

PRESS RELEASE

BRUCE NAUMAN AT GEMINI G.E.L. AT JONI MOISANT WEYL

An exhibition of eleven new works by Bruce Nauman, *Fingers and Holes*, opens February 28, 1995, at Gemini G.E.L. at Joni Moisant Weyl. As the title implies, the monoprint, seven small etchings and three lithographs in this series all use the subject of hands as the predominant imagery.

References to the human hand abound in Nauman's work, from fingerprints left on sculpture in 1960, to photographs of his own hands and feet in 1978, to more recent works in neon. Posing his hands in different gestural images, the fingers lent themselves to be able to create an expressive quality; holes within the images were incidental. Nauman himself says, "the series was not about holes at first, and then I saw that that was going on. So I started thinking about that - about topology. Things that don't look alike that morphose one into the other". Evidence of this idea can be seen where fingertips touch to form a hole or gap, or in the juxtaposing of the pairs of hands formed in a circle.

Using his own hands as the model for the seven etchings, he drew the right hand with the left and the left with the right. A skilled printmaker, Nauman is clearly referencing the idea of reversal of imagery that occurs in fine-art printing. As the etching images were being resolved, proofs or "states" were pulled from the copper plates, and Nauman experimented with these to create the "circle of hands" monoprint series. To print these works, plastic bottles were used to squeeze red, yellow and blue inks onto the printing element in a random variation of color, resulting in a series of monoprints unique in their slight variation of color.

In the three lithographs, one sees Nauman's acknowledged graphic abilities and, again, his awareness of printmaking's reversal in the appearance of his handwriting, intentionally reversed, across the top of two of the prints. The figurative imagery refers to neon works dating from 1985, in which two clowns are seen in confrontation, hands and penises furiously pumping up and down. According to Gemini's master printer, James Reid, Nauman "deconstructed" a print originally proofed in 1985 but never resolved, and used the plates in creating the one multi-colored and two black-and-white lithographs.

Born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1941, Nauman's first retrospective opened in 1973 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and traveled to the Whitney Museum, New York, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and other international locations. On March 1st, a major retrospective, organized by the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis) and the Hirshhorn Museum, opens at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, after having also appeared at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and the Reina Sofia in Madrid.

Additional information and visuals are available by contacting the gallery.