

The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel. 956-6100 Cable: Modernart

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Printed, Cut, Folded and Torn, an exhibition of 54 works from The Museum of Modern Art's collection of prints and illustrated books, including many recent acquisitions, will be on view from May 14 through August 11 in the Museum's third floor Sachs Galleries. This exhibition focuses not on the traditional uses of paper in printmaking, but on the more recent interest in paper as a material which can be manipulated in a variety of ways before, during, and after the printing process.

"For hundreds of years paper has been taken for granted as a material to print, write, or draw on, but only in recent years has its wider potential as a medium been exploited by artists," according to Howardena Pindell, Assistant Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books and director of this exhibition.

Lucio Fontana was one of the first artists to redefine space by piercing holes and making incisions in the paper or canvas support. More recently, Jasper Johns, in his lithograph "Decoy," removed a portion of the printed image by punching a hole in the surface. A print by Richard Tuttle uses punched holes to create a drawing device.

Other forms of manipulating paper include tearing, creasing, cutting by hand, or folding the print before, during, or after printing. Iain Baxter crumpled a completed edition of prints and documented the process; Sam Gilliam has creased the paper vertically after the printing, thereby dispersing and blotting the still-wet ink; and Dieter Roth, in his etching "Simple Trolley" transferred the printed image to tissue paper so that the image can be viewed from both sides of the sheet.

Some artists have created variation within an edition. No prints by Alan Shields can be identical as each sheet is stenciled, dyed and sewn, with certain

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128

areas slit and interwoven with dyed strips of paper. In his recent prints Robert Rauschenberg has become involved in the process of making paper. During the summer of 1973 Rauschenberg created a series of works at a French paper mill. These included forming paper molds as well as dyeing fibers with special pigments. Serigraphed sheets of Japanese tissue paper were cut and embedded into the wet, newly dipped sheets of macerated rag paper fiber.

Some artists have manipulated the plate by embedding objects in it or exposing it to a prolonged acid bath, thereby allowing the printing process to emboss the paper. Among them is Günther Uecker, in whose works the raised and often broken surface of the paper reflects light, escaping the spatial limitations of paper.

Printed, Cut, Folded and Torn includes the work of 32 artists who have significantly extended the boundaries of printmaking through molding, dyeing, cutting, punching, sewing, creasing and tearing the paper upon which the printed image appears.

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Additional material available from Mark Segal, Assistant, and Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7296; 956-7501.
