

Indianapolis Museum of Art

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Batuz: Works in Paper

Through October 3
III Floor, South Gallery

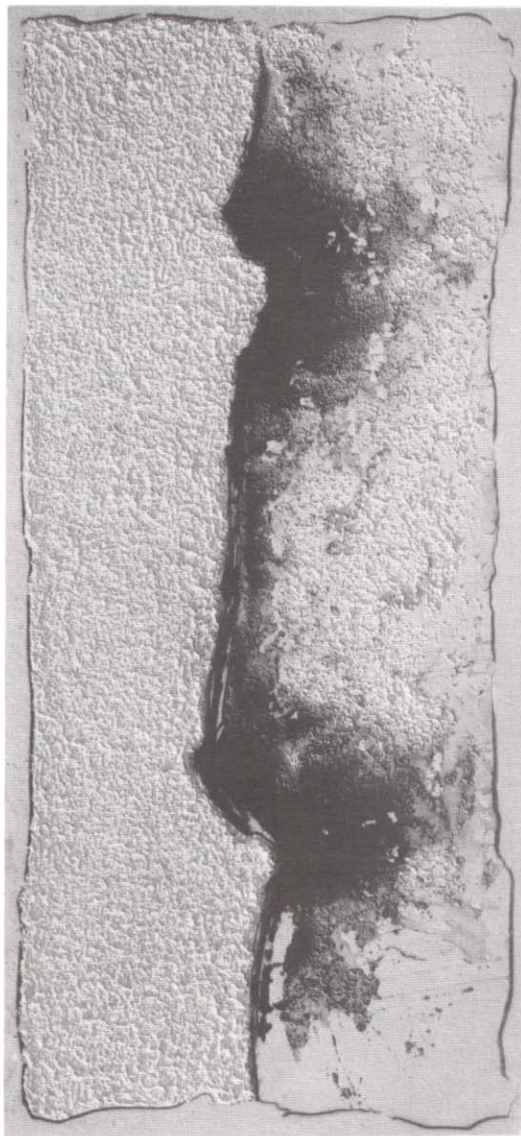
Recently the art world has discovered handmade paper as an art form unto itself, but Batuz' works in paper have taken wet paper pulp to new dimensions of abstract art. Several of the approximately 20 works in the exhibition are massive, such as those that are 10 feet by 13 feet. Every work contains a vertical line dividing two interrelated but opposing forms, with the contrast of color or texture in the work producing a positive/negative effect. Some critics say the line represents a wound that refuses to heal or the abyss from which the universe emerges. Batuz has been seen as a disciple of Kandinsky, an explorer of "spirituality through abstraction," but he is a unique artist who has attracted the attention of collectors such as Joseph Hirshhorn.

Batuz was born in Budapest, Hungary and was a World War II refugee. When Batuz was 16, his family emigrated to Buenos Aires, where he was introduced to painting. Batuz is a self-taught artist and philosopher, and his work has evolved from naturalism into the abstract. He had his first one-man show in Buenos Aires in 1963 and has since exhibited around the world. In 1973, while on tour in the United States, Batuz and his family were forced into exile by a change in the Argentine government. He has remained here ever since.

In this country, his style and sense of space have found outlet in huge abstractions, from oil paintings resembling the effects of torn paper, to silkscreening on handmade paper, to the direct application and manipulation of the pulp itself, which is why the exhibition title reads *Works in Paper*.

The exhibition, which opened at the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, New York, travelled to the Kunsthalle in Nuremberg, West Germany, and the Museum der Moderner Kunst in Vienna prior to opening at the IMA. An illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition and may be purchased in the Alliance Museum Shop.

Georges Braque, *Still Life III*, 1921, color lithograph. Gift of the Gamboliers. 32.153



Batuz, No. 31, June 1, 1979. Private Collection

Gifts of the Gamboliers, 1928-1936

Through November 7
II Floor, Beesley Gallery

This exhibition brings together a selection of 50 prints, drawings, and watercolors from the 159 gifts of the Gam-

boliers presented to the Museum between 1932 and 1936. These gifts form the nucleus of the IMA's collection of early 20th-century European and American graphics.

The Gamboliers were founded in Indianapolis in 1928 and the 24 members set themselves the task of supplementing the purchases of the predecessor of the IMA, the John Herron Art Institute. By pooling their annual membership dues of 25 dollars, the Gamboliers sought to purchase for the Museum the works of younger, more progressive artists whose reputations were not yet firmly established and whose work consequently could be had at advantageous prices. In a sense, according to former Museum director Wilbur Peat, they "gambled" on the future reputations of these artists. The Gamboliers found an eminently qualified agent for their purchases, Mrs. Cornelius Sullivan of New York. Mrs. Sullivan, formerly of Indianapolis, maintained strong ties to the city and was the driving force behind the formation of the Gamboliers. In 1929 Mrs. Sullivan joined with Mrs. John D. Rockefeller and Miss Lizzie Bliss to found the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The **Gifts of the Gamboliers** contains some of the most significant examples from the IMA's collection of modern graphics. Included are lithographs by Toulouse-Lautrec, drawings by Modigliani and Raoul Dufy, watercolors by Maurice Prendergast, and prints by Henri Matisse. The Gamboliers did not ignore the efforts of emerging American printmakers, purchasing works by Martin Lewis, "Pop" Hart, Walt Kuhn, and many others.

