



THE MUSEUM OF  
PRINTING HISTORY

## *The Workshop of Ernest F. de Soto, Master Printer* September 30, 2010– March 5, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Museum Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Admission: Free  
Location: 1324 West Clay Street, Houston, TX 77019 Tel: (713) 522-4652 Fax: (713) 522-5694  
Web Address: [www.printingmuseum.org](http://www.printingmuseum.org)

**OPENING RECEPTION: Thursday, September 30, 2010; 6:00 P.M.-8:00 P.M.**

The Museum of Printing History is pleased to bring Ernesto F. de Soto, the renowned Master Printer, for a series of events and an exhibition at the Museum. *The Workshop of Ernesto F. de Soto, Master Printer*, will appear at Houston's Museum of Printing History from September 30, 2010 – March 5, 2011. With the events planned at the Museum and the artist's other appearances at partner institutions, we hope to introduce the work of Mr. de Soto, the nation's first Mexican American Master Printer, to a large cross-section of museum visitors.

Beginning in the late 1960's de Soto, operated a series of well-known lithography workshops that became very popular with an emerging generation of now world-famous Mexican artists. Based in San Francisco from 1967 to 1993, Collector's Press Lithography Workshop, Editions Press, and the de Soto Workshop worked with the finest of Mexico's artists on what has become an important post-war lithography collection. With over 50 years of experience specializing in contemporary Latin American and American lithographs, fine prints and etchings by some of the best-known Latin American and American artists of our time, Master Printer Ernesto F. de Soto has created a significant collection and national treasure. Prints included in the exhibition include collaborations with artists Rodolfo Abularach, Thomas Akawie, Terry Allen, Edmundo Aquino, Robert Baxter, Alejandro Colunga, Jerry Concha, Jose Luis Cuevas, Roy De Forest, Jose Fors, David Gallegos, Byron Galvez, Rupert Garcia, Luis Granda, Luis Jimenez, Leonard Koscianski, Lionel Maciel, DeLoss McGraw, Lowell Nesbitt, Gustavo Rivera, Richard Shaw, Alfredo Varela, Ulfert Wilkee, Adja Yunkers.



Alejandro Colunga, *Autobus*, 1980; 25 x 35 3/4 in.,  
6 Color Lithograph



Jose Luis Cuevas, *MacBeth*, 1987; 24 1/4 x 33 1/3 in.,  
4 Color Lithograph

The Museum of Printing History is funded in part by grants from the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance. Many prints in the exhibition are on view courtesy of the Ernest F. do Soto Collection, Mexic-Arte Museum, Austin, Texas.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Ernest F. de Soto is an artist, writer and Master Printer born Oct. 26, 1923 in Tucson, Arizona. An eighth-generation Tucsonian, de Soto left high school for art school in Los Angeles when he was seventeen. Drafted into the Army Engineers, his background in art landed him work as a camouflage technician. After serving in the South Pacific, de Soto returned to Los Angeles briefly and then used money from the G.I. Bill to fund his studies in Mexico.

De Soto started as an artist studying in Los Angeles under printmaker Lynton R. Kristler in the late '40s. He then moved to Mexico, printed his own work and taught at the Institute at San Miguel de Allende. During the '50s de Soto printed original lithographs for Contemporaries Gallery in New York and taught at the University of Illinois. In 1965 de Soto received a grant from the Ford Foundation to work, learn and experiment at Tamarind Institute in Los Angeles for two full years. After two years of apprenticeship, he was awarded the title of Master Printer. There he met Mexican artist Jose Luis Cuevas, with whom he printed many suites and later became partners of Editions Press in 1972.

In 1967, shortly after leaving Tamarind, De Soto became co-founder and Master Printer of Collectors Press Lithography Workshop. He remained with Collectors Press until the founding of his own shop in 1975, the Ernest F. de Soto Workshop, located in San Francisco. The de Soto Workshop is known for specializing in contemporary Latin American and American lithographs, fine prints and etching by some of the best-known Latin American and American artists of our time. He still maintains a partnership in a printing workshop in Mexico City while drawing, painting and making prints in his Tucson-based studio.

## **THE MASTER PRINTER**

De Soto is a Master Printer with virtuoso craftsmanship who worked hand in hand with artists to create hundreds of images over fifty years. De Soto states, "A Master Printer is one who has learned every possible way to make a lithograph: how to tackle a problem and solve it. A Master Printer is competent and professional. A person can not be considered a Master printer until he is charge of his own shop. A printmaker should be able to prepare the work in such a way that long editions, sometimes up to 200 can be printed. This requires special skill, especially in lithography, because the higher the number of impressions, the greater the effort and knowledge needed to prepare for a long print run.

In an original lithograph, the art must be repeated exactly. The larger an edition, the more difficult it is to create 100 impressions that are each exactly like the first one. An artist can print his own work, but a Printer-artist as I call him is first of all a Printer. He is more skillful than an artist-printer in terms of technical knowledge. A Printer can suggest more things than an artist is aware of. The Master Printer also must be inventive in helping the artist to achieve any special effects he wishes, and above all a Master Printer can not make mistakes."

## **LEGACY**

As a technical innovator and superb master of the art and craft of printmaking, de Soto has impacted the art of printmaking. De Soto worked with artists to incorporate contemporary concerns. Throughout the years, de Soto developed a detailed documentation and archive relating to the production of each print created in his studio.

Ernest de Soto was the first American Master Printer to establish an international relationship with artists in Mexico. His interest in Latin America, bilingual ability, and desire to travel, landed him opportunities to create important relationships. Recognized as one of the foremost original print studios in the country, de Soto has played a major role in nurturing and creating long lasting international relations with artists in other countries in Europe and Asia. In this way he has been a promoter of international relations.

Through the significant production of original prints of the highest quality, he has contributed to the development of the US and Latin American art market. For example he worked with many artists who had never created a lithograph such as Francisco Zuniga who later adapted these techniques as part of their main production.

De Soto merits national recognition for his contributions to the artistic tradition and craftsmanship of printmaking. As an artist he has contributed to teaching, advocacy, organizing and preserving the once endangered art of lithography and made a major impact on the artistic tradition of printmaking. His attention to detail and keen perception has served to preserve and further our nation's diverse cultural heritage.



**Selected Prints from *The Workshop of Ernest F. de Soto, Master Printer*  
On view at the Museum of Printing History September 30, 2010– March 5, 2011**



**Jerry Concha, *Ahote*, 1982, 30 x 22 3/8 in., 10 Color Lithograph**



**Alejandro Colunga, *Autobus*, 1980  
25 x 35 3/4 in., 6 Color Lithograph**



**Rupert Garcia, *The Geometry of Manet and the Sacred Heart II*, 1990, 19 x 35 in., 7 Color Lithograph**



**Jose Luis Cuevas, *MacBeth*, 1987  
24 1/4 x 33 1/3 in., 4 Color Lithograph**



**Luis Jimenez, *Fiesta*, 1985  
31 3/4 x 23 3/4, 5 Color Lithograph**



**Gustavo Rivera, *Al Viento*, 1982, 30 x 1/8 x 22 1/2 in., 6 Color Lithograph**