

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRUCE GAGNIER *Incarnate*

March 31 – May 1, 2010

Lori Bookstein Fine Art is pleased to present its third one-person show of Bruce Gagnier, in conjunction with the publication of an illustrated catalogue.

On exhibit are a group of life-size figures, the largest Gagnier has made to date, and selected mid-size sculptures, small heads and mounted cruciform figures. The ten human-scale works, ranging from five to six feet in height and made of cast hydrocal plaster, represent a marked departure from Gagnier's last body of work. Whereas the *Otom/Otoma* series (2001-06), stressed formal coherence over individual psychology, the figures of *Incarnate* are more so their own persons than ever, a fact emphasized by each piece's given title: *Emma*, *Louis* and *Mrs. Petit*, to name a few.

Accompanying the increase in scale of these "people" is a greater physiognomical variegation and specificity. Gagnier has stated, too, that he has worked more from outside himself than ever before, a letting go which has contributed to the creation of beings which are more real, and less distant to their maker and the viewer. The spirit of his process is surprisingly like that of an Abstract Expressionist: he works unconsciously, starting with his materials rather than a fixed idea and allowing specific psychic states to emerge from his creations.

Over the course of his career, the subject of Gagnier's work has eluded the categorizations of "ugly" or "pretty." Nor has the artist sought to represent any number of recognizable, universal sensations which have lent themselves readily to figurative sculptural tradition: the heroic, the tragic, the sublime, the pathetic. In this recent body of work, such ideals are not merely muted, but rendered irrelevant. They are realizations of particular individuals, recordings of particular flesh. They have as their criteria to fit poetically together and to be internally complete, relying on contemporary specificity rather than historical standard.

Bruce Gagnier (born 1941, Williamstown, MA) studied art history at Williams College (1959-63) and went on to attend the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (1963) and Columbia University (1963-67), where he studied with Nicholas Carone, Peter Agostini and John Heliker. In 2004 he was elected Academician by the National Academy, and is the recipient of the Ingram Merrill Award (1993) and the New Jersey State Council Award (1985). Gagnier's teaching career includes positions at Yale University, Sarah Lawrence, Parsons, Haverford College and the International School of Art in Umbria, Italy. Since 1979, he has been teaching drawing and sculpture at the New York Studio School. Gagnier lives and works in Brooklyn.

Bruce Gagnier: Incarnate will be on view through Saturday, May 1, 2010. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 am to 6:00 pm, and by appointment. For additional information and/or visual materials, please contact the gallery at (212) 750-0949 or info@loribooksteinfineart.com.