Works on Paper by Czech Artists

The Baruch Foundation was established in 2008 in order to continue the pioneering work of Anne and Jacques Baruch by providing access to the personal collection of artwork of the Baruchs. Anne (1925-2007) and Jacques Baruch (1922-1986) were legendary art dealers who first opened their gallery in Chicago in 1967. Their inaugural exhibition was of works on paper by artists from Jacques’s homeland, Poland. Born in Warsaw, Jacques immigrated to Chicago in 1946 after witnessing the murder of his parents during World War II. Soon after his arrival he met Anne Stern, a woman of Russian and Rumanian heritage from Chicago’s West Side, and they married in 1951. Jacques worked as an architect for nearly two decades before he and Anne decided to open a gallery. Rather than showing popular art, the Baruchs decided to go behind the Iron Curtain and showcase pieces from Central and Eastern Europe. The couple traveled to Central Europe in search of artists to represent, first to Poland, and then Prague and Czechoslovakia. Their gallery was opened on East Superior, but later moved to North Michigan Avenue. The new location helped the gallery thrive, as it was an architectural wonder allowing the unique artwork to engage in a new and exciting way with viewers. The development of the Jacques Baruch Gallery was not an easy task, as Anne and Jacques and the artists encountered personal risks trying to navigate the murky waters of bringing artwork from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Hungary back to the United States in times of tension as a result of the Cold War.

This collection contains correspondence with artists, records of exhibitions at the Jacques Baruch Gallery and exhibit ephemera, photographs and slides of artwork, artists’ biographical material, museum files, and client files. In addition, this collection includes original works of art on paper by the following artists: Jiri Balcar, Oldrich Kulhanek, Jan Krejci, Jiri Anderle, and Cestmir Kafka.

Contact the Special Collections Research Center for further information about this archive. 773-702-8705