



CAIO FONSECA

A NEW RELEASE FROM PAULSON PRESS

Paulson Press in Berkeley, California is proud to announce the release of five intaglio editions by New York painter Caio Fonseca. These print editions are available in March 2001

In his most recent project at the Paulson Press studio, Fonseca created impressive works that incorporate exciting new compositional elements. The series is titled "Seven String Etchings", which refers to the artist's use of actual strings-- seven in number--that are collaged into the prints, under layers of Hosho paper and etching ink. The strings create uneven ridges that extend across the surface of the prints where dots of color are hand-applied after the printing. The dimensional presence of the strings and the subtle texture of the hand stamping add a density to the already rich surfaces that characterize his work.

Fonseca has a strong affinity for the intaglio medium because his painting technique mirrors the approach required to make etching plates. In his paintings, as in the etchings, he employs a process of finding and describing forms by painting around them, thereby revealing and concealing at the same time, the layers underneath. In *Seven String Etching with Yellow and Red*, a canary yellow background snakes around forms comprised of an irregular red and white checkerboard pattern. Here he started with a plate that was covered edge to edge by the bold pattern, and then painted with asphaltum on subsequent plates to define the sweeping S-shapes.

Similarly, in *Seven String Etching No. 3* a distinct pattern of stripes and drips, in a dusty blue, courses beneath the brilliant mandarin orange color field, and appears briefly inside other, smaller curling forms. Also in this print we see the emboldened visual vocabulary and strong color sense that is characteristic of the entire series. Smaller shapes that look vaguely like commas and parentheses dance across the background, highlighting the exaggerated horizontal format, revealing the pattern just underneath the surface.

A similar sense of movement appears in *Seven String Etching with White and Blue*, which also has a long, horizontal compositional format. Here the forms are interconnected, creating a distinct balance between the positive and the negative spaces. The print features a seductive and radiant background that is built up from many layers of spit bite and soft ground plates.

Two prints, *Seven String Etching No. 1*, and *Seven String Etching, Obliques*, show the range of scale Fonseca achieves from imaginative variations in his unique forms and the detailed expanses between them. *Seven String Etching No. 1* is one of the larger prints of the series. The commanding scale of the work is enhanced by the relationship between the near black shapes and the fine staccato lines and faint curving arcs that connect and relate the forms against a background of warm neutral tones. In the outer edges of the print, delicate washes of violet appear, creating a subtle darkening around the edges.

The only vertical print in the group, *Seven String Etching, Obliques* has a sophisticated quietude with its smaller forms which are dispersed in greater intervals. Elongated S-shapes are stretched out on their sides while curving C-shapes, both in ultramarine blue, are suspended in a multi-layered ground of faint visual marks and notations. As with musical composition, space (or silence) is not so much diagrammed as acknowledged, and the relationship between the shapes (or sounds) is not so much intended as discovered.

This most recent series of etchings combine Fonseca's technical mastery of the etching process with his visual compositions that are both elegant and playful. He distills a formal and rigorous abstraction to an animated vocabulary of elemental forms that are neither symbolic nor descriptive. His unique and inventive forms harmoniously carry the inherent pleasure in pure form that is behind his highly ordered foundations. As Fonseca said in an interview in *Atelier* magazine, "From the beginning, I had this sense of an order underlying

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Seven String Etching with Yellow and Red, 2001

Spitbite and sugarlift aquatint etching with softground and chine collé
Somerset white textured paper
Image size 29 1/2" x 41"
Paper size 38" x 49"
Edition of 50



Seven String Etching No. 3, 1998

Spitbite and sugarlift aquatint etching with softground and chine collé
Somerset white textured paper
Image size 17 7/8" x 36"
Paper size 28 1/2" x 45 1/2"
Edition of 50



Seven String Etching with White and Blue, 2001

Spitbite and sugarlift aquatint etching with softground and chine collé
Somerset white textured paper
Image size 13 1/8" x 29"
Paper size 23 1/3" x 37 1/2"
Edition of 50



Seven String Etching No. 1, 2001

Spitbite and sugarlift aquatint etching with softground and chine collé
Somerset white textured paper
Image size 13 1/8" x 29"
Paper size 23 1/3" x 37 1/2"
Edition of 50



Seven String Etching Obliques, 2001

Spitbite and sugarlift aquatint etching with softground and chine collé
Somerset white textured paper
Image size 24 1/2" x 18"
Paper size 34 1/2" x 26 3/4"
Edition of 50

the chaos of reality

Caio Fonseca was born in New York City in 1959. He divides his time between his studios in Manhattan and Pietrasanta, Italy. His works are held in numerous public and private collections in Europe and the United States including the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Brooklyn Museum of Art; the Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, DC; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

For more information about these prints, please contact Paulson Press at, (510) 559 2088. Prices and availability are subject to change without notice.