, California studio, an abandoned department store, functions as a fully contained complex where all steps of the casting process except for bronze pouring take place. Working in a traditional medium, Graham exhibits a modern concern with process. In some of his bronze fragments, which he calls "found objects," sprues and vents are left attached to the casting, serving both as support and as environment. The figures' poses are often taken from Graham's films, photographs, and videos of models. The painted surfaces of many of Graham's bronze figures (muted tones of purple, gray or green) plus their less-than-lifesize scale create a psychological distance from the viewer.

Starting in 1974, Graham collaborated with Gemini G.E.L. on both prints and 3-dimensional clay objects. Among his exhibitions are those at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1970); the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts (1972); the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1981); and a traveling exhibition organized by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1981). The creator of numerous private and public commissions, amongst his most celebrated are the Olympic Gateway and commemorative coins for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, the Duke Ellington Memorial in New York City, and the Great Bronze Doors for José Raphael Moneo's Cathedral of Our Lady of Angeles.

Robert Graham died in Los Angeles at the age of 70 on December 27, 2009.