

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

BRUCE NAUMAN

Combinations Described (Chicago)

Opening Reception, Friday, September 16, 2011, 5 - 7 PM

Donald Young Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Bruce Nauman. Spanning a wide range of media, Nauman's work often challenges conventional perceptions of body and space. Comprised of a video installation and four new drawings, *Combinations Described (Chicago)* presents an exploration of human behavior informed by reoccurring themes from Nauman's practice.

The installation consists of a single looped projection of the artist's hands, roughly one and a half times life-size, situated against white and black backgrounds as he performs a systematic set of finger movements. What might appear as random motions, is the artist's deliberate exercise in mental process and physical reaction as he responds to his own pre-recorded verbal instructions: "right hand, first finger, right hand third finger, right hand thumb" and so on. All possible finger combinations are explored in the video, totaling 31 movements for each hand. From four channels Nauman layers six different voices (four at a time) as they describe the movement of the artist's fingers witnessed on the screen. The visual cues and echo of voices simulates an endless reiteration of instruction and response. What seems like an infinite variable of hand and finger combinations coalesces into monotonous activity. Informed by an interest in repetition, *Combinations Described (Chicago)*, functions as a study in cause and effect, instruction and response. It presents a conceptual exercise of coordination, as both artist and participant wrestle between body and language.

Finding influence from literature and philosophy Nauman touches on notions of time, body and repetition. *Combinations Described (Chicago)*, nods to previous investigations and persistent issues in the artist's oeuvre. The iteration of sound and movement takes a different approach from *Clown Torture* (1987) but returns to the command and expected with *Shit in Your Hat- Head on a Chair* (1990). The installation finds the artist's hands at play and the duality of metaphor and meaning, a reprise of themes found in the 1994 print series, *Fingers and Holes* and the bronze sculptures of *Fifteen Pairs of Hands* (1996).



Bruce Nauman was born in 1941 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Nauman first garnered critical attention with exhibitions in Los Angeles and California; in 1968 he made his solo debut at Leo Castelli Gallery in New York. His first major survey was co-organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1972. The Walker Art Center in association with the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden organized a survey of Nauman's work, 1993-95 and the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum organized an exhibition of his early work in 2007 titled A Rose Has No Teeth. In 2009, Nauman was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion for representing the United States in the 53rd International Art Exhibition – La Biennale de Venezia with his exhibition Bruce Nauman: Topological Gardens, organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

The reception is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm and Saturday, 11:00 am to 5:30 pm. If you would like more information please contact Emily Letourneau or Robyn Farrell at 312.322.3600 or at gallery@donaldyoung.com.