

THE DRAWING ROOM 16R Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937 T 631 324.5016

CAIO FONSECA  
paintings on canvas and paper

From August 14 through September 29, 2008 The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present *CAIO FONSECA: paintings on canvas and paper*. The exhibition, which is accompanied by an illustrated catalogue, presents a lyrical body of work painted over the last year in Pietrasanta, Italy where Fonseca has had a studio since 1985. A native New Yorker, Fonseca divides his time between Italy and New York, using his East Hampton studio in the off seasons. This is his first solo show in the Hamptons.

In this recent work comprising large and small mixed media paintings on canvas and on paper, Fonseca's distinctive method of image making finds complete expression. The son of a sculptor and a painter, Fonseca learned early the importance of his materials to his imagery. Constructing images using the physical material of his media - gesso, acrylic paint, gouache and wax – and various tools - brushes, pie cutters, pasta rollers, and composer's nibs - his paintings evoke a personal imagined space.

Specifically, Fonseca has evolved a technique whereby the memory of an underpainting charged with vivid color and broad gesture is eclipsed by an off white over painting which preserves oddly shaped partial views of the original painted ground. Inevitably, the composition becomes a palimpsest of visual evidence from a different moment of painting. The earlier painting offers a rich archeology of forms and color, which Fonseca selectively paints out, creating positive shapes from negative space. Fonseca's fine drawing reigns in the colorful forms like a spider's web touching every element in its path. Simultaneously modern and classical, each painting records its own history in a unique rhythm of found and created visual events.

In the *Pietrasanta* 2007 series on paper, the white overpainting acts as a curtain, which opens here and there to reveal rich passages of brush marks moving in a procession across the space. These keyhole shaped glimpses of grape and ochre, tangerine and olive, or lime and raspberry glimmer and light up the surface with dynamic, abstract brushwork. It is this repertoire of improvised forms, which skid and land across the surface, that animate the enormous space in Fonseca's elegantly structured paintings.

In *Pietrasanta C07.6*, for instance, the large yellow and green passages conjure views from a train window of passing verdant sunflower fields. In *Pietrasanta C07.21*, large arcs of blue float in a white field articulated by stacks of stripes and Mediterranean signs and symbols floating across a deep white cosmos. Iconic ancient vase shapes of bright orange recede and expand across the Matisse blue square surface of *Fifth Street C08.7*. Fonseca is a master choreographer of the elements of abstract painting and these works demonstrate his unique and joyful inspiration.

Caio Fonseca has exhibited widely across the United States and in Italy, Spain and Sweden, and was the subject of a retrospective at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. His works are in numerous museum collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC.

Gallery hours: Mon & Thurs-Sat 11 to 5; Sun 11 to 4.  
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