



GEMINI G.E.L. AT JONI MOISANT WEYL

Bruce Nauman

Born:

Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1941

After majoring in mathematics and art at the University of Wisconsin at Madison (B.S., 1964), Bruce Nauman focused on art at the University of California at Davis (M.A., 1966). His interest in using words in prints, drawings, books, and neon signs dates from that period.

By 1966 (while teaching at the San Francisco Art Institute), Nauman's sculptures became referential to the artist's body and to cognitive actions of the viewer; 1967 saw a diversification of his efforts, with increased emphasis on the distanced and anonymous utilization of his body in his work. Discovery of Gestalt psychology reinforced Nauman's intuited notions that even simple, repeated activities have value. His work in film, video, holography, and photography evoked sympathetic responses implicit to observation of human activities. It was a natural step for Nauman to develop participatory projects in which the viewer duplicated the physical experience of the art. *Performance Corridor* (Whitney Museum of American Art, 1968) was the first; architecture, light, mirrors and video monitors structured the viewer's experience.

In Nauman's work the clarity of the viewer's initial impression gives way to ambiguity and second thoughts. His sculptures of the 1970s, designed and executed both in southern California (where he settled in 1969), and New Mexico (he moved there in 1979), are readily comprehensible geometric shapes that often seem weightless. Yet upon examination, these shapes become more idiosyncratic, and the problem of defining their formal unity, more difficult.

In addition to working at Gemini, Nauman has collaborated on print editions with Cirrus Editions Ltd. Retrospective exhibitions of his art include those organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1972); the Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, The Netherlands (1981); and one devoted to his neon signs at the Baltimore Museum of Art (1982). The most recent Nauman retrospective was organized by the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and traveled to many venues throughout America and Europe from 1993 to 1995. Since 1989, he has been married to another artist, Susan Rothenberg. They both live and work in Galisteo, New Mexico.