

ELIZABETH MURRAY and PHILIP GUSTON

September 5 - October 5, 1996

New works by **Elizabeth Murray** and a selection of lithographs by the late artist **Philip Guston** are on view at **Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl** from September 5 through October 5, 1996.

Elizabeth Murray, renowned for her shaped and 3-dimensional canvases, has created a series of unique pastels drawn over lithographically printed forms. The series, entitled "*Whazzat*", was created during her visit to the Los Angeles-based artists' workshop, Gemini G.E.L. These new hand-colored pieces, with their undulating forms and layering of color and shape, are highly typical of her work. Figures and objects intertwine in a playful manner while their exact recognizability is sometimes uncertain; as always, Murray's work borders between abstraction and representation. The lithographs by Philip Guston were amongst his very last works, drawn by the artist and printed by Gemini in late 1979, and published over a 3-year period immediately preceding and following the artist's death. Guston was widely admired for a distinctive and dramatic use of color in his paintings, as well as his simple yet bold black-and-white drawings. The lithographs exhibited are exceptional examples of Guston's superb talent in line and mark-making.

Both artists have their autobiographical visual vocabularies rooted in Abstract Expressionism, and for both there is a constant struggle between the structure of the work and the subject. The similarities between these two artists, with their layering of objects and forms, are numerous. Murray implements a layering of the paper to create her three dimensional forms and Guston relies on layering the objects themselves. Murray's new work shows an abundance of hands, feet and faces, manipulated into ambiguous shapes. Guston's objects are taken directly from his surroundings, including items such as shoes, an easel, and paintbrushes. In most all of Guston's drawings his line quality is aggressive, emphasizing heavy repeated marks, lines and dark forms. Influenced by Guston's paintings, color is what allows Murray to be expressive in her work, with each of these new hand-colored pieces developing a different characteristic and personality.

Elizabeth Murray's work has been the subject of over forty solo exhibitions since 1974, including a major retrospective of her paintings and drawings in 1987 and 1988, co-organized by the Dallas Museum of Art and the Albert and Vera List Visual Arts Center in Massachusetts. Born in Chicago in 1940, she attended the Art Institute of Chicago to receive her B.F.A., and her M.F.A from Mills College in Oakland, California. Murray began to collaborate with Gemini in 1992 and this is her fourth project with the Los Angeles workshop.

Philip Guston was born in Montreal, Canada in 1913, spent his early years in California, and moved to New York City in the late 1930's, eventually settling in Woodstock, New York in 1967. His paintings and drawings have influenced many artists and students (he taught off and on throughout his life). Major retrospectives of his work include the Solomon R. Guggenheim exhibition in 1962-63, a career survey organized by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1980-81, and a posthumous drawing retrospective organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1988. Guston passed away in 1980 and his work continues to be explored as one of the great artistic achievements of our time.

Please contact the gallery for visuals and information.