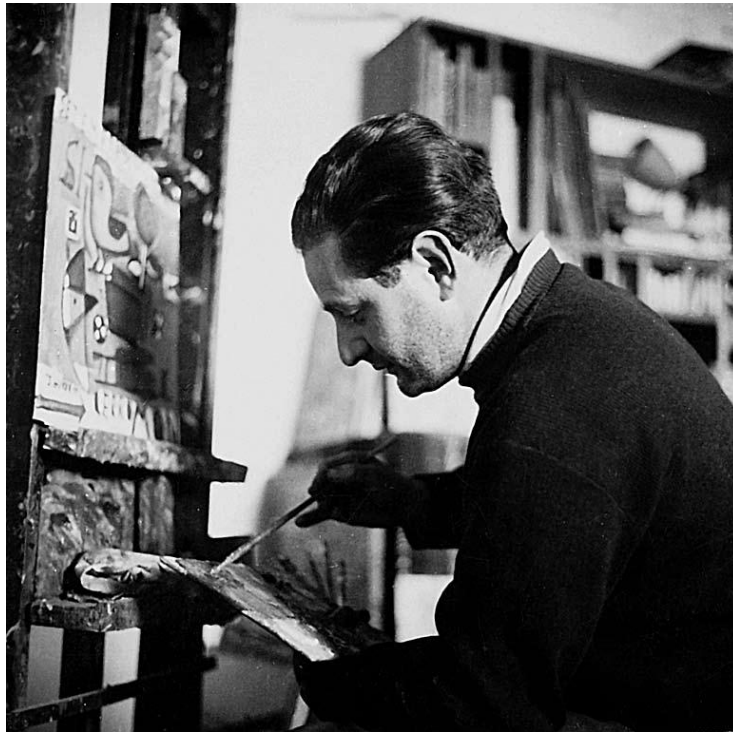


## JOSÉ GURVICH

Lithuania, 1927 - New York City, 1974



- 1927** January 5th: Gurvich was born in the midst of a snow storm, in the village of Vezna (Jieznas), district of Trakai, in Lithuania. His parents, Jacob Gurvich and Jaie Galperas, lived humbly. Lithuania, in northeastern Europe was in the midst of social, political, and economic crisis. Although Gurvich's memories of his country of origin were vague, he recalled them in his writings and in his paintings.
- 1928** May 30th: Birth of his sister, Myriam.
- 1931** Jacob Gurvich emigrated to Uruguay with some friends. The reason being similar to that of millions of Europeans seeking a better life in the Americas and escaping religious persecutions.
- 1932** Jacob Gurvich sent for his wife and children, who arrived in Montevideo at the end of 1932. They settled in the Southern district, (Barrio Sur) where there is a concentration of Jewish immigrants. His father was a barber, eventually he owned several barber shops. They successively lived on Durazno, Isla de Flores and Río Branco Streets.



- 1933** José adapted well to his adoptive country. He went to the public school Escuela Chile, which he remembered with affection as well as his teachers and his childhood friends Basilio Bernat and Martín Muller. It was at the Escuela Chile where, due to his father's difficulty in explaining why his own surname was Gurvich and that of his son was Gurvicius, that he was registered as José Gurvich, instead of Zusmanas Gurvicius (his legal Lithuanian name). He already showed great ability for drawing.  
After he left school he got a job to help support his family working at the Montag factory that made raincoats and rubber articles. At home he made his first sculptures in plaster.
- 1942** He started to study painting at the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes, his teacher was the Uruguayan painter José Cúneo.
- 1943** He studied music and violin with the Russian violinist David Julber, there he met Horacio Torres.
- 1944** Julber introduced Gurvich to the painter Joaquín Torres García Horacio's father. His vocation for the visual arts was awakened as a result of this meeting. He felt he had to choose between music and painting. His adolescence is marked by the routine imposed by the factory's work schedule, violin lessons, painting, and endless discussions at the café Sorocabana. Later in life, Gurvich kept an eight hour work schedule in his studio as he always considered himself to be an "art worker".
- 1945** Gurvich joined the Taller (Workshop) Torres-García, hereafter referred to as TTG; he participated in all its activities: exhibitions, publications, and mural painting projects.  
January 25th: the first issue of the magazine Removedor, the organ of the TTG, was published. It was one of the most important publications promoting modern art in Latin America. Twenty eight issues were published through 1953. The cover illustration for the final issue, July-August 1953, is by Gurvich.
- 1946** June 15th: The TTG published the book Nueva Escuela de Arte del Uruguay (New Art School of Uruguay) with photographs of the TTG's artists works, which included ceramics, tapestries, toys, murals and paintings.  
November 28th: Gurvich took part in the 35th exhibition of the TTG, "Painting and New Art of Uruguay", at Montevideo's Athenaeum. His first individual exhibition was in Melo the capital of the Cerro Largo province.
- 1947** He participated in a group exhibition at the Juan Manuel Blanes Museum in Montevideo, on the occasion the museum acquired several works by Gurvich.
- 1948** His sister Myriam emigrates to Israel with other members of Hatzomer Hatzair to set up the kibbutz Ramot Menasche near Haifa.
- 1949** August 8th: Joaquín Torres-García died in Montevideo, at the age of seventy - five. October opening of the 49th exhibition of the TTG in his honor at the Athenaeum.

**1950** February 2nd: Gurvich's paintings are included in the exhibition "Torres-García and his Workshop" at the Pan American Union of the OAS, in Washington DC.



**1951** December: Gurvich took over teaching at the TTG when Julio Alpuy left for the Far East and Europe. Gurvich moved to Fonseca's studio near Montevideo's harbor, on 25 de Agosto Street, while Fonseca was traveling. He stayed there until 1954, when he left for Europe and Israel.

**1952** June 30th: Gurvich's drawings are included in a limited edition publication titled 30 Constructivist Drawings by artists of the TTG.  
Painted a mural (since destroyed) at the bar El Temerario, in downtown Montevideo. Gonzalo Fonseca and Julio Alpuy, fellow artists at the TTG also painted murals there.

**1953** March: Gurvich and other members of the TTG were commissioned to design programs for the Cine Club film screenings. He worked for the theatre designing sets for the Teatro del Pueblo, Club del Teatro, El Galpón, El Tinglado, La Màscara, and for the SODRE Ballet.

**1954** He traveled to Europe with fellow TTG artists Manuel Aguiar and Antonio Pezzino. In Europe he met up with Horacio Torres. Together they visited museums in Spain, France, Holland, and Italy.  
In Madrid he met other Latin American artists and the Spanish art critic José Moreno Galván.

**1955** June 1st: Gurvich's first one man show is at the San Marco gallery in Rome. The Ramot Menasche kibbutz (where his sister lived) invited Gurvich to paint a mural for the communal dining room.  
He settled in the kibbutz working as a shepherd (which in Hebrew is Roe or "he who looks").

**1956** April 19th: Individual exhibition at the Katz gallery in Tel Aviv. He returned to Europe, in Madrid he studied the Spanish masters Goya and Velazquez; but was fascinated by Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel.  
December 21st: Participated in the "Jonge Schilders uit Uruguay" exhibition, at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (it was well received in the Dutch press). In December he returned to Montevideo and to his parents, resumed teaching painting at the TTG. Among his students were: Pepe Montes, Guillermo Fernández, Yuyo Goitiño, Sara Capurro and Eva Díaz Yepes.

**1957** Gonzalo Fonseca leaves Uruguay, Gurvich moved to Fonseca's house in El Cerro a working class neighborhood overlooking Montevideo's harbor.

**1958** September: Individual exhibition in the Arte Bella Gallery.  
October: The TTG publishes the first issue of the magazine Escuela del Sur. The third and last issue of the magazine featured a work by Gurvich on the cover.

**1959** Began a series of abstract monochrome paintings related to musical theory and compositions.



- 1960** February: Participated in a TTG group exhibition at the Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes, in Punta del Este.  
August 18th: Married Julia Helena Añorga.  
December 12th: Gurvich's works were included in the exhibition "The New School presents: The Torres-García Workshop," at the New School for Social Research, in New York. He was invited by the University of Chile to participate in the group exhibition "Arte y Espacio" (Art and Space), in Santiago.
- 1962** Painted several murals: one for the Caja de Pensiones del Frigorífico del Cerro, another at Mailhos' residence in Punta del Este; another in the Reims building on Sarmiento Street.  
He takes part in the exhibition "Salón de Arte", organized by General Electric of Montevideo.  
April: The closing of the TTG is announced in an article published by the newspaper El País, of Montevideo.  
December: His mother traveled to Israel to visit her daughter Myriam.
- 1963** January 25th: His son, Martín José is born.  
October: His father moved to Israel, to live in the Ramot Menasche kibbutz joining his wife and daughter.  
José Gurvich purchased a house in El Cerro where he built a ceramics workshop, it is not far from his old house on Polonia Street. Gurvich teaches a group of young artists, they form the Taller Montevideo. Among its members were: Eva Olivetti, Celeste Núñez, Blanca Minelli, Gloria Franchi, Clara Scremini, Dorita Mandirola, Linda Kohen, Lilian Lipschitz, Adolfo Nigro, Ernesto Vila, Ernesto Drangosh, Rafael Lorente, Gorki Bollar, Héctor Vilche, and Armando Bergalo.
- 1964** May: Second trip to Europe and Israel, this time with his wife and son. They visit France and then move on to Israel. They live at the Ramot Menasche kibbutz, where Gurvich paints and works again as a shepherd.
- 1965** May 1st: Second exhibition at the Katz gallery in Tel Aviv. Travels to Greece where they stayed for three months, later on visited Rome and Naples. At the end of the year they returned to Montevideo.
- 1966** October 28th: Participated in the group exhibition "Nuevo Arte del Uruguay", organized by the Uruguayan-American School in Montevideo.
- 1967** May: First major individual exhibition at the Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes, showed over 200 works (paintings, drawings, and ceramics), which was well received by the public and the press. He took part in the exhibition "One Hundred Years of Uruguayan Painting" at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, DC.
- 1968** Solo exhibition at the American Embassy in Montevideo.
- 1969** November 22nd: Third trip to Europe and Israel with his family (visited Spain, Madrid, Barcelona, France, and Greece).
- 1970** April 4th: Gurvich's father Jacob died of a heart attack.  
May: Gurvich's work included in the group exhibition "Universalismo Constructivo" (Constructive Universalism), at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires.  
July 18th: Third exhibition at the Katz gallery in Tel Aviv.

September 18th: the Gurvich family arrived in New York. They stayed a few months in Long Island with Lithuanian relatives, survivors of concentration camps. Moved to Manhattan's Lower East side. Gurvich worked in a small workshop in the basement of his apartment.

Joined TTG artists living in New York: Julio Alpuy, Gonzalo Fonseca, Horacio Torres. Met Latin American artists Marcelo Bonevardi, Rodolfo Abularach, Elba Damast.



- 1971** Group exhibitions: "Select Works from Latin America", at the New York Greenwich Library, and at the Couturier Gallery in Stamford, Connecticut.
- 1972** Group exhibitions: "Feria de la Opinión Latinoamericana", at the San Clemente Church of New York, at the Iramar Gallery of the University of Columbia, New York.  
June: First individual exhibition in New York at the Lerner-Misrachi Gallery. He takes part in the Third Biennial in Coltejer, Medellín, Colombia.  
December 24th: His mother Jaie died, after a long illness.
- 1973** New York's Jewish Museum scheduled a Gurvich retrospective exhibition that never took place.
- 1974** February 2nd: He takes part in the exhibition "Sculpture by Painters", at the Humanist Center of New York.  
April 27th: Group exhibition "Masters of Today and Tomorrow," at Temple Israel, Great Neck, New York.  
June 24th: Gurvich died of a heart attack as he was working on a painting of a Jewish feast, Succoth. He was 47 years old..

