

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GALLERY II Leland Bell: Morning Series

July 7- August 1, 2014

Lori Bookstein Fine Art is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings and works on paper by Leland Bell. This is the artist's second solo-show with the gallery. *Leland Bell: Morning Series* will be on view in Gallery II.

The *Morning Series*, a collection of work on paper and work on canvas, highlights Bell's longstanding preoccupation with variations on a theme. In each work, the composition is the same. A man, rising from sleep, sits up in his bed while a female figure looms over him. At times, the couple is joined by a cat that seems to both surprise and intrigue them. In every instance, Bell provides just enough information to suggest narrative without telling it.

Characteristic of Bell's signature style, figures are composed of dense planar colors and dark outlines. These outlines contour the figures, giving them a sense of geometry that hearkens to his Modernist influences (including Balthus and Mondrian), but also highlights the grace and fluidity of the human form. Color is equally important, however sparsely used. Cool blues and grays, reminiscent of shadowy pre-dawn light, are interrupted by warm pinks and oranges, indicative of sunrise. Line, color, and shape function together to create rhythm, so that while his works have a unique sense of solidity, they are never static.

Heavily influenced by the Modern European masters, Bell crafted his own unique visual aesthetic that merges painterly representation and the discipline of abstraction. Bell was a distinctive artist of the New York scene for over four decades, and yet his style often differed from the popular trends of the time. Rather than following the progressions of Abstract Expressionism, Dada, Pop, or Minimalism, Bell instead pursued figuration in a time when doing so was truly avant-garde.

Leland Bell (b. 1922- d. 1991) was born in Cambridge, MD. Bell studied with the painter Karl Knaths in Provincetown, Massachusetts before moving to New York. He was a founding faculty member at the New York Studio School and the Parsons School of Design. A dedicated teacher, he also taught at Yale University, the Kansas City Art Institute, and Indiana University. Bell was married to the Icelandic artist Louisa Matthíasdóttir. His works are featured in such public collections as the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and The Phillips Collection, Washington D.C., as well as the Canton Museum of Art, Canton, OH.

Leland Bell: Morning Series will be on view July 7- August 1, 2014. An opening reception will be held on Thursday, July 10th from 6-8 pm. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 10:30 am to 6:00 pm. For additional information and/or visual materials, please contact Joseph Bunge at (212) 750-0949 or by email at joseph@loribooksteinfineart.com.