

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOUISE KRUGER *Fabric and Wood*

June 9 – July 9, 2010

*[Kruger's work] supplies another chunk in the history of postwar American art... Her life-size figures, portrait busts and political asides are in step with other artists of her generation, including Bill King and Marisol. But her works have their own formal quirks, telling abbreviations, lustrous finishes and quiet, watchful force.* – Roberta Smith (The New York Times, June 15, 2007)

Lori Bookstein Fine Art is pleased to present fabric works and wood sculpture by Louise Kruger. Dating from the 1960s and 70s, with some works as early as 1955, the show presents the artist's distinctive cast of people and animals, made in hand-stitched, tapestry-sized wall hangings and carved, sometimes painted, wood works. Characteristic of the work are the dichotomies of Kruger's process: not least the way a disarmingly folksy craftsmanship is as easily the backdrop for genuine playfulness and whimsical exploration as it is for incisive political and feminist concerns. Kruger passes as fluidly from needle to chisel as she does in meaning, delivering messages at times stark and precise, at others ambiguous and generalized.

With the larger-than-life scaled hangings, Kruger conjures personages and vignettes from various patched fabrics, exploiting properties of pattern and texture to substitute for volume. The forms are flat but suggestive, the gestures anatomically improbable but wholly legible. In these works, Brice Brown writes, "Kruger manages to balance paradoxes to great effect... finding the sweet-spot where the homey and inviting play counterpoint to razor sharp critique. It's a tough row to hoe, for politics and aesthetics can be feisty lovers. But Kruger clearly understands how to portion information so as to encourage innuendo and allusion through a few simple elements, daring the viewer to complete the narratives."

Kruger's abbreviated, approximated passages are studded with open-ended stories. Whether overtly political, such as the image of a smiling mother positioned over a squashed baby (the artist's response to *Roe v. Wade*), or more obliquely critical – the striped red and white nude, saluting patriotically in front of an American flag – Kruger's storytelling is one part biting, two parts mysterious.

Louise Kruger was born in Los Angeles in 1924. She attended Scripps College in California and the Arts Students League in New York, but three subsequent apprenticeships played a formative role in her arts education: a study of woodworking and joinery (with a ship builder in New Jersey) and traditional metal-working techniques (at foundries in Pistoia, Italy and Kumasi, Ghana). Kruger received early recognition for her woodblock prints, turning to sculpture in earnest in 1951. In 1953, she was included in the "New Talent" show at the Museum of Modern Art, and exhibited through the early 1980s at Martha Jackson Gallery, Schoelkopf Gallery, Landmark Gallery, and Condeso/Lawler Gallery. Kruger's works are in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum, the MoMA and the New York Public Library. This is her second solo show at Lori Bookstein Fine Art.

*Louise Kruger: Fabric and Wood* will be on view through Friday, July 9, 2010. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 am to 6:00 pm, and by appointment. For additional information or visual materials, please contact the gallery at (212) 750-0949 or [info@loribooksteinfineart.com](mailto:info@loribooksteinfineart.com).