

**MoMA EXHIBITION LOOKS AT PAPER AS A SOURCE OF ARTISTIC
EXPERIMENTATION BEGINNING IN THE 1960s**

Paper: Pressed, Stained, Slashed, Folded

March 11 - June 22, 2009

The Paul J. Sachs Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries, second floor

NEW YORK, March 11, 2009—The Museum of Modern Art presents ***Paper: Pressed, Stained, Slashed, Folded***, an exhibition of approximately 70 works from MoMA's collection that explore and manipulate the materiality of paper. Comprising prints and illustrated books as well as drawings and a papier-mâché sculpture, the exhibition focuses largely on works from the 1960s and 1970s, when an interest in everyday materials and nontraditional processes fueled the redeployment of some of the most familiar and humble mediums. On view are works by approximately 30 artists, including Lucio Fontana, Eva Hesse, Lygia Pape, Robert Rauschenberg, Dorothea Rockburne, Dieter Roth, and Ed Ruscha, as well as examples by contemporary artists Martin Creed, Ellen Gallagher, and Mona Hatoum, among others. Recent acquisitions by Giuseppe Penone and Mira Schendel are on display for the first time. The exhibition is organized by Starr Figura, The Phyllis Ann and Walter Borten Associate Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books, and is on view March 11 through June 22, 2009, in The Paul J. Sachs Prints and Illustrated Books Galleries, on the second floor.

In the 1960s Lucio Fontana (Italian, b. Argentina, 1899-1968) experimented with different methods of violating the surfaces in his works on paper, slashing and puncturing them much as he had already done in his works on canvas. Included in the exhibition are his portfolio *Six Original Etchings* (1964) and artist's book *Spatial Concept* (1966). In the etchings Fontana used metal printing plates to puncture the paper, resulting in a pattern of pockmarks on each sheet. What in an earlier era would have been a printing accident was here a deliberate aesthetic decision. *Spatial Concept* is a small book of gold, accordion-folded paper with die-cut holes through each page.

The potential of paper as a sculptural material is investigated in the work of Dorothea Rockburne (American, b. Canada 1932). Included in *Paper* are all six prints from her 1972 series *Locus*. To make them, Rockburne folded large sheets of paper before running them through a printing press, thus creating embossed lines in triangular segments. Aquatint—which appears as a velvety off-white against the white paper—was printed on the portions of folded paper that faced outward and came in contact with the printing plate. The process of folding then unfolding the sheets of paper gives them a sense of sculptural relief.

Ed Ruscha and Dieter Roth created print editions by pressing food and other organic materials onto paper. On display are works from Ruscha's (American, b. 1937) portfolio *Stains* (1969), created at a time when the artist was turning away from traditional painting in order to experiment with unusual substances. Here Ruscha applied food, drugstore products, and other wet materials to sheets of paper using an eyedropper. Two works by Dieter Roth (Swiss, b. Germany, 1930-1988), another artist who challenged traditional notions about artistic materials, are also included in the exhibition. To make *Large Sunset* (1968) and *Large Landscape* (1969), the artist pressed sausage and cheese, respectively, onto paper using a printing press. Over time the works gradually decomposed, exemplifying the themes of decay and metamorphosis that Roth emphasized throughout his artistic career.

Other artists, including Sol LeWitt, Robert Rauschenberg, and Richard Tuttle, similarly embraced the delicacy and mutability of paper. Included are two works by Rauschenberg (American, 1925-2008), including *Cardbird VI* (1971), an edition made from corrugated cardboard and sealing tape. During this time, Rauschenberg was one of many artists who sought to challenge the strict definitions of centuries-old print processes including woodcut, etching, and lithography. In 1974, he spent time at the venerable Richard de Bas paper mill in Ambert, France, where he experimented freely with paper pulp and developed a series of handmade paper editions titled *Pages and Fuses*. *Page 4* from this series is composed of two sheets of handmade paper formed in a mold designed by Rauschenberg. A piece of twine was laminated into the sheets as they were made, connecting the two and introducing a sculptural element to the work.

This quasi-sculptural approach has extended into the present and is reflected in the work of a younger generation of artists including Martin Creed, Ellen Gallagher, and Mona Hatoum. On display are three works by Hatoum (British of Palestinian origin, b. Beirut, Lebanon 1952), including *Untitled (Grater)* (1996), a wax paper rubbing taken from an antique kitchen utensil. The embossing is both a literal trace of the object and a ghostly image, evoking, like much of Hatoum's work, the fragility of life.

MoMA WEBSITE:

An online exhibition will provide an interactive presentation of the works included in *Paper*, with a slideshow of selected highlights, interpretive texts, and an illustrated checklist of the exhibition. The site will launch by March 17, 2009. www.moma.org/paper

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For downloadable high-resolution images, please register at www.moma.org/press.

MoMA Monday Nights:

MoMA will remain open until 8:45 p.m. on selected Mondays, giving visitors extended hours to view special exhibitions and the Museum's collection. The evenings will include entertainment and a cash bar. Regular admission applies.

The Museum will stay open from 10:30 to 8:45 on the following Mondays:

April 6

May 4

June 8

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours: Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Closed Tuesday

Museum Admission: \$20 adults; \$16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members.
Admission includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs.
Free admission during Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Visit us on the Web at www.moma.org.