

Lori Bookstein Fine Art

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On the Wall / Off the Wall

March 18 – April 16, 2011

Lori Bookstein Fine Art is pleased to present “On the Wall / Off the Wall,” a group exhibition of artists who explore a variety of possibilities in the making of three-dimensional sculpture which projects from, or relates to, the wall.

Eight contemporary artists – Willard Boepple, Varujan Boghosian, Garth Evans, Louise Kruger, Gelah Penn, Rachel Rotenberg, Cordy Ryman, and Tim Woodman – as well as the late Irving Kriesberg and Betty Parsons – comprise the exhibition, skirting the traditional conception of free-standing sculpture by affixing work to the wall or building it up the corners of a space; many synthesize object-making with an evident joy of drawing and painting.

Willard Boepple frequently uses the wall as the support for his abstract, yet vaguely utilitarian-feeling sculpture. Working within a human-sized or slightly oversize scale, he distills man-made and machine-inspired forms to their ergonomic essence. Built from wood and metal, his pieces exploit the physical structures of his materials but often obscure their organic properties.

Varujan Boghosian has explored mixed media collage and construction since the 1950s. An inveterate collector, he amasses antique children’s toys and unusual detritus, recombining them in his playful and surreal assemblage works, and bringing the art of collage into high relief. Classical history, legend, and narrative are woven throughout, assigning specific but sometimes mysterious meanings to his constructions.

Garth Evans embodies the dual interests of a sculptor’s concerns with a painter’s attention to surface. Over the course of his career he has mined the various properties of wood, fiberglass, and clay. Each work is resolved formally, both as a three-dimensional shape but also as a painted surface, with each playing off the other to produce unexpected anthropomorphic qualities.

Irving Kriesberg [1919-2009] was a pioneer in the rethinking of traditional painting in the 1950s and 60s. Influenced by comic books no less than by renaissance altarpieces, his so-called changeable paintings make use of sculpture bases to remove painting panels from the wall, while hinges in the multi-paneled works allow the viewer to determine the overall configuration.

Louise Kruger relies on the human (and sometimes animal) form as the departure point for her extremely personal, instantly recognizable, representational work. Like her unorthodox apprenticeship with a shipbuilder, Kruger’s understanding of form and balance belie the folksy external appearance of her figures.

Betty Parsons [1900-1982], was better known in her lifetime as an early champion of the Abstract Expressionist artists in her 57th Street gallery, but had a lifelong identity as an artist. Out of wood scraps and driftwood, she assembled and painted wall constructions, combining a primitive sensibility with a sophisticated feeling for composition and color.

Gelah Penn's drawings in space incorporate synthetics like mosquito netting and plastic tubing to turn installation sites into both ground and armature. Her structures inhabit walls, corners, and ceilings, and appear to define architectural space while simultaneously emerging from it. Non-narrative, they are nonetheless filled with gesture and allusion.

Rachel Rotenberg uses natural materials to give shape to personal stories. Using primarily cedar wood, she repurposes it to make new, slightly oversize organic forms. Alluding to bodily forms, man-made objects, and the natural world, their ambiguous origins make them both oblique and universal.

Cordy Ryman uses small, discrete components made from mundane materials to build human-scaled installations in which his interest in painting and sculpture converge. The works are not necessarily site-specific, relying on the wall for support but not dependent on a particular site; indeed, the aggregate nature of the pieces allow them to be disassembled, rebuilt, and adapted.

Tim Woodman's aluminum cut-outs balance careful execution of form with a skillful ability to ascribe modeling through a few simple strokes. The episodic works deal with the observed world, sometimes humorously giving shape to a real-life vignette, at others deriving images from literary classics.

“On the Wall / Off the Wall” will run through April 16, 2011. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 to 6. For more information or visual materials, please contact Lauren Bakoian at lauren@loribooksteinfineart.com or call (212) 750-0949.