

M A R G A R E T
T H A T C H E R
P R O J E C T S



"Slash: Paper Under the Knife"

A humble material takes center stage as an artistic medium.

By Jane Harris

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Adam Fowler, *Untitled (74 Layers)*, 2009, Hand-cut graphite on paper, 20 x 59 inches (51 x 150 cm)

From the papyrus rolls of ancient Egypt to the first sheets of tree pulp manufactured in 19th-century Europe and beyond, paper has been central to the evolution of knowledge, art and commerce. It's almost impossible to imagine life

without it. Even with the advent of the Kindle, online commerce and digital art (not to mention the apocalyptic prospect of deforestation), statistics show that paper use hasn't really abated. Enter "Slash: Paper Under the Knife," organized by the Museum of Arts & Design's chief curator, David McFadden, the third in a series of exhibitions devoted to the contemporary renaissance of traditional handcraft materials and techniques....

The most interesting works are the most extreme: those that reference paper's basic material and performative nature (its ephemeral, malleable qualities, for example), and by contrast, those that convey its transformative potential, its ability to become something other than itself—a window, a body, a forest, an urn.

Examples of the former include Lu Shengzhong's *Human Brick II* (2004), made from layers of red tissue paper cut to reveal masses of human figures; Shaul Tzemach's *Concretion/Conglomerate* (2005--07), featuring whirlpools, trees and fractals cut with surgical precision; **Adam Fowler**'s swirling, spaghetti-like confections in *Untitled (74 layers)*, from 2009; and the folk-inspired works of Dario Robleto, Aric Obrosey and Michael Velliquette.