

Emmanuel Gallery

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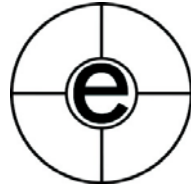
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Fonseca's Coyote: Living with the Trickster June 8 – July 15, 2006

Emmanuel Gallery's first exhibition of the summer season under the new direction of Shannon K. Corrigan will be a retrospective of Harry Fonseca's Coyote drawings and paintings. *Fonseca's Coyote: Living with the Trickster* will include over 25 pieces by Harry Fonseca that feature the Coyote, a character that has appeared in his work for over 30 years.

This thought provoking work tackles issues of Native identity with humor and beauty. In Native Peoples' myth lore, the Coyote can be the Creator, the messenger, the culture hero, the transformer or the fool. The Coyote appears in many Native Peoples' cultures and is commonly known as the trickster. In Fonseca's work, the Coyote is seen 'Leaving the Res' in his black leather jacket, dancing on stage in 'Swan Lake' and hanging out with his girlfriend Rose, an equally fascinating character. By examining thirty years of Fonseca's work through an amazing collection of early and more recent depictions of the Coyote, one sees both the transformation of the artist as well as Native lives. This exhibition is being guest curated by Polly Nordstrand, Assistant Curator of Native Arts at the Denver Art Museum. Many works are from Fonseca's own collection and have never been seen before by the public.

Fonseca's own heritage includes Maidu, Hawaiian and Portuguese. In Maidu culture, Coyote plays a significant role in the creation of the world and humankind. In the creation story, Coyote as the trickster is seen connected to both truth and deception. His actions conjure joy, humor, and sadness. Living and working in California in the 1970's, Fonseca's work spoke to the search for identity among many Indian people in urban areas. The contemporary identity of many Indian people is influenced by the tremendous interaction of peoples—Indian, European, Asian, Hispanic and Pacific Rim peoples all had a significant part in California's history. The Bay area, like Denver, became a relocation destination in the 1950s. Indian people from across the country were relocated through government efforts to gain employment and education opportunities not available in their reservation homes. The cultural mix in these urban



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areas was enriched with Indian people from the Plains, Southwest, Northwest coast and beyond.

While there are over 45,000 American Indian people in the Denver area, exhibits of contemporary American Indian art are rare. We hope to celebrate this exhibition by partnering with local schools and organizations such as the Denver Indian Center to provide programs for the local community to experience and understand Fonseca's interpretation on urban Indian life. Fonseca does not lament social crises nor exploit hopelessness, but instead observes the reality of Indian lives and honors the strength of heritage. We seek to offer this vision of strength to the urban community of Denver.

Harry Fonseca paintings are exhibited internationally and in permanent collections at the Denver Art Museum, Heard Museum, Linden Museum in Germany, and the Oguni Museum in Japan, to name a few. He is highly regarded as an artist, a community leader, and Emmanuel Gallery couldn't be more pleased to organize, and hopefully travel, this exciting exhibition.

- Grand Opening: June 9, 2006
- Mural Project with the Indian Education Program of DPS, June 17
- Credit Line for Cover Image: Harry Fonseca, "Coyote Leaves the Res #1", acrylic on cardboard, 21" H x 13 1/4" W, 1976, Courtesy of the Artist.