

CHRISTOPHER BROWN

A NEW RELEASE FROM PAULSON PRESS

Paulson Press in Berkeley, California is pleased to announce its first publication: a set of four color etchings by painter Christopher Brown. Completed in August of 1996, this print edition will be available for release January 1997.

Brown's newest prints feature images of trains that are from photographs he took while in Germany on a Fulbright Fellowship several years ago. Each of the four prints, which combine the techniques of soft ground and aquatint in 5 or 6 color plates, shows different cropped views of a single train car. Only one or two figures appear within the scenes: one passing by on the platform, another silhouetted in the train window. In each print, Brown experiments with a different resolution of color (pale yellow trains with either red or blue horizontal stripes) and perspective (from a cropped close-up to an omniscient point of view). In all of the prints, he has successfully created a moment in time, captured its haunting image and presented it as if remembered or witnessed by four different viewers.

In *Start*, the scene replays in a straightforward manner, although we do not see the larger context of this unknown narrative. The all over, golden light allows us to make out the vaguest details of the figure in the window and the figure passing in front of the train. The relationship of the two figures is also in question--have they just parted ways or are they members of a larger crowd routinely found at train stations. Brown welcomes multiple readings in his work by regularly creating scenes that are charged with an air of mystery.

Trains and train stations are inherently fluid subjects that allude to an idea Brown readily addresses in his work: that change is imminent, if not already in progress. In these prints, the waxing and waning of light and the oscillating space are his fluid subjects. In *Window* the image of the train is severely cropped to show only the mysterious figure framed in the train window. Edges are blurred and the overall image is reduced to a palette of rich blues, yellows and greens. Here, Brown shows his talent at dissolving the boundaries between abstraction and realism.

The foreground of a painting or print is another opportunity for Brown to blur the line between abstraction and reality. He has noted that he often uses objects in a foreground plane that act as a screen or "film between you and the image so that you cannot get into the painting in a conventional way." These visual devices are metaphors for the way memory functions--the way we try to remember a scene as it actually happened. In both *Bend* and *Accordion*, the entire scene is folded, like a screen or fan. The blue horizontal stripes of the trains become abstracted zigzags of line and color. The two figures are still apparent, although in *Accordion* the passerby slips into one of the folds. Brown seems to be physically collapsing the space between photography and the factual reality we expect from it.

Images taken from photographs, video and film have long been a rich reference point for Brown's investigation into the nature of memory and perception. He acknowledges that mechanically reproduced imagery has played a revolutionary role in our contemporary culture. His use of images from emotionally charged moments in history memorialized by photographic means--the Zapruder film of the Kennedy assassination, historical photographs of the American Civil War and footage from the film *The Battleship Potemkin*--separates him from many of the traditional Bay Area Figurative painters with whom he is generally associated.

Christopher Brown first experienced printmaking as an undergraduate at the University of Illinois. Ever since, the freedom and flexibility of printmaking have been a vital and influential element in his work. In all of his prints Brown succeeds in creating a tension between the beauty of the print surface, enhanced by his extraordinary painterliness, and the structure imposed by the process-oriented nature of the medium.

Recently relocated from Berkeley, California to New York City, Christopher

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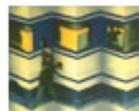
e-mail: info@paulsonpress.com



Start, 1996
Softground and aquatint etching
with scrape, burnish and roulette
Somerset white paper
Image size 8" x 10"
Paper size 16" x 17"
Edition of 40



Bend, 1996
Softground and aquatint etching
with scrape, burnish and roulette
Somerset white paper
Image size 8" x 10"
Paper size 16" x 17"
Edition of 40
Only available in the set of 4



Accordion, 1996
Softground and aquatint etching
with scrape, burnish and roulette
Somerset white paper
Image size 8" x 10"
Paper size 16" x 17"
Edition of 40



Window, 1996
Softground and aquatint etching
with scrape, burnish and roulette
Somerset white paper
Image size 8" x 10"
Paper size 16" x 17"
Edition of 40

Brown still has many ties to the San Francisco Bay area. In 1995, the San Jose Museum of Art recently exhibited a mid-career retrospective of his work that also traveled to the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, TX; the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, HI; the Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, CA ; and the Norton Gallery in West Palm Beach, FL. He has won many national awards and fellowships, and was recently honored with an induction into the Academy of Arts and Letters. Brown regularly shows his paintings at Campbell-Thiebaud Gallery in San Francisco, CA , at Edward Thorp Gallery in New York, and at Zolla/Lieberman in Chicago, IL.

For more information about these prints, please contact Paulson Press at (510) 559 2088. Prices and availability subject to change.