

## The Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo begins the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Modern Art Week with an exhibition in honor of the Gomide-Graz family

*Curated by Maria Alice Milliet, the exhibition **Desafios da modernidade – Família Gomide-Graz nas décadas de 1920 e 1930** presents a dialogue between the visual arts and design as currents within Brazilian modernism.*

“Que soluças tu, transido de frio, sapo-cururu, da beira do rio...” [How you sob, shivering from the cold, cane toad, at the edge of the river...], Brazilian writer Ronald de Carvalho recited, to loud boos, from the poem by Manuel Bandeira, during the **Modern Art Week of 1922**. The lines of the classic work *Os sapos* (1918) convey in rhyme and irony the transformation and need for a rupture in poetry, referring to the modernists who aspired for freedom and simplicity in language. As in literature, modern art sought to break away from old paradigms and to implement new forms of expression. The movement took on unimaginable proportions and the Week of '22 was transformed into a milestone in Brazilian art history. To begin the celebrations of the movement's 100th anniversary, the **Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo** is presenting, starting May 25, the exhibition **Desafios da modernidade – Família Gomide-Graz nas décadas de 1920 e 1930** [Challenges of Modernity: The Gomide-Graz Family in the 1920s and 1930s], **curated by Maria Alice Milliet**.

The show sheds light on the interface between the visual arts and design as a current of Brazilian modernism, an outcome of the Week of '22. “It can be said that their creations are solidary, insofar as the paintings, drawings, fabrics, furniture and light fixtures were designed to compose determined settings, to function as a set. It is art integrated with the dwelling space and it will be shown like that,” the curator explains.

The artists **Antonio Gomide, John Graz** and **Regina Gomide Graz** were pioneers of art deco and played a key role in the introduction of abstract geometric compositions into Brazil through utilitarian objects. Born in Brazil, the Gomide brothers moved to Switzerland in 1913 and met John Graz at the Academy of Fine Arts of Geneva, where the three studied. Graz fell in love with Regina, with whom he married in 1920, in Brazil. In that same decade, he entered into contact with the forerunners of modernism and participated in the Modern Art Week of 1922.

For his part, in 1920, Antonio was living in Toulouse and approached French artist Marcel Lenoir, who became his teacher in the art of fresco. Living in France, he made contact with Brazilian modernists and European artists linked to the vanguard movements, such as Victor Brecheret, who was his neighbor in Montparnasse, a bohemian district in Paris, and Vicente do Rego Monteiro – both members of the modernist movement.

Regina was dedicated to making tapestry works, as well as panels, quilts, cushions, fabrics and lamps in cubist and art deco style. In 1923, in Rio de Janeiro, she conducted research into the indigenous weaving of the Upper Amazon region, being, alongside Vicente do Rego Monteiro, a pioneer in the interest in Brazilian indigenous tradition.

“The hallmark of the designs by John Graz is the harmony among all the elements that are part of the planned space. He aimed at the ‘total design’: everything from furniture to panels, light fixtures and even details such as doorknobs and gratings,” explains the curator. Considered the introducer of art deco in Brazil, Graz became established in São Paulo as an interior decorator in the 1920s and 1930s.

Regina and John Graz collaborated with Warchavchik in producing the interior settings of the **Casa Modernista**. The house, open to public visitation, is today considered a milestone in the introduction of a new manner of dwelling. The proposal combined a functional and unornamented architecture with settings organized on the basis of furniture with pure forms, complemented by the best of modern art.

Antonio, John and Regina were founding members and active participants of the Sociedade Pró-Arte Moderna (SPAM). That association aimed to strengthen the relationships between artists and people interested in art in all its manifestations, holding exhibitions, concerts, conferences, literary meetings and an annual “art month,” while also operating a social center. Officially founded on December 22, 1932, and conceived by poet Mário de Andrade, SPAM united Brazilian artists such as Anita Malfatti, Lasar Segall, Tarsila do Amaral, the art patrons Paulo Prado and Olívia Guedes Penteado, the writers Sérgio Milliet and Menotti Del Picchia, and others.

Around 80 artworks will be shown, including emblematic paintings by **Antonio Gomide**, panels and furniture pieces by **John Graz**, and tapestries, rugs and quilts by **Regina Gomide Graz**, many on loan from Fulvia and Adolpho Leirner. Besides these and other works loaned by private collections, museums and public institutions, the show will also feature a video documentary prepared by **Estúdio Preto e Branco**, infusing the museum with the atmosphere of that time of art deco and the settings designed by John Graz. Visitors can also review works by **Cássio M’Boy** and **João Batista Ferri**. During the exhibition’s run, a **catalog** will be released with a rich critical text and images of all the pieces featured in the show.

“This is the first exhibition with in-person visiting that MAM is holding this year. The museum is harnessing all its potential toward furthering its commitment to promoting culture and art for the population. This is an action for receiving the public, in an affective and safe reencounter,” says the museum’s chief curator, Cauê Alves. “The show is a starting point for the celebrations that MAM will hold, beginning this year, around the Week of ’22 and will contribute to enlarging the understanding of the applied arts and art deco in the history of modernism. The rigorous research conducted by curator Maria Alice Milliet underscores how important it is for us to critically reevaluate modernism, a movement which was as fundamental for Brazilian art as for the founding of MAM itself,” the curator adds.

MAM São Paulo is following a rigorous protocol of health and sanitation implemented in collaboration with the consulting team of Hospital Israelita Albert Einstein, while also adopting protective measures established by the Brazilian health agencies. Tickets will only be available for purchase online (at <https://www.mam.org.br/ingressos>) and all visits must be prescheduled. The number of people per room is limited and the use of a facemask is mandatory. Moreover, hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at strategic points in the museum.

### **About MAM São Paulo**

Founded in 1948, the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo is a public-interest, nonprofit civil society. Its collection contains more than 5 thousand works produced by the most representative names of modern and contemporary art, mainly that of Brazil. Both its collection and its exhibitions are geared toward experimentalism, while also opening to the plurality of artistic production worldwide and the diversity of interests in contemporary societies.

The museum maintains a wide spectrum of activities, including courses, seminars, lectures, performances, shows, concerts, video screenings and artistic practices. The content of the exhibitions and of the activities is accessible to all public segments by way of audio guides, video guides and translation into Brazilian sign language (Libras). The collection of books, periodicals, documents and audiovisual material consists of 65 thousand titles. Its exchange with libraries and museums of various countries keeps the collection alive.

Located in Ibirapuera Park, the most important green area of São Paulo, MAM's building was adapted by architect Lina Bo Bardi and, besides the exhibition rooms, it houses a studio, library, auditorium and restaurant. The museum's spaces are visually integrated with the sculpture garden, designed by Roberto Burle Marx for the permanent display of works from the collection. All of the museum's facilities are accessible to visitors with special needs.

### **Exhibition details:**

***Desafios da modernidade – Família Gomide-Graz nas décadas de 1920 e 1930*** [Challenges of Modernity: The Gomide-Graz Family in the 1920s and 1930s]

**Curated by: Maria Alice Milliet**

**Period: May 25 to August 15**

**Place: Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo**

**Address: Ibirapuera Park (av. Pedro Álvares Cabral, Gates 1 and 3)**

**Times: Tuesday through Sunday, from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. (closed to entry at 5:30 p.m.)**

**Telephone: (+55 11) 5085-1300**

**Free admission on Sundays**

**Admission: R\$ 20 (full price) and R\$10 (half-price for students and teachers, with corresponding ID)**

Free admission for children 10 and younger, adults 60 and over, people with disabilities, members of ICOM, AICA and ABCA with ID, workers of environmental agencies, CET, GCM, PM, Metrô, CPTM, Polícia Civil, bus drivers and fare collectors of city and charter buses, SPTuris workers, open-air vendors of Ibirapuera Park, gas station workers and taxi drivers with identification.

Admission tickets available online: [www.mam.org.br/ingressos](http://www.mam.org.br/ingressos)

Accessible by people with disabilities

Restaurant/coffee

Air-conditioned

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