

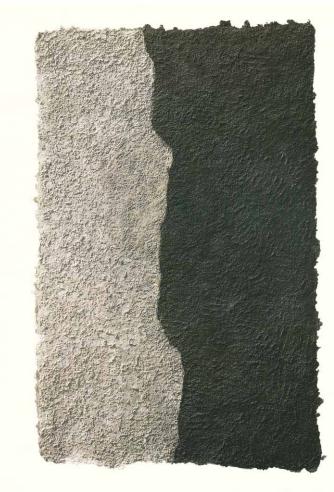


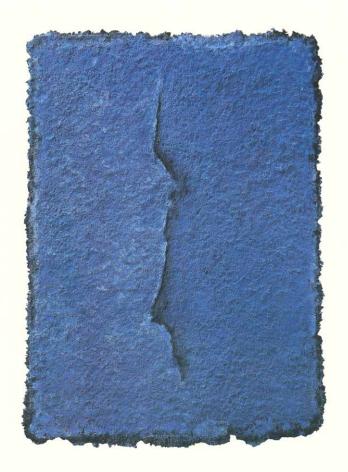
77-78. No. 29. May 10, 1979. 48 × 54".

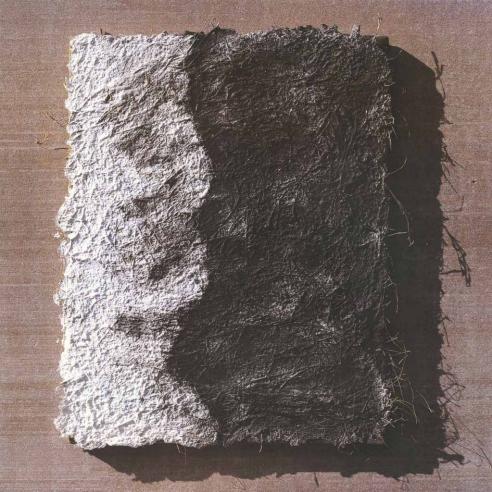
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Janos Szekeres, Stamford, Conn.















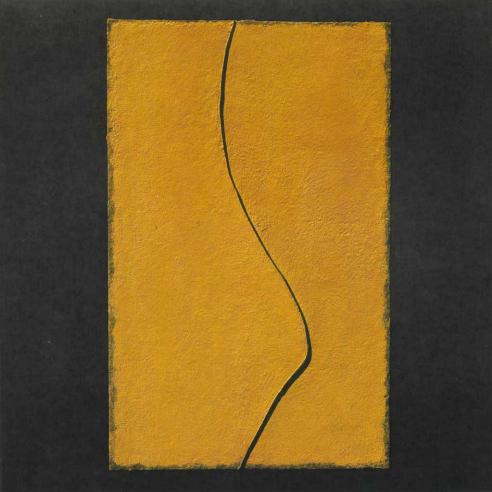


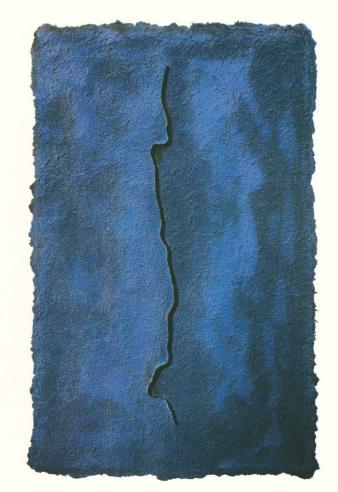








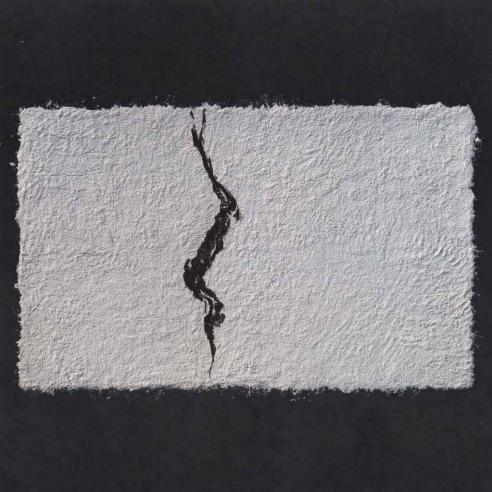






91-92. No. 46. Aug. 25, 1979. 71 × 83½"







94. No. 85. Aug. 23, 1980. 73½ × 129½"





### On the Artist by Curt Heigl

95. No. 78. June 20, 1980. 82 × 129" Emigration, voluntary or forced, is certainly not peculiar to our time. For as long as there has been a written tradition, there have been examples from every epoch of whole peoples, single classes, and groups or individuals who have left their homeland for the most diverse reasons. Of course, even a voluntary fate involves sacrifice and inconvenience, but it can be said for the field of art that there have always been artists, from El Greco to Gauguin, from Poussin to Picasso, who first discovered their artistic calling in a foreign country, or at least developed it there to the extent we admire today.

Batuz belongs to this list of artists. In 1949, war and postwar confusion drove him and his family to Argentina. During his recuperation that year from a serious heart ailment, he made the decision to paint. His first naturalistic attempts were accompanied by intensive studies in aesthetics and philosophy. Appreciation for the theoretical became a lasting concern for Batuz, all the more since he decided in 1964 to dedicate himself exclusively to art. His painting gradually tended toward abstraction under the influence of the southern Argentinean coastal landscape outside his home at Villa Gesell.

A further step toward completing his artistic vocabulary involved coming to terms with sculpture. In a series of sculptures created from lava rocks in 1967, he was confronted for the first time with the artistic problem which has occupied him as no other since then: that of positive and negative (space-) forms and their interrelationship. While this may have been the initial spark, his continually sharpened eye for and grasp of the ambivalence of forms and lines becomes understandable only in the context of his intensive study of ontological philosophy, particularly Heidegger.

His fate as an emigrant, however, which seems to have been spe-

cially designed for him, played an equally important role in the full development of Batuz' artistic means. In 1973, he moved with his wife and three children to the United States.

He succeeded after initial difficulties not only in gaining a foothold in the tough business of the North American art world but also in establishing an independent, highly respected position for himself. His language of forms has, in the meantime, gained a fascinating intensity, not the least through his struggle with large panels of color-field and hardedge painting. Thus, the definitive retreat from surface concreteness which he has finally accomplished is anything but an escape into the thin air of abstraction for its own sake. The lines which Batuz only appears to draw arbitrarily, but which in reality are drawn as the result of rigourous "lawfulness," with extreme care and with the exclusion of all accidental emotion, breathe life and sensuality.

Batuz himself has put his artistic creed into the following words: "My painting is concerned with the relation between forms. The tensions are brought about by two acting lines—which encircle, cross, or delimit space. Through the activity of these lines, the delimited or created space becomes also an acting entity, giving to the Nothing a meaning, as Heidegger does."\*

96. No. 78, detail

<sup>\*</sup> Batuz: Interrelation of Forms. Washington, D.C./São Paulo, Brazil: The Phillips Collection/Museu de Arte de São Paulo, 1977, n.p.



## Work in Grass

while his works in paper have evolved toward a reification of nature, Batuz has also worked directly *in* nature for many years, using lava rocks, boulders, wood, and the land itself. In May and June of 1980 he created such a work in the lawn of the former tennis court at Green's Farms, a monumental and unique counterpart to the works in paper which served to reinforce their philosophical and formal meanings in a larger scale and context. It was a painting without paint or canvas, a merging of art and nature that has now been absorbed back into nature.

The lines were made on the huge rectangle of grass with a long yellow electrical cord, which Batuz adjusted and corrected as he would a drawn or painted line. The left half of the composition was then covered with stones and wood and the right half with black plastic sheets. When these coverings were removed after three weeks, the grass in the left half had turned to a macerated, whitish green, in the right half to a burnt-out straw color. The sinuous central line, left uncovered throughout, remained a vivid green. Batuz completed the work by covering the central and circumference lines with gunpowder and burning them, which resulted in an effect reminiscent of charcoal drawing.

















# Chronology

- 1933 Born May 27 in Hungary.
- 1940-44 "Experiences" of the war and bombing.
- 1944-45 Flight from the front line, constantly on the move and without home or shelter.
- 1945–49 Refugee camps in Austria. Studies German, history, and literature.
  - 1949 Emigrates with his family to Argentina. Starts to paint in the fall, painstakingly copying old masters and then Impression-
- 1955-63 His style turns toward an expressionistic interpretation of nature in landscapes and still lifes.
  - 1961 Marries Ute Mattel in May. His father dies in the fall.
  - 1963 First one-man show in Buenos Aires is sold out. He cautions: "It cannot be so good when people like it so much." His son Sasa is born.
  - 1964 Moves with his family to a solitary place (Villa Gesell) in the south of Argentina to dedicate himself exclusively to painting, remaining there eight years. His work gradually turns toward abstraction. He builds his own studio with chicken wire and concrete over two years. Begins to make sculpture from lava rocks as well as concrete.
  - 1965 His son Bandy is born.
  - 1967 His daughter Dada is born.
  - 1970 Wildenstein Gallery becomes his exclusive representative.
  - 1972 Publishes his first portfolio of serigraphs, with text by Rafael Squirru. Leaves Argen-

- tina in December for travels through South America, the United States, and Europe.
- Settles with his family in the United States.
   Joseph H. Hirshhorn visits his studio and purchases several works. Publishes portfo-

lio of serigraphs, "Forms in Tension," which

he prints himself.

1976 Exhibits in West Germany. The Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne, the Kunsthaus in Zurich, and the Museo Español de Arte Contemporaneo in Madrid acquire his work. Publishes portfolio of serigraphs, "Homage to America," which he prints himself.

- 1977 His works are shown in the new acquisition exhibitions at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., and the Kunsthalle in Nuremberg, West Germany.
- 1978 Publishes portfolio of serigraphs, "Polymorphic." One-man shows at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo in Brazil and the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. His book Interrelation of Forms, with texts by Rafael Squirru, Frank Getlein, Dieter Ronte, and Joseph H. Hirshhorn, also serves as catalogue for these shows.
  - 1979 Works in collage with various materials. The Phillips Collection acquires two of his works. Experiments in the handmade paper workshop of John Koller, where he does a series of works pressed by hydraulic press. Begins to work with pulp in his own studio

in freer manner. Starts to paint with pulp.
Completes his large work, Omen, in September. Travels to Europe, where he is invited to exhibit by several museums. The Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse and Onondaga County, N.Y., acquires the yellow Botond No. 2 for permanent collection.

Creates several large works in paper. Film by Rawn Fulton on his life and work starts in April and continues during the following eight months, becoming an important document on the process of his work at all stages.

The Kupferstich Kabinett, Staatliche Museen (Dahlem Museum), in West Berlin acquires his work in paper No. 40 (Präsentia) for their permanent collection, to be shown in the exhibition "Prints, Changes in a Medium since 1945" (June 4–Aug. 16, 1981). Makes the work in grass on the abandoned tennis court of his home. Works on maquettes for ceramic, stone, wood, and metal sculptures as further development of his search for form relationships.

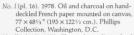
# Catalogue

### Works on Paper









No. II (pl. 18). 1978. Charcoal, acrylic, and soft crayon washed on newspaper on wood, 30 × 35" (76 × 89 cm.), Collection Dr. John H. Abeles, New York

No. III. 1979. Charcoal washed drawing on paper, 221/2 × 18" (57 × 46 cm.) No. IV (pl. 17). 1979. Charcoal washed drawing

on paper, 221/2 × 18" (57 × 46 cm.) No. V. 1979. Charcoal and crayon wash, 22×18" (56×46 cm.)

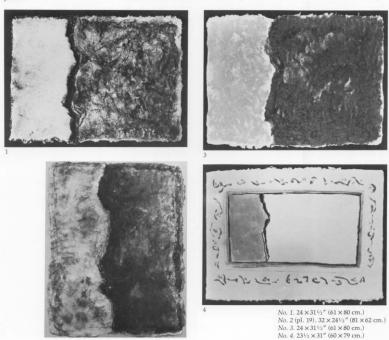


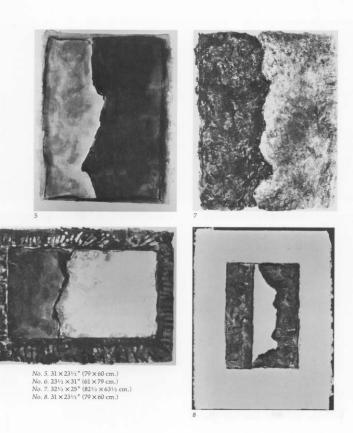


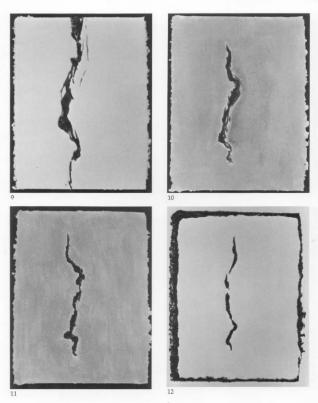


## Works in Paper

Numbers 1 through 23 were made by the artist at the workshop of John Koller in March 1979. The freshly couched paper pulp was colored with previously dyed pulps, crayons, crushed crayon dust, and other media. These works were finally machine pressed.



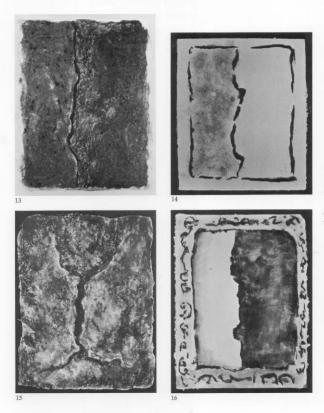




No. 9. 31½ × 24" (80 × 61 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn.

No. 10. 31½ × 24" (80 × 61 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn.

No. 11. 31½ × 24" (80 × 61 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn. No. 12. 31 × 23½" (79 × 60 cm.)



No. 13. 31½ × 24" (80 × 61 cm.) Collection Mr. and Mrs. Henry Covington, New Canaan, Conn. No. 14. 24 × 20" (61 × 51 cm.)

No. 15. 32½ × 25" (82½ × 63½ cm.) No. 16. 31 × 23½" (79 × 60 cm.)







No. 18. 23½ ×31" (60 × 79 cm.)

No. 19 (pl. 20).  $24 \times 31''$  (61  $\times$  79 cm.). Private collection

No. 20. 23<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 31" (60 × 79 cm.), Collection Stephen Campbell, Weston, Conn.



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No. 21. 31½ × 23½" (80 × 60 cm.) No. 22. 31½ × 23½" (80 × 60 cm.) No. 23. 24 × 31½" (61 × 80 cm.) Numbers 24 through 85 were made by the artist at his Green's Farms' studio using various techniques and without a hydraulic press.

No. 24 (pl. 80). Mar. 28, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and pressed by hand, 67 × 42" (170 × 106½ cm.). Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse and Onondaga County, N.Y.

No. 25 (pl. 9). Apr. 11, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and partially pressed by hand, 70 × 60" (178 × 152 cm.)

No. 26 (pl. 55). Apr. 18, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and sprayed with diluted acrylic paint and water, 70 × 60" (178 × 152 cm.)





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- No. 27 (pl. 30). May 2, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and sprayed with diluted acrylic paint and water, 72 × 62" (183 × 157½ cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jim Barrett, Toledo, Ohio
- No. 28 (pl. 73). May 4, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and sprayed with diluted acrylic paint washed with water, 73 x 46" (185½ x 117 cm.). Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, Ind.
- No. 29 (pls. 77–78). May 10, 1979. Glued newspapers on particle board, with colored paper pulp and acrylic, 48 × 54" (122 × 137 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Janos Szekeres, Stamford, Conn.
- No. 30 (pl. 60). May 20, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and drawn with charcoal, 63 × 38" (160 × 96½ cm.). Private collection
- No. 31 (pl. 86). June 1, 1979. Colored and uncolored pulp on canvas, drawn with charcoal, 85 × 39" (216 × 99 cm.). Private collection

















No. 32 (pl. 75). June 1979. Acrylic mixed in pulp, applied in several layers and painted with crayon, charcoal, acrylic, and lacquer, 28 × 20" (71 × 51 cm.). Private collection No. 33 (pl. 68). June 6, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, painted, and drawn with charcoal, 43 × 72" (109 × 183 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Levy, Paramus,

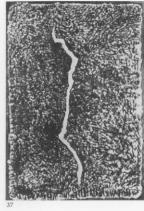
N.J. No. 34 (pl. 65). June 10, 1979. Acrylic mixed in pulp, applied in several layers on screen, 38 × 441/2" (961/2 × 113 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Le Roy Rubin, Stamford, Conn.

No. 35 (pl. 70). June 20, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, 21 × 18" (53 × 46 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn.



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No. 36 (pl. 53). June 26, 1979. Crayon on wet paper pulp, 73 × 45" (185½ × 114 cm.) No. 37 (pl. 66). June 30, 1979. Crayon on wet paper pulp, 66½ × 45" (169 × 114 cm.). Private collection





No. 38 (pl. 74). July 6, 1979.
Crayon on wet paper pulp,
51 × 37" (129½ × 94 cm.)
No. 39 (pl. 51). July 1979. Acrylic
paint mixed in pulp, with
embossed painted cut,
19 × 14½" (48 × 37 cm.)
Collection Dr. and Mrs. James M.
Shelley, New York, N.Y.

No. 40 (pls. 63–64). July 15, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, pressed with newspapers and drawn with charcoal, 71×45" (180×114 cm.). Kupferstich Kabinett, Staatliche Museen (Dahlem Museum), West Berlin

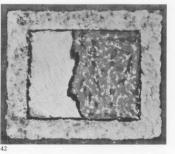
No. 41 (pl. 8). July 18, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, 53 × 37" (135 × 94 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jim Barrett, Toledo, Ohio

No. 42. July 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, with painting on wet pulp and border pressed with fingers, 14½ × 17" (37 × 43 cm.)

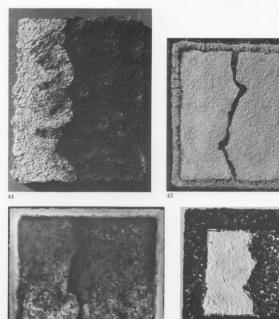
No. 43. July 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, with painting on wet pulp and border pressed with fingers, 15½ x 18½ (39 x 47 cm.)











No. 44 (pl. 82). July 1979. Dryed grass covered with colored pulp, 33 × 25½" (84 × 65 cm.)

No. 45. (pl. 67) Aug. 5, 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, with charcoal drawing and additional layers superimposed after spraying and pressing, 72 × 67" (183 × 170 cm.). Private collection

No. 46 (pls. 91—92). Aug. 25, 1979. Several layers of colored pulp and dried grass covered with additional layers of pulp dyed with acrylic paint, 71 × 83½" (180 × 212 cm.)

No. 47. Aug. 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, with painting over wet pulp, 20 × 26" (51 × 66 cm.)











No. 49. Nov. 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, 31 × 301/2" (79 × 77 cm.)



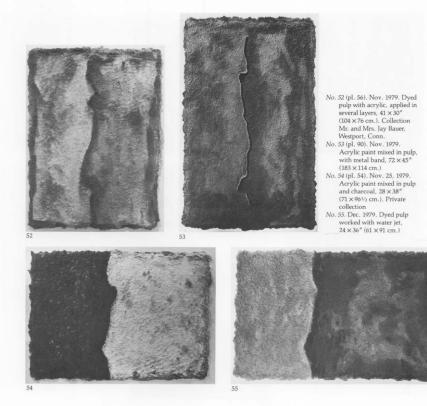
No. 50. Nov. 1979. One work in paper on top of a larger work in paper, 36 × 32" (91 × 81 cm.)

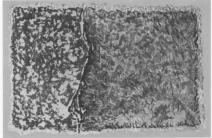
No. 51. Nov. 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, 421/2 × 271/2" (108 × 70 cm.)





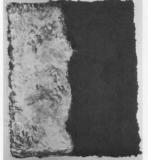
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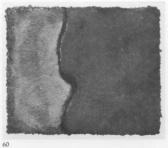


- No. 56. Dec. 1979. Crayon and charcoal on wet paper pulp, 24 × 37" (61 × 94 cm.)
- No. 57 (pl. 61). Dec. 1979.

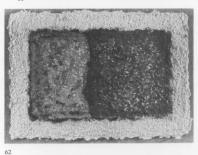
  Acrylic paint mixed in pulp and worked over with crayon on wet pulp, 31 × 38" (79 × 96½ cm.). Private collection
- No. 58 (pl. 79). Dec. 1979.

  Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, pressed and shaped by hand, and painted with crayon, 35 × 27½" (89 × 70 cm.).

  Private collection
- No. 59. Dec. 1979. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, applied in several layers, pressed by hand and with charcoal dust, 76 × 43" (193 x 109 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn.



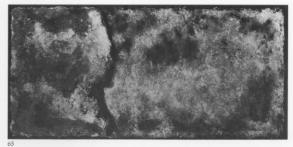






- No. 60 (pl. 23). Jan. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, charcoal drawing and charcoal dust, pressed by hand with newspapers, 45 × 53" (114 × 135 cm.). Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.
- No. 61 (pl. 69), Jan. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp and crayon powder, 43 × 48" (109 × 122 cm.). Private collection
- No. 62. Jan. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp and crayon, 27 × 38" (681/2 × 961/2 cm.)
- No. 63. Feb. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, drawn with charcoal and sprayed, 391/2 × 29" (100 × 74 cm.). Collection Mrs. Sally Swing Shelley, New York









No. 64 (pl. 88). Feb. 1980. Dyed pulp, 47 × 35" (119 × 89 cm.). Private collection

No. 65 (pls. 83–84). Feb. 1980.
Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, drawn with charcoal and charcoal dust, pressed with fingers, 44 × 91" (112 × 231 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jim Barrett, Toledo, Ohio

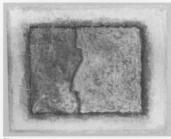
No. 66. Feb. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp. charcoal drawing and charcoal dust, pressed with newspaper by hand, 62 x 73½" (157½ x 187 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Peter Penczer, Fairfield, Conn.

No. 67 (pl. 89). Mar. 1980. Dyed pulp with metal band, 97 × 59" (246 × 150 cm.)





- No. 68 (pl. 44), Mar. 1980. Dyed pulp on canvas with metal bands, 65 × 65" (165 × 165
- No. 69 (pl. 57). Mar. 1980. Dyed pulp and charcoal, 96 × 70" (244 × 178 cm.). Private collection
- No. 70 (pl. 59). Mar. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp on curved frame with metal band. 32 × 39" (81 × 99 cm.)
- No. 71 (pl. 71). Mar. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, 84 × 60" (213 × 152 cm.). Displayed outdoors in a oneton, free-standing, airtight steel frame with plexiglass pane, filled with natrium to control humidity. Collection Mr. and Mrs. Barton L. Weller, Easton, Conn.













- No. 72 (pl. 76). Apr. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, painted with crayon on wet pulp and inlaid in a larger pulp, 78 × 48" (198 × 122 cm.)
- No. 73 (pl. 85). May 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp with layer of dried grass and pulp, 70 × 45" (178 × 114 cm.). Private collection
- No. 74 (pl. 58). May 15, 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp in many layers of different colors, painted with crayon on wet pulp, 65 × 71" (165 × 180 cm.)
- No. 75. June 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp and crayon, 72 × 62" (183 × 157½ cm.)

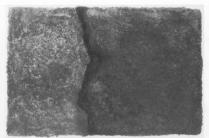


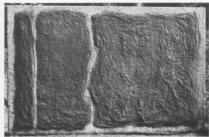
No. 76 (pl. 81). June 1980. Dyed paper pulp and charcoal, 38 × 27" (96½ × 68½ cm.). Collection Oscar P. Landmann, São Paulo, Brazil

No. 77 (pl. 72). June 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, drawn with crayon on wet pulp, 62 × 94" (1571/2 × 239 cm.). Private collection

No. 78 (pls. 95-96). June 20, 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp with layer of dried grass and several layers of pulp, partially worked with crayon, 82 × 129" (208 × 328 cm.)

No. 79 (pl. 46). Aug. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, painted with crayon between layers, 38 × 37" (961/2 × 94 cm.). Private collection













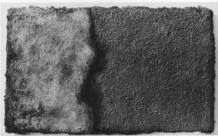
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No. 80 (pl. 87). Aug. 8, 1980. Dyed paper pulp pressed with newspaper by hand, 82 × 85½° (208 × 217 cm.) No. 81 (pl. 6). Aug. 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, with crayon and charcoal, 93 × 49° (236 × 124½ cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bauer, Westport, Conn. No. 82. Aug. 1980. Charcoal drawing on wet pulp and

layers of dyed pulp, 82 × 46" (208 × 117 cm.)



No. 83 (pl. 93). Aug. 1980. Unpainted pulp with charcoal line, flattened with newspaper by hand, 42 × 66" (106½ × 167½ cm.). Collection Oscar P. Landmann, São Paulo, Brazil



No. 84 (pl. 52). Aug. 18, 1980. Acrylic paint mixed in pulp, pressed first and then sprinkled with wet pulp, 42½ × 69" (108 × 175 cm.). Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Hirshhorn, Washington, D.C.



No. 85 (pl. 94). Aug. 23, 1980. Dyed pulp, 73½ × 129½" (187 × 329 cm.)

#### Contributors to this volume

Curt Heigl is Director of the Kunsthalle in Nuremberg, West Germany.

Ronald A. Kuchta is Director of the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse and Onondaga County, New York

Dieter Ronte, Director of the Museum Moderner Kunst in Vienna, Austria, has written on Batuz' earlier work in Batuz: Intervelation of Forms, published in conjunction with the artist's one-man exhibition at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D. C., and the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil, in 1978.

Rafael Squirru, poet, essayist, and art critic, founded the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was its first director. He is the author of forty books.

#### Photographic credits

Most of the photographs of Batuz' works in paper were taken by Don Ross. Additional photographs were taken by Roberto Ciechanow, Rawn Fulton, Bandy Mahr, Carlos Mozo Saravia, Andrew Stewart, Photo Wass, and Angelika Weller.