


MURILO
MENDES,
POET
CRITIC:
THE
INTIMATE
INFINITE



CURATORSHIP LORENZO MAMMÌ / MARIA BETÂNIA
AMOROSO / TAISA PALHARES

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MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART OF SÃO PAULO PRESENT

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CURATORSHIP LORENZO MAMMÌ / MARIA BETÂNIA
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MURILO MENDES, CRITIC AND COLLECTOR

As part of the celebration of 75 years of cultural and artistic activities, it is with great satisfaction that the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo presents the exhibition *Murilo Mendes, Poet Critic: The Intimate Infinite*. The show brings together a large number of works by artists who were discussed and often collected by Murilo Mendes.

Curators Lorenzo Mammì, Maria Betânia Amoroso and Taisa Palhares have selected works that indicate Murilo Mendes's singular contribution to art criticism and that expands our understanding of modern art in Brazil from the 1920s onward. Alongside the artworks, the show features documents, books, and photographs—many never made public before—that reveal a less well-known side of Murilo Mendes: his activities as an art critic and collector.

This catalogue includes texts by the curators, an illustrated chronology of Murilo Mendes's work as an art critic, and texts of great historical importance. One of these, written by Italian theorist Giulio Carlo Argan, explores Murilo Mendes's art criticism as a form of poetic composition in itself. The other text is by Mario Pedrosa and it is followed by letters from Murilo Mendes to Pedrosa, which allows us to follow a rich dialog on art and criticism in Brazil.

The exhibition has the invaluable support of the Murilo Mendes Museum of Art (MAMM), at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora,

in Minas Gerais, where Mendes was born. We express our gratitude to the MAMM for the loan of artworks and documents, and, in particular, for the contributions made by chief-director Aloisio Arnaldo Nunes de Castro and for his text—published here—on the provenance of works in the Murilo Mendes Collection, which is published here.

In this way, the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo contributes to the promotion and dissemination of modern art, especially with in-depth research on Murilo Mendes's lesser known but highly influential work as an art critic and collector, both in Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, and, in Europe, from the 1950s until his death in 1975.

ELIZABETH MACHADO

President of the Board of Directors,
Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo

CAUÊ ALVES

Chief Curator,
Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo

A TIME TO STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND PROMOTE MORE IN-DEPTH REFLECTION

The exhibition *Murilo Mendes, Poet Critic: The Intimate Infinite* is the crowning achievement of a successful partnership between the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo (MAM São Paulo) and the Murilo Mendes Museum of Art (MAMM) at the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF). In October 2022, the MAMM was granted the great honor of being invited to stage an exhibition at MAM São Paulo that would reveal a less well-known side of the poet Murilo Mendes: his work as an art critic and collector.

The MAMM—a university museum open to the public free of charge—aware of its institutional mission to research, conserve and promote the Murilo Mendes archive, was quick to embrace the proposal to provide broad public access to a considerable portion of its archive beyond the city of Juiz de Fora.

The exhibition brings together a representative sample of the MAMM’s collection of books, archives, and artworks, curated in such a way as to explore the legacy of Mendes’s work as a critic. This confirms the potential of the MAMM archive to serve as a privileged repository for research into modernist art in Brazil and around the world.

The planning and staging of the exhibition involved constant collaboration between the two museums, including virtual meetings, technical visits at MAMM by the curators, research, selection of works, conservation and restoration, the production of technical reports, and other activities. A special mention should be made of the unflagging efforts of the MAMM’s technical team, and we are likewise deeply thankful for the extremely fruitful partnership with MAM São Paulo. We would also like to express our gratitude to the MAMM Board of Curators, for unanimously approving the project, and to the UFJF’s Vice Dean for Culture, Valéria Faria, without whom this project would not have been possible.

The year 2023 marks the 18th anniversary of the MAMM. On the occasion of this symbolic “coming of age,” the exhibition *Murilo Mendes, Poet Critic: The Intimate Infinite*, staged in partnership with MAM São Paulo, underlines the commitment of the MAMM and the UFJF to reach out to society and to provide access to and critical reflection on the museum’s archive devoted to the life and timeless work of the poet Murilo Mendes.

ALOISIO ARNALDO NUNES DE CASTRO
Chief-director of the Murilo Mendes
Museum of Art – UFJF (Federal
University of Juiz de Fora)

MURILO MENDES, POET CRITIC: THE INTIMATE INFINITE.

As from when Murilo Mendes first met Ismael Nery, in 1921, until the poet's death in 1975, Mendes was one of the most influential figures in the Brazilian art world. As art critic, collector, and organizer of exhibitions, as well as poet, Mendes played a vital role in the development of a whole generation of critics, from Mario Pedrosa to Antônio Bento and Rubens Navarra, and discussed art from Rio de Janeiro with Mário de Andrade. Mendes's importance, however, has largely gone unacknowledged.

Mendes's work as a critic can be found in various articles in newspapers and magazines, as well as in many of his writings in poetry and prose. However, it was only towards the end of his life that Mendes gathered his critical texts together into a volume that was published posthumously, *A invenção do infinito* [The Invention of the Finite]. In 1994, his art collection was acquired by the Federal University of Juiz de Fora for its newly created Murilo Mendes Art Museum (MAMM), which, since then, has staged exhibitions and put together publications based on the collection. This exhibition would not have been possible without the outstanding work done by the MAMM over many years.

The exhibition is divided into three blocks: the first deals with the circle surrounding Murilo Mendes and Ismael Nery in Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s and 1930s, and the developments of the subsequent decade. In this phase, Mendes supported a group of artists, including Nery himself, Cícero Dias, Alberto da Veiga Guignard and Jorge de Lima, all of whom fostered a close relationship between the fine arts and poetry and were strongly drawn to surrealist and metaphysical poetics, albeit with divergences. He was opposed, however, to the dominant realism of the time that defended a return to art as a craft in the service of nation-building and social engagement. This was Mendes's "rebellious" phase.

The second block covers the period from the mid-1930s to Mende's move to Italy in 1957. He was by now a famous poet and influential critic. His range of interests broadened to include the work of Lasar Segall, Bruno Giorgi, Maria Martins, and Alberto Magnelli and he began to put together a collection of the various artworks he had acquired during his trips to Europe.

During this phase, Mendes's involvement with artists who arrived in Rio de Janeiro from Europe, fleeing Nazism – in particular Maria Helena Vieira da Silva and her husband Arpad Szenes – was crucially important. The circle that formed around these artists included Milton Dacosta, Djanira, Ione Saldanha, Almir Mavignier, Carlos Scliar, Fayga Ostrower, and others. Mendes became interested in abstract but not concrete art.

The third block covers the period from 1957 onwards, during which Mendes lived in Rome and lectured on Brazilian Literature. He developed a close relationship with the art critic Giulio Carlo Argan, with whom he shared an interest in Italian artists who practiced non-geometric abstraction, without fully adhering to informalism. The poet was also interested in optical and kinetic art and collaborated with artists such as Alberto Magnelli, Lucio Fontana and Soto in producing exhibitions and publications. He staged shows of contemporary Brazilian artists at the Brazilian Embassy's gallery in Rome, featuring artists such as Volpi, Goeldi, Weissmann, Mavignier and others. The apex of this final phase may have been Mendes's work as curator of the Brazilian representation at the Venice Biennale in 1964, the first one where Brazil had its own pavilion. We hope that the present exhibition will go some way towards consolidating and further promoting Murilo Mendes's reputation as a collector and art critic, revealing his marked influence on the history of art criticism in Brazil.

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TAISA PALHARES

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“Moved by a deep instinct, I have always sought to sacralize the everyday, to make real life less banal, to create or re-create a wondrous, magical dimension”
MURILO MENDES, *A idade do serrote*

In a text published in 1948 about his friend, the artist Ismael Nery, Murilo Mendes would state that “instead of the word ‘modernism’, I prefer ‘modernity’”.¹ The choice of terminology, which may appear to some readers to be merely rhetorical, epitomizes Mendes's stance towards the debate surrounding the various meanings of modernism in Brazil in the first half of the 20th century. Contrary to a certain contemporary view, while, over the past one hundred years, the project of modernism has achieved canonical status in the thinking of figures such as Mário de Andrade, this project was by no means the only one in vogue in the country in the years between 1920 and the late 1950s.

Seeking to clarify his position, by way of critical commentary on the work of Ismael Nery, Mendes presents a neat summary of a certain interpretation of modern art that will be present in most of the critical texts he wrote throughout his career, and which, consequently, guides the choice of works in his important art collection. Returning to the definition of “modernity” proposed by Baudelaire, according to whom, art should extract poetry from historical lived experience and extract the eternal from the transitory, Mendes understands the progression of modern art as a process that has unfolded throughout the centuries, and one in which the origin of many elements of more recent art (by artists such as Braque, Picasso, and Bonnard) can be traced back to the artists of the past. This notion of expanded time recasts modernity as having a positive task—one which the term “modernism,” with its call for endless innovation and a vertiginous flow of novel styles, fails to convey.

In his thinking, the adult poet-critic who believes that “eras are not impervious compartments but are connected to eras and moments of the past”² echoes the reflections of Murilo Mendes as a boy in the Minas Gerais town of Juiz de Fora, who, from an early age, confessed that he was concerned with “the problem of time”: “The

¹ Murilo Mendes, *Recordações de Ismael Nery* [Memoirs of Ismael Nery], São Paulo, Edusp, 1996, p. 107. In his 1935 article “Painting and politics”, Mendes will expose the limitations of art criticism based on the dialectical materialism of his friend Mario Pedrosa and likewise reflects that “...the classifications of art such as ancient, Romantic, modern, and so forth, are conventional designations for convenience of reference, because, in fact, eras are not impervious compartments, but precisely linked to one another, as are events”.

² *Ibid.*, p. 106.

words ‘formerly’, ‘in that time’, ‘in the past’, ‘years ago’ impressed him greatly. He wanted to know whether it might be possible to glue the various time periods together, whether time was horizontal or vertical. In other words, the idea of time was more present than that of space”.³

It is therefore not hard to understand that the meeting between the 20-year-old Murilo and a modern artist such as Ismael Nery was one of those occasions on which two souls came together around certain elective affinities. Some of the aesthetic and intellectual elements that sparked this attraction endured in Murilo Mendes's interpretations of other artists and in his mature view of the history of art in general. Mendes will later, in the late 1940s, remark that Nery’s “employed new dimensions in the study of art and life. He not only carried on tradition but expanded upon it. He believed that human beings should interpret the vast spiritual heritage they have inherited from their ancestors, without dismissing any aspect that could be regarded as positive, confronting it with their own personal experience”.⁴

This means an understanding of tradition as the transmission of a “collectively-owned treasure” which, filtered through the lived experience of each individual artist, makes his or her work unique. For Mendes, the interplay between particular and universal, transitory and essential, chaos and harmony, matter and spirit – and so many other binary oppositions of which modern human beings are composed⁵ – is the formative nucleus of art in the broadest sense of the word. This interpretation can be found in the text that Mendes wrote in the same decade on the Portuguese artist Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. In this text he situates Silva’s work in the period of reconstruction following the First World War and admires the fact that this “dialectical” artist did not wish to “wipe the slate clean so far as the past was concerned. On the contrary, through studying and reflecting on the lessons to be learnt from the old masters, she gathered together the elements needed to create her own style, combining tradition with a spirit of adventure and passion for investigation”.⁶

This point of view, which might at first sight seem conservative, was in fact allied, in the 1920s and 1930s, with surrealism, as it was understood by Nery and other artists in his circle, such as Guignard, Mendes himself, and also Cícero Dias and Jorge de Lima. Temporal expansion, in which images of the present and of the past, of the conscious and the unconscious mind, of the real and the imaginary, of

³ Murilo Mendes, *A idade do serrote* [The Age of the Handsaw], São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 2018, p. 57.

⁴ Murilo Mendes, *Recordações de Ismael Nery*, p. 102.

⁵ In his own words, “We know that the ancient conception of the human being as a monolithic creature has been completely shattered. Human beings are full of shocking contradictions and have long been unaware of the wealth of tendencies and possibilities that each carries within”. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁶ Murilo Mendes, “Maria Helena Vieira da Silva (a propósito de sua exposição)” [Maria Helena Vieira da Silva (on the occasion of her exhibition)], *Revista Acadêmica*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 61, August 1942.

the mystical and the erotic, are juxtaposed in pictorial compositions and photomontages, points to a desire to liberate oneself from any programmatic social art project exclusively based on figurative realism. While surrealist artists sought “to give concrete form to imprecision”, as Mendes notes in relation to Magritte⁷, they never lose sight of the enigma that broadens the “field of reality”, as can be seen in the paintings of Mendes’s friend Vieira da Silva.⁸ The young Mendes and his colleagues were attracted to surrealism as an avant-garde technique, not a system, and one that entails “relinquishing facile predictable schemas”. It is thus especially well-suited to meeting the challenge of expressing Brazil—a country “surrealist by birth”.⁹

It is a question of believing in the power of invention of an “*autre* reality”, a new dimension that cannot be reduced to the restrictions of conventional reality, as the poet-critic will declare on numerous occasions.

Some spiritual states are surrealist, in so far as they transcend a reality that is expected, foreseeable, and categorizable. A new reality, which is unforeseen, unexpected, and unclassifiable, is continually encroaching upon reality. The surrealist state effects magical combinations using opposing and dissonant elements, providing an experience of something unprecedented. If we delve deeper, however, we find connections with classical order.¹⁰

As Mendes observed in the late 1940s, discussion around the problem of a plastic construction based on “specifically Brazilian” contextual factors and features was already in the late 1920s producing only anecdotal and superficial solutions. Nery opposed this trend, arguing, “If I am Brazilian, my art will necessarily reflect the Brazilian psyche. No need for a program”.¹¹ Mendes, in turn, faithful to this non-programmatic notion of artistic activity, did not restrict his taste and his choices to particular movements or styles, either in his art criticism or in his activities as a collector. It was not a question of being an adherent of figurative or abstract art—to reference a dispute characteristic of the 1950s—but of seeking to express a “polyhedral, innumerable, ambiguous” reality, as he wrote in 1971 in a text on the Italian painter Gastone Biggi.¹² His friend, the artist Fayga Ostrower, in a later statement, declared that Mendes cast his critical eye “on a broader and much deeper concept of liberty, of ethical commitment to oneself, of a greater humanism that embraced all artistic expressions”.¹³

⁷ Murilo Mendes, “Magritte”, *Retratos-relâmpagos* [Snap Portraits], *Poesia completa e prosa* [Collected Poems and Prose], edited by Luciana Stegagno Picchio, Rio de Janeiro, Nova Aguilar, 1994, p. 1.256.

⁸ In the portrait of “Vieira da Silva” in *Janelas verdes* [Green Windows], the poet critic-writes that “the existence of enigma tends to expand the field of reality”. *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1.443.

⁹ Mendes writes as follows in “Giorgio de Chirico”: “Brazil, according to Jorge de Sena, is surreal by birth, and my ‘conversion’ to that method, albeit partial, was therefore not a difficult one”. *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1.270.

¹⁰ Mendes, *Recordações de Ismael Nery*, p. 114.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

¹² According to Mendes: “The greatest defect of ‘socialist realism’ resides in reducing reality to a single schema. Reality is in fact polyhedral, innumerable, ambiguous”. *A invenção do finito* [The Invention of the Finite], *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1.299.

¹³ Fayga Ostrower, “Murilo e a arte” [Murilo and Art], *Revista Poesia*, p. 59.

Thus, for Murilo Mendes, neither the art critic, nor the artist, nor even the collector, should restrict themselves to predetermined forms, pre-established historical schemas or limiting terminology. And it is notable that his private art collection, which began in the 1920s with works by Ismael Nery and by the artists surrounding him who espoused the surrealist aesthetic more directly, expanded, in subsequent decades, to embrace the work other artists—generally those who were fully active at the time when the critic acquired their works. What we now know of the famous “collection of Brazilian art”, prior to his move to Rome in 1957, represents but a small portion of the artworks that Murilo Mendes and Maria da Saudade Cortesão once kept in their apartment in the Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Botafogo. As the researcher Valtencir Almeida dos Passos¹⁴ and the art historian Tadeu Chiarelli¹⁵ have observed, through investigation of the loan materials of a part of the collection to the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAM-RJ), in 1968, the whole collection provided a substantial panorama of the art produced in Brazil between 1920 and 1950, along with a number of sculptures and images of a religious nature.

Many of these artists no longer feature in the collection¹⁶ but were friends of Mendes and also objects of study in themselves, including Di Cavalcanti, Lasar Segall, Djanira, Bruno Giorgi, Carlos Scliar, Alfredo Volpi, Emeric Marcier, Maria Martins, Emídio, among others. There were also important works by artists who moved in the same circles as the writer, such as Milton Dacosta, Anita Malfatti, Maria Leontina, José Pancetti, Aldo Bonadei, Ivan Serpa, and Henrique Boese, to give just some examples.¹⁷

In the year of his death, Mendes gave permission for important works to be removed from the collection that was on loan to the MAM-RJ, at a time when Brazil’s modern art market was experiencing a boom. Documentary research by Passos has revealed that, on 27 June 1975, the artist’s nephew removed the following works from the Rio institution: Portinari’s *Retrato de Murilo Mendes* [Portrait of Murilo Mendes], Pancetti’s *Menina do morro* [Girl from the Hills], Milton Dacosta’s *Figura de moça* [Figure of a Girl], Marcier’s *Anunciação* [Annunciation], Bonadei’s *Imagem barroca* [Baroque Image], José Paulo M. da Fonseca’s *Paisagem* [Landscape], engravings by Fayga Ostrower, Lasar Segall’s sculpture *Mãe e filho* [Mother and Child] and Volpi’s *Mulata* [Girl of Mixed Race].¹⁸ The history of the collection leads us to suppose that Mário de Andrade

¹⁴ In his Master’s dissertation, *O processo de institucionalização da coleção de artes plásticas do poeta Murilo Mendes* [The Institutionalization of the Poet Murilo Mendes’s Art Collection], Juiz de Fora, Instituto de Artes e Design, UFJF, 2019.

¹⁵ In the introduction to *Coleção Murilo Mendes: 25 anos* [The Murilo Mendes Collection: 25 years], Juiz de Fora, Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes, UFJF, 2020.

¹⁶ Murilo Mendes and Maria da Saudade Cortesão’s art collection was sold to Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) in 1993 and since then has been a public collection, with the main part now kept in the UFJF’s Murilo Mendes Art Museum.

¹⁷ Tadeu Chiarelli, p. 31, and Passos, p. 86.

¹⁸ Op. cit., p. 94. The author provides a full list of works in Appendix 1, p. 183.

and Murilo Mendes’s collections are two of the most important in Brazil so far as the history of Brazilian modern art in the first half of the 20th century is concerned.

The whereabouts of many of these works remains a mystery. The present exhibition, however, contains a significant portion of the Murilo Mendes collection that is still intact in the museum that bears his name, along with some occasional works by artists who influenced Mendes’s career as a critic and collector. The exhibition aims to shed new light on the significant, but often forgotten, role this writer from Minas Gerais played in the development of modern art in Brazil.

MURILO MENDES

BY MARIA BETÂNIA AMOROSO

POET- -CRITIC

¹ In *Murilo Mendes: o poeta brasileiro de Roma* [Murilo Mendes: Brazilian Poet in Rome] I address this subject in the chapter titled “The eye of the poet-critic” (São Paulo; Juiz de Fora: Editora da Unesp; MAMM, 2013, p. 63-89).
² There is an extensive bibliography on the poetry of Murilo Mendes; studies of his work as an art critic are however few, notable exceptions being Júlio Castañon Guimarães, *Territórios/Conjunções poesia e prosa críticas de Murilo Mendes* [Territories/Conjunctions: The Poetry and Prose Criticism of Murilo Mendes], São Paulo, Imago, 1993; and Marta Moraes Nehering, *Murilo Mendes crítico de arte: A invenção do finito* [Murilo Mendes Art Critic: The Invention of the Finite], São Paulo, Nankin Editorial, 2003. While the former is a study of Mendes’s presence among and intimacy with other artists, the latter deals with his work as an art critic, in texts from *A invenção do finito* [The Invention of the Finite], edited by the same author and published posthumously. See also Lorenzo Mammi, “Murilo Mendes, crítico de arte” [Murilo Mendes, art critic], *Remate de Males*, 32.1, Jan./June 2012, p. 81-94.

³ See the introduction to “The Murilo Mendes Art Collection: trajectory; transformations” by Tadeu Chiarelli, published in Valéria de Faria Cristofaro and Valtencir Almeida Passos (Eds.), *Coleção Murilo Mendes 25 anos* [25 Years of the Murilo Mendes Collection], Juiz de Fora, MAMM; UFJF, 2020; and Maria de Lourdes Eleutério, “Murilo Mendes, colecionador” [Murilo Mendes, collector], *Remate de Males*, 21, 2001, p. 31-62.

⁴ Marta Moraes Nehering, op. cit., p. 40.

The ongoing exchange of ideas between Murilo Mendes and the world of fine art was by no means sporadic, occasional, or late in coming.¹ It continued throughout his career, from his early years in Rio de Janeiro, in the 1920s and 1930s, to his death, in Europe, in 1975. His work contains many texts on this subject, published as poetry or prose. There were also articles written for newspapers, introductions to catalogues of artists and works, biennials and exhibitions but these have not been gathered together into a single book and are known only to a small number of readers, mostly scholars of the poet’s work on art theory.² Reading these texts, one is impressed by the fact that Murilo Mendes has still not received the attention he deserves as an art critic and this may come as a surprise, especially to those who closely follow Brazilian art criticism. Alongside his work as a critic, it is also worth examining Mendes’s contributions as a collector.³

The modes of critical writing practiced by Mendes varied over time. His first collection *Poems (1925-1929)* – contained pieces titled “Seascape 90”, “View of a Dining Room”, “Landscape”, “Watercolor”, along with others dedicated to painters who were his friends – “The Glory of Cícero Dias” and “Tribute to Ismael Nery”, published in 1930. This reveals Murilo Mendes’s “permeability for the visual arts”⁴. “The Glory of Cícero Dias” would appear to describe a cheerful popular festival in Heaven, in which the painter receives and enthusiastic welcome from cherubim and little angels, who hover around in the poem as they do in the paintings of Cícero Dias. “Tribute to Ismael Nery” adopts a graver tone, reflecting both the obsessive rigor of this artist’s quest for forms and Nery’s complex philosophical world. Beyond the composition of the painting—with its green cubes and blue spheres—there is an entity, the poem says.

In his subsequent books, artists’ names are used as the titles for poems. He composes *Snap Portraits* and *Murilograms*. Constituting a kind of literary subgenre invented by the poet, these texts resemble prose but are written in the condensed manner of poetry. Mendes provides some biography and descriptions of the artists’ works. Accounts of actual meetings with many of the artists mingle with interpretations, presented in the style of a memoir.

Alberto Giacometti’s Parisian studio on Rue Hippolyte Maindron is a place of dust and disorder, the antithesis of Max Bill’s. Apart from sculptures, the only item of decoration is an enormous electric lamp that casts its glare over the spindly figures of his sculptures,

practically obliterating them. Giacometti seems to prefer to disassociate himself from them. He talks about other artists, other topics. The sculptures wait patiently. The muffled din of traffic on the boulevard is faintly discerned. *Who makes history: the sculptures or the boulevard?*⁵ (Emphasis ours.)

Mendes expands on this in other more analytical texts in which he goes back to issues related to modernism in an attempt to delineate a distinct place for poetry. This is not, as in *Poems*, the critic attempting to emulate painting in words. In *Tarsila*, the point where poetry and the visual arts overlap is embraced as a constitutive force in modernist work, and, above all, in Murilo Mendes's own poetic style.

Starting with the work of Tarsila do Amaral, painting began to influence Brazilian poetry. It was Tarsila's *Aba-poru* that inspired Raul Bopp to produce his work, especially *Cobra Norato*. Others in the same cycle would inspire texts by Mário de Andrade, who dedicated "Syncopated Rhythm" to Amaral. Paintings such as "Distance", "Cuca", "The Dream", "The Black Woman", are a covert presence throughout my own *Poemas*, alternating with Max Ernst, the early Cícero Dias and the early De Chirico. The Pau-Brasil movement and anthropophagic painting would pave the future course that poetry would take. *Cubism was Tarsila's "military service" so far as form is concerned, a combination of discipline and freedom.*⁶ (Emphasis ours.)

In these two passages, the phrases marked in italics are the points at which poetically constructed critical commentary occurs. These are lapidary statements, whose concision and controlled eloquence akin to that of aphorisms remind us of the poet's fondness for this particular literary genre. His 1945 book *The Disciple from Emmaus* was composed entirely of aphorisms. For Luciana Stegagno Picchio, this book, in which Mendes's Catholicism looms large, also contains much reflection on aesthetic issues.

Painting is a recapitulation of humanity and its familiar and mythical objects. The meanings generated by the painter are developed, not only through detailed observation of nature, but also in the actual making of the painting. There is a kind of concrete meditation that

⁵ Murilo Mendes, *Poesia completa e prosa* [Collected Poems and Prose], edited and annotated by Luciana Stegagno Picchio, Rio de Janeiro, Editora Nova Aguilar, 1994, p. 1.244.

⁶ Murilo Mendes, *op. cit.*, p. 1.250.

is every bit as intense as one of a philosophical nature. It is important to possess imagination in relation to color and drawing—not in relation to the subject matter.⁷

Another group of texts were published in Brazilian newspapers, written between the 1930s and the 1950s, when, in 1952, Mendes began travelling in Europe and, in 1957, moved to Rome. Portinari, Djanira da Silva, Di Cavalcanti, Lívio Abramo, Aldo Bonadei, Lasar Segall, Faysa Ostrower, Vieira da Silva are some of the artists he wrote about during this period.⁸

In an *O Jornal* article, dated 28 September 1930, which may have been his first published piece of art criticism, Mendes remarks that Manuel Bandeira, another poet who was also an art critic, had also noted the very scant attention the drawings of Ismael Nery had received. It is known that the earlier part of Mendes's collection—and of his criticism—was dedicated to paintings and drawings by this artist. Nery himself showed little interest in making his work known to the general public, or even preserving it for himself. For many years, therefore, his friend Murilo, was responsible for preserving and promoting his work. Both the collection and Mendes's critical work were initially circumscribed by criteria that are elaborated, in hyperbolic style, in such a way as to situate Nery within the discussions and impasses that dominated European art criticism at the time. It was around this time that Mendes's criticism adopted a distinctly Marxist tone.

Ismael Nery, in the Americas, and Max Ernst, in Europe, are the two great driving forces behind modern drawing, the only individuals capable of saving painting from the steam bath into which it has been plunged by the exaggerations and infantilism of the latest European theories. These artists should be able to wrest painting from its single-minded devotion to ornamentation, so long as cinema remains a technique available only to imperialists.

In the same newspaper, on 28 June 1936, Mendes published an article on Alberto Guignard, to accompany an exhibition of this artist's work in Rio de Janeiro.

Guignard is a painter who is in touch with elemental colors that are simple and eternal, with children, flowers, and fish, which certain-

⁷ Murilo Mendes, *op. cit.*, p. 848-50. These aphorisms remind us of Baudelaire, one of Murilo Mendes's favorite writers, in *Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne* [The Painter of Modern Life].

⁸ In a letter to Carlos Drummond de Andrade, Murilo Mendes remarks, "I have stopped contributing to *A Manhã*, even though I had been enjoying it, because it enabled me to practice my prose style, and I also badly needed the 800 cruzeiros...". Júlio Castañon Guimarães, *Distribuição de papéis: Murilo Mendes escreve a Carlos Drummond de Andrade e a Lúcio Cardoso* [Distribution of Roles: Murilo Mendes's Letters to Carlos Drummond de Andrade and Lúcio Cardoso], Rio de Janeiro, Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa, 1996, p. 20. On relations between poetry and prose in Mendes's work, Castañon associates the practice of writing for newspapers with his own poetic needs. See Júlio Castañon Guimarães, "Entre reescritas e esboços" [Between Sketches and Rewritings], *Remate de Males*, Murilo Mendes, v. 21.2, 2001, p. 15-30; "A forma severa - ajustes de roteiro em Murilo Mendes" [The stern form—routine adjustments in Murilo Mendes], *Remate de Males*, Murilo Mendes and Italy, 32.1, Jan./June 2012, p. 9-28.

ly causes him to distance himself from the latest fashions and to strive towards eventually finding the subject matter that is the true essence of his art. I see in him the possibility of achieving a kind of a rhapsody imbued with plasticity and a sense of childlikeness, clear indications of which are already apparent here and there in his work.

Once again, I cite expressions such as “a rhapsody imbued with plasticity and a sense of childlikeness,” in which the critic succinctly concentrates his impressions. The fashions Mendes refers to probably concern the predilections of the critics of nationalist art, who interpreted the peculiar features of Guignard’s painting in such a way as to adapt them to the needs of the time. Carlos Zilio, commenting on “the limitations of modernism” in relation to the understanding of some artists, cites Guignard as an example. Zilio’s comments can be understood as explicitly stating ideas that Mendes expresses in a more lapidary fashion.

Guignard was taken on as a naïve creature capable of expressing the poetry of the “Brazilian soul”. His work, however, is marked by his commitment to seeking to create paintings that go beyond a merely anecdotal relation. He does not express “the Brazilian soul”, but seeks, through a trend that establishes itself in the course of his work, to eliminate the relation between figure and background, through dissolution of space and the subjective treatment of dilute color, causing the subject to lyrically spill out into nature.⁹

Throughout his life, the poet moved in the same circles as painters, engravers and sculptors. He wrote about them and their work, visited their studios, organized exhibitions and used the walls of the rooms he was staying in to hang works of art.¹⁰ One of these museum-rooms or bedroom galleries, photographed for *O Cruzeiro* magazine on 12 November 1938, contained works by Ismael Nery. Many years later, the same spirit of collector-critic was still alive and a portion of the collection, now containing over one hundred works, was displayed in his apartment on *Via del Consolato* in Rome.¹¹

It was not until 1987, when Murilo Mendes was already dead, that the activities of this poet-critic and collector were shown to the general public, on the occasion of the first exhibition, in Lisbon, featuring some of the works he had collected, along with some of his texts on artists. Two important art critics, Mario Pedrosa and

⁹ Carlos Zilio, “A questão política no modernismo” [The political question in modernism], Annateresa Fabris (Ed.), *Modernidade e modernismo no Brasil* [Modernity and Modernism in Brazil], Porto Alegre, Zouk, 2010, p. 104. The two extracts cited were chosen on account of their exemplary character: they do not feature, if I am not mistaken, in existing collections of Mendes’s prose works.

¹⁰ In a letter to Lasar Segall, he wrote, “...we are arranging the apartment, and, in the ‘living room’ there is a wall where we are hanging some of the paintings of our finest artists. We obviously want to give your painting pride of place, as befits an artist of your standing and importance”. Letter dated 28 November 1951.

¹¹ The video titled *Murilo Mendes, a poesia em pânico* [Murilo Mendes, Poetry in Panic] shows the works contained in the collection displayed throughout the apartment. This video was directed by Alexandre Eulalio, and produced by Carlos Augusto Calil, with photography by João Carlos Horta. It was filmed while the poet was still alive and finished in 1977.

¹² Mario Pedrosa, “Murilo, o

poeta-crítico” [Murilo, poet-critic], *Jornal do Brasil*, 23 January 1960. Giulio Carlo Argan, “I ventagli di Murilo Mendes” [Murilo Mendes’s *Éventails*], in Luciana Stegagno Picchio (Ed.), *Murilo Mendes. L’occhio del poeta*. [Murilo Mendes. The Eye of the Poet] Roma, Gangemi editore, 2001, p. 25-6. In the Portuguese translation “O olho do poeta ou *Les éventails* de Murilo Mendes” [The Eye of the Poet or Murilo Mendes’s *Les Éventails*], Murilo Marcondes de Moura notes that the text had been conceived, in the 1970s, as the introduction to an anthology of Murilo Mendes’s writings about art, which had not been published at the time. The catalogue *Acervo* [Collection], Centro de Estudos Murilo Mendes, Juiz de Fora, 1999, p. 36. In 1984, the text appeared in *Letterature d’America* (n. 23, Estate), in an issue dedicated to Murilo Mendes.

¹³ The periodical’s editorial committee included the poets Carmelo Arden Quin, Rhod Rothfuss, Gyula Kosice and Edgar Bayley, along with figures associated with the new art movements, such as Joaquín Torres-García and Vicente Huidobro.

¹⁴ *Inventionism* was the term used to present the group and its proposals.

¹⁵ María Amalia García, “La revista *Arturo* y la conexión carioca: en torno de la participación de María Helena Vieira da Silva y Murilo Mendes en la vanguardia inventionista porteña” [*Arturo* and the Rio connection: the participation of María Helena Vieira da Silva and Murilo Mendes in the Argentinean inventionist avant-garde], *PÓS*, Belo Horizonte, v. 2, n. 4, Nov. 2012, p. 55 (p. 36-59).

¹⁶ *Acervo* [Collection], catalogue, op. cit., p. 43.

Giulio Carlo Argan, had already written about the distinct *method* of this poet critic.¹²

Years earlier, the Argentinean publication *Arturo*¹³ had invited Murilo Mendes and Vieira da Silva to contribute. María Amalia García, in her analysis of this contribution, notes that this review of abstract art (to give it its subtitle), published in a single edition, in 1944, was a project produced by avant-garde South American artists, who felt the tension between nationalism and internationalism. García comments that, although Mário de Andrade had good relations with Argentinean intellectuals,

the universalism of Mendes’s proposal connected at various points with that of the Argentineans. Adherence to an international project, based on Marxist principles, featured prominently on the ‘inventionist’ agenda.¹⁴ The surrealist undercurrent that was weaving its way into Mendes’s circle was another common point of interest with the Argentinean publication.¹⁵

Mendes himself clearly referenced his involvement in art criticism and on an occasion that clearly signaled recognition. In 1952, the Brazilian Association of Art Critics invited Murilo Mendes pay tribute to Manoel Bandeira. Some of his comments on Bandeira – “an unofficial, unsystematic gunslinger of a critic, free of any orthodoxy” constitutes self-projection. Like Bandeira, Mendes was a poet, and becoming an art critic amounted to an unplanned change of course. It just happened. “For the time being,” Mendes said, “I am just an amateur, albeit a veteran, in the art world”.¹⁶ He followed this with some observations on the various types of art critic.

There are, as I see it, two categories of art critic: the official critic with enormous stature and great responsibility, who analyzes and produces a systematic account of current opinions and styles, a Bernard Berenson, a Lionello Venturi, a Herbert Read... and then there is the amateur critic, who renders the arts into a plane of delight and contemplation, rather than into one of scholarly knowledge or research. We can include in this category the likes of Rilke, Apollinaire, and Cocteau...

It would thus be easy to show that, despite their lack of formal knowledge, it was the literati who were, through the mysterious vehicle of intuition, the first to be avid readers of what I call “plastic

texts”, and who identified the true nature of these works of art, placing them in their true light, often well before the academics or even the artists themselves.

When Mendes was living in Rome, between 1957 and 1975, he continued to frequent artists’ studios. He was subsequently invited to write texts for exhibitions, and these can be found in catalogues. Mendes himself put together exhibitions at the Brazilian Embassy’s Casa do Brasil. He was also put in charge of nominating Brazilian entries for the Venice Biennale in 1964. Mendes struck up an acquaintance with the Italian artist Achille Perilli, wrote about one of his paintings and included it in his collection. This illustrates the extent to which Mendes was an active presence among artists in Rome, echoing and confirming his self-identification as an amateur critic, a term that was by no means intended to be self-deprecating, recalling the “old habit of poets visiting painters...which came so naturally [to Mendes], as if the two artforms possessed everlasting secret affinities”.¹⁷

There are, therefore, plenty of issues to consider more carefully vis-à-vis Murilo Mendes’s activities as an art critic and collector and the potential relations between the closely interwoven acts of seeing, writing and collecting.

The exhibition *Murilo Mendes, poet critic: the intimate infinite* seeks to showcase the long and unequalled trajectory charted by Mendes, and one that carries a wealth of meanings and significations.

“NOTÍCIA SOBRE ISMAEL NERY”
[NEWS ABOUT ISMAEL NERY]
(MURILO MENDES’S ROOM WITH
PAINTINGS BY ISMAEL NERY),
12 NOV. 1938

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¹⁷ João Nuno Alçada and Maria da Saudade Cortesão Mendes (Eds.), *Murilo Mendes: o olhar do poeta*, Lisbon, Gulbenkian, 1987, p. 25.



Notícia sobre ISMAEL NERY

FOI Ismael Nery um dos grandes pintores que o Brasil teve. Senhor de uma arte com características pessoais, profundamente de função psicológica, seus quadros são ricos não somente em valor plástico, como em seus temas.

A reportagem d'O CRUZEIRO teve oportunidade de visitar a residência do poeta Murilo Mendes, grande amigo daquele pintor falecido há poucos anos, e que guarda alguns de seus quadros ainda desconhecidos do grande público.

Damos em seguida algumas reproduções e a descrição minuciosa de cada uma, julgando de grande interesse a sua divulgação.

AN AESTHETICS

BY LORENZO MAMMÌ

OF THE IMPASSE

27

One of Murilo Mendes's first texts on the visual arts, published in *Boletim de Ariel*¹ in October 1931, bore the title "Painting at an impasse".² Many of the ideas contained in this piece are attributed to Ismael Nery in *Memoirs of Ismael Nery* (1948) and were certainly the subject of many a discussion in the circles the artist was accustomed to frequent. The 1931 text presents a somewhat enigmatic summation of these ideas. Mendes begins by observing that photography and cinema "have changed the conditions of existence" of painting. And, for this reason, "after endless speculation about modes of making, 'the sluice gates of the imagination' have been opened and all manner of combinations of form, color and subject matter have been created". Mendes associates this "inflation of images" with the crisis of overproduction in the capitalist economy. The coffee industry was in sharp decline, as a result of the 1929 crash. "People don't burn paintings the way they burn coffee", Mendes observed, but this is only because the producers of paintings are so poorly paid and do not go on strike.

Shortly thereafter, he introduced a new argument: the decorative function of painting has been replaced by an educational role. Modern architecture has ensured the obsolescence of paintings as "wall decoration", either by rejecting ornamentation *tout court* or by achieving this itself "by way of the distribution of light and volume". The prioritization of education over decoration led to a privileging of "black and white techniques". The article ends with a prophesy: "Cinema will not replace painting, but painting in movement will succeed it, having the advantage of taking on a character of universality".

This set of ideas, presented like a collage, was unusual among Brazilian debates of the time, but surprisingly prescient. The dominant topic of discussion at the time, especially in the field of painting, was the need to develop an updated version of technical skill to serve as the basis for a national socially engaged kind of painting. The buzzword of the day was "training". The role models were Portinari and Di Cavalcanti, or, more mundanely, Família Paulista³. Mendes, by contrast, started out from the assertion that painting was going through a crisis and that reflection on "modes of making" had run its course. What remained was an overproduction of images. However, as painting was deemed to have lost its decorative function, thanks to modern architecture,⁴ paintings conceived as flat pictures to be hung on the wall were no longer relevant.

¹ A periodical launched by Ariel Editora publishing house, founded in 1931.

² Earlier than this text, I know only, through Maria Betânia Amoroso, of a brief response to a review by Manuel Bandeira of Ismael Nery ("Reflection on an article", in *O Jornal*, 28 September 1930). This circumstantial text already expressed some of the ideas that he would return to in "Painting at an impasse".

³ An ensemble of artists formed in 1937 in São Paulo, whose vision of art was more moderate and traditional *vis-à-vis* the experimentalism and avant-gardism that characterized other groups active in São Paulo and Rio at the time.

⁴ Mendes's observations on architecture were very probably influenced by recently having met Le Corbusier when the latter visited Rio de Janeiro (1929-1930), although the poet was already familiar with this architect's ideas through *Esprit Nouveau* ("Le Corbusier" in *Snap Portraits*, 3rd series, in *Collected Poems and Prose*, p. 1.272-3).

Color gave way to black and white. Mendes is clearly thinking of techniques that involve images designed for combination with texts or print, such as drawings, engravings, and photography.⁵ Even more mysterious is the allusion to painting in movement. Would he already have seen the first attempts at experimental cinema, either directly or through accounts provided by Nery? It should be recalled that Mário Peixoto's *Limit* had been shown for the first time at Cinelândia, Rio de Janeiro, in May 1931, five months prior to publication of this article.⁶

The overproduction of images that Mendes observes is not related to any specific "modes of making" but pervades various artistic languages by way of an opening of the "sluice gates of the imagination": painting, drawing, poetry, music, photomontage, cinema. Better still, hybrid forms (with Max Ernst and Apollinaire looming large in this respect). Though still a young man, Mendes became the main mentor of the artists of this second wave of modernism, which we might call imagist: Nery, Cícero Dias, the young Guignard, occasionally Goeldi. The explicit or implicit cross-fertilization of textual and plastic art forms is clear in all of these artists: many of Nery's drawings have the structure of something more than allegory, of enigmas. Dias's watercolors tell short tales. Goeldi prints, much prized by the José Olympio publishing house, present spontaneous dramas. On the other side, there is the well-known statement by João Cabral de Melo Neto to the effect that the poetry of Murilo Mendes "taught me to value the image over the message, plastic form over discourse."⁷

Despite having a very different creative agenda, Mário de Andrade was both interested in and sympathetic towards these "Rio de Janeiro fashions".⁸ Mendes would become someone with whom Andrade engaged in much discussion of Rio art. Andrade was also one of the first to publish an article promoting the work of Ismael Nery,⁹ and article in which he also expresses his perplexity at the "very unsettling unfinished" nature of this painter's work, in which "the problems arising in some paintings are developed in further pieces and finished in others." At the time, this struck him as being "a major shortcoming". Shortly thereafter, however, writing about Mendes in "Poetry in 1930", the writer reveals a more nuanced understanding of this apparent incompleteness. He no longer puts it down to a certain nonchalance combined with a certain nobility of character but sees it as being justified by a

⁵ Many of Nery's paintings, especially in the 1920s, are monochromatic or almost monochromatic (black and blue), but the context suggests that Mendes is thinking of the kind of material that could be easily reproduced in printed publications of the time.

⁶ On various occasions, Murilo Mendes emphasized the important influence of cinema. In *Ismael Nery - A Memoir XI (Letras e Artes, 05/09/1948)*, he recalls that the painter wanted to make films and even produced some scripts, having asked Mendes to collaborate. In "Poetry Lesson", an interview with Homero Senna in the 1940s, republished in *República das Letras* in 1957, he states that "I was so enamored of cinema that I studied it seriously for a long time, and even wrote a book about the subject, a book I burnt soon after I had finished it".

⁷ Mario Pedrosa, "Murilo Mendes, poet critic", *Jornal do Brasil*, 23 January 1960.

⁸ Mário de Andrade, "Poetry in 1930", in *Aspectos da literatura brasileira* [Aspects of Brazilian Literature], Americ-Edit, 1943, p. 62.

⁹ *Diário Nacional*, 10 April 1928.

singular poetics. Comparing Murilo Mendes to Cícero Dias, he notes that, in both,

the possibility of a masterwork is notably absent. The idea of a work that is complete in and of itself and unforgettable as an object vanishes completely... One verse or another, some aspects of the painting strike one as being finer, more moving, more profound, but the works are all interconnected, they spill into one another; they are suspended in an enlightened indifference, in which there is no longer any need to distinguish great invention from invention of a more mediocre kind.¹⁰

Mendes's poetry helps Mário de Andrade to understand the "overproduction of images" of Nery and Dias, which resists being boxed into a formal unity. In fact, Mendes's first forays into the visual arts can be found in his poems. Not only where he mentions artists explicitly ("The Glory of Cícero Dias", "Tribute to Ismael Nery"), but also, more generally, in the way he constantly moves back and forth between literary devices and visual images. "Quasi-pathetic study", a poem included in *The Visionary* (1931-33, but published in 1941) is one example, in so far as it alludes to the visual imagination of Oswaldo Goeldi.¹¹

In the article published in *Boletim de Ariel*, Mendes does not mention essentialist philosophy, which he will later consider to be one Nery's greatest legacies, although traces of what may be considered essentialism can already be found in *Poems*, published in 1930. Despite the often nebulous explanations that were later proposed,¹² essentialism seems to be, not just a doctrine, but a method. It starts out from everyday (even vulgar) experiences and extracts value from them that is absolute and universal. Eternity would thus seem to be incarnated in the most trivial contingencies. The technique was surrealist— "based on juxtaposing disparate elements", according to Mendes's later definition¹³ —, but it served different ends: Nery and Mendes rejected automatic writing and, in general, anything that aimed for an immediate release of unconscious drives. They were also suspicious of the adherence of many of the movement's leaders to dialectical materialism, as we shall see, albeit Mendes himself had flirted with Marxism and thought that socialism and Christianity, could in the near future be reconciled. They believed that essentialism should be propaedeutic to

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64-5.

¹¹ "The storm rips the posts out of place/ The fish jump into the air/ The electric light protests in chaos...". *Poesia completa e prosa* [Collected Poems and Prose], Aguilar, 1994, p. 218.

¹² Especially in Jorge Burlamaqui's "Abstraction of time and space", published by Mendes in *A ordem*, year 12, vol. 13, Jan./June, p. 181-95, and republished in L.M.F. Barbosa; M.T.P. Rodrigues, *Ismael Nery e Murilo Mendes: reflexos* [Ismael Nery and Murilo Mendes: Reflections], Juiz de Fora, MAMM; UFJF, 2009, p. 92-7.

¹³ See "André Breton", in *Snap Portraits*, 1st series, in *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1.238.

the full acceptance of Catholic dogma. Despite recurring temptations, Mendes never became a propaganda poet: his revelation was always open-ended, impossible to reduce to formulas. But this position raised the possibility of a new equilibrium, a new serenity; at the end of the day, a new classicism, although this lay further out on the horizon. It was this, I believe, that gave rise to his fascination with metaphysical painting, especially the early De Chirico.¹⁴

It was Mendes who, around 1924, introduced Mario Pedrosa to Nery's circle and awakened his interest in art.¹⁵ But Pedrosa travelled to Europe in 1927, returned in 1929 to São Paulo (where he began to write about the visual arts),¹⁶ and to Rio only in 1935, by which time Nery had already died. By this stage, Pedrosa was already a leader in the Trotskyite Fourth International movement, while Mendes had become a Catholic poet.

The recently-arrived Pedrosa published an article in *Espelho* magazine entitled "Painting and Portinari", in which he praised the painter from Brodowski as being the most important artist in Brazil at the time and drew parallels between Portinari and Nery. His main argument was that, in Portinari, "objects are not dislodged from their rightful place". This does not mean that he is a naturalistic painter, but that he had supposedly found the right balance, the synthesis, between reality and an advanced stage in the elaboration of form, corresponding to the development of industrial production. Portinari was deemed to be an artist who applied the method of dialectical materialism to painting. Nery, however, was an example of a painter, infatuated with his own talent, who was unable to endow his objects with an extramental reality. Hence the nonconformist uncertainty with which his objects were situated in space.

Mendes responded in *O Cruzeiro* magazine,¹⁷ rebuking the shortcomings of the materialist approach. He manages to produce a delicious parody of what a Marxist-Leninist biography of Portinari might look like; he reiterates that the function of art is primarily an educational one and that this "involves *bringing to consciousness* that which everyone more or less feels without being able to express or organize it". He strategically cites Rosa Luxemburg to the effect that "the purpose of art is to shake up the human soul" and proceeds to defend the principle of art as "abstraction". Pedrosa had confused abstraction with phantasmagoria. He may be troubled by the lack of perspective in Nery, but perspective itself is

¹⁴ See, among others, the text on the artist in *Snap Portraits*, 2nd series, in *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1.270.

¹⁵ See Mario Pedrosa, "Ismael Nery, um encontro na geração" [Ismael Nery, a meeting in generation], *Jornal do Brasil*, 4 December 1966. Republished in Aracy Amaral (Ed.), *Dos murais de Portinari aos espaços de Brasília* [From the Murals of Portinari to the Spaces of Brasília], São Paulo, Perspectiva, 1981; and Otília Arantes (Ed.), *Acadêmicos e modernos* [Academicians and Moderns], São Paulo, Edusp, 2004, p. 197-201.

¹⁶ "As tendências sociais da arte e Käthe Köllwitz" [The Social Tendencies of Art and Käthe Köllwitz], 1933.

¹⁷ "Pintura e política" [Painting and Politics], 16 November 1935.

an abstraction, which can be applied to great effect (by Portinari, or De Chirico, Mendes adds) or it can be replaced by others (he mentions Japanese and Persian artists, and Matisse). In speaking of abstraction, I believe that Mendes was not referring to abstractionist poetics, which was not yet on the agenda in Brazil (Pedrosa, who was more cosmopolitan, had made a brief negative mention this). He was rather referring to the method of extracting content of an absolute nature from everyday life, which was the principle upon which essentialist aesthetics was founded.

The dispute was in fact highly amicable. The two men became even closer after the war, when Pedrosa, having returned from the United States, relinquished certain ideological patterns of thought of his youth and came to advocate constructive art and the "art of vital necessity" in primitive societies that therefore preceded bourgeois society and was destined to outlive it also. Mendes, on the other hand, moved towards abstract art, especially the Italian version, and he and his friend's tastes converged in many respects (Volpi, Mavignier, Palatnik), but diverged in others (Maria Martins, with some reservations), although neither came to fully accept concrete art. In the final years of his life, Mendes dedicated a compilation of his critical texts from 1960-1970 *A invenção do finito* [The Invention of the Finite] to "my friend Mario Pedrosa, artist and critic, my companion for many years in the world of art". Pedrosa directly responded to the article in "Murilo Mendes, poet critic", published in 1960.¹⁸

In the mid-1930s, Mendes wrote more extensively in the press, especially in the *A manhã* newspaper and its weekly "Letters and Arts" supplement. He became a more accomplished essayist. Contact with the exiled artists who disembarked in Rio de Janeiro in the early 1940s was another decisive experience—especially in the case of Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. Mendes and Cecília Meireles put together an exhibition of this artist's work at the National Museum of Fine Arts in 1942 and were the prime movers behind the (modest) recognition that she subsequently garnered in Brazil.

A poem dedicated to Vieira da Silva in *As metamorfoses* [Metamorphoses]¹⁹ begins with a series of "contrasting pairs" ("Day and night/ Long and short/ Male and female/ Wave and serpent/ Metal water/ Tracking flame"), the first of these being picked up again in the last verse ("Creature of night and day"). In the central section of the poem, the image of the "Nervy meticulous/ creature" that "has been weaving... for a thousand years... In contrast to the

¹⁸ *Jornal do Brasil*, 23 January 1960.

¹⁹ Written between 1938 and 1941, published in 1944 (*Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 351).

forms/ of the organized city,” refers clearly to the silkworm, but also to Penelope in Homer’s *Odyssey*, weaving by day and unravelling her work by night. Much later, in *Green Windows*,²⁰ Mendes would write that, in Vieira da Silva’s work “the undoing of allegory forms part... of the actual allegory”.²¹ In the space at once claustrophobic and infinite render in the paintings of Vieira da Silva, Mendes is able to find another, more laborious way, of introjecting the impasse: the uncanniness no longer lies in the conflicting images, but in the act of painting itself. “Speculation on modes of making” became relevant again. This may mark the beginning of Mendes’s interest in abstract art.

Another crucial influence was Magnelli, whose works Mendes had had the opportunity to see and pay tribute to at the *1st São Paulo Biennial*, in 1951.²² That same year, he met the artist during his first visit to Europe, and wrote his first article about him in 1955.²³ Magnelli arrived at abstractionism, not by breaking with tradition but out of respect for it, distilling it to its most essential elements. These are decidedly formal issues (achieving a balance between vertical and horizontal, and mastering color), but they are charged with a density of meaning that comes from the past.

Mendes’s attachment to the art of Magnelli prefigured his association, when he was in Italy, with the tradition of criticism that came down from Lionello Venturi, the most important proponents of which were Giulio Carlo Argan and Nello Ponente, who worked at the same university as Mendes. This tradition had historicist roots but was imbued with phenomenology and also owed a great debt to the Gramscian concept of the organic intellectual. For these critics, every aspect of the work of art, even the unique brushwork, involves posing and solving a problem that is at the same time a matter of (historically determined) culture and of perception.²⁴ Hence a certain mistrust both of freedom of gesture (or that which purports to be this), and of excessive proximity between art and science. Mendes, who, in “Painting and Politics” defended the idea that the scope of art involves “*making conscious* that which everyone more or less feels”, had no objection to this line of thinking. Suffice it to compare the list of artists included in *L’occhio del poeta* [The Eye of the Poet] with those studied by Argan during the same period²⁵ to reveal the extent to which the two men’s interests converged.

It seems to me, however, that there was a certain inversion of perspective in the Italian writings. While, in the “imagist” phase, the

²⁰ Concluded in 1970, published in part in 1989 with drawings and silkscreen prints by Vieira da Silva, and in full in *Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1363-1445.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1443.

²² “Sugestões da Bienal” [Suggestions for the Biennial], in *O Estado de S. Paulo*, 22 May 1952.

²³ *Habitat*, n. 25, p. 88-9.

²⁴ Giulio Carlo Argan, “O primeiro Renascimento” [The First Renaissance], in *Clássico Anticlássico* [Anticlassic Classic], São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1999, p. 17-19.

²⁵ Giulio Carlo Argan, *Salvezza e caduta nell’arte moderna* [Fall and Salvation in Modern Art], Milan, Il Saggiatore, 1964.

issue was one of extracting absolute value from a contingent fact, outside of space and time, the task of the artist now was that of reducing the absolute and indeterminate to something concrete. In this respect, Mendes has a number of trenchant observations. He writes, for example, that, in Fontana, “the infinite becomes intimate, quotidian, is brought within reach”.²⁶ That, in Morandi, the bottle “designates... participation in the world within the consciousness of a limit”.²⁷ The very title of his collection of critical texts, *The Invention of the Finite*, suggests that the initial datum with which the artist is faced is something limitless and ill-defined. The artist’s task is one of reducing this to a sign that can be used and lived.

From the 1960s onwards, Mendes, like Argan, began to develop an interest in kinetic art. In this art genre, the merging of disparate elements can be seen to have achieved the status of an immediately perceived fact, the oscillation of the gaze. In 1974, he wrote a long text on Soto, in which he returned to some of the language of his youth: “Soto documents the tension among humans in relation to a schema in which matter and spirit, transcendence and reality meet”; “Soto, in his manipulation of matter, is a man possessed by an idea of the absolute”. Finally, referring specifically to *Penetráveis* [Penetrables], “he turns a labyrinth into a way out to the other side” (our emphasis).²⁸ Another text, titled “Labyrinth for SotoRoma”,²⁹ begins with the following words: “Two women (who are antithetical or complement one another?), conscious or unconscious, engage in a debate within me”. The “combination of disparate elements” continues to be a fundamental feature, practically an investigative technique.

It would be easy to present other examples, but perhaps it would not be fair: formulas such as these depend on the lengthy analyses in which they are immersed and from which they should arise unpredictably. Only thus do they ignite a catalytic spark which enables a sudden transition to another level. These are the verses that Mário de Andrade thought “leapt out” when he read *Poemas* in 1930 and which still fuel the critical prose works of the later period. This may, at the end of the day, be what essentialism means.

²⁶ “Fontana”, in *A invenção do finito* [The Invention of the Finite] (*Poesia completa e prosa*, p. 1317).

²⁷ “Giorgio Morandi” in *L’occhio del poeta* [The Eye of the Poet], p. 128.

²⁸ “Soto”, in *A invenção do finito*, p. 1.337-42.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1,342-46. The text was originally published under the title “A labyrinth for Soto” in *Soto-Mendes*, Rome, De Luca, 1975.

"Tracking the provenance of a work of art to ensure its uniqueness/authenticity is, in fact, an approach that looks to the future"
MILOSCH; PEARCE, 2019

¹ Stefanie Cavalcanti Freire, *As Dedicatórias manuscritas: relações de poder, afeto e sociabilidade na biblioteca de Manuel Bandeira* [Handwritten dedications, power, ties of affection and social relations in the library of Manuel Bandeira], Master's Dissertation in History, Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2013.

² Vanilda Salignac de Souza Mazonni, Fabiano Cataldo de Azevedo, and Alicia Duhá Lose, "Um detalhe, uma história: a etiqueta de dois livreiros na província da Bahia, Pogetti e dois mundos" [A detail, a history: the labels of two booksellers in the Province of Bahia, Pogetti and two worlds], *Ponto de Acesso*, 16(3), p. 532-565, 2022.

³ "The term provenance has French roots and dates back to the Enlightenment era" (Christian Huemer, "The provenance of Provenance", in Jane Milosch and Nick Pearce (Eds.), *Collecting and Provenance: a multidisciplinary approach*, Washington D.C., Smithsonian Institution, 2019, E-book, p. 4). "...each copy represents a physical object, an artifact, which, apart from its format, number of pages, printed appearance and academic or artistic content, has its own specific features. These are the characteristics that we call 'evidence' or 'proof' of the use and function of this particular copy, which can take various forms...". (Fernanda Maria Guedes Campos, *Para se achar facilmente o que se busca: bibliotecas, catálogos e leitores no ambiente religioso (século XVIII)* [To easily find what you are looking for: libraries, catalogues, and readers in an 18th century religious setting], Casal de Cambra, Portugal, 2015, p. 101).

⁴ David Pearson, "Book Owners Online: uma base de dados para subsidiar a pesquisa da proveniência" [Book Owners Online: a database for provenance

Through a study of the handwritten dedications¹ and marks of use² that appear on the artworks that form the Murilo Mendes Collection, and by approaching the analysis from the interdisciplinary perspective of *provenance research*,³ it became possible to shed light on the origins of the collection and on Mendes's *modus operandi* as a collector. This process contemplates multiple interpretations regarding time, space and the history of reception of the artworks, as well as the network of social relations built up in the course of the life of the poet, collector, and art critic Murilo Mendes (1901-1975).

The ensemble of 175 works of art that make up the Murilo Mendes Collection comprehends a total of 47 items (26.8%) that have handwritten dedications, 28 dedicated to Murilo Mendes himself, 14 to Mendes and his wife, and five to his wife, Maria da Saudade Cortesão Mendes (1917-2010), alone. In relation to marks of use (including marks of ownership and handwritten notes), it is possible to identify 29 items (16.5%) containing marks made by Murilo Mendes himself as part of the administration of his collection. Most of these are situated on the back of the frame.

From a historiographical perspective, such handwritten dedications and marks of use constitute key primary sources for analysis and historical research.⁴ We will look here at some noteworthy examples as a way of provoking discussion and reflection on the process of amassing the Murilo Mendes Collection, which took place in the period between 1921 and 1974, during which the poet was active as a collector.

At this point, we should mention Roger Chartier's work in the field of Cultural History on the complementary notions of practices and representations. According to this French historian, a culture (or various manifestations thereof) can be examined in terms of the active interaction of these two poles.⁵ Adopting Chartier's interpretation, it would seem to be possible to view the handwritten dedications in the Mendes collection as representations of the poet Murilo Mendes within the dynamic of his practices and social relations as a collector and art critic.

PROVENANCE IN THE

**ALOISIO ARNALDO NUNES DE CASTRO
FABIANO CATALDO DE AZEVEDO**

MURILO MENDES COLLECTION:

**NOTES AND REFLECTIONS ON HANDWRITTEN DEDICATIONS
AND MARKS OF USE**

There is therefore a need for a critical analytical examination of dedications that frequently contain expressions of praise and employ eulogistic language. For this reason, Viola and Seara, in their studies of the functions of dedications,⁶ outline the interpretative elements that may prove useful for analysis of such marks of provenance in the Murilo Mendes Collection.

In the case of handwritten dedications in the Collection, a dedication representing significant symbolic capital has a bearing on the implicit value of the work. The wording of the dedication plays the role of a *captatio benevolentiae*, guiding the reader towards a favorable attitude in relation to the work of art. While the act of writing a dedication lies within the realm of gift-giving and spontaneous offering, it may also reveal an expectation of some kind of reward, a request for reciprocity and mutual exchange in the world as representation, as propounded by Chartier.

According to this interpretation, we should consider the possible intentionality, on the part of some artists, involved in incorporating dedications into the works of art on display on the walls of Murilo Mendes's iconic apartment at Via del Consolato, No. 6, in Rome. Likewise, it is fair to presume that the artists (here taking on the role of dedicators) would benefit from mentions in Mendes's critical writings or poems. The expected reward in these cases would entail a strengthening and legitimization of ties and proof of an affectionate relationship with the poet Murilo Mendes (the dedicatee).

In the case of the autographed dedication, it may express feelings of gratitude, friendship, esteem, connection, power relations, a homage, or even a flight of emotion springing spontaneously in the few brief lines in which the seductive art of dedication is plied.⁷ The standard structure of the dedication can thus be seen to contain the following elements: an identifier of the origin (the dedicator), the destination (the dedicatee); the itinerary (the date and location); and the statement (the performative act).

The handwritten dedications, as well as the marks of use found in the Murilo Mendes Collection, can be read as elements extrinsic to the original structure of the artwork, since these were added *a posteriori* in relation to the act of artistic creation. However, in the trajectory of a work of art and/or cultural artifact contained in a museum, it can be surmised that such elements are an integral part of the artwork, making its structure unique, singular and indissociable.

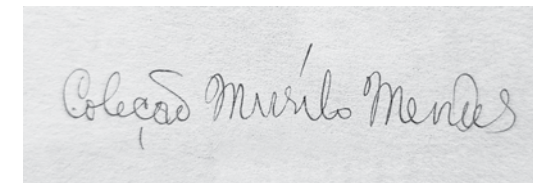
researchers], *Ponto de Acesso*, v. 16, n. 3, p. 25-45, 2022.

5 Roger Chartier, "Por uma sociologia das práticas culturais" [Towards a sociology of cultural practices], in *A história cultural: entre as práticas e representações* [Cultural history: between practices and representations], Lisboa, DIFEL, 1990, p. 18.

6 Ana Isabel Viola, Isabel Seara, "Da (des)construção da dedicatória: análise linguístico-textual" [On the (de)construction of the dedication: textual linguistic analysis], in António Moreno, Maria de Fátima Henriques Silva, and João Veloso (Eds.), *Textos Selecionados - XXX Encontro Nacional da Associação Portuguesa de Linguística*, [Selected Texts - 30th National Meeting of the Portuguese Association of Linguistics] Braga: APL, 2015.

7 Antonio Carlos Secchin, "João Cabral e a arte da dedicatória" [João Cabral and the art of the dedication], *Valor Econômico*, 1 June 2012, available at: <http://www2.academia.org.br/artigos/joao-cabral-e-arte-da-dedicatoria>

On the back of the 1928 painting *Enseada de Botafogo* [Botafogo Bay], - an iconic painting that exemplifies the surrealist work of its author, Ismael Nery -, there is an owner's mark with the handwritten note "Murilo Mendes Collection" added by the poet himself. This peculiar and important register indicates Mendes's intention to identify himself as a collector of works of art. Furthermore, this note was added to a work, which, according to research conducted by Tadeu Chiarelli, belonged to the first segment [1921-1934] of the "Brazilian Period" of the Murilo Mendes Collection,⁸ namely, the initial phase in the poet's career as a collector.



Angela de Castro Gomes, in her book *Escrita de Si - Escrita da História* [Writing of the Self - Writing of History] (2004), draws attention to the need for systematic reflection on the genre of writing of the self in the field of historiographical research. According to Gomes, the cultural practice of "writing of the self" involves the individual constructing a memory for him- or herself through documents.⁹ Seeing Mendes's notes as a "writing of the self" thus suggests that this is a methodological tool that is appropriate for deciphering the lived experiences of a time and place, expressed notably in the marks of provenance found in the artworks that make up the Murilo Mendes Collection.

The handwritten dedications are rich primary sources,¹⁰ capable of revealing, in written words, the expressions of affection shared by dedicator and dedicatee. Of the 47 handwritten dedications examined, 29 (61.7%) express some kind of emotion, while 18 (38.3%) do not. These data suggest that the most frequently expressed feeling is that of friendship, based on the ethos that expresses the personal relationship between dedicator and dedicatee. This indicates that Mendes's sociability network was linked to the symbolic praxis of affectivity.

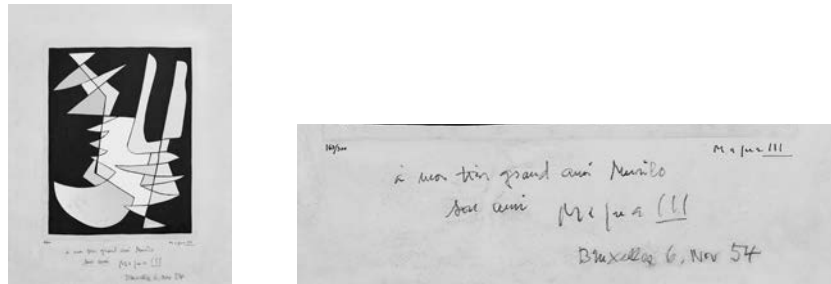
Special attention should be paid to the specific location of the handwritten dedication on the artworks in the Collection. While, in Mendes's book collection, the dedication is usually on the first third of the initial pages of the book, examination of artworks in his collection

8 Tadeu Chiarelli, "Coleção de Arte Murilo Mendes: Percurso; Transformações" [The Murilo Mendes Art Collection: History; Transformations], in Valéria de Faria Cristofaro (Ed.), *Coleção Murilo Mendes: 25 anos* [25 Years of the Murilo Mendes Collection], Juiz de Fora, MAMM/UFJF, 2020, p. 23.

9 Angela de Castro Gomes, "Escrita de si, escrita da História: a título de prólogo" [Writing of the Self, Writing of History: in lieu of a prologue], in Angela de Castro Gomes (Ed.), *Escrita de si, escrita da História*, Rio de Janeiro, FGV, 2004, p. 7-24.

10 Often personal documents that become part of a public collection of material culture. See Ulpiano T. Bezerra de Menezes, "Memória e cultura material: documentos pessoais no espaço público" [Memory and material culture: personal documents in the public sphere], *Estudos históricos: arquivos pessoais*, 11(21), 1998.

shows that the dedication is handwritten in pencil and normally located in the bottom margin of the printed image, below the print area. This would appear to be in keeping with the genesis and history of print-making techniques, wherein artists tend to add page numbers, titles, date and signature in pencil. It consequently makes sense to suppose that this technical tradition both compels and invites the artist to place the handwritten dedication on the front surface of the print. An artwork on a paper support thus acts as a receptacle for the performative act of dedication, as the support for the apposition of a textual narrative.



As can be seen in the image reproduced above, which shows the dedication to Mendes written by the Italian artist Alberto Magnelli, it is more usual to see handwritten dedications on the front side of works of art on a paper support, especially prints. This cultural practice takes on a special significance in the Mendes Collection, in which word and image are combined in a singular manner.¹¹ The visual representation and the textual language merge into a unified, original, indissociable discourse.

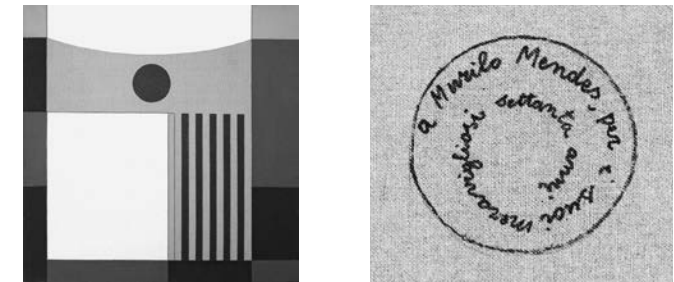
In relation to easel paintings, most of the handwritten dedications are to be found on the back of the works. This confers special singularity to these pieces, seeing that, from the perspective of museographical display, the textual narrative remains hidden from view,



¹¹ Sandra Ramalho Oliveira, *Imagem também se lê* [Images Can Also Be Read], São Paulo, Rosari, 2009.

impeding the full aesthetic fruition of the artwork. We can see this in the case of an untitled piece by Alberto Magnelli dedicated to Mendes and his wife.

The biographical dedication written by Ario Marianni on the back of the 1969 painting *Onnipotenza del faraone* [Omnipotence of the Pharaoh] is especially original. The words “To Murilo Mendes, on his seventy marvelous years”, in reference to the poet’s 70th birthday, are handwritten in such a way as to form a spiral within the circumference of a circle, in the manner of a concrete poem.



Likewise, the back of the piece by the Italian artist Gastone Biggi’s is a particularly instructive and interesting example of provenance. In relation to the dedicatee (Murilo Mendes), the affectionate words (*Viareggio Prize 2nd Place, with affection*), alluding to the literary award received by the poet in 1973 are written on the piece. We can also see, along with the handwritten dedication, an ink stamp containing information relating to the title, number, date, dimensions, medium, and location of the work - all handwritten, probably by Biggi himself.



Alongside this dedication is an inscription of a symbol, namely an arrow pointing to the bottom edge, denoting the precise orientation as to which way up the painting should be hung. In the center, there

is a name label with typed information and an *ex libris*¹² handwritten by Maria da Saudade Cortesão Mendes, indicating the history and ownership of the work. Together, these pieces of information give the artwork a peculiar social distinction, and also underline the social ties that Murilo Mendes had with the Italian artist.

So far as our analysis of marks of provenance shows, 31 works of art on a paper support and one easel painting have dedications on the front of the work, while three on paper and eight canvases have dedications on the back. From this it can be inferred that the textual discourse (peculiar to the dedication) and the visual image contained in the work thus merge into an authentic and unrepeatable narrative, and this is what preeminently shapes the characteristics of singularity and uniqueness of the Mendes Collection.

In an attempt to identify and analyze the temporal context in which each dedication was written, we came up with the following data: 1930s (one dedication), 1940s (6), 1950s (9), 1960s (17), 1970s (3) and 11 undated works. The largest number of dedications thus came from the 1960s, the so-called “Roman Period” (1957-1973)¹³ and this presumably was also the period when Mendes’s social network was at its most extensive. According to research conducted by Chiarelli, this was also the period during which Mendes became interested in post-war Italian art, leading him to write critical texts on these artists and find a place for them in his collection.¹⁴

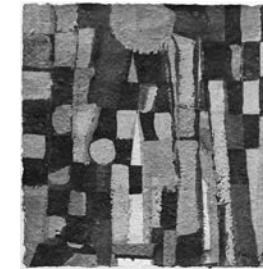
Furthermore, we can see that the poet’s various handwritten notes are marks of use, which – apart from registering and documenting information on authorship, date, and location – also accord, in a symptomatic manner, a sense of belonging to his own collection. In writing these notes on the back of framed works, Mendes places a symbolic and legitimizing mark of ownership and social distinction on canvases and artworks on a paper support. A mark of ownership appears on 29 of the 175 works examined here. We can also see how meticulous the poet was in providing data on the provenance of the works.

The typology of autobiographical dedication¹⁵ situates the reader vis-à-vis the biographical trajectory of the dedicatee. Such is the case with a gouache on paper by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, on which the Portuguese artist herself has handwritten a dedication (using a painter’s brush and paint) on the back of the work, bearing the following words: “To Murilo, 13 May 1965”, the date of the poet’s birthday.

¹² On handwritten *ex libris*, see Mazonni, Azevedo, and Lose, op. cit.

¹³ Valtencir Almeida dos Passos, *O processo de institucionalização da Coleção de artes plásticas do poeta Murilo Mendes*, [The Institutional Acquisition of the Art Collection of the Poet Murilo Mendes], Juiz de Fora, Instituto de Artes de Design/UFJF, 2019.

¹⁴ Tadeu Chiarelli, op. cit., p. 64
¹⁵ According to Viola and Seara (2015, p. 803), autobiographical dedications pertain to an affective register and reveal an ethos of sensibility, and may include homages to family members and friends, and loving dedications.



When he framed this piece, we can see that Mendes took care to highlight the provenance by creating a window in the cardboard on the back of the frame, ensuring that the dedication remains visible. The poet also added the following words, likewise on the back of the frame: “Gouache by M. H. Vieira da Silva Paris, 1963. Sent from Paris to Rome on the occasion of my birthday, 1965”. It is interesting to note that the collector’s mark of use reiterates the structural pattern of the dedication in the format mentioned above: origin (the dedicator Maria Helena Vieira da Silva); destination (the dedicatee Murilo Mendes); and location (Paris, 1963). Taken together, these elements bear witness to and serve also to strengthen the social relation and ties of affection between the poet and the Portuguese artist.

In another of Murilo Mendes’s handwritten notes, this time on the back of the frame of a work by Hans Arp, we find information relating to the artist, title, location, and the date of purchase of the print. According to Chiarelli, such data confirm the fact that Mendes intentionally acquired works by Arp, James Ensor and Georges Rouault and dispel the notion that the Mendes collection came about in a purely “spontaneous” manner.¹⁶

In his studies of provenance, the Spanish scholar Villaseñor Rodríguez¹⁷ has outlined the types of sources of information related to provenance and origin. According to this researcher, such information may be personal, institutional or documentary. Following this interpretation, the back of the frame of the piece by Georges Rouault contained in the collection reveals key aspects of its trajectory. The print, dated 1938, was purchased in Paris, in 1954. The Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro label shows that for a period a portion of the Murilo Mendes Collection was held by this museum. And the label located in the bottom right-hand corner stems from the period when the work was on loan to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, in Lisbon. Such marks tell the unique story of each work, revealing the archeological layers formed in the course of its history.¹⁸

¹⁶ Tadeu Chiarelli, op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁷ Isabel Villaseñor Rodríguez, “Los instrumentos para la recuperación de la información: las fuentes” [Tools for recovering information: sources], in Isabel de Torres Ramírez (Coord.), *Las fuentes de información: estudios teórico-prácticos* [Sources of Information: theoretical and practical studies], Madrid, Síntesis, 1999.

¹⁸ Barbara Heritage, “The Archeology of the Book”, in *Charlotte Brontë: The Lost Manuscripts*. The Brontë Society, Keighley, United Kingdom, 2018, p. 22-69.



The mark of use placed by Murilo Mendes on the back of the piece by Georges Braque, in its turn, is representative of an interesting interweaving of archival information and Murilo Mendes's literary production. During his cultural mission in Europe (1952-1956), in 1955, Mendes visited the French poet René Char. This visit is recollected in a text contained in *Retratos-relâmpago* [Snap Portraits]: "René Char in his Paris home on Rue de Chanaleilles, where Alexis de Tocqueville also once resided, shows me drawings and paintings by Braque, Giacometti, Brauner, and Nicolas de Stael".¹⁹ Combining Murilo Mendes's literary narrative and the information given on the artwork "Braque print // for René Char's 'Le soleil des eaux',²⁰ // A present from René Char. // Paris, 1955", we can conclude that the print had been presented to Mendes as a gift during the visit he recounts.



Analysis of documentary characteristics of the provenance identified in the Murilo Mendes Collection makes it possible to conduct a critical examination of relevant information on artworks, artists, institutions, and social relations of both a private and a public nature. Such research thus contributes greatly to our understanding of how the poet's collection was put together and of his work as an art critic.

¹⁹ Murilo Mendes. *Retratos-relâmpago* [Snap Portraits]. São Paulo, Conselho Estadual de Cultura, 1973, p. 68.

²⁰ Mendes tells us that the Braque lithograph appeared in the published version of *Lesoleil des eaux* [The Sun of the Waters], a stage play René Char, published by Gallimard in 1951.

²¹ Lynn Rother and Iris Schmeisser, "Provenance Research in Museums: The Long Run", in Arthur Tompkins (Ed.), *Provenance Research Today: Principles, Practice, Problems*, London, Lund Humphries, 2020, p. 106-16.

Hence, through analysis and inferences regarding the information found on the artworks it is possible to chart the provenance of many items in the Murilo Mendes Collection, reconstructing their national and/or international trajectory through the various institutional archives and collections of which they have been a part. This has also made it possible to establish a chronology for works not dated by the artists, to identify titles and the location in which the work was acquired, to establish the correct attribution of unsigned works, and to chart key points in the biography of the poet as he remembers them.

In particular, systematic charting and interpretation of these aspects of the collection under study greatly aids the technical processing, cataloguing and indexing of the collection for institutional databases. The provenance represent important features involved in the attribution of criteria that establish the value of works as cultural heritage, involving the technical work of museums in the fields of research, conservation, and providing access to the general public.

We should finally remark upon the special uniqueness and singularity²¹ that these marks confer upon the Murilo Mendes Collection and the vital role they play in confirming the authenticity and safeguarding the physical security of the collection and the institution's mission of preserving items of heritage housed in museums. Likewise, they contribute greatly to the study of provenance and of the historiography of the reception of works of art over time.

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MURILO MENDES, POET- -CRITIC

MARIO PEDROSA

As I was about to write my text, the post delivered the catalogue of the exhibition then showing in Rome, at the Galleria Pogliani, of paintings by Corpora. The preface was written by Murilo Mendes. For several days, previous to this, I had been going through Mendes's poems (1925-1950), collected together in a single volume this year by José Olympio, and I therefore felt very powerfully the presence of a friend and great poet.

No Brazilian poet or literary figure has ever been as passionate about painting as Murilo Mendes. Mário de Andrade also loved art and wrote much about it. But Mendes lives it, as a specialist critic, and, what's more! as an artist, a painter. He is the all-round complete artist: there are no limits to what he can achieve. Can one love painting but not love music? Love sculpture but not architecture? Or love painting, sculpture, and architecture, but be oblivious to poetry? How could one neglect the poetry that Mendes loves above all things and which, for him, forms the basis on which all the other arts are laid? What butchery this would be!

Mendes lives in Rome and is constantly channeling the spirit of Dante. He does not deprive himself of enjoying an hour of Mozart a day, while the images of Delphos or Segesta, in Sicily, are never far from his fabulous

memory, over which "the world" incessantly "knocks on". This may be the reason why, in one of his earliest poems, he was already yearning for "the spirit of destruction" to come and "put an end to my memory".

But do not think that Mendes is a mere keeper of archaisms. On the contrary, his home in Rome is an obligatory stopping-off point for the most up-to-date Italian poets and, above all, visual artists. His preface on Corpora's paintings is no exception. Just last year, it was his responsibility to show the Italians themselves the art of the most Italian of modern master painters, Magnelli. Corpora is one of the biggest names in this generation that is now reaching maturity. Mendes makes very pertinent remarks about the latest phase in this artist's work. As a personality and as a painter, Corpora stands out on account of his critical stance, which perhaps comes from his French upbringing, in North Africa, where he was born. His intellect remains sharp in the presence of the painter at work, when a physically sensual material, such as he is, spills out over the canvas, and goes about stratifying itself, for this transformation that Mendes so rightly describes as being "from a larval to an organic state, in which colors are transported: these reveal the clarity of a vision, which, freed of emotion,

Original text published in *Jornal do Brasil*, 23 January 1960, and republished in *Murilo Mendes: acervo* [Murilo Mendes: Collection], 1999, exhibition catalogue, Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF.

establishes an equivalence between form and material”.

Murilo Mendes's poetry is permeated by hiatuses, critiques, as part of this universal indissoluble thread, in which painting, music, poetry, architecture, dance, and all forms of man's artistic expression are braided together. All of this in the heyday of 1920s *modernism*, which was so often puerile and provincial (in the pejorative sense of the word). Mendes produces verses that reveal his plastic concerns: “We drive in the comfortable automobile, thinking of cubism”. His poems, in all periods, are full of *still lifes*, described or conceived, of allusions to painters and paintings, such as the admirable poem in which he describes the art of Vermeer. They are filled with plastic metaphors that more often than not are transformed into more than mere literary *allusions*, concerning ideas, feelings, and problems that are truly faced by painters, sculptors and architects in their daily work.

In one of his most recent poems, published in the Sunday Supplement of the *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper, he speaks of “the red that fired a shot into silence,” comparable to a similar passage in his splendid *Sicilian* series, in which he discovers “the charisma of blue, that cannot be exhausted of its enigmas” (“Elegia de Taormina” [Taormina Elegy]).

The poet penetrates the mystery of colors and *describes* for us the incomprehensible perception of them. In *Oswaldo gravas* [Oswaldo Engraves], dedicated to the art of our beloved Goeldi, he writes, in a poetically perspicacious manner, “You do not subject the drawing to engraving. You free both forces up... Through visionary nature. And the austerity of your craft... Silence and solitude. Oswaldo engraves”. Does this not capture the very essence of all Goeldi's work?

João Cabral de Melo Neto once said, with intuitive magnanimity and insuperable perspicuity, that it was Mendes's poetry “that taught me to give precedence to the image over the message, the plastic over the discursive”. If João Cabral will forgive me the barbarity of making one small alteration to his thoughts, instead of *discursive* I would say *descriptive*, to keep things within the bounds of phenomenology. A large portion of Mendes's poetry involves describing sensations-visions that cannot be reduced to the language of formal logic. So, the *plastic* appears like a hail of stones flung by Mendes – an artist in the traditional fabric of the poetic. And when he is done throwing them, everything is suddenly frozen in allegory. From here on, poetry is often an apocalypse.

MURILO MENDES'S ÉVENTAILS

GIULIO CARLO ARGAN

For Murilo Mendes, art criticism was a literary genre, or rather, one chapter in his poetic work. At times, the critical text retains the metrical form of his poetry; more frequently it comes into being as a fully-fledged poetic act, and then, the second version is worked into a form of prose that makes discrete and spontaneous use of the terminology of art criticism. The resulting prose is strangely rarefied and somewhat deliberately paced, possibly in an effort to tone down the sonority and emphasize the transparency of the words. Mendes spoke the same way, as if confiding in a friend. What, at first may have seemed to resemble timidity, was, in fact, highly civilized reserve.

Mendes did not approach art criticism as a dilettante, but as one section of his linguistic laboratory. Gentle and modest as he was, he almost seemed to apologize every time that he wrote about art; and, in fact, did so with great humility, as if he were a visitor in someone's home, avoiding rash judgments, dogmatic affirmations, or the urge to discuss controversial issues. He wrote about art, not because he wanted to be a critic, but because, being a poet and

thus also a linguist and philologist, he was interested both in the language of art and in that of criticism and understood the intrinsic link between the two. Always concerned with the vitality of the image, he could not ignore the relations and the associations between visual and phonetic images. The language of art criticism provided precisely this connection between the two versions of the image. Thus, just as he abstained from passing judgment, he also rejected the translation of visual images into literary ones as transliteration, interposing between the two a language of criticism, of whose literary autonomy he was fully aware. Such a diaphragm-like tissue was subtle and almost invisible, like a spider's web. He directed his attention only to things that got caught in this web and remained hanging there until they became words. It was all a question of habit and time. This spider's web was also a vibrant field of tensions. If the impact of the object did not resonate and produce waves, it left a hole and nothing more. As a critic, Mendes was not especially astute, a skill which would have allowed him to produce well-turned-out passages without compromising

Original text published in *Murilo Mendes, L'occhio del poeta* [The Eye of the Poet], Ed. Luciana Stegagno Picchio. Rome: Gangemi Editore, 2001.

himself too much. He would like to have known how to do this, because his angelic nature instilled him with the urge to please all and sundry. This, however, was not possible. If nothing caused his magnetic field to resonate, he lacked the technical skills required to produce academic criticism.

Since art criticism for Mendes was essentially an experiment, he did not address only the most high-profile artists and issues. He wrote only one book-length work of criticism—a monograph on Magnelli, who was a friend and colleague, a fact which must have engendered much mutual influence. The book on Magnelli certainly contains observations deriving from Mendes's work as a poet and it is by no means difficult to see the traces in Mendes's literary work of the emotional precision of Magnelli's painting. Most of the writings contained in this volume are introductions to shows—pamphlets with a drawing in the corner, intended to be handed out on opening night and then thrown away. Mendes in fact relished the occasional and ephemeral nature of this material, which always reminded him of Mallarmé's

Éventails [Fans]. Attending the exhibitions of artists who were friends—and there were many—was a civilized and convivial way of spending those evenings in Rome that marked the end of the day's studies and were also the culmination of them. For those, like Murilo Mendes, who were familiar with the art scene in Rome (which has now, much to Mendes's chagrin, ceased to be) it is easy to reconstruct his itineraries and the daily agenda of meetings with Roman artists from the names of those whose exhibitions he introduced. He was not seeking greatness or genius among his artist friends. His refined and affable humor prevented him from adopting a dogmatic tone. His highly sensitive critical faculties were spurred to action only in the presence of an artist who, no matter how modest, struck him as being authentic and original. Neither his aesthetic intuition nor his sense of morality ever failed him. Like Alfred de Vigny, he loved "*ce que jamais on ne verra deux fois*" ["that which one will never see twice"].

Rome, 1977.

LETTERS FROM MURILO MENDES TO MARIO PEDROSA



Da bordo del "Paolo
Toccanelli",
22 Jan. 57.

Queridos, aqui estamos há 9 dias nesta
jaula; não me canso de insueltar o oceano,
no, estou aflito para me ver livre
dêle. Gato muito mais da terra, com
todos os seus defeitos. Saudades, mil.

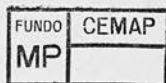
Repassamos nossa vida no Rio, e no
balanço final, sobra sempre esta
angústia - a ideia de que vemos
tão pouco os amigos mais queridos,
mais admirados, mais fiéis - don't
you, entre os principais, naturalmente.

Mario, não recebi a
foto que a Lúcia Clark me prometeu.
Na portaria do edifício não
me entregaram nada. Comme je
tiens beaucoup à avoir cette photo,
resolvi fazer - lhe aqui o aviso.

Não creio que você, tão desorganizado,
encontre hora e disposição
para meter a foto entre dois papéis
e me enviar a Roma. (Talvez a
organizaçõesima (?) Lúcia o faça...)
Mas, o melhor é você guardá-la
aí em casa, tomá-la - e no meu
regresso. MP - cor - dig 020 - 001

22 Jan. 1957 | 15 Feb. 1960

Original letters from the Fundo Mario Pedrosa/
CEMAP - Centro de Documentação do Movimento
Operário Mário Pedrosa/Centro de Documentação
e Memória - Cedem/UNESP.



o final não trouxe seu bilhete de apresentação para Morandi. Deu geral, na Europa, eu me apresento diretamente aos artistas e poetas. Mas, o caso é que, partindo de um homem da categoria de Mario Pedrosa, a apresentação não é para desdenhar. Revista e se, portanto, de coragem, Mario, e me mande umas linhas pra Roma.

Adeus, querido,
Gato por tudo que nos tem sido e se
tão bom e tão amigável.

Apertados abraços
de saudade e
deste vossíssimo

Murilo,

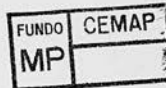
Samhaugo, a toda a tua, esp.

Gullar,
Carlinho,
Basto,
Joan e
Ligia.

Roma, 1 - fev.
Acabamos de chegar. Recebido seu teleg, dirigimo-nos ao hospital, com o casal Afonso Arinos Jr. Ch Lucy está lá há 1 mês, teve pneumonia, mas ainda tem outra coisa que ainda não foi localizada. O hosp. é público mas mto limpo e decente, e a L. não tem nenhum de nada, a não ser de certo barulho de cada a não ser de certo barulho (é por toda a parte!) Comovemos com os cuidados. Bem sabemos que você é o gô-amigo de sempre. Colocamo-nos a disp. dela pra o que for preciso. Breve retornamos pra lá e lhe darei conta. Ela parece bem disposta, e supõe-se q. já esteja em condições.
M.

MP-02-019020-002

Roma, 15 Fev. 1960.



Querido Mario,

Mãe amiga, mandaram-me o resorte do seu artigo MURILLO, O POETA = CRÍTICO. É natural que isto me tenha dado grande prazer. Você é um homem rigoroso, não tem o elogio fácil, e se escreverem aquelas coisas, tão lisongeiros para mim, é por que as sente mesmo. Sem nenhuma hipocrisia, sem falsa modestia, acerto-as, repito, com alegria. Suas palavras me compensam de certas omissões. Superfluo seria dizer-lhe que nela, transparece também o afeto do velho amigo, cuja convivência tem sido para mim das mais úteis e agradáveis. Obrigado, meu caro.

Há muitoencionava escrever-lhe. O diabo é que haveria tanta coisa a contar e perguntar, que seria necessário um livro. Desde quando o Dorasio resistiu da viagem ao Brasil, dando-me razões que me convenceram (ele disse-me que lhe escreveu na época), desejo bater um papo postal com você, mas vou adiando. Os assuntos são muitos. Dorasio foi incluído por Max Bill entre os artistas mais interessantes da atual vanguarda europeia. Gostei de sabê-lo, pois desde o primeiro dia da minha chegada a Roma, em 57, acreditei nele e passei a frequentar seu atelier - mesmo contra a opinião de certo italiano que não lhe negavam

MP-02-019026-001

a inteligência, mas a pintura.

Apareceu aqui uma nova revista de vanguarda das artes plásticas, APPIA. O diretor é Emilio Villa, que o conhece muito - pelo menos de nome. Ele me pediu para indicar-lhe uma figura capital da crítica brasileira para colaborar. É claro que indiquei você. Caso puder, queira mandar um artigo (não longo). P.ex., sobre o concreto e neo-concretos. Possivelmente, fotos. Em português, traduziremos. E também notícias sobre os movimentos de vanguarda daí. Não falam - hélas! - em pagamento. Cito que os recursos são poucos.

Li seu excelente artigo "Da abstração à auto-expressão."
Bem nessez, informel! Mary Vieira a semana última passou pelo aeroporto camião da Suíça, e telefonou-nos, deu "vossa" notícia.

Chateado com o que se passa no mundo, Algéria, problema de Berlim, desarmamento, no papel e no discurso e incompreensão da Cúria Romana em relação ao socialismo. O catolicismo de esquerda, dont je suis, recebendo paulada sobre paulada. Duros tempos! Bomba até a meia de sábado: fim da "douce France" (que de fato existiu algum dia?...?) Os jornalistas dizem

3) que os franceses estão radiantes!... Que imbecis.
Lanza del Vasto: "L'avenir est aux pays sans bombe".

O outro dia, em Moscon, na televisão, Gronchi declarou que o grande problema da Itália é a falta de matéria-prima. O tradutor atrapalhou-se e a coisa saiu assim: "O grande problema da Itália é a falta de queijo".

Quanto à lua, é velha. Os poetas já foram lá há muito tempo, v.g. A LUA DE OURO PRETO, espec. a pgs. 428-29, das minhas POESIAS.

Os imbecis não têm nem noção o que se passa de real no mundo mas, nós já temos S. Mateus, O Apocalipse, Dostoiévski, "1984", etc.

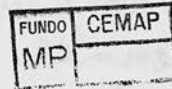
Escreva logo que puder
Lembranças a Verinha e Luciano.
Com a Mary acito grande abraço de saudade e do seu velho e grato
Murilo.

P.S.

O Emilio Villa, não sei se v. sabe, é sujeito de vasta cultura. Ado o estilo dele muito retorcido e complicado. Seus artigos às vezes me exasperam. Mas tenho tido umas boas conversas com ele, e vejo que o cabra é bocado mesmo, sabe coisa como o diabo (sem falar nas várias línguas que lê, inclusive o sânscrito). M.)

2º P.S.

Inútil dizer que senti imenso a morte do nosso velho Evandro, sujeito fabuloso.



MP - WR - dig 026-002

On board the "Paolo Toscanelli" 22 January 1957

Dear Friends,

We have been here in this cage for nine days. I never tire of cursing the ocean and I am very anxious to be free of it. I like dry land much more, despite its faults.

Miss you lots.

We are looking back over our life in Rio and, in the final analysis, this leaves us distressed by the thought that we so seldom see our dearest and most loyal friends - you yourselves naturally foremost among them.

Mario, I did not receive the photo that Ligia Clark promised me. The building's porter did not hand me anything. As I would very much like to have that photo, I decided to mention it to you here.

I do not believe that you, who are not so well organized, will find the time or the disposition to place the photo between two pieces of card and send it to me in Rome (Perhaps the highly organized (?) Ligia might do so...). But it would be best for you to keep it at your place. I will pick it up when I return.

I ended up not bringing your letter of introduction

for Morandi. In general, in Europe, I introduce myself directly to artists and poets. The fact is, however, that, coming from someone of such great stature as Mario Pedrosa, such an introduction could not be disregarded. So, pluck up your courage, Mario, and send some lines to me in Rome.

Adieu my friends.

We are thankful for everything special you have given us and for such good friendship.

Warm embraces. Missing you. I remain truly yours, Murilo
Send my regards to the whole gang, especially Gullar, Carlinhos, Basto, Ivan and Ligia.

Rome, 1 February

We have just arrived. On receiving your telegram, we drove to the hospital, with Afonso Arinos Jr. and his wife. Lucy has been there for a month. She had pneumonia but still has something else that has not yet been identified. The hospital is a public one, but it is very clean and respectable, and L. has no complaints, except for the noise (which is everywhere!) She was very moved by the good care she has received.

We know that, as always, you are a great friend. And we would like to offer to help her with anything she needs. We will go back there soon, and I will give you a full report. She appears to be in a good mood and already on the mend.

M.

Rome, 15th February 1960

Dear Mario,

Friends have sent me a cutting of your article MURILO, THE POET = CRITIC. Naturally I am overjoyed with it. You are such a meticulous thinker and do not give praise lightly. So, I know that, if you have written such flattering remarks about me, it is because you truly feel them. I accept them very gladly, with no hypocrisy or false modesty. Your words make up for certain omissions. I do not need to tell you that these words also transparently express the affection of an old friend, with whom I have spent much time that has always been both worthwhile and pleasurable. Thank you, my friend...

I have been meaning to write to you for some time. There are enough things I want to tell you and ask you to fill a whole damned book! Since Dorazio gave up on the idea of travelling to Brazil, for reasons that I find fully convincing (he told me that he wrote to you at the time), I have been wanting to have a postal chat with you, but I keep putting it off. There are many things to talk about. Dorazio was included

by Max Bill among the most interesting avant-garde artists around in Europe these days. I was pleased to hear that, because, since I first arrived in Rome, in 1957, I have believed in him and been a regular visitor to his studio - even though this went against the opinion of some Italians, who respect his intelligence but not his painting.

A new avant-garde art magazine called APPIA has appeared here. The director is Emilio Villa, who knows you well, at least by name. He asked me to recommend a good Brazilian critic to work with and I naturally suggested you. If you are able to, he would like you to send an article (not too long). For example, on the concrete and neo-concrete artists. Possibly photos. In Portuguese. We will translate it. And also news on the avant-garde movements there. Unfortunately, they did not mention payment. I believe money is tight.

I read your excellent article "From abstraction to self-expression." A plague on these 'informels'!

Last week, Mary Vieira passed through the airport on her way to Switzerland

and called us giving us 'your' news.

I am annoyed about what is going on in the world. Algeria, the problem of Berlin, disarmament on paper and the refutations and incomprehension from the Vatican in relation to socialism. Left-wing Catholicism, of which I am a proponent, has been getting quite a beating. Hard times!

Saturday's atomic bomb: the end of "la douce France" [sweet France] (which did in fact once exist?..). The newspapers say that the French are radiant!... What idiots. Lanza del Vasto: "The future is for countries without the bomb".

The other day, in Moscow, on television, Gronchi declared that the big problem in Italy is the lack of raw materials. The translator slipped up and it came out as: "The big problem in Italy is the lack of cheese."

So far as going to the moon is concerned, this is old hat. The poets have already been going there for a long time, e.g., THE MOON IN OURO PRÊTO, especially pages 438-439 in POEMS.

The idiots can neither see nor hear what is really going on in the world. But

we have already read Saint Matthew's gospel, the Book of Revelation, Dostoevsky, "1984" etc.

Write as soon as you can.

Send my regards to Verinha and Luciano.

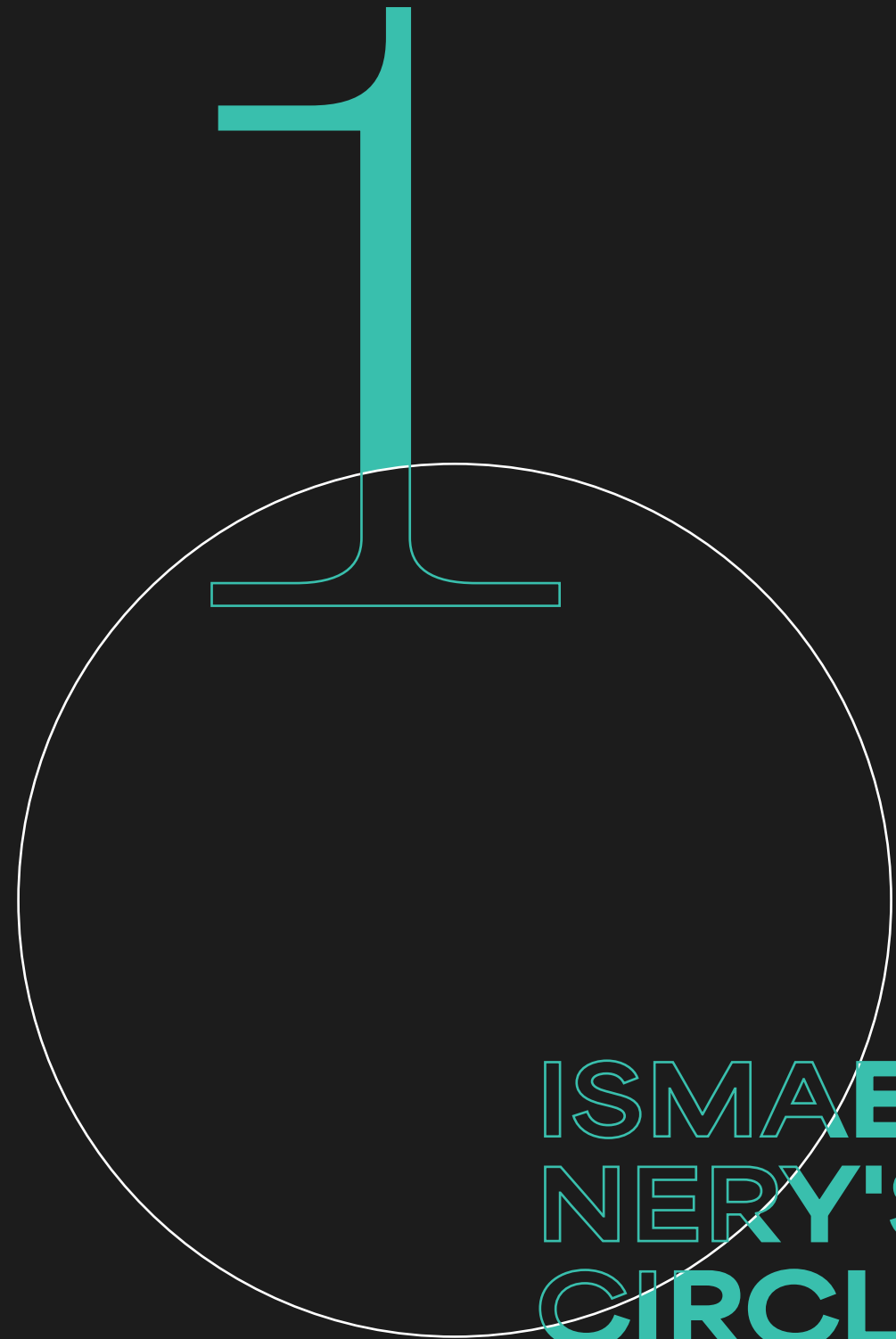
With Mary accept big hugs from Saudade and your old and thankful friend,

Murilo.

P.S. I don't know whether you know him, but Emilio Villa is a highly cultured person.

I find his style very tortuous and complicated. His articles sometimes leave me exasperated. But I have had some excellent conversations with him, and I can see that he's damned good. He knows a hell of a lot (not to mention the various languages he can read, including Sanskrit).

P.P.S. It goes without saying that I was deeply saddened by the death of our old friend Evandro. A fabulous fellow.



ISMAEL
NERY'S
CIRCLE

1901

Murilo Mendes is born on 13 May in Juiz de Fora. Some of his earliest memories foreshadow his later career as a poet and art critic, as he recalls in a letter to Maria Helena Vieira da Silva (13/11/1943):

I first became an art lover at around five years of age, when I began to explore my bedroom wallpaper in Juiz de Fora. If I remember correctly, it contained images of the Orient... There were tigers and panthers, houses with curved roof tiles, minarets and elaborate bridges, princesses with their faces veiled, and so forth. It was very colorful - and yet there were no colors. There were countless lines contorting themselves into labyrinths. It took months, years, for me to succeed in tracing the course of these lines with my eyes...

1910

The passage of Halley's comet makes a profound impression on the young boy. He claims not to have slept a wink throughout the three nights on which the comet appeared in the night sky and that, the first time he saw it, he was touched by poetry.

1916-19

Enrolls in Pharmacy School in Juiz de Fora but withdraws from the course to take up a place at the Salesian College in Niterói, from which he also drops out. While still at this college, he plays truant to watch the ballet dancer Vaslav Nijinsky perform at Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Theater. He returns to live in Juiz de Fora and unsuccessfully tries his hand at various jobs.



YOUNG MURILO WITH A PALE HAT AND BLACK SUIT, LEANING SIDeways, 1927 B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES – UFJF

1920

Moves to Rio de Janeiro and gets a job as an archivist at the National Heritage Board. He contributes regularly to the “Crônica mundana” [Worldly Chronicle] column in the Juiz de Fora local paper *A Tarde*.

1921

In late 1921, Mendes first makes the acquaintance of Ismael

Nery, who was returning from a trip to Paris. Nery is hired by the Department of Architecture and Surveying at the Ministry of Finance's National Heritage Board. Years later, in *Memoirs of Ismael Nery* Mendes will recall the occasion:

Ismael had recently returned from Europe, where he had spent one year furthering his studies in painting. I remember him

talking passionately about the various exhibitions and museums, but he did not mention any specific painter of the time. He was expecting there to be some major change in the way artists are conceived, or perhaps a return to the classical concept, because he saw the artist as a being in perfect harmony, blessed with wisdom and foresight, and not merely a cultivator of temperament; he saw painting as being in a state of crisis, with the emergence of cinema.

In the 1920s, up to Nery's death in 1934, Mendes attends meetings at his friend's house in Botafogo. Antônio Bento, Mario Pedrosa (after 1924), Alberto da Veiga Guignard (after 1929), Antônio Costa Ribeiro, and Jorge Burlamaqui, among others, are also present.



MURILO MENDES AND ISMAEL NERY, 1920S B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES – UFJF

1922

Ismael Nery paints his first portrait of Murilo Mendes.

1924

In his room in the guesthouse where he is living, Murilo Mendes mounts an “exhibition” of the work of Ismael Nery. Antônio Bento and José Lins do Rego recall that Mario Pedrosa took them to see these works. Pedrosa, for his part, will recollect, in 1966, that it was Antônio Bento who took him to Nery's house.

1927

Ismael Nery travels once again to Europe, where he meets André Breton and befriends Marc Chagall.

Mendes is introduced to surrealism by Ismael Nery. He is especially drawn to Max Ernst and Giorgio De Chirico. He will later comment as follows on his relationship to surrealism in a text on De Chirico in *Retratos-relâmpago* [Snap Portraits]:

In the very early years of surrealism, I began avidly absorbing

information on this new avant-garde style, which, although I did not adopt it systematically, fascinated me and compelled me to create an uncanny atmosphere, and to renounce facile predictable schemas. This was a matter of cultural duty. Brazil, according to Jorge de Sena, was surreal by birth, and my “conversion”, albeit partial, was therefore not that difficult.



MURILO MENDES
BESIDE A PAINTING
BY ISMAEL NERY, 1939
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: JORGE DE CASTRO
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF

Murilo Mendes will recollect the occasion years later in an essay on the artist in *Snap Portraits*:

Oswald de Andrade sported a broad red sash under his tuxedo, bearing the slogan “The world marches left”. This is what the early anarchic poems communicate to us, the ones about Pagu of the Oriental eyes. Fair-armed Elsie Houston sings the rhythms and overabundance of Brazil; Benjamin Péret films the Rio carnival, studies our folklore, visits an indigenous community. Ismael Nery comments on life in general and in particular, re-inventing a kind of high-level philosophy without books... Everyone

brings a good stock of dreams, projects, irreverence. Yes, I saw, touched and heard these people and others who surrounded Tarsila in those magical times.

Le Corbusier lectures at the Brazilian Institute of Architects (IAB) (5 and 7 December). Mendes meets the Swiss architect on this occasion and/or during Le Corbusier’s second visit in 1936 to design a project for the Ministry of Education and Culture. After the death Le Corbusier, whose funeral Mendes attended, he will write in *Snap Portraits*:

I met Le Corbusier in Rio, in the early 1930s. We met at the homes of mutual acquaintances. He surrounded himself with aspiring young architects led by Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer... I was

1928

Publishes a poem in the São Paulo magazine *Revista de Antropofagia*.

After visiting Murilo Mendes in Rio de Janeiro and seeing Ismael Nery’s work for the first time, Mário de Andrade lavishes praise on Nery in an article for *Diário Nacional* (10/04).

First exhibition of the work of Cícero Dias in Rio de Janeiro, at the head office of the Polyclinic, on the occasion of the 1st South American Congress

of Psychoanalysis, through the intercession of Graça Aranha.

1929

Ismael Nery exhibits for the first time at the Belém Palace Theatre in the Brazilian State of Pará and, shortly thereafter, at the Palace Hotel in Rio de Janeiro, in a show put together by Murilo Mendes and Antônio Bento.

This year also sees Tarsila do Amaral’s first solo show in Rio de Janeiro, then the capital of Brazil, and

already a great admirer of the founding father, along with Ozenfant, of the Purist movement. I was familiar with the magnificent periodical they both edited, *Esprit Nouveau...* One day, when I was walking with him along the seafront, he traced out in the air, with methodical

deliberation, a sketch of his highly original plan for a single sweeping horizontal block of buildings, connecting Praia Vermelha to Ponta do Calabouço.

Max Ernst publishes *La femme 100 têtes* [The Hundred Headless Woman], a collage-novel which

will become the main source of inspiration for the photomontages produced by Murilo Mendes and Jorge de Lima the following year. In testimony to the high regard in which he held Max Ernst, Mendes will write in 1965-1966 in *Snap Portraits*:

Currently having no permanent place of residence, Marx Ernst receives me in a Paris hotel. He probes me with his blue eyes... I confess how much I am indebted to him, the coup de foudre that his work represented for the development of my own poetry and my discovery of his remarkable book of photomontages *La femme 100 têtes*, comparable, in the world of literature, only to the text of

Les Illuminations. In fact, I believe that Max Ernst is a descendent of Rimbaud, in so far as he creates a magical atmosphere, juxtaposing disparate elements, the violent cut of the poem or the frame, the passion for enigmas (which had primarily been aroused by the oeuvre of De Chirico). Ernst is a visionary.

1930

Publishes his first book *Poemas* [Poems] (1924-1929) and receives, along with Cecília Meireles and Cícero Dias, the Graça Aranha Foundation Prize. In “Poetry in 1930” (1931), Mário de Andrade pays tribute to the book, which he describes as being the most important literary event of the year, and compares Mendes’s poetry to the paintings of Cícero Dias:



MURILO MENDES AND
CÍCERO DIAS, 1930
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF

The Rio style, the blurring of dreams and reality, the independent nationality and accomplished lyrical complexity bear comparison only with Murilo Mendes, and, in drawing, with the Pernambuco artist Cícero Dias....In the work of Murilo Mendes, as in that of Cícero Dias, we no longer detect any trace of the possibility of a masterpiece, the work complete unto itself and unforgettable as an object.

Meets Jorge de Lima and Alberto da Veiga Guignard, who paints his portrait.

Publishes the article "Notes on an exhibition", in which he criticizes the exhibition brought from France of the work of artists of the "Paris School," put together by Vicente do Rego Monteiro and Géo-Charles (*O Jornal*, RJ, 25/05).

1931

Candido Portinari paints the poet's portrait.

In May, Mário Peixoto's film *Limite* (1930) is shown for the first time at the Capitólio Cinema in Rio's Cinelândia district.

Publishes "Painting at an Impasse" in *Boletim de Ariel* (n.1, Oct.) drawing parallels between painting, architecture, and film:

Painting is in crisis. The photographic camera and cinema, as everybody knows, have greatly transformed the conditions of its existence... Wall-decoration painting is tending to disappear, because the spirit of modern architecture rejects decoration - or rather, decoration is created by the distribution of volume and light... Cinema will not replace painting, but, painting, in movement, will succeed it.

1932

Takes a job at his cousin Aníbal Machado's notary office, in Copacabana.

1933

Publishes a collection of poems *História do Brasil* [History of Brazil], with cover illustration by Di Cavalcanti.

1934

Ismael Nery dies of tuberculosis at the age of 33. His friendship with Nery and his friend's death cause Murilo Mendes to make changes in his life. He turns his back on the Bohemian lifestyle and moves closer to Catholicism, in the particular version adopted by Nery, which the poet will call Essentialism. Mendes publishes an article titled "Ismael Nery, essentialist poet" in *Boletim de Ariel* (Year 3, 10/07).

1935

Organizes a retrospective exhibition of Ismael Nery's work at the São Nicolas Salon, in Rio de Janeiro. He and Jorge de Lima publish *Tempo e Eternidade* [Time and Eternity]. The poems written by Mendes included in this collection are dedicated to Ismael Nery.

Mendes will go on to publish poems by Ismael Nery in *A Ordem* magazine, along with an essay titled "Abstraction of Time and Space," in which Jorge Burlamaqui explains essentialist philosophy.

Mario Pedrosa publishes an article entitled "Portinari and painting" in the March edition of *Espelho* magazine, in which he lavishes praise on Portinari but is critical of Ismael Nery. Mendes replies in "Painting and politics" published in *Revista Cruzeiro* (16/11).



1936

Quits his job at the notary office, having been appointed Inspector of Secondary Education in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

1937

Makes his first contributions to the *Dom Casmurro* periodical, intervening in disputes between fascists, communists, and Roman Catholics. His book *O Sinal*

de Deus [The Sign of God], the exact date of publication of which remains uncertain (it may be 1936 or 1938), is withdrawn from circulation. According to some sources, this was at the behest of Murilo Mendes himself, while others claim that it was at the request of Adalgisa Nery.

MURILO MENDES WITH A PORTRAIT OF ADALGISA NERY, 1937[?] B&W PHOTOGRAPHY - REPRODUCTION PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES - UFJF

"PINTURA E POLÍTICA" [PAINTING AND POLITICS], TEXT BY MURILO MENDES, 16 NOV. 1935 MAGAZINE O CRUZEIRO (RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL), YEAR 8, N. 2, P. 27 - REPRODUCTION PHOTO: ARQUIVO O CRUZEIRO/D.A PRESS COLLECTION OF THE FUNDAÇÃO BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL - BRAZIL

MURILO MENDES AND ADALGISA NERY IN FRONT OF PORTINARI'S HOME, 1937 B&W PHOTOGRAPHY - REPRODUCTION PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES - UFJF





MURILO MENDES WITH
A GROUP OF FRIENDS
GATHERED IN A BANQUET
FOR PORTINARI, 1934
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY -
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
COLLECTION MUSEU DE
ARTE MURILO MENDES -
UFJF

ISMAEL NERY
RETRATO DO ARTISTA COM
MURILO MENDES, 1930
WATERCOLOR ON PAPER -
B&W REPRODUCTION
COLLECTION MAM RIO

Jorge de Lima produces what may be one of his first photomontages for the cover illustration.

Mendes also edits Adalgisa Nery's first book of poems. The frontispiece contains a portrait of the poet by Portinari. Mendes and Adalgisa cowrite a letter to representatives of the Spanish government in Brazil, protesting the threat of fascism in Spain.

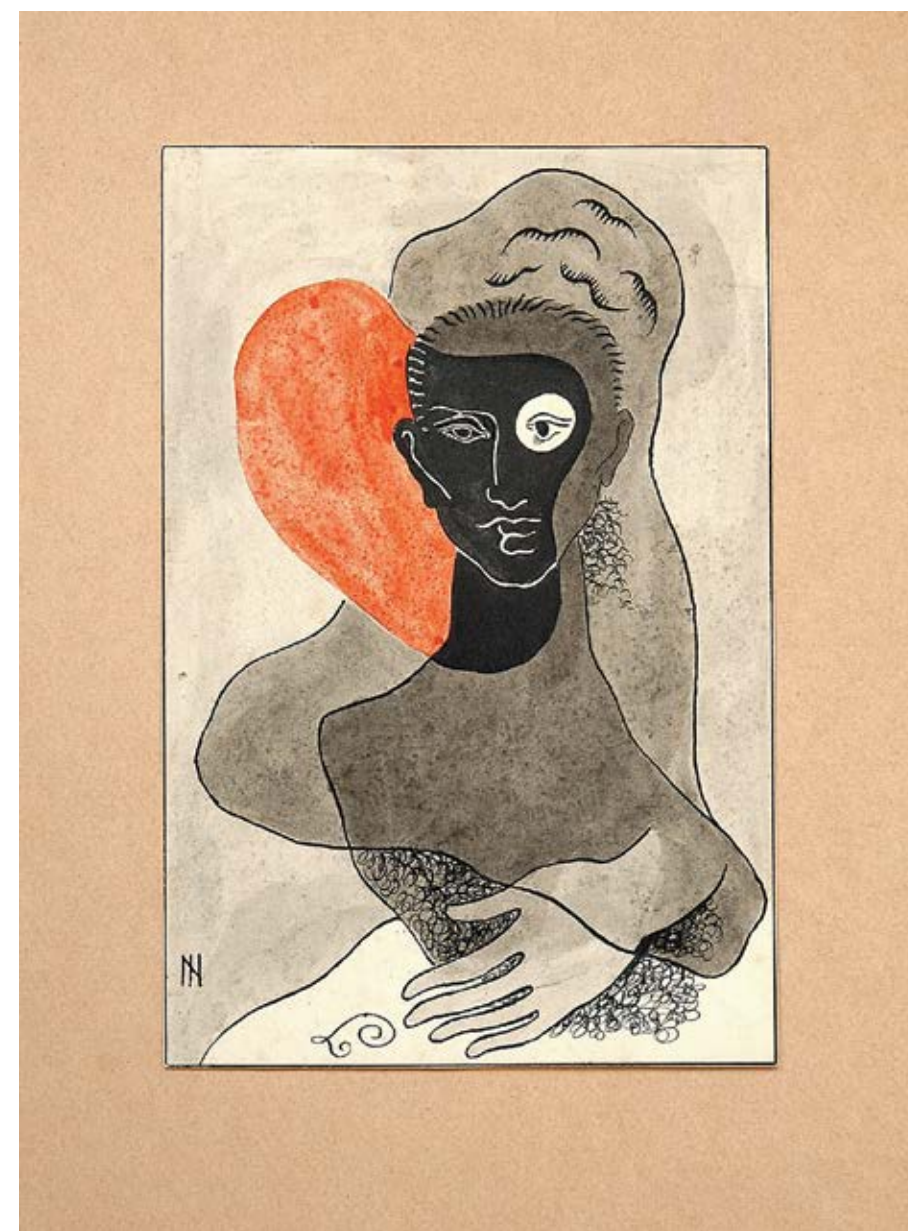
1938

Publishes *A poesia em pânico* [Poetry

in Panic]. The cover illustration is a photomontage produced in collaboration with Jorge de Lima.

1939

On behalf of Brazilian artists, Mendes makes a speech paying tribute to Getúlio Vargas on the occasion of then President Vargas's visit to a large retrospective exhibition of the work of Candido Portinari at Rio's National Museum of Fine Arts.



ISMAEL NERY
Untitled, n.d.
China ink and watercolor
on paper

ISMAEL NERY
*Mulher sentada com
 ramo de flores, 1927*
 oil on paperboard

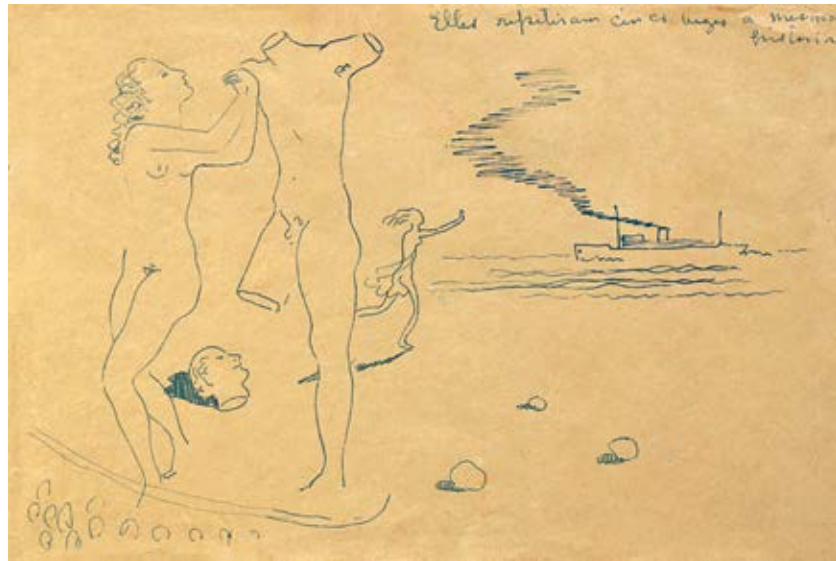


ISMAEL NERY
Enseada de Botafogo, 1928
 China ink and watercolor
 on paper

ISMAEL NERY

*Elles repetiram cinco vezes
a mesma história, n.d.*
blue ink on paper

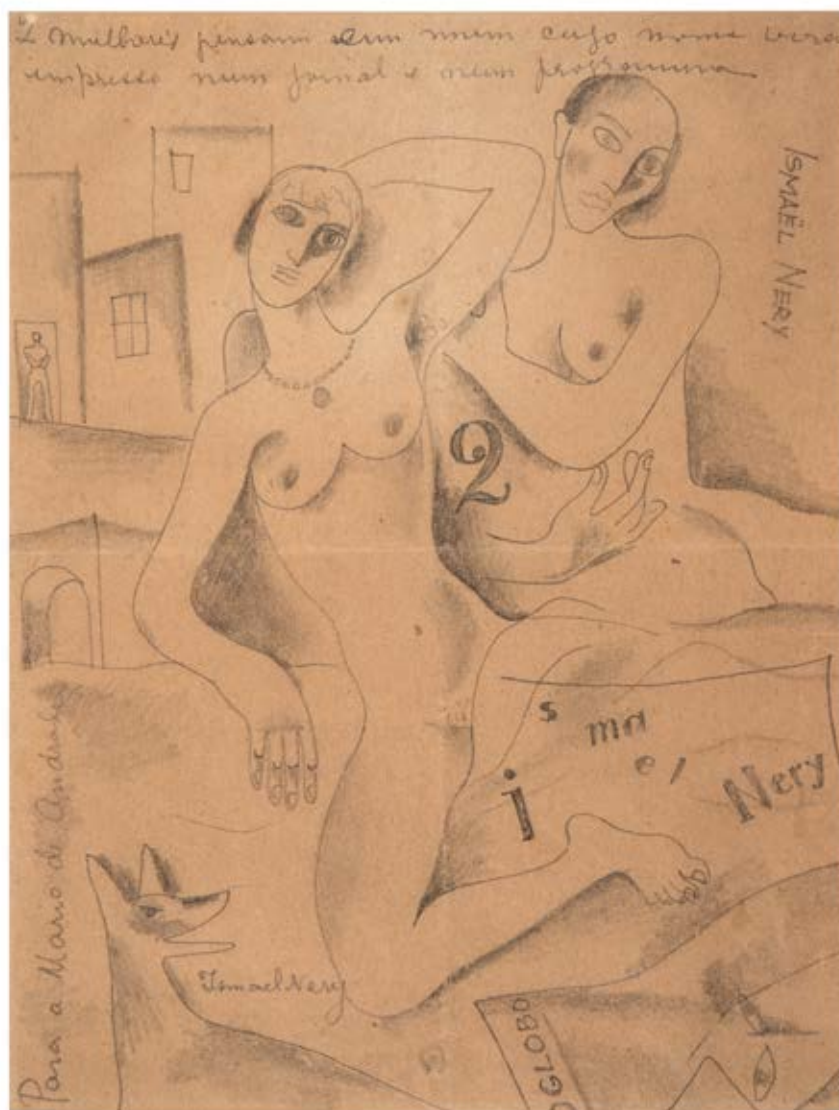
*Elisa era o nome de sua
mulher, n.d.*
blue ink on paper



ISMAEL NERY
Untitled, n.d.
oil on canvas

ISMAEL NERY

Duas mulheres pensam em mim, cujo nome viram impresso num jornal e num programa, n.d.
pencil on paper

**ISMAEL NERY**

Homem e mulher, 1928
gouache on paper

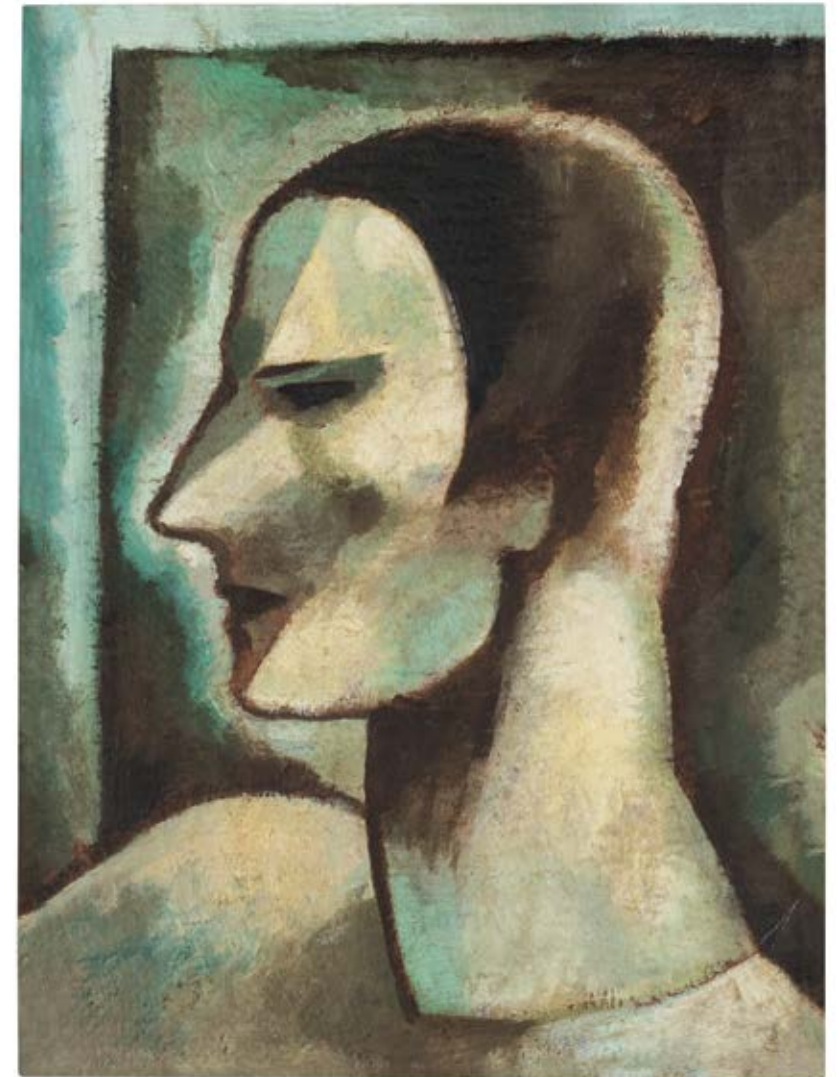






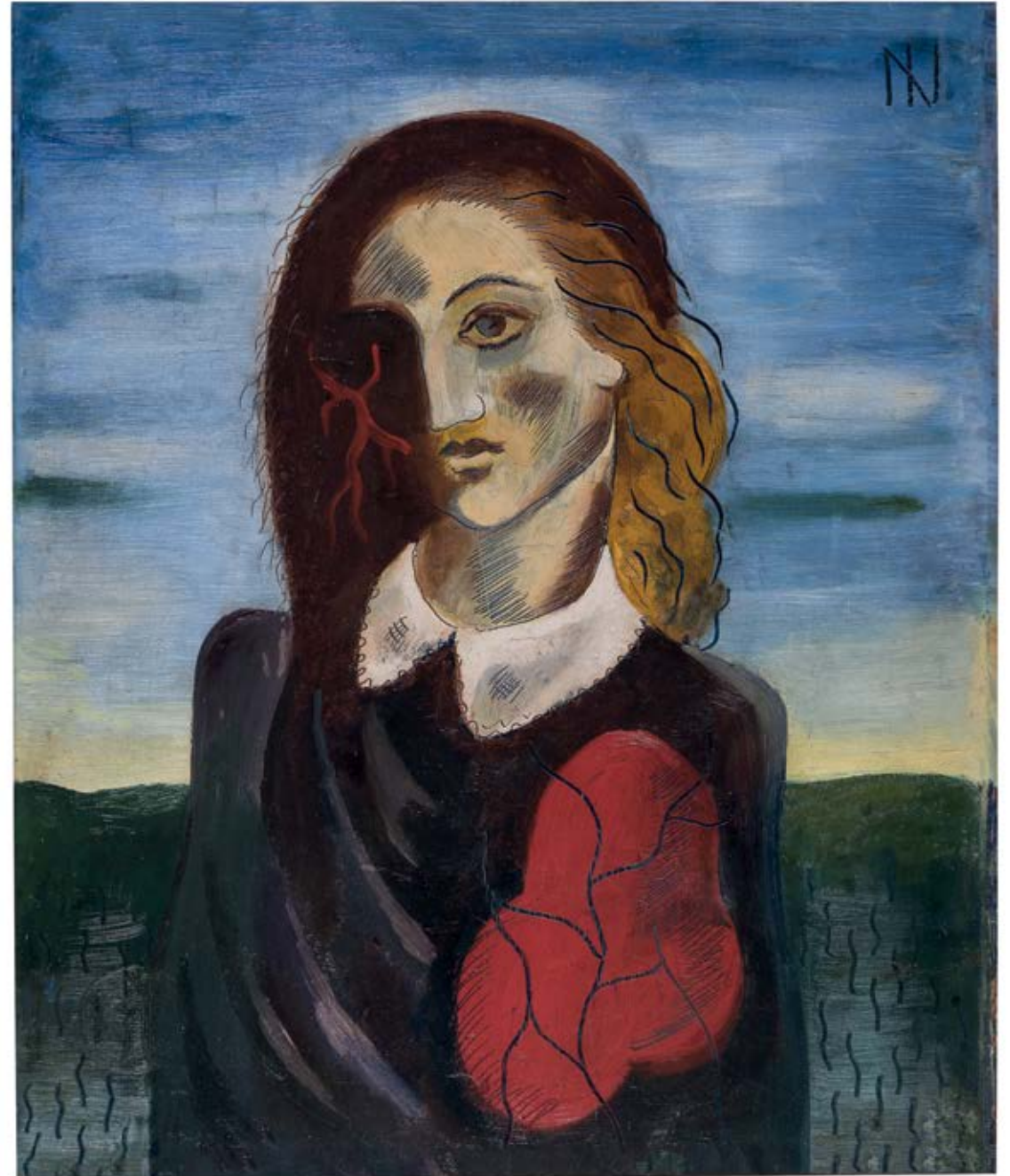
ISMAEL NERY
Duas irmãs, n.d.
 oil on hard paperboard

ISMAEL NERY
Autorretrato (verso Casas), n.d.
 oil on plywood

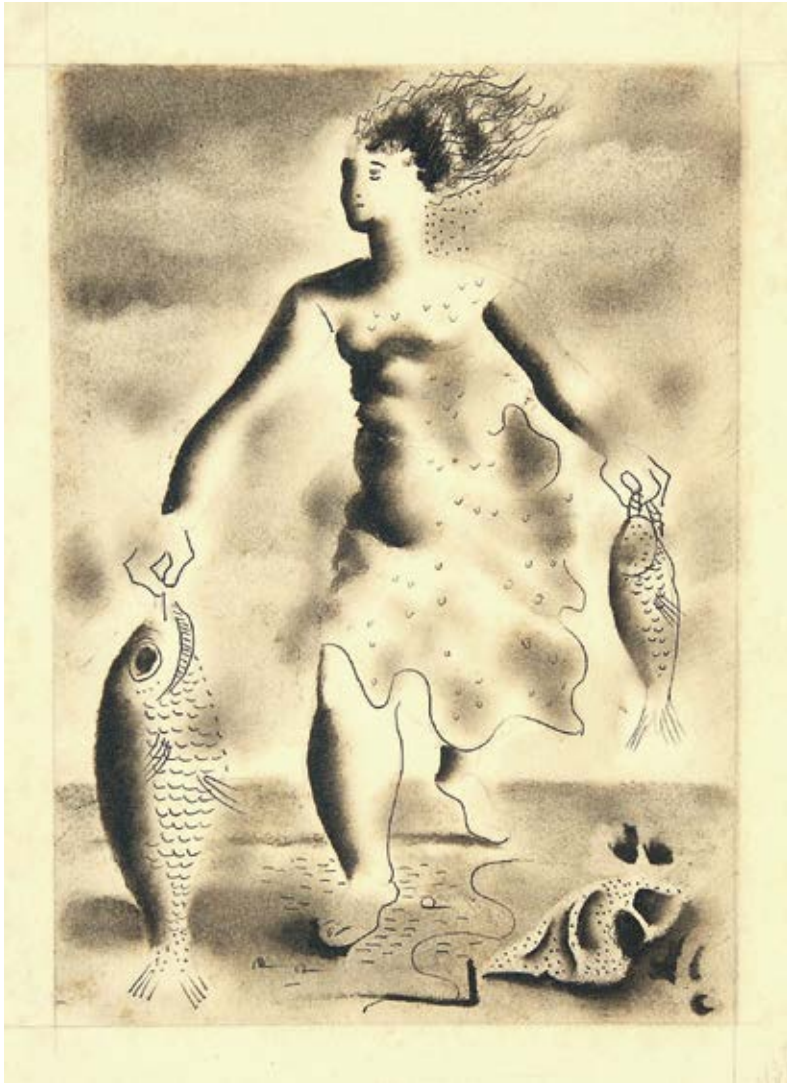




ISMAEL NERY
Retrato de Adalgisa, n.d.
oil on canvas

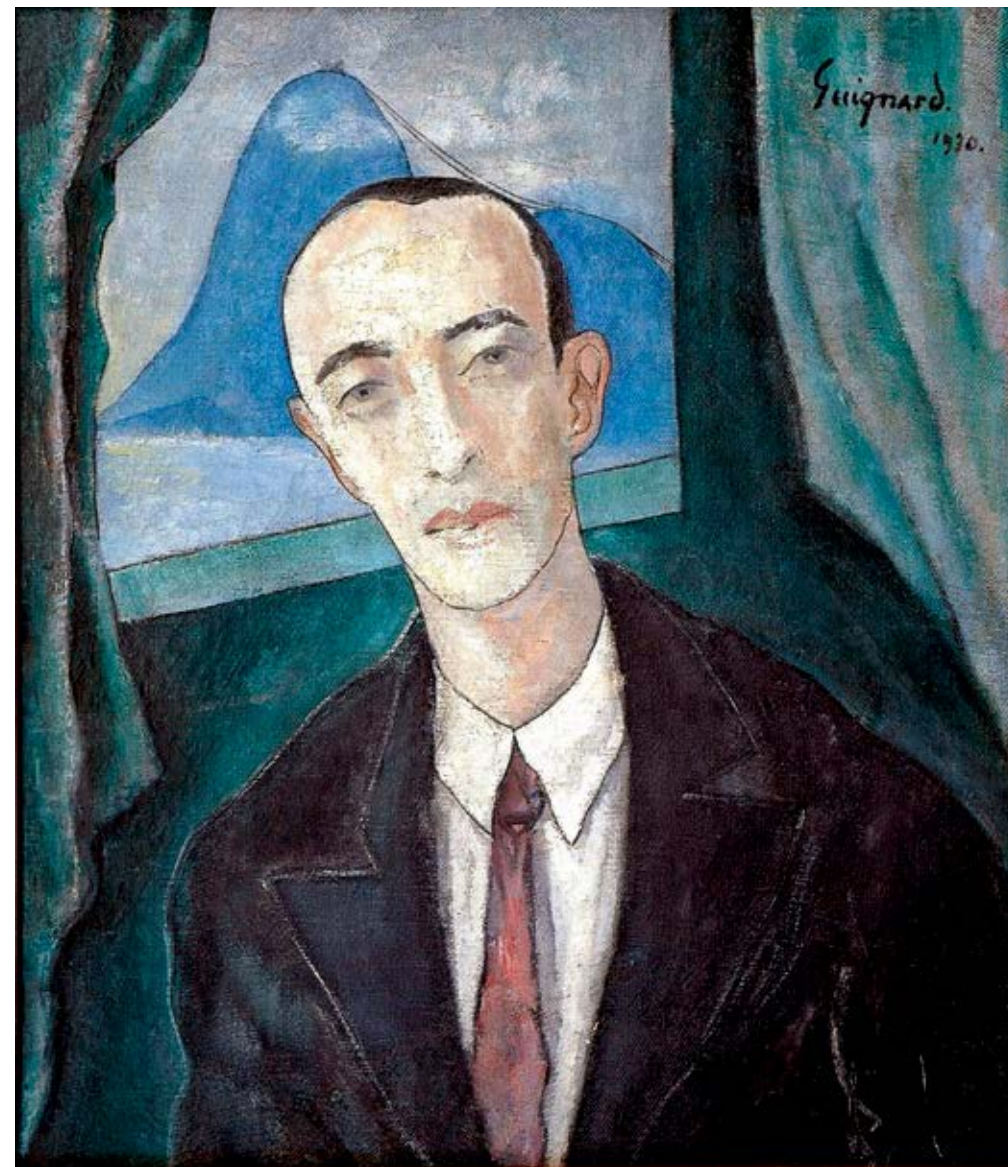
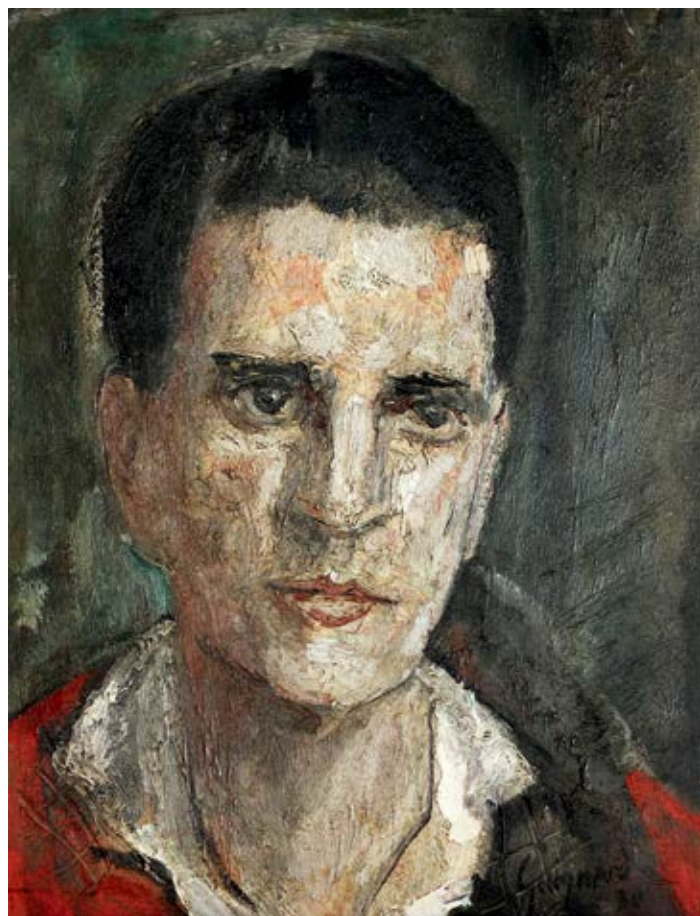


CANDIDO PORTINARI
Untitled, n.d.
China ink and oil on paper



CANDIDO PORTINARI
Retrato de Murilo Mendes, 1931
oil on canvas

ALBERTO DA VEIGA
GUIGNARD
Retrato de Ismael Nery, 1930
oil on paperboard



ALBERTO DA VEIGA
GUIGNARD
*Retrato de Murilo
Mendes*, 1930
oil on canvas

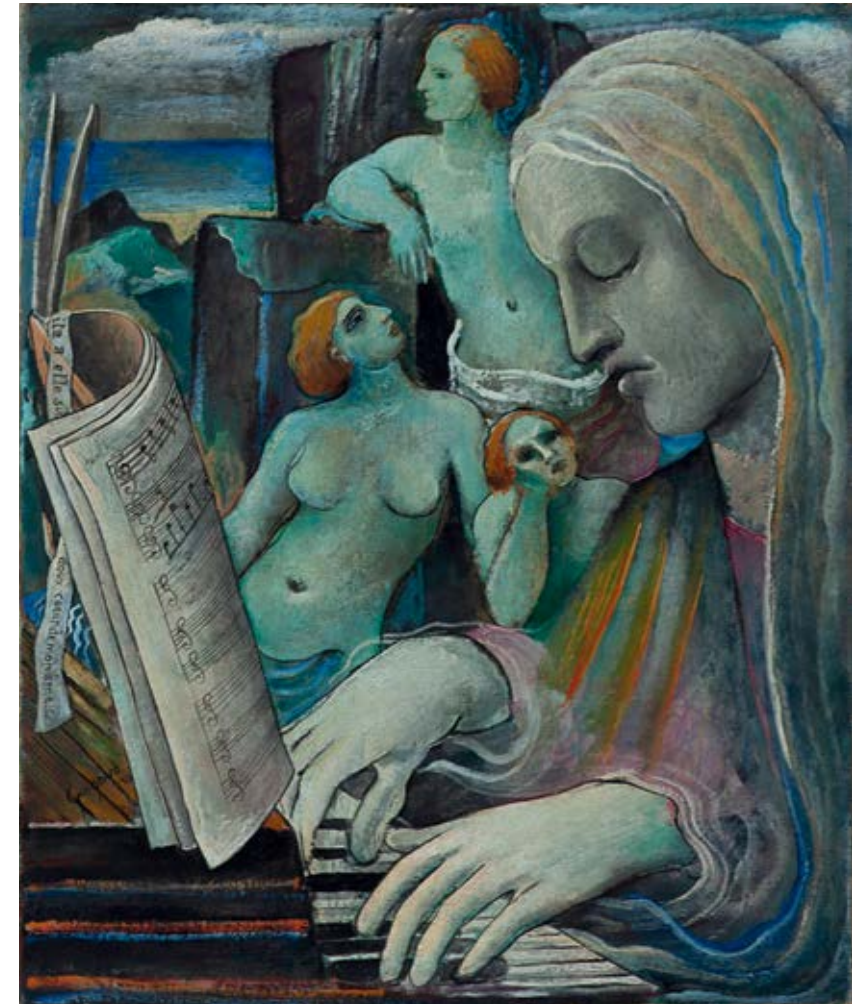


**ALBERTO DA VEIGA
GUIGNARD**
Evocação, 1949
full-color photograph
on paper

Untitled, 1949
full-color photograph
on paper



**ALBERTO DA VEIGA
GUIGNARD**
Santa Cecília, 1933
oil on canvas



CÍCERO DIAS
Saudades, 1931
 watercolor and
 China ink on paper



CÍCERO DIAS
*Cena-violão, mulher e
 soldado*, c. 1928
 gouache on paper

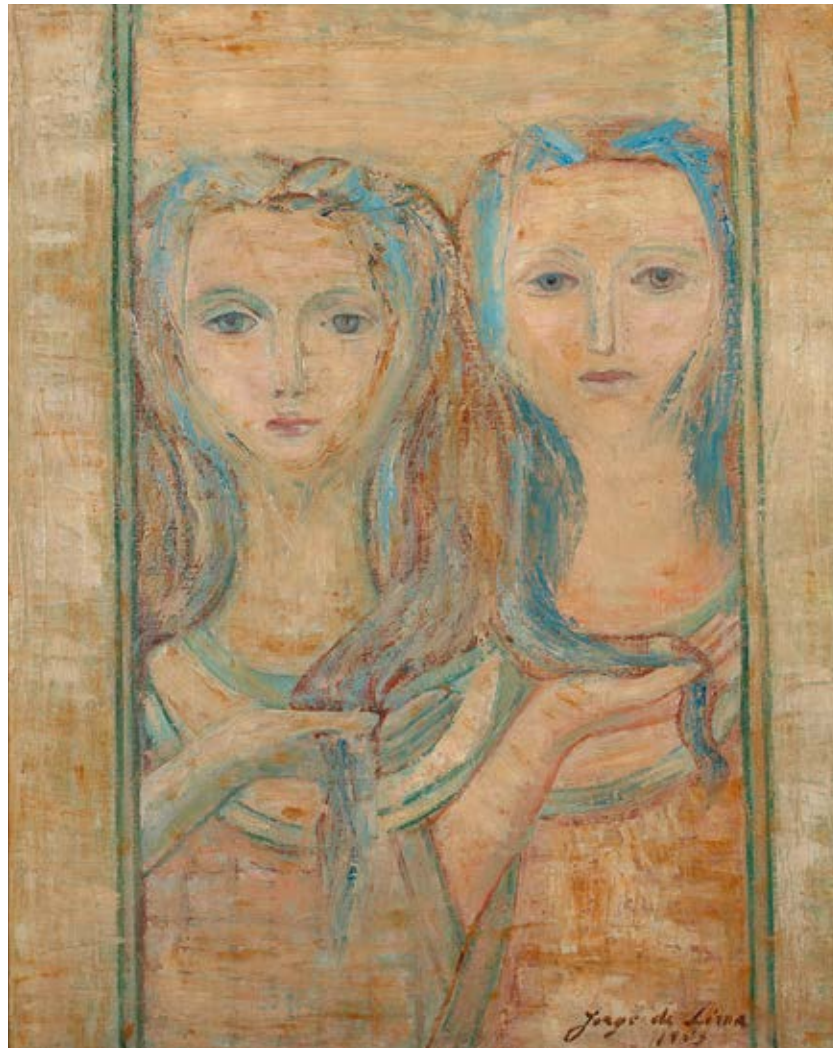
CÍCERO DIAS
Arcos da Lapa, 1930
watercolor on paper



CÍCERO DIAS
Untitled, 1920s
watercolor and
China ink on paper







JORGE DE LIMA
Altair e Violante, 1953
 oil on canvas



JORGE DE LIMA
Fotomontagem:
Mulher com perfil de
gorila, c. 1939
 b&w photography
 on paper

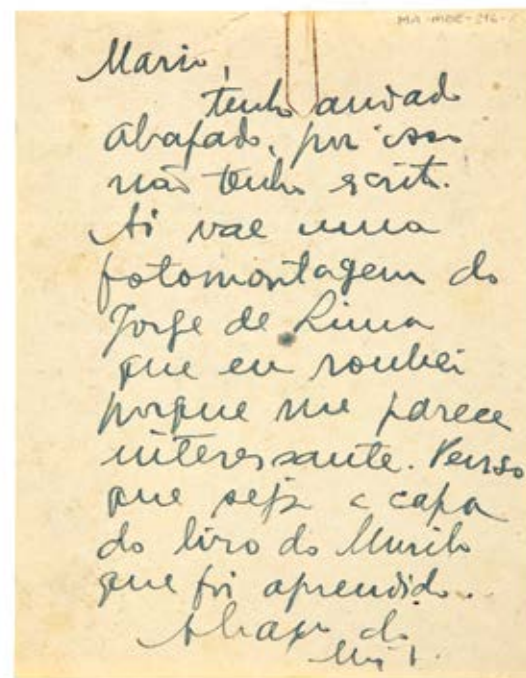
Fotomontagem:
Paródia da
"Ressurreição de
Lázaro", c. 1939
 b&w photography
 on paper





JORGE DE LIMA
 Fotomontagem:
 Mulher com cabeça
 de escafandro -
 O Julgamento do
 Tempo, c. 1939
 b&w photography on
 paper

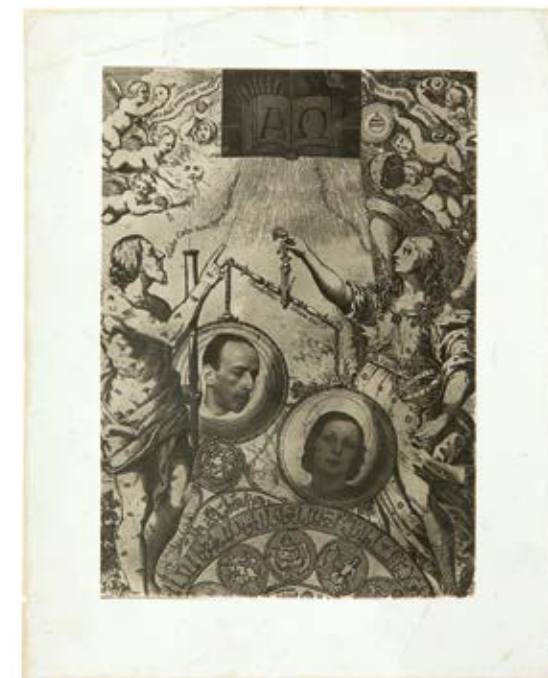
Fotomontagem:
 Figura humana sem
 rosto, vestida com
 casaco de pele,
 c. 1939
 b&w photography on
 paper



MURILO MENDES
 Letter from Murilo Mendes
 About Photomontage by
 Jorge de Lima, n.d.
 pen ink on paper

JORGE DE LIMA
 Fotomontagem:
 possibilidade de capa
 para o livro de poemas
 "O sinal de Deus", de
 Murilo Mendes, c. 1936
 collage and b&w
 photography on paper

JOSÉ MEDEIROS
 Adalgisa Nery, 1942
 b&w photography





MURILO
MENDES
CRITIC
**AND ART
COLLECTOR**



MURILO MENDES AND MARIA DA SAUDADE CORTESÃO, C. 1947
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
COLLECTION CARLOS AUGUSTO CALLI

Later on, Szenes and Vieira da Silva move to a chalet belonging to the Hotel Internacional, in Santa Teresa. A whole community of intellectuals and artists formed around the Hotel Internacional and the nearby Mauá Guesthouse. Apart from Murilo and Saudade, these included Maria Helena and Arpad, Milton Dacosta, Djanira, Carlos Scliar, lone Saldanha, Fayga Ostrower, the poets Cecília Meireles and Manuel Bandeira, and the critic Ruben Navarra.

Mendes publishes “Portinari: Instantaneous” in *Revista Acadêmica* (Rio de Janeiro, n. 48, Feb.). From the 1940s onwards, he writes more regularly about art in major newspapers and journals.

1942

Murilo Mendes and Cecília Meireles stage the first ever exhibition of work by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva at the National Museum of Fine Arts, in Rio de Janeiro. Mendes writes the introduction to the catalogue, which is also published in *Revista Acadêmica* (n. 61):

In Maria Helena the exercise of plastic realization has taken on an ascetic character. Day and night, her lights are on, and the indefatigable worker sets about her labor with brushes and pencil, without the outside world intruding to disturb or cajole her. Her freedom as a visionary is served by sound technical skills. A vast array of highbrow elements is combined with others from popular culture without producing any sensation of conflict,



OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION OF VIEIRA DA SILVA AT RIO DE JANEIRO'S MUSEU NACIONAL DAS BELAS ARTES, 1942
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
FASVS ARCHIVE, LISBON

Jorge de Lima publishes a book of photomontages titled *Painting in Panic* with a “Liminal Note” by Murilo Mendes.

1944

Begins to write regularly for *A Manhã* newspaper on art, literature, music, religion, and cultural matters in general. He publishes *As metamorfoses* [Metamorphoses] with illustrations by Portinari and a cover designed by Santa Rosa. The book is dedicated to Mozart. He writes “Marcier the painter” (9/7) and “Maria Helena” (10/12) on the latter’s

in the numerous drawings and canvases that she produces, almost always managing to achieve a combination of grace and gravitas, obtained generally through the use of blues and earthy tones.

1943

Mendes's father dies. He is admitted to a sanatorium to be treated for tuberculosis.



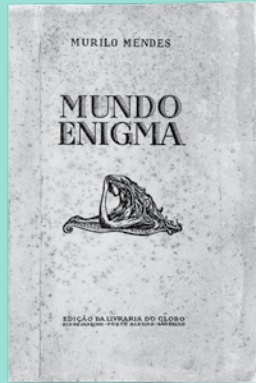
ARPAD SZENES, MURILO MENDES AND MARIA HELENA VIEIRA DA SILVA, RIO DE JANEIRO, 1941
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
FASVS ARCHIVE, LISBON

MURILO MENDES WITH EMERIC MARCIER AND HIS CHILDREN, 1950
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES – UFJF

1940-41

Meets Maria da Saudade Cortesão, daughter of the Portuguese historian Jaime Cortesão, who is living in Brazil, exiled by the Salazar dictatorship in Portugal. Many European artists in a similar situation arrive in Rio, fleeing the Second World War. These include

Emeric Marcier (from Romania), Axl Leskoschek (from Austria), and husband and wife painters Maria Helena Vieira da Silva and Arpad Szenes, who became very close to Mendes. The couple lived for a time in the “Russian Guesthouse”, on Rua Marquês de Abrantes, in Flamengo, where Mendes also resided.



COVER PAGE OF *MUNDO ENIGMA*, 1942
BOOK BY MURILO MENDES
PUBLISHED BY LIVRARIA DO
GLOBO (RIO DE JANEIRO,
BRAZIL) IN A JOINT EDITION
WITH *OS QUATRO ELEMENTOS*
(1935) IN 1945
PHOTO: JOÃO GUILHERME
SANTOS
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF

second exhibition in Rio de Janeiro, both for *A Manhã*.

1945

Publishes *O discípulo de Emaús* [The Disciple from Emmaus], a book of aphoristic prose writings, and *Mundo enigma* [Enigmatic World] with a drawing by Vieira da Silva on the cover and a portrait of Mendes by Arpad Szenes as an illustration.

Writes “Mário de Andrade” on the occasion of the writer’s death (04/03/1945) for the *A Manhã* newspaper. Mário de Andrade was a friend of Mendes.

1946

Takes a job as a clerk at the Fourth Family Court.

The *A Manhã* newspaper creates the “Letters and Arts” supplement, which will continue until 1954. The supplement, with its bold design, will provide an important forum for interaction between visual artists and writers. Mendes will feature regularly up to 1951, contributing poems and art and music criticism.

Inauguration, in September, of the painting workshop at the Engenho de Dentro Psychiatric Hospital under the coordination of Almir Mavignier. In the same year,

Mavignier begins painting lessons with Arpad Szenes.

1947

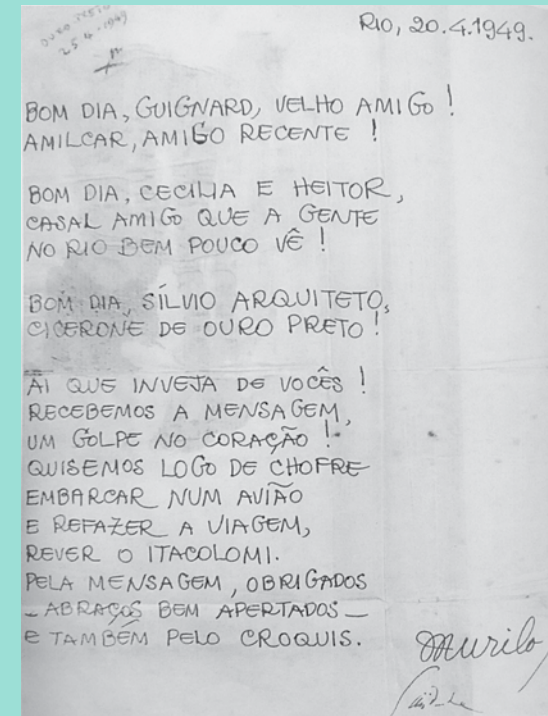
Publishes *Poesia liberdade* [Freedom Poetry]. Marries Maria da Saudade.

1948

Begins work on *O infinito íntimo* [The Intimate Infinite], a book of “meditations”

that will remain unpublished until 1994. Starts to publish the texts contained in *Memoirs of Ismael Nery* in the “Letters and Arts” supplement of the *A Manhã* and *O Estado de S.Paulo* newspapers. Exhibition of artists from Engenho de Dentro at the

RAPHAEL DOMINGUES
RETRATO DE MURILO MENDES, 1949
CHINA INK ON PAPER –
REPRODUCTION
COLLECTION MUSEU DE
IMAGENS DO INCONSCIENTE



LETTER FROM MURILO MENDES TO ALBERTO DA VEIGA GUIGNARD,
20 APRIL 1949
COLLECTION MUSEU CASA GUIGNARD/DIRETORIA DE MUSEUS/SECRETARIA DE ESTADO DE CULTURA E TURISMO DE MINAS GERAIS

published in 1954. Writes “Ouro Preto under threat” for *A Manhã* (21/8).

The poem “Janela do caos” [Window of Chaos] is published in Paris, with lithographs by Francis Picabia.

Also, for *A Manhã*, Mendes writes “The Arts in Bahia” (4/12), in which he comments on the First Fine Arts Salon of Bahia, after a brief trip to Salvador.

1951

Writes articles on Lasar Segall after a visit to the artist’s studio in São Paulo (published on 20 and 27 May and 3 June in the “Letters and Arts” supplement):

The art of Segall bears witness to the clash between the individual and the collective. The individual artist resolves the conflict of forces by interpreting social reality, transposing it to a higher aesthetic and philosophical plane, in which beings crushed by the enormous steam roller receive their justification.

Mendes also visits the First São Paulo Biennial and writes at least two articles about the show (“Suggestions from the Biennial” and “Views of an Exhibition”), in which he addresses the debate over figuration versus abstraction that was underway at the time, claiming that “abstract art is not opposed to reality; it expands it”.

He writes the preface of the catalogue accompanying the exhibition of paintings that marks the opening of the exhibition

Ministry of Education in Rio de Janeiro, reshown in 1949 at the MAM São Paulo and in the lobby of the Rio de Janeiro City Council Chamber, presided over at that time by Jorge de Lima. With the support of Mario Pedrosa, the young artists Ivan Serpa, Almir Mavignier and Abraham Palatnik form a fraternity. Geraldo de Barros joins them in 1949.

1949

Publishes a text about the painter Djanira, in the “Letters and Arts” supplement of *A Manhã* (9/1). He also writes about Di Cavalcanti for the same newspaper (6/2).

Travels to Ouro Preto and comes up with the ideas for the first poems in *Contemplação de Ouro Preto* [Contemplation of Ouro Preto],



GOELDI, MURILO MENDES AND MARIA DA SAUDADE, 1952
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: AGÊNCIA JB
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES – UFJF

of Brazilian Culture at the University of Madrid. However, he is declared a *persona non grata* on account of his opposition to General Franco. Shortly thereafter, he is appointed to another post in Brussels, where he remains for another two years, lecturing in the city and also in Paris and Amsterdam.

room of the new head office of the Brazil-United States Institute in Rio de Janeiro. The show features Djanira, Milton Dacosta, Maria Leontina, Guignard, Iberê Camargo, Roberto Burle Marx, Santa Rosa, among others.

travel to Europe. The cities they visit include Paris, where Mendes meets André Breton, Marc Chagall and Alberto Magnelli, about whom he will write on various occasions.

1952

Murilo Mendes and Maria da Saudade

1953

In September, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs appoints him Professor

1955

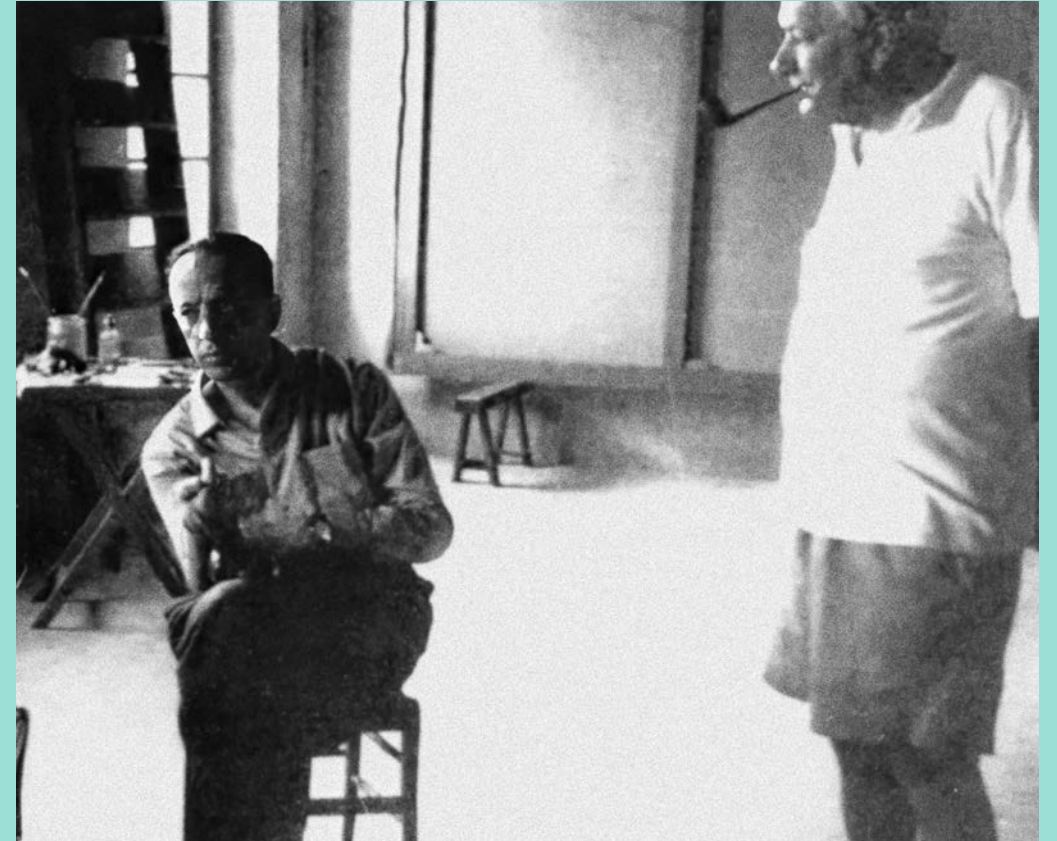
Visits a grand retrospective exhibition of the work of Alberto Magnelli in Brussels and publishes his first article on the artist in *Habitat* magazine.

The *XXe Siècle* periodical publishes, in French, an article by Murilo Mendes titled “Magnelli à Bruxelles” [Magnelli in Brussels].

1956

Sits on the panel of judges at the 5th National Modern Art Salon, in Rio de Janeiro. Writes an article on the selection of paintings for the competition’s exhibition for *Para Todos* (Year 1, n.3, in the first fortnight in June), in which he discusses a variety of subjects, including concrete painting:

The concrete artists must be taken seriously, since they are now in the vanguard of new developments. It is not fair, however, to demand that they deliver something they are not yet capable of... They have just been born, and the more correct approach, in my view, would be to receive them sympathetically, even when they diverge from one’s own aesthetic credo. They are looking for a new plastic



MURILO MENDES AND ALBERTO MAGNELLI AT THE ARTIST’S STUDIO, 1958
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY – REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: UNKNOWN AUTHOR
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE MURILO MENDES – UFJF

language, like those musicians who are researching relations of sound based on atonality, or those poets who seek to use poetry in a way that eschews or transcends the system of ordering words that has prevailed hitherto, within a tradition of strict logical rigor.

He also stages the first retrospective exhibition of the Brazilian artist Maria Martins at the Museum of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro and writes the main text accompanying this exhibition:

With a view always to expressing the violent tensions between magic and functionality,

between Eros and death, between the dynamism of clearly defined forms and an ambiguous dreamlike atmosphere, in his quest for a language that is at the same time barbarous and flexible, Maria, dissonant and theatrical, is the latest in the long line of those who have researched and interpreted an augmented reality.

OSWALDO GOELDI
O paraquedista, 1942
crayon on paper



OSWALDO GOELDI
O ladrão, n.d.
 woodcut



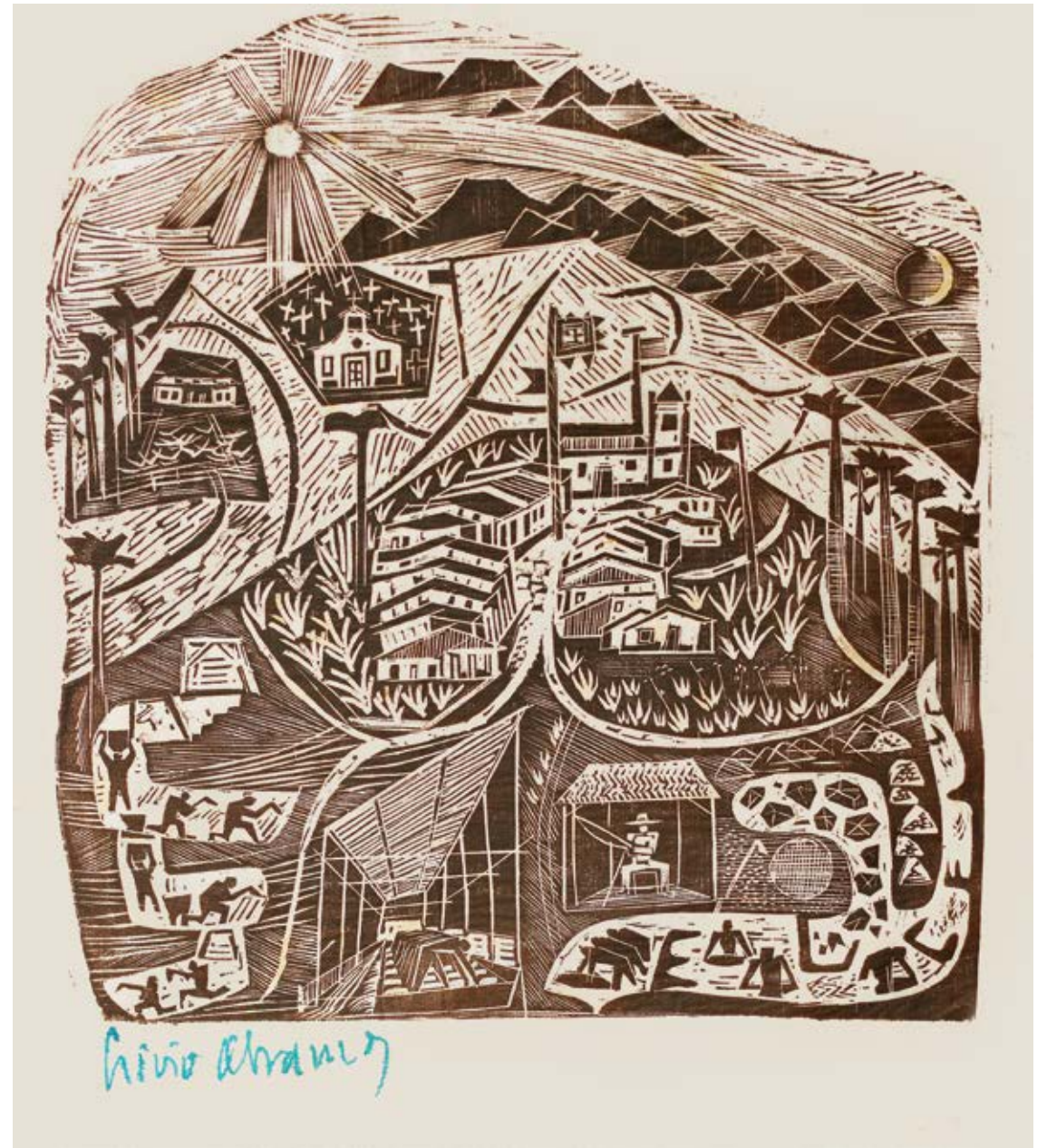
AXL LESKOSCHEK
 Untitled (Figure 5 - Illustration
 for the book "Demons" by Fiodor
 Dostoiévski, Rio de Janeiro:
 Ed. José Olympio), 1962
 woodcut on paper

Untitled (Figure 10 - Illustration
 for the book "The Brothers
 Karamazov" by Fiodor
 Dostoiévski, vol. 2, Rio de Janeiro:
 Ed. José Olympio), 1961
 woodcut on paper



LÍVIO ABRAMO
 Untitled, 1951
 woodcut

LÍVIO ABRAMO
 Untitled, n.d.
 woodcut



FAYGA OSTROWER
*Duas mulheres e uma
 criança, 1950*
 etching, lavis aquatint, and
 drypoint on paper

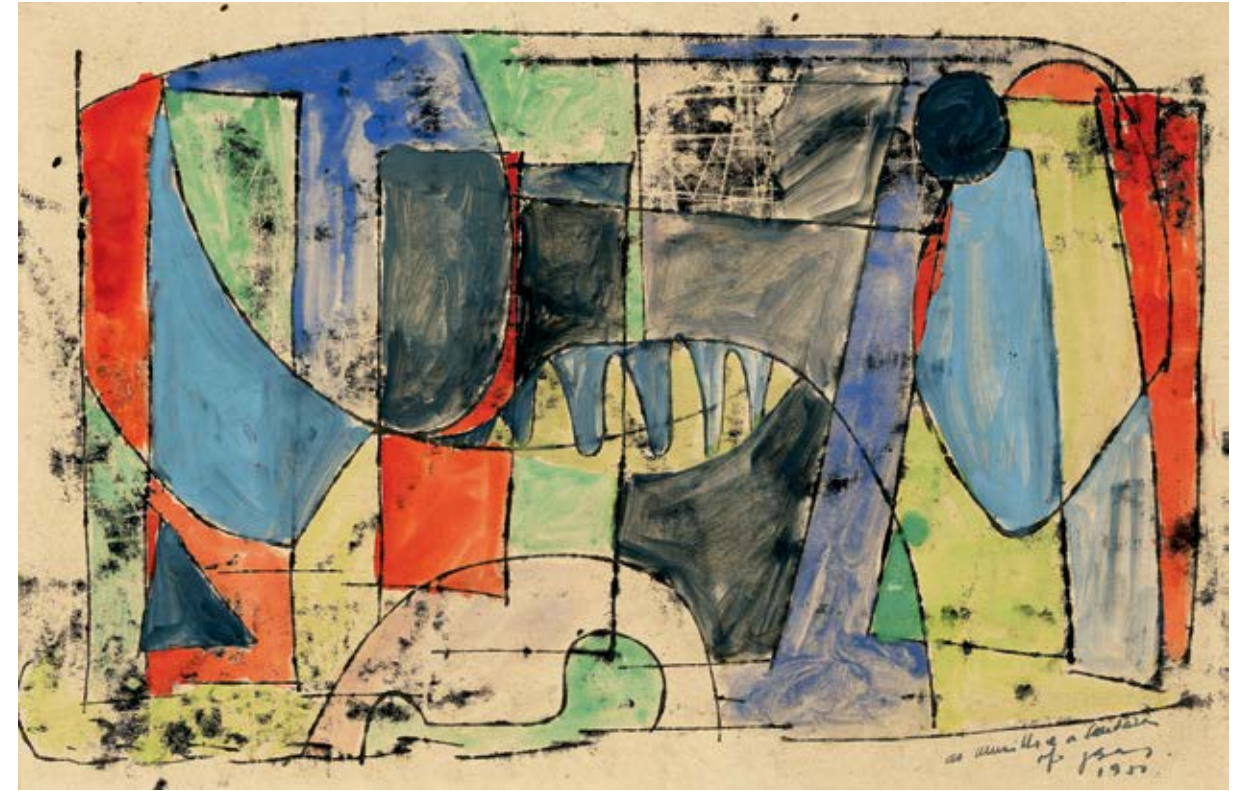
Untitled, n.d.
 metal engraving



FAYGA OSTROWER
 Untitled, c. 1953
 full-color linocut and
 gouache on paper

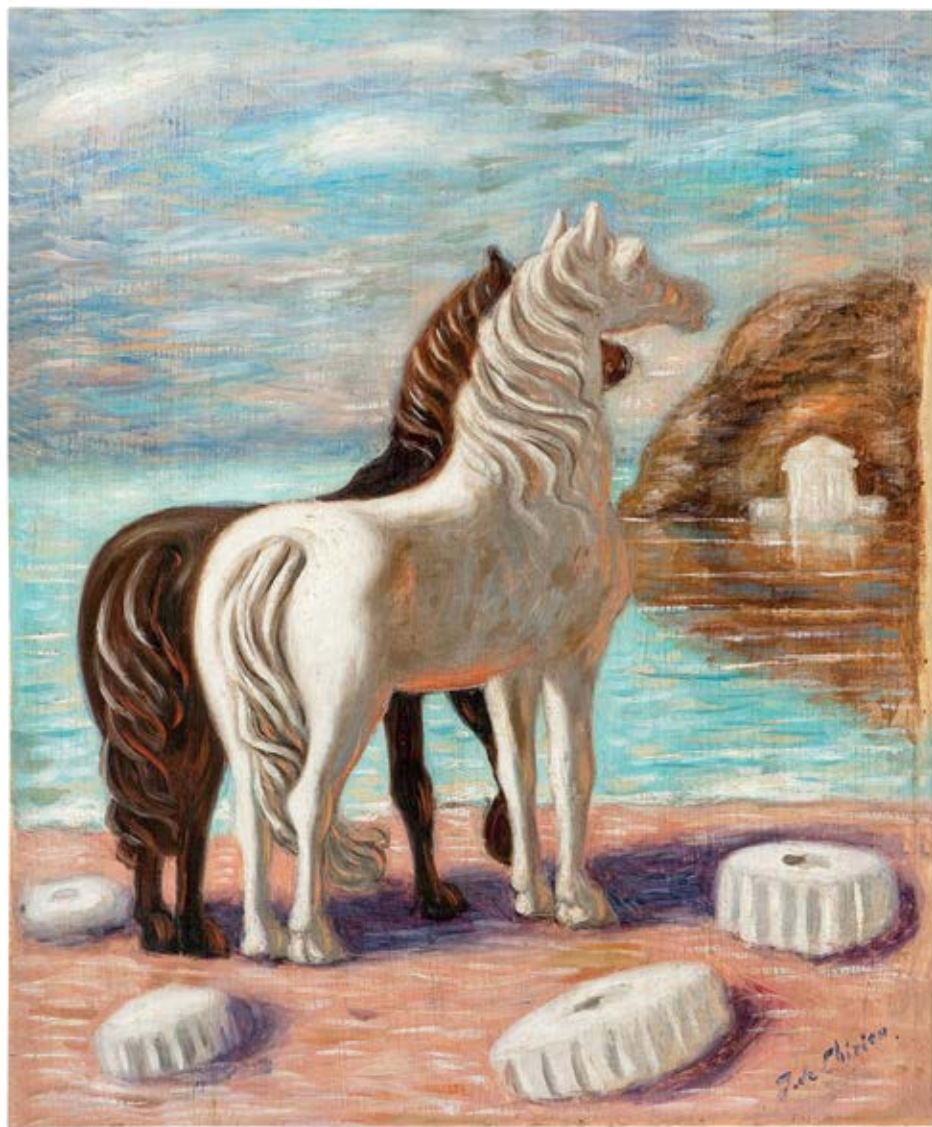
Untitled, c. 1954
 full-color etching and
 aquatint on paper

MARCELO GRASSMANN
 Untitled, 1949
 woodcut



GERALDO DE BARROS
 Untitled, 1950
 lithography and gouache
 on paper

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO
Cavalli in riva al mare,
 1932-1933
 oil on canvas



MILTON DACOSTA
Dois cavalos, 1942
 oil on wood

GIUSEPPE CAPOGROSSI
Banhistas no trampolim, 1931
oil on canvas

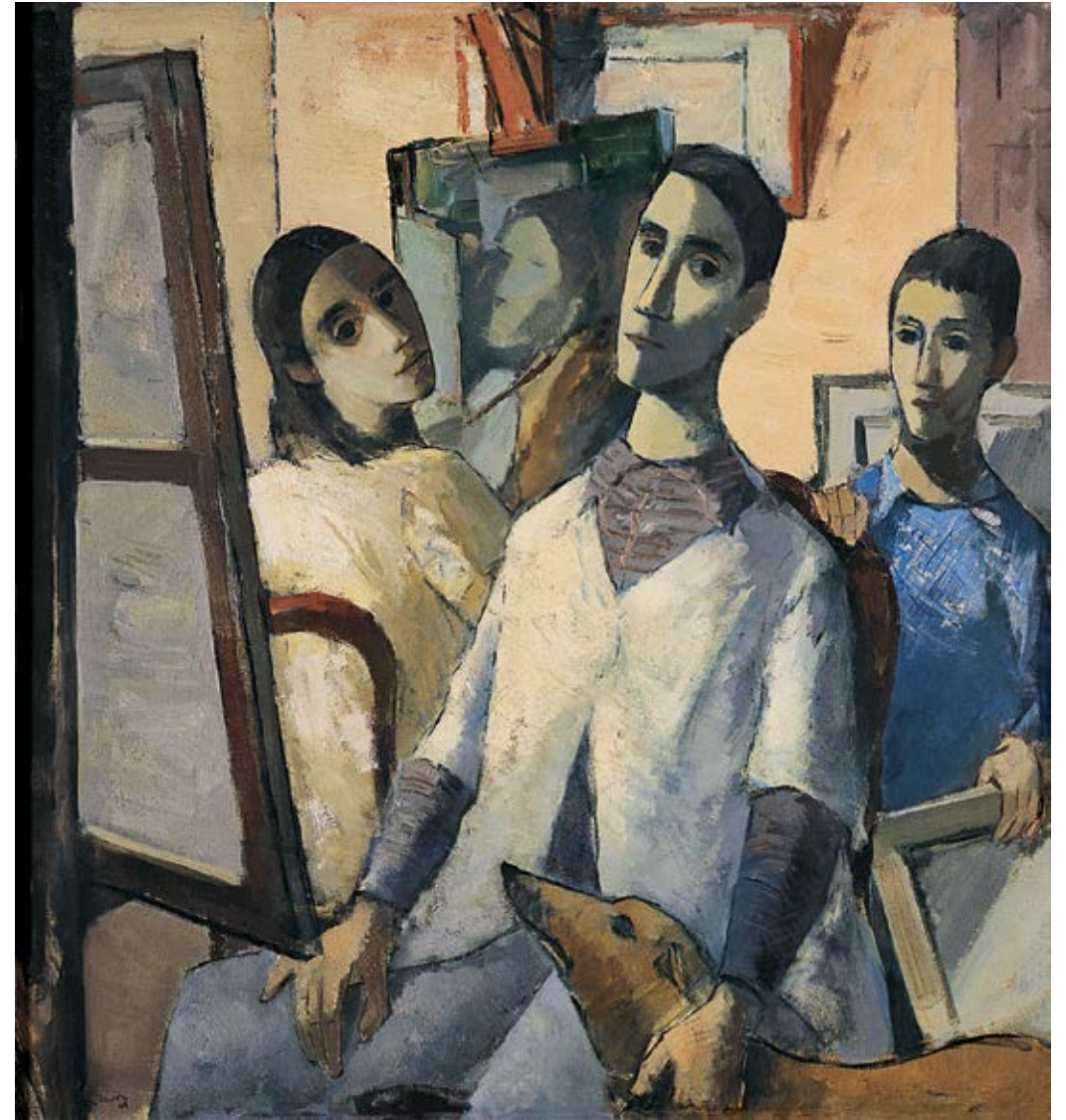


MILTON DACOSTA
Ciclistas, 1941
oil on canvas



DJANIRA DA MOTTA E SILVA
Autorretrato, 1945
 oil on canvas

MILTON DACOSTA
Interior de ateliê, 1944
 oil on canvas

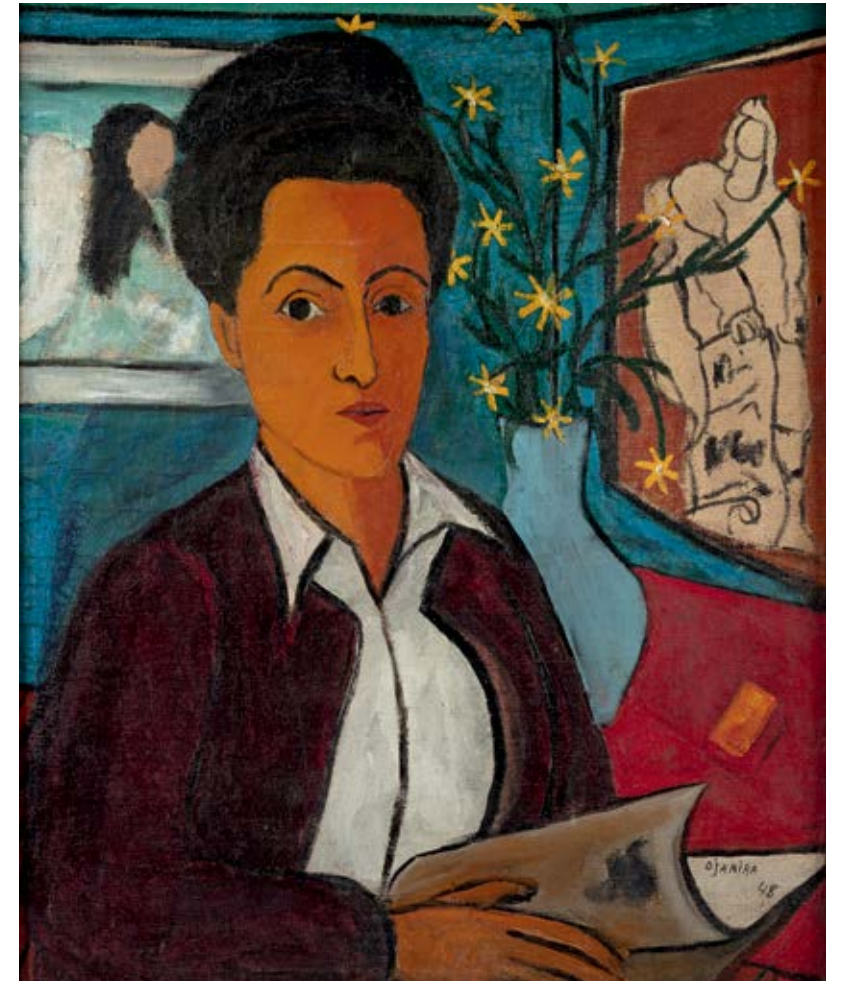


FLÁVIO DE CARVALHO
*Cabeça do poeta Murilo
Mendes, 1951*
graphite on paper



MILTON DACOSTA
Figura (Cabeçuda), 1942
oil on canvas

DJANIRA DA MOTTA E SILVA
O circo, 1944
 oil on canvas



DJANIRA DA MOTTA E SILVA
Retrato de Cecília Meireles, 1948
 oil on canvas

IONE SALDANHA
Quarto de Murilo Mendes, 1956
 oil on paper



IONE SALDANHA
Casario, 1950s
 oil on canvas

ARPAD SZENES
MM ouvindo música, 1940
China ink on paper



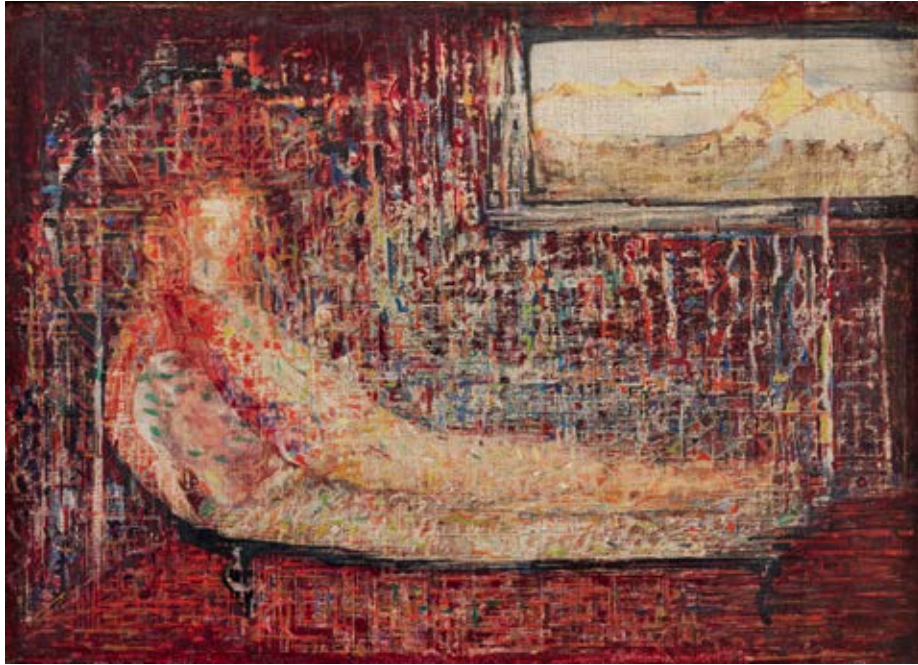
ARPAD SZENES
Vieira da Silva no ateliê, 1946
oil on canvas



**MARIA HELENA
VIEIRA DA SILVA**
*Interior (Casa da artista
em Santa Teresa - RJ), 1944*
oil on canvas

**MARIA HELENA
VIEIRA DA SILVA**
Le jeu des cartes, 1942
China ink and gouache
on paperboard





**MARIA HELENA
VIEIRA DA SILVA**
Untitled, 1940s
oil on canvas

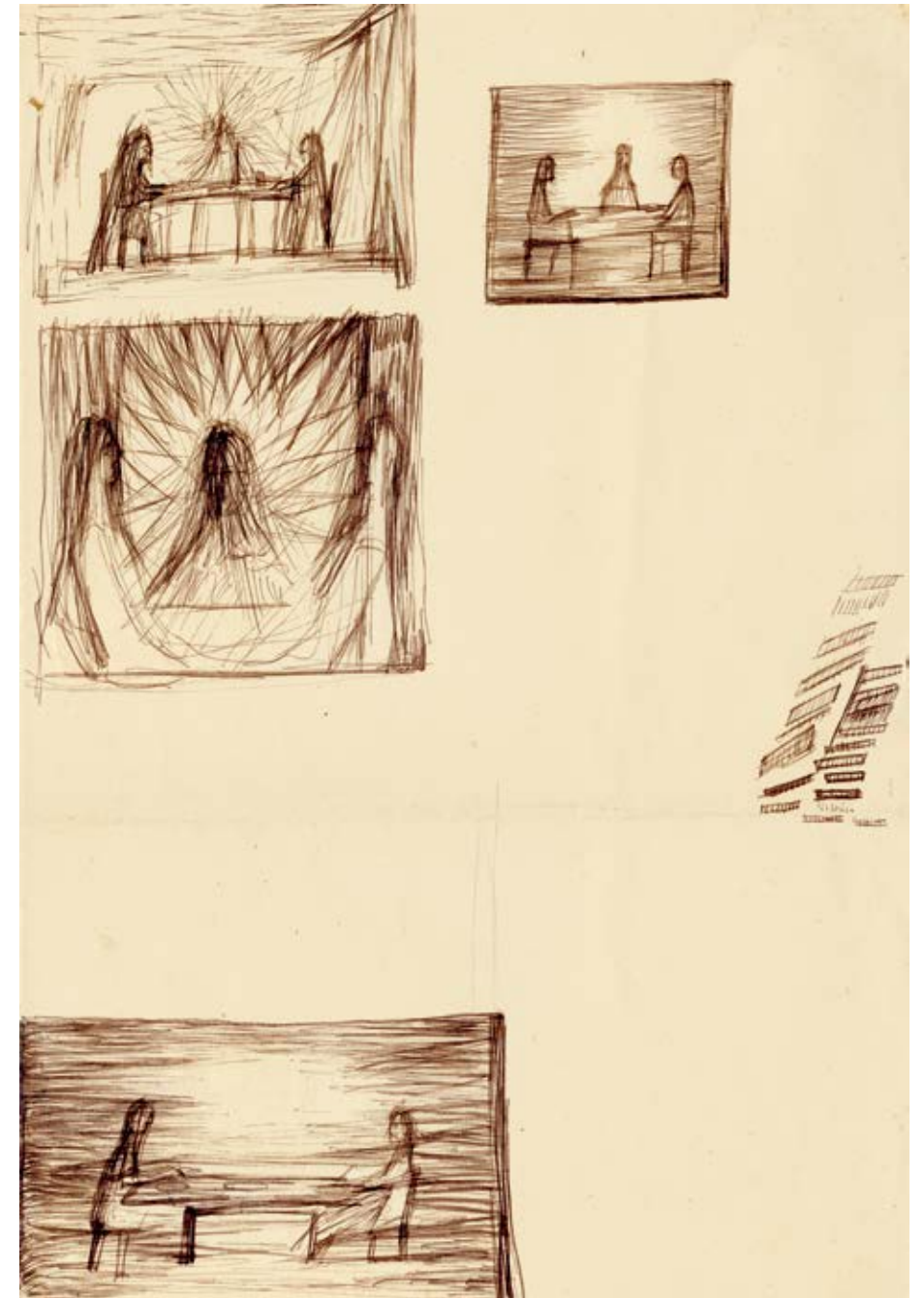
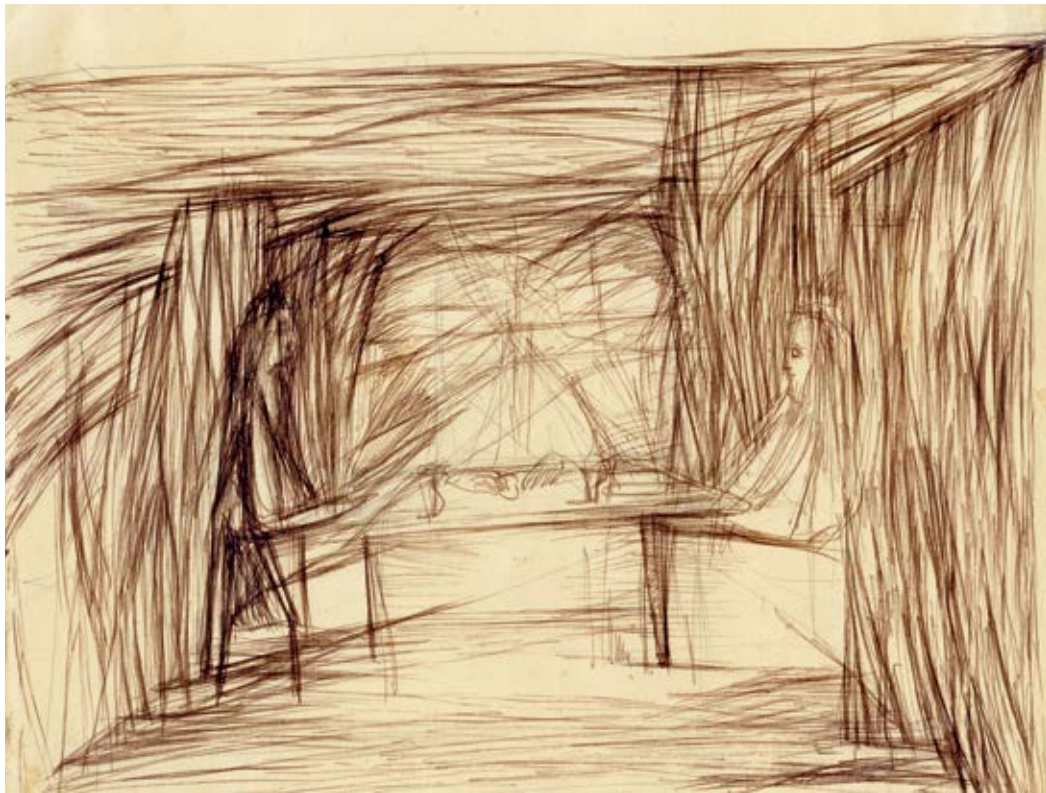
Untitled, 1963
gouache on paper



**MARIA HELENA
VIEIRA DA SILVA**
Les terrasses, 1952
oil on canvas

**MARIA HELENA VIEIRA
DA SILVA**
*Projeto de capa
para Discípulos, n.d.*
China ink on paper

*Croquis para os discípulos
de Emaús, n.d.*
China ink on paper

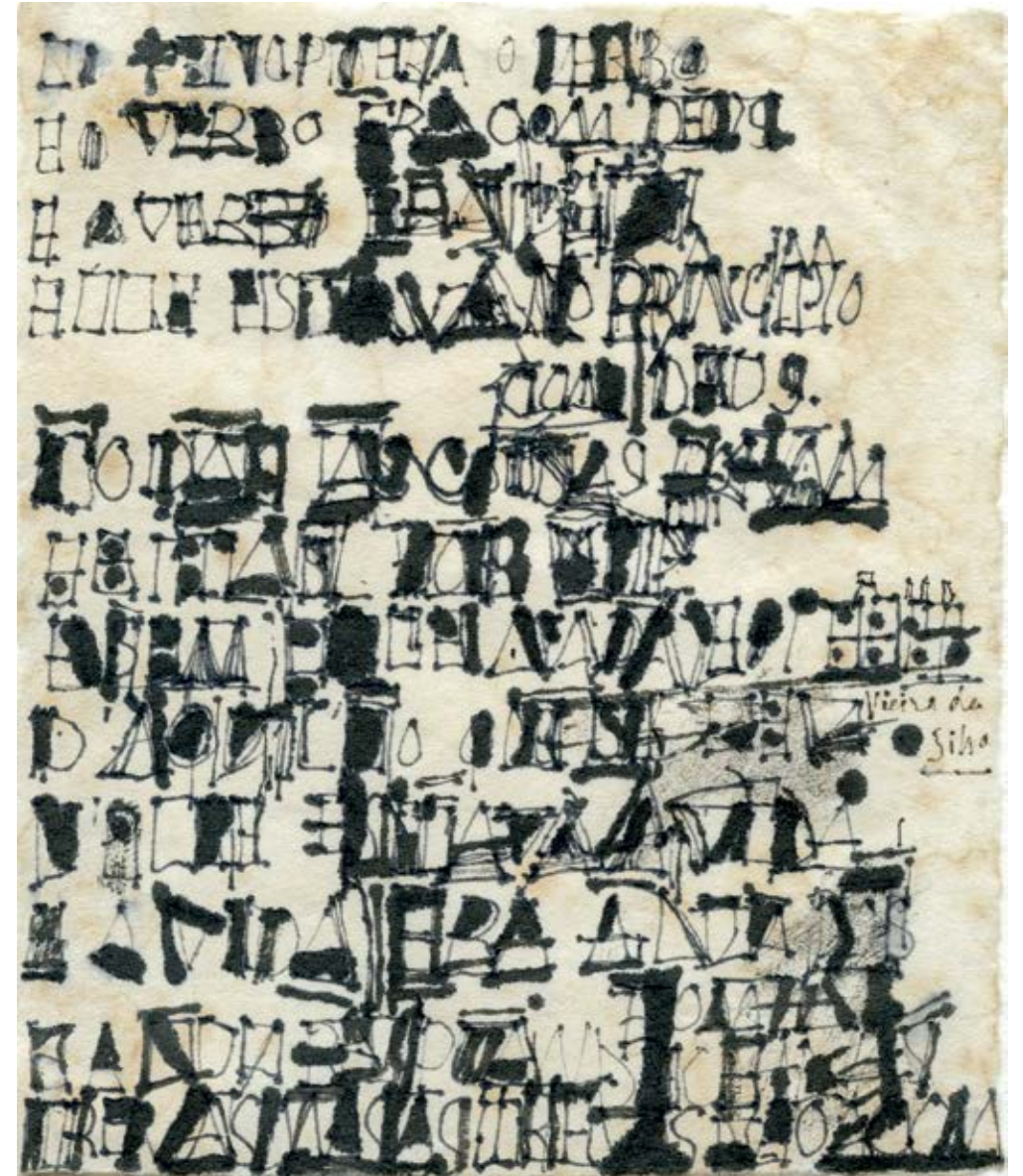


MARIA HELENA VIEIRA
DA SILVA
Ilustração para
Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper

Ilustração para
Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper



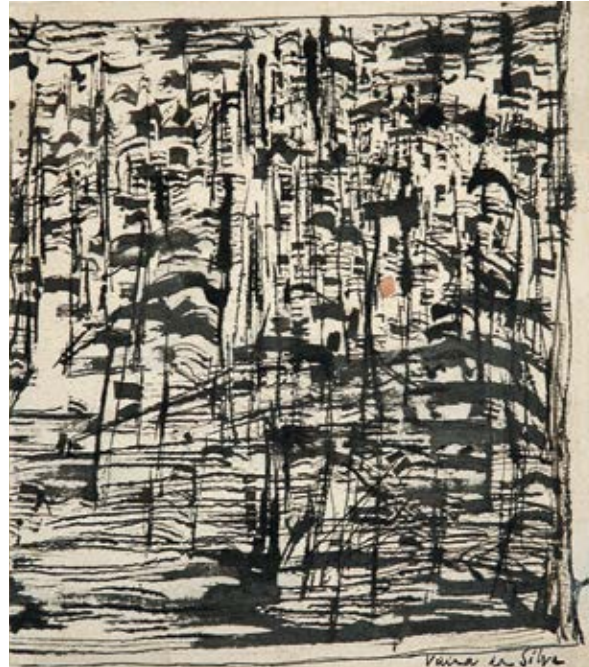
MARIA HELENA VIEIRA
DA SILVA
Ilustração para
Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper





**MARIA HELENA
VIEIRA DA SILVA**
Untitled, n.d.
China ink on paper

Untitled, n.d.
China ink on paper



CARLOS MOSKOVICS
O pintor Arpad Szenes,
Rio de Janeiro-RJ, n.d.
b&w photography

Maria Helena Vieira da Silva,
1940s
b&w photography



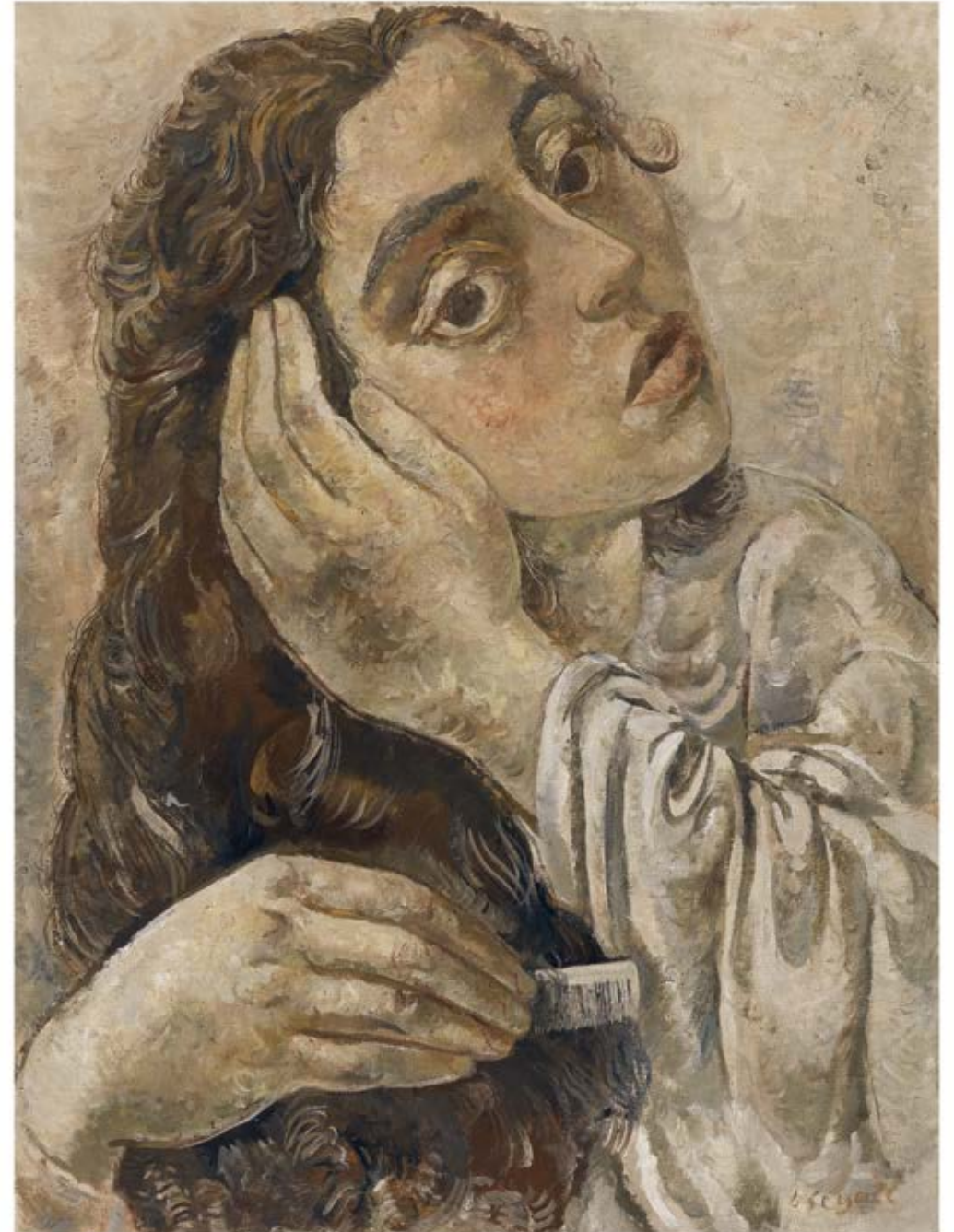
142

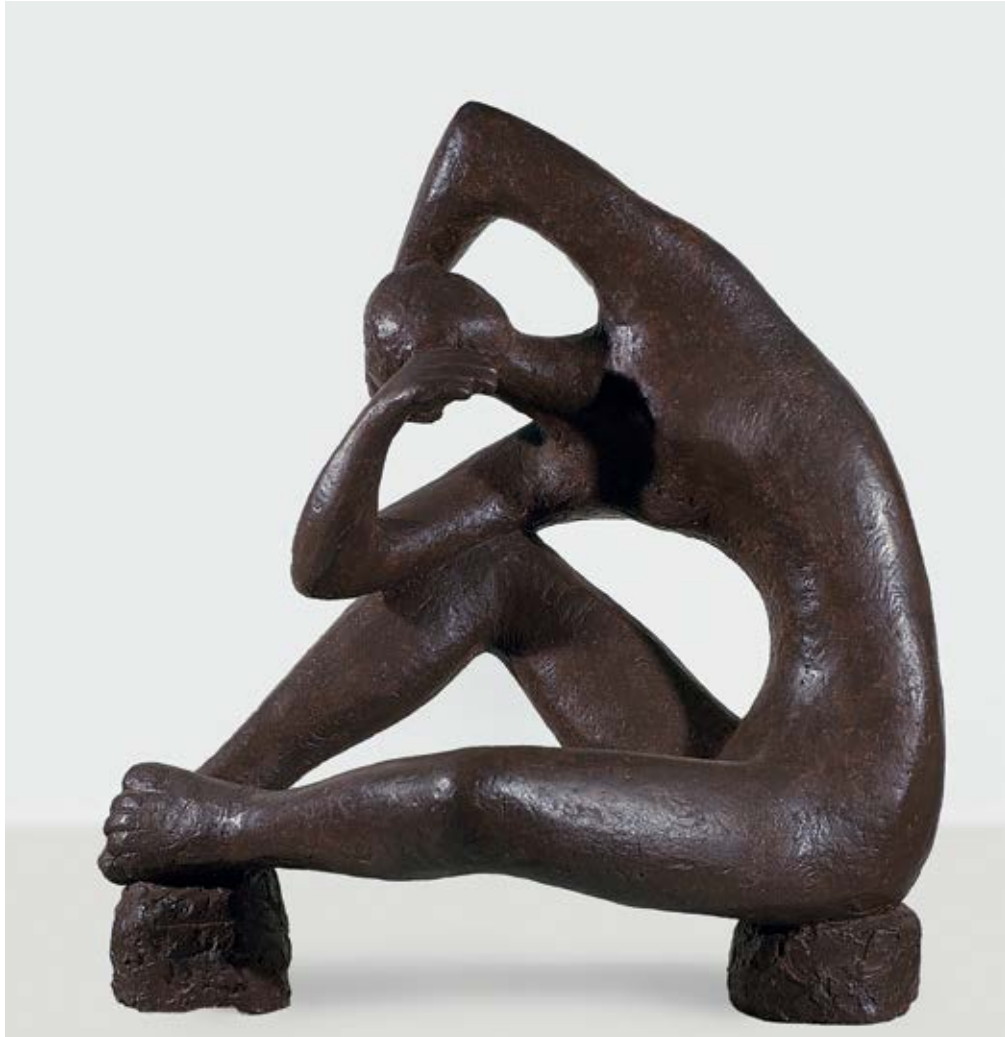
LASAR SEGALL
Maternidade, 1936
cast bronze



143

LASAR SEGALL
Jovem de cabelos compridos, 1937
oil on canvas



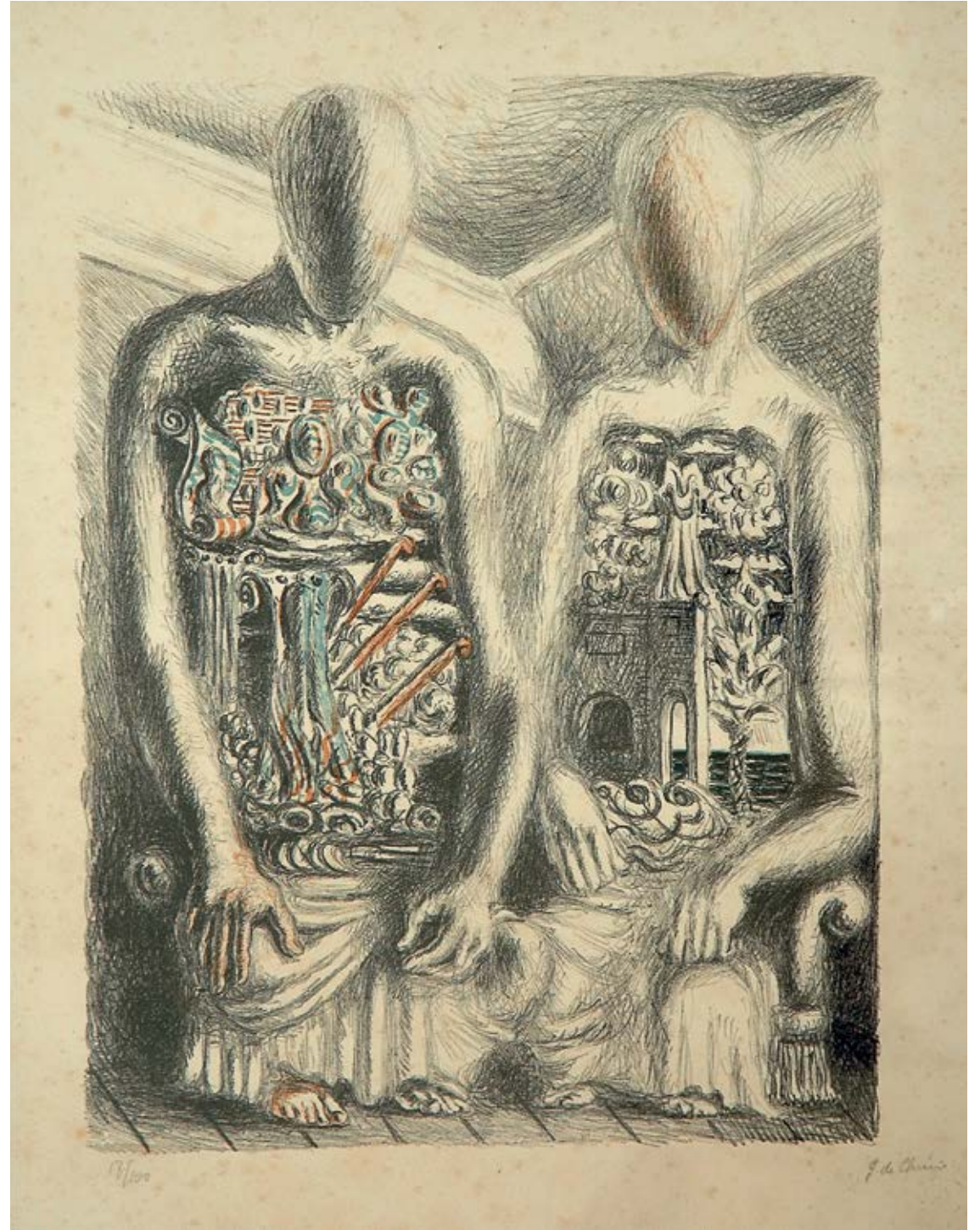


BRUNO GIORGI
Figura, 1951
 patinated plaster

Pastor com corça, c. 1962
 bronze





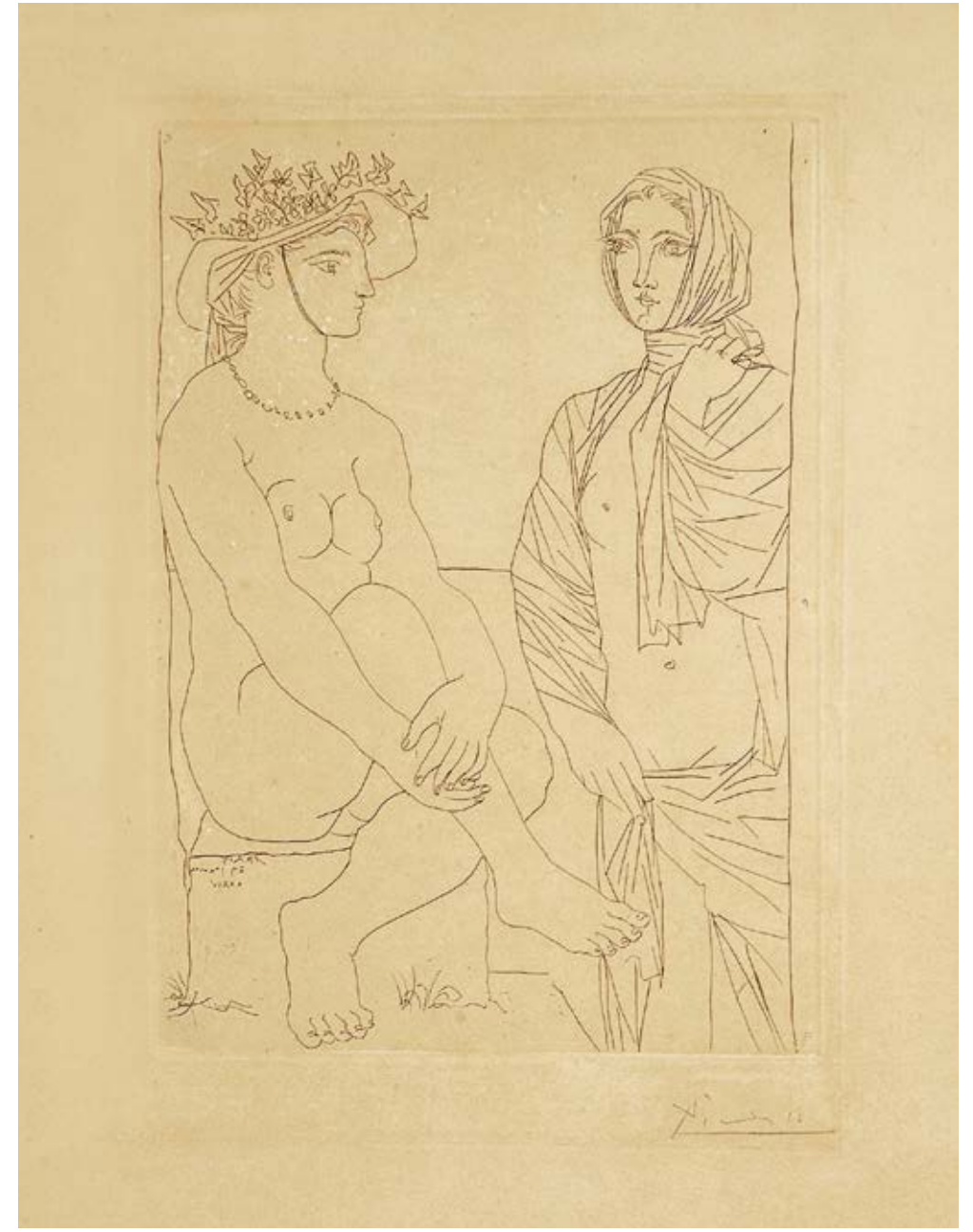


GIORGIO DE CHIRICO
Manequins, n.d.
lithography



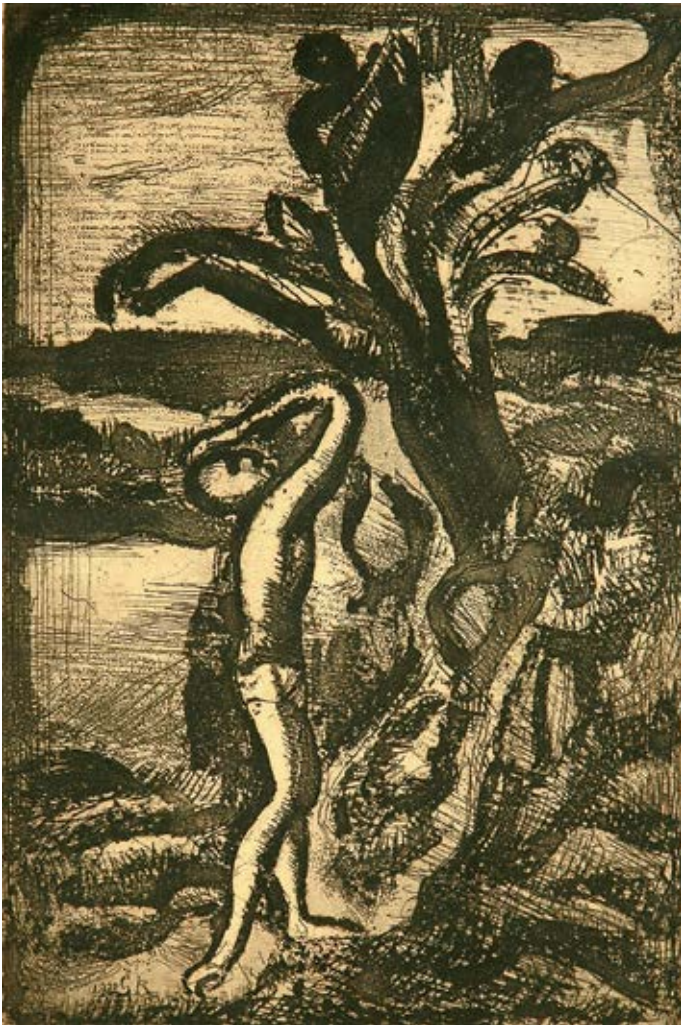


MAX ERNST
Danse, n.d.
 lithography



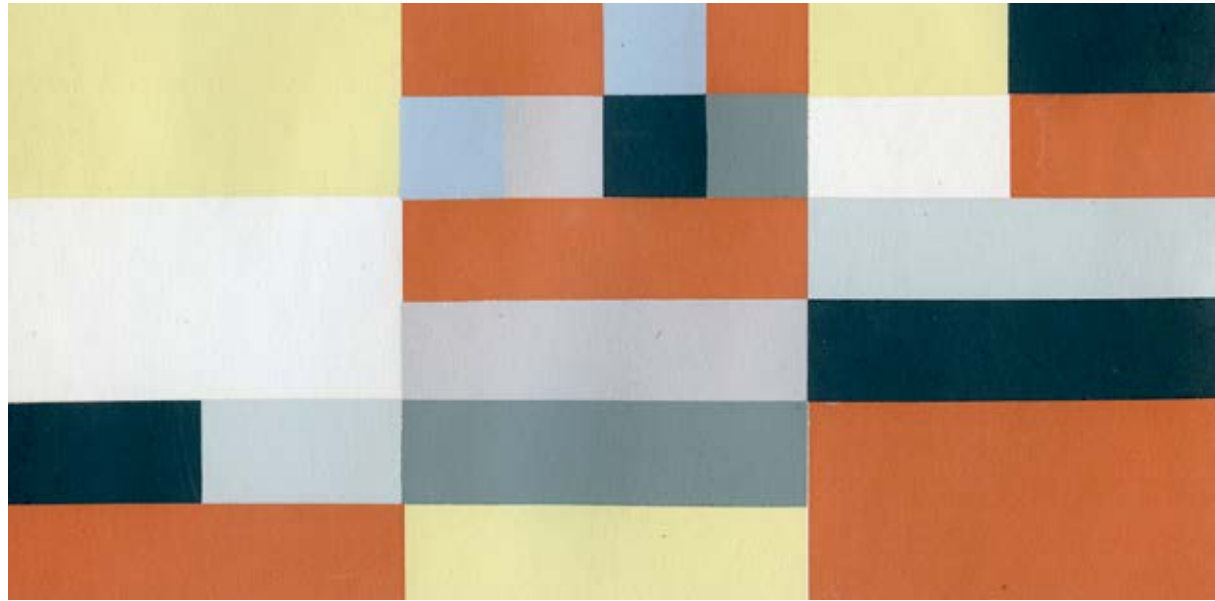
PABLO PICASSO
*Mujer sentada con sombrero y
 mujer cubierta de pie, 1934*
 etching

GEORGE ROUAULT
Figura e árvore, 1928
 engraving



JAMES ENSOR
Insects singuliers, 1888
 drypoint

Le roi peste, 1895
 engraving



SOPHIE TAEUBER-ARP
Untitled, n.d.
silkscreen



1957

Moves to Rome, in January, to assume the Chair of Brazilian Studies at the University of Rome, a post linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During his period of residence in the city, he also works with the Embassy's cultural sector, organizing exhibitions, publishing books, and giving talks.

In October, he attends the Congress of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), in Naples.

Mendes moves from his first apartment into a permanent home at Via del Consolato 6, in Rome's city center. This is where he will store his collection of artworks. Luciana Stegagno Picchio writes as follows about Mendes's arrival in Rome:

Early on, Murilo, a poet and a friend

of painters, with in-depth knowledge of and a deep appreciation for artists, was asked to write the introductions to their works. These were precious, beautifully printed objects, normally with a reproduction of a painting on the front cover. At that time (in the 1960s and 1970s) they were almost all informal. Almost all the major artists living in Rome at the time visited Murilo. These included Dorazio, Perilli, Accardi, Corpora, Turcato, Franchina, and Sanfilippo, and they were frequently joined by artists from Brazil and other countries who were passing through.

1958

Donation of portrait of Giuseppe Ungaretti by Flávio de Carvalho to Rome's National Gallery of

MURILO MENDES STANDING IN HIS APARTMENT, 1973
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: GIOVANNA PIEMONTE
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF



MURILO MENDES AT HIS WORK DESK, 1972
FULL-COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY –
B&W REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: BRUNO ANDREOZZI
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF



Modern Art. Mendes is invited by the ambassador to pay tribute to Ungaretti.

1959

Helps his friend, the critic Mario Pedrosa, who is Vice-President of the AICA, to organize a meeting of the association in Brasília, suggesting the names of visual artists, critics, and architects, and establishing contacts. These include, among others, the architects Bruno Zevi and Pier Luigi Nervi, and the painter Piero Dorazio.

Publishes *Siciliana*, with a preface written by Ungaretti. Two further books are published: *Poesias* (1925-1955), in Brazil, and *Tempo espanhol* [Spanish Time], in Portugal.

Giulio Carlo Argan becomes Professor of Modern Art at the University of La Sapienza, where

Mendes teaches. The pair will engage in many important discussions.

1960

The 9th of January sees the opening of Antonio Corpora's exhibition at Galleria Pogliani in Roma. Murilo Mendes writes the artist's introduction to the catalogue:

...Corpora effects some kind of conversion of space into a new category, with a vitality in which pinks, blues, blacks and greens function as plastic metaphors. What does this mean? It means that the painter has transformed nature through his own consciousness, as the artwork gains its own autonomy and is transformed into a fable in and of itself.

1962

Visits Almir Mavignier in Ulm, where he also meets Max Bill.

Writes the introduction to the exhibition at L'Obelisco gallery (in Rome) of sculptures by Aldo Calò, winner of the sculpture prize at the 31st Venice Biennale. Lygia Clark's work is exhibited at the same Biennale and Murilo Mendes has his photograph taken alongside one of her objects.

Luigi Dallapiccola composes *Preghiere* for baritone and chamber orchestra, using poems by Murilo Mendes translated by Ruggero Jacobbi.

1963

Organizes exhibitions of the work of Almir Mavignier, Alfredo Volpi, Oswaldo Goeldi, Bruno Giorgi, Franz Weissmann, and others at the Brazilian Embassy's

Brazil House Art Gallery.

Mendes writes as follows about Mavignier in an article in *Habitat* (n. 71, March 1963):

Mavignier made the most of the courses at the Ulm School. He learnt about painting but also conducted an in-depth study of industrial design, and has now become a proficient poster designer.... Mavignier's posters demonstrate complete mastery of the craft. He combines his own personal skills as a craftsman with typographic techniques, thereby helping to dispel the myth that it is impossible for a humanistic spirit to co-exist with industrial civilization.... I consider these posters "substantial", in the sense that they possess fundamental qualities that transcend the merely circumstantial.



MURILO MENDES
IN ULM, 1962
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: ALMIR MAVIGNIER
MAVIGNIER 75 (MAM SÃO
PAULO, 2000)

MURILO MENDES WITH
MAX BILL IN ZURICH, 1962
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: ALMIR MAVIGNIER
MAVIGNIER 75 (MAM SÃO
PAULO, 2000)

MURILO MENDES WITH
MAX BILL IN ZURICH, 1962
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: ALMIR MAVIGNIER
MAVIGNIER 75 (MAM SÃO
PAULO, 2000)



They are highly charged with visual culture, enticing the viewer to participate directly in the system of signs that derives from perfect coordination of hand, eye, and brain.

The same year, he is invited to write the introduction to exhibitions by Alberto Magnelli at Galleria La Strozzi, in the Palazzo Strozzi (in Florence), and by Giuseppe Capogrossi at Galleria del Naviglio (in Milan).



1964

April sees the much belated appointment of the board responsible for the selection of artists for the 32nd Venice Biennale, at which Brazil will open a new pavilion, designed by Henrique Mindlin. At the recommendation of the Venice Biennale itself, Mendes is invited to sit on the board, along with Antônio Bento, Clarival do Prado Valladares and the diplomat Mário Dias Costa, representing the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (news report in the Santos newspaper *A Tribuna*, 16/4/1964). The Biennale opens in June, and the Brazilian artists selected are Tarsila do Amaral, Alfredo Volpi, Franz Krajcberg, Abraham Palatnik, Franz Weissmann, Almir Mavignier, Glauco Rodrigues, and Maria Bonomi. Krajcberg wins the Città di Venezia Prize. Mendes writes the



introduction to the catalogue.

Le metamorfosi [The Metamorphoses] and *Alberto Magnelli* are published in Italian with texts by Murilo Mendes.

1965

Mendes joins Pablo Neruda, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Rafael Alberti, Ted Hughes, and Ezra Pound, at the 7th Festival dei Due Mondi, in Spoleto (Italy). He publishes a book

titled *Italianissima* (7 murilogrammi) [Very Italian Indeed. Seven Murilograms]

Opening at the New York MoMA of an exhibition titled *The Responsive Eye* dedicated specifically to kinetic and optical art in the United States. Soto features in the show, along with Mavignier and Dorazio. Mendes pays homage to the exhibition with an eponymously titled poem, which will later be included in *Conversa Portátil* [Portable Talk].

1967

Participates in the International Poetry Meeting at the Montreal Universal Poetry Exposition (in Canada). In the Exhibition Pavilion, he sees Jesus Soto's *Penetrável* [Penetrable]. Later on, in 1974, he writes a text on this experience, which is then included in *The Invention of the Finite*:

MURILO MENDES WITH
"ARMED EYE" BY
LYGIA CLARK, 1968
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: MARIA DA SAUDADE
CORTESÃO
COURTESY OF ALINE MACEDO

BRAZILLIAN PAVILLION AT THE
32nd VENICE BIENNALE, 1964
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: FOTO FERRUZZI
COLLECTION FUNDAÇÃO
BIENAL DE SÃO PAULO /
ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO
WANDA SVEVO

BRAZILLIAN PAVILLION AT THE
32nd VENICE BIENNALE, 1964
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: FOTO FERRUZZI
COLLECTION FUNDAÇÃO
BIENAL DE SÃO PAULO /
ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO
WANDA SVEVO



Soto turns the labyrinth into a way out to the other side, where the horizon is broad and clear, the information is exact, communication sensitive and obedient to poetry, where problems are not annulled, but evolve in accordance with the givens of a higher spiritual training.

1968

Publication in Brazil of *A idade do serrote* [The Age of the Handsaw], written in Rome between 1965 and 1966.

Puts together the first version of *Ipotesi* [Hypotheses], revised in 1970, containing poems written directly in Italian. These include tributes to Old Masters (Eyck, Bruegel, and Joachim Patinir) and modern ones (Magnelli, Klee, Arp, De Chirico, and Morandi). The book will be published posthumously in 1977.

1970

Convergência [Convergence] is published in Brazil.

Edits the book *Janelas Verdes* [Green Windows], with illustrations by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. However, only a partial print run will be released in 1989, in Portugal, with drawings and silk-screen prints by the artist, before being included in the poet's volume of *Collected Works, Poesia completa e prosa*.

The introduction to the catalogue accompanying Arpad Szenes's exhibition, at museums in Rouen, Rennes, Lille, Orléans, and Dijon (France), is written by Murilo Mendes.

In the same year, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation stages an exhibition of the work of Vieira da Silva. Murilo writes as follows in the catalogue:

I can walk about freely in these paintings, since the lower plane corresponds to the higher: entrance and exit are identical in meaning. I am delighted to be involved in this process, which, taking to the extreme the refinement that is the enduring mark of cubism, shows itself to be even

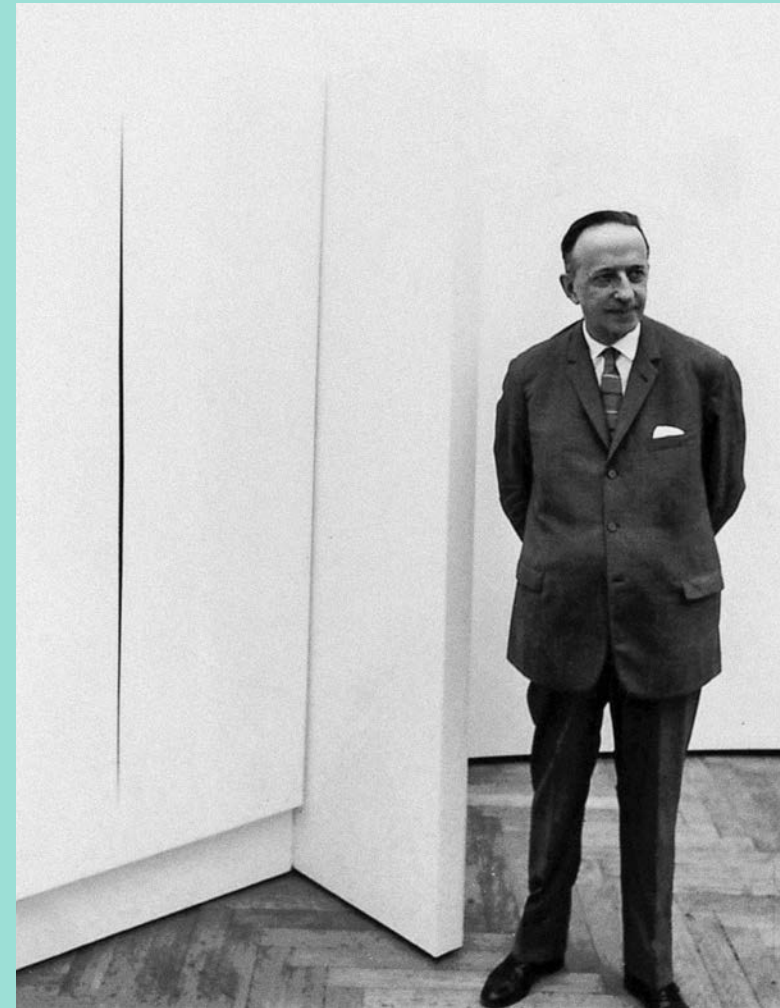
more alive than perception. The brush directs the color, bending it to its visual will. The color collaborates to form the general plane, which is precisely predicated upon a particular poetics: that is, a poetics based on the architecture of memory, a fairytale set in a modern city.

JOÃO CARLOS HORTA FILMS
MURILO MENDES ON THE
BRIDGE LEADING TO THE
SANT'ANGELO CASTLE, IN
ROME (STILL OF THE FILM
"MURILO MENDES: A POESIA
EM PÂNICO"), 1971
FULL-COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY
– B&W REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: ALEXANDRE EULALIO
COLLECTION CARLOS
AUGUSTO CALIL



1971

Writes the text accompanying the series of silkscreen prints *I collages di Magnelli* published by the Roman gallery



MURILO MENDES BESIDE A
WORK BY LUCIO FONTANA, N.D.
B&W PHOTOGRAPHY –
REPRODUCTION
PHOTO: AGÊNCIA JB
COLLECTION MUSEU DE ARTE
MURILO MENDES – UFJF

Italian-Latin American
Institute in Rome:

The act of the artist that consists of cutting the canvas or ceramic corresponds to the following concept rich in consequences: the universe is forever opening its doors ever wider. Behold the infinite become intimate and quotidian, within reach of hand, eye, and palette knife.

Il Collezionista d'Arte Contemporanea.

In January and February, the same gallery publishes the poem "Arp" in the catalogue accompanying the artist's exhibition.

Publishes the collection *Poesia libertà* [Freedom Poetry].

Filming starts, in Roma, of the documentary *Murilo Mendes: A Poesia em Pânico* [Murilo Mendes: Poetry in Panic], written and directed by Alexandre Eulálio, which will be concluded in February 1977, in São Paulo.

1972

Receives the 11th Etna-Taormina International Poetry Prize for *Poesia libertà*. Visits Brazil for the last time.

Writes the text for the catalogue accompanying Lucio Fontana's show at the

1975

Publication of *Mendes Soto*, a book-object with images of Soto and a text titled *Labirinto per Soto* [Labyrinth by Soto] by Murilo Mendes.

Murilo Mendes dies in Lisbon on 13 August.

1976

Mundo enigma
[Enigmatic World]
is published.

1977

Maria da Saudade
Cortesão donates
a portion of Murilo
Mendes's private
library to the Federal
University of Juiz de
Fora (UFJF).

1980

The book of prose
texts *Transistor*,
edited by Saudade
Cortesão, is pub-
lished in Italy.

1987

O olhar do poeta
[The Eye of the Poet]
exhibition at the
Calouste Gulbenkian
Foundation, Portugal,
is the first public ex-
hibition of the Murilo
Mendes collection.

1993

The Federal
University of Juiz de
Fora acquires the
Murilo Mendes art
collection.

1994

*Poesia completa e
prosa* [Collected

Poems and Prose],
edited by Luciana
Stegagno Picchio, is
published by Aguilar.

Opening of the
Murilo Mendes Study
Center (CEMM),
linked to UFJF.

First exhibition of
the Murilo Mendes
collection in Juiz
de Fora.

2001

Publication in Italy,
with preface by
Giulio Carlo Argan,
of *L'occhio del
Poeta* [The Eye of
the Poet], a collec-
tion of critical essays
written by Mendes
in Italy.

Staging of the *Murilo
Mendes 1901-2001*
exhibition at CEMM
to commemorate
the centenary of the
birth of the poet. The
show later moves on
to the Chácara do
Céu Museum, in Rio,
and the Lasar Segall
Museum, in São Paulo.

2005

Opening, in
December, of
the UFJF's Murilo
Mendes Museum
of Art (MAMM).



ALBERTO MAGNELLI
Pedras, 1933
oil on paper



HANS RICHTER
 Untitled, 1970
 mixed media and
 collage on paper

Untitled, 1970
 mixed media and
 collage on paper



ALBERTO MAGNELLI
 Untitled, 1948
 collage on paperboard



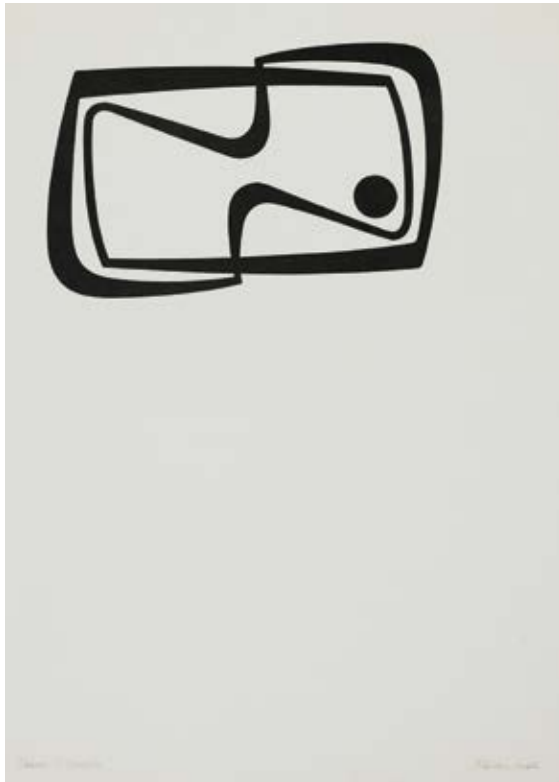
ALBERTO MAGNELLI
 Untitled, from the album
I collages di Magnelli, 1970
 silkscreen



ALBERTO MAGNELLI
 Untitled, from the album
I collages di Magnelli, 1970
 silkscreen

ETTORE COLLA
 Untitled, n.d.
 silkscreen

GINO SEVERINI
 Untitled, 1961
 drypoint



JEAN ARP
 Le Voilier dans la forêt, n.d.
 silkscreen

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GIORGIO MORANDI
Untitled, 1931
etching on paper

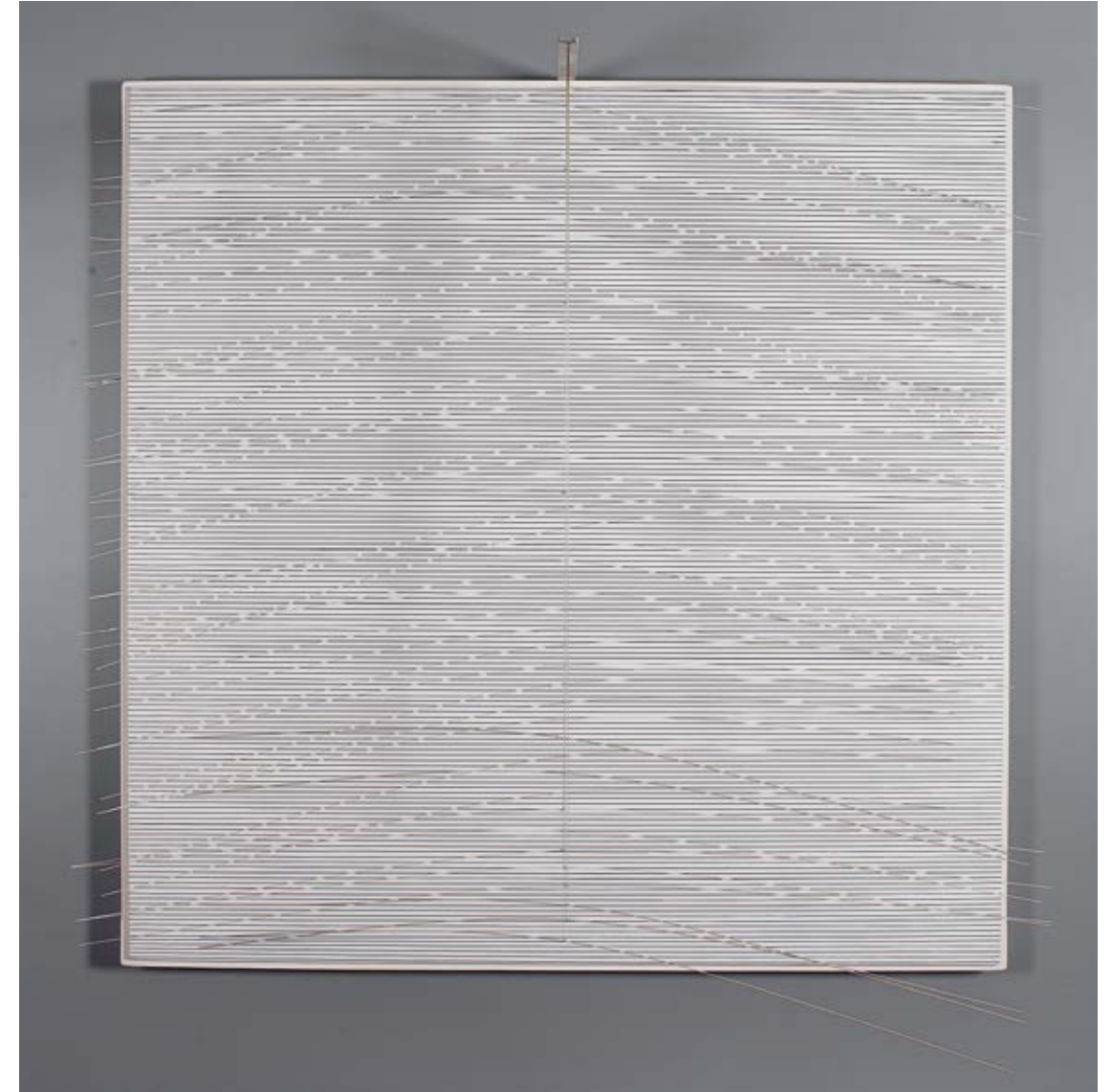


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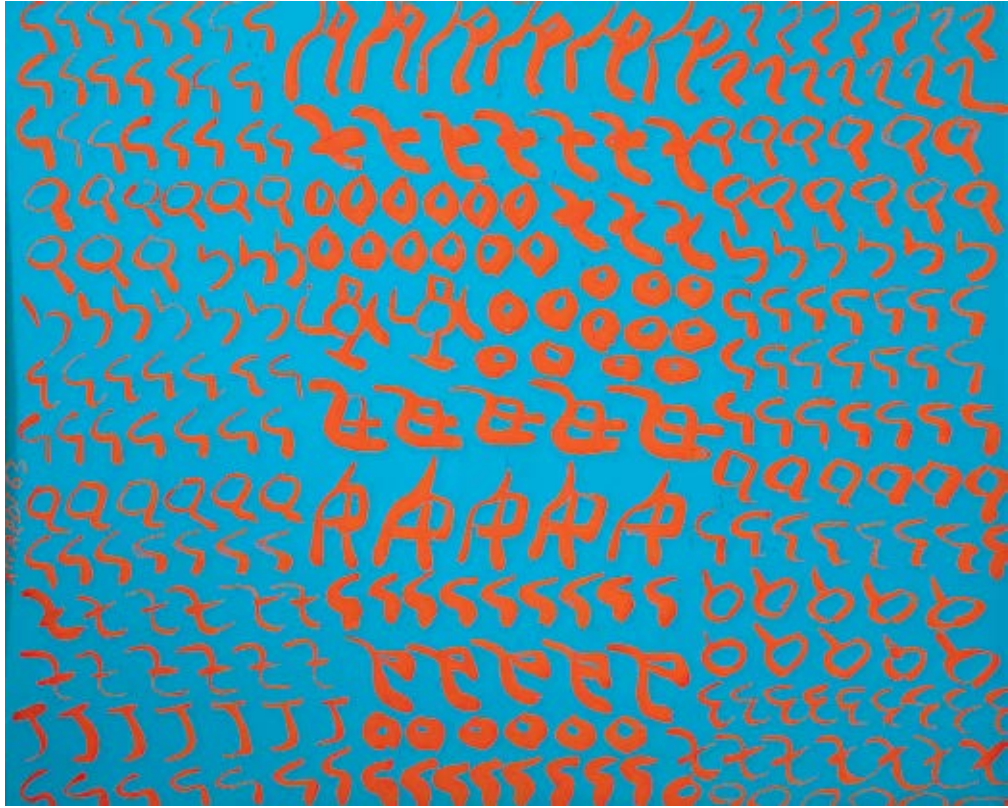


GIORGIO MORANDI
Natura morta, 1956
oil on canvas

VICTOR VASARELY
Untitled, n.d.
lithography

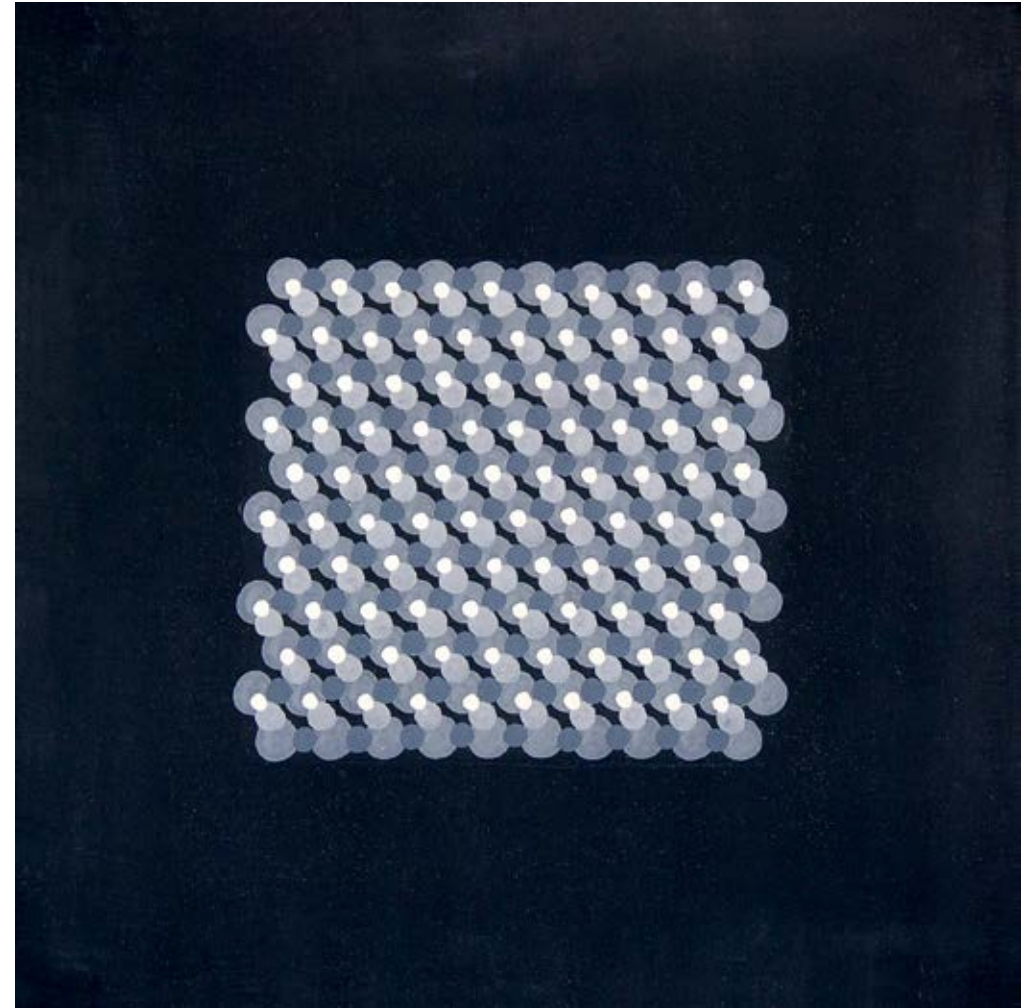


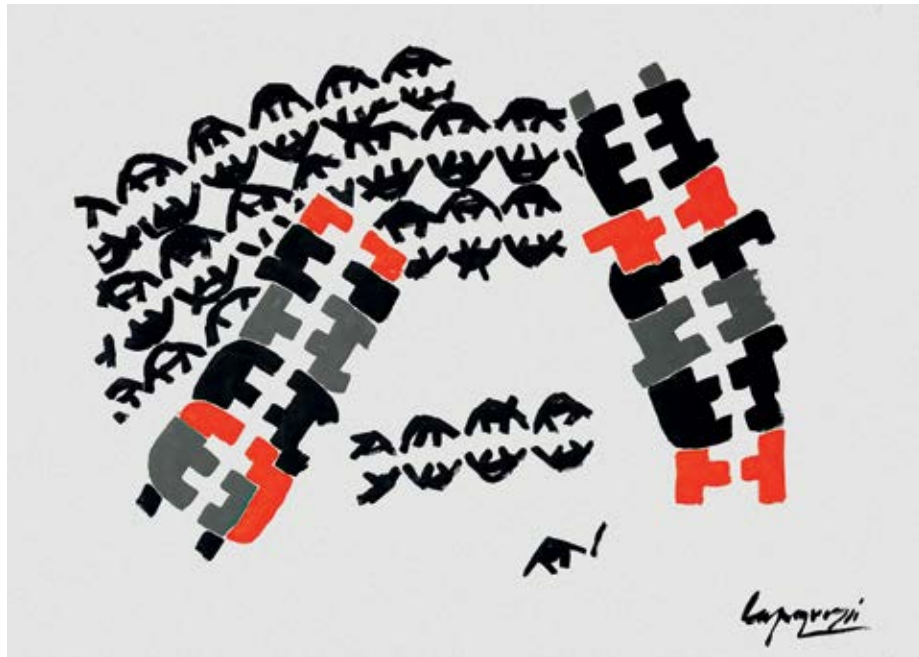
JESÚS RAFAEL SOTO
Untitled, 1975
acrylic and painted metal



CARLA ACCARDI
 Untitled, 1963
 gouache on paper

GASTONE BIGGI
Variabile N, 1967
 acrylic on canvas

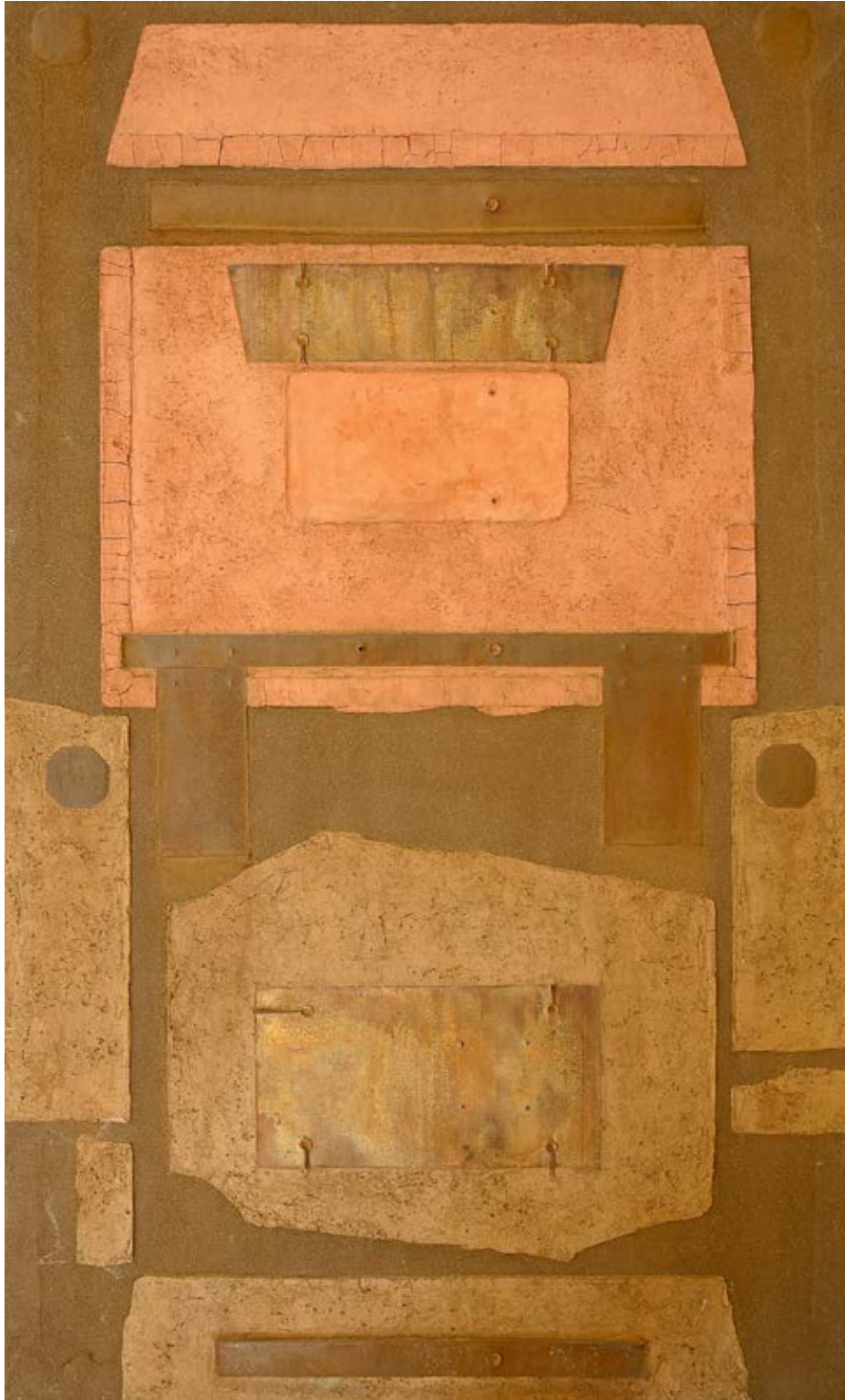




GIUSEPPE CAPOGROSSI
Superficie 455, 1961
 oil on canvas

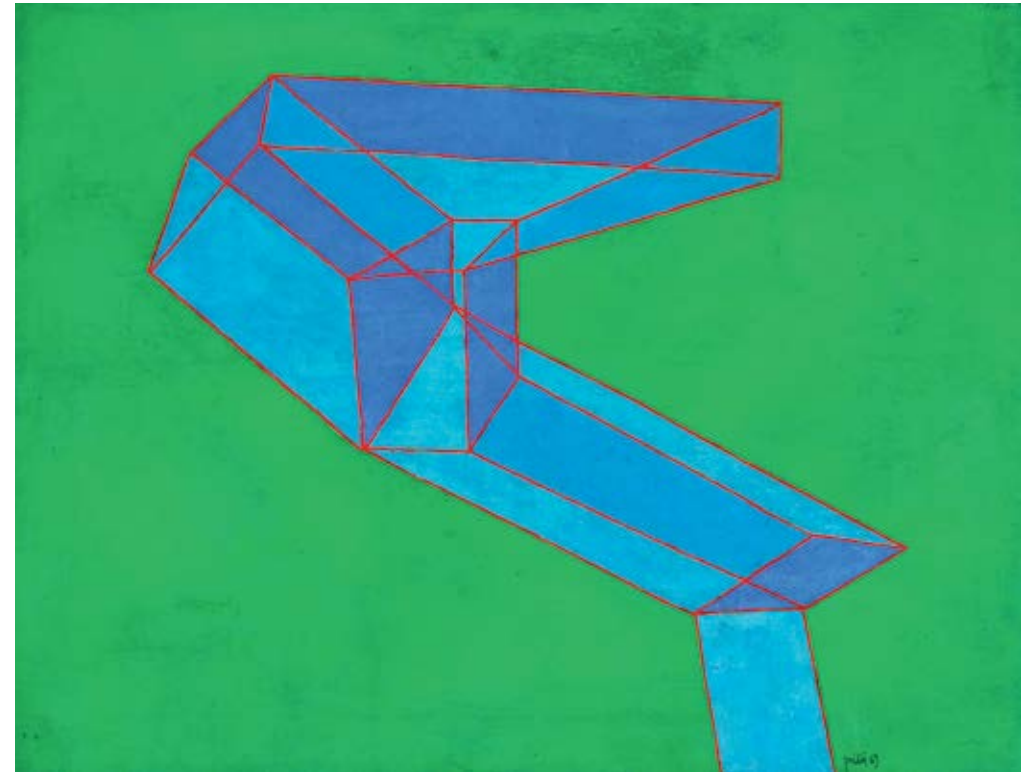


PIERO DORAZIO
Nel Silenzio, 1960
 oil on canvas



MICHELANGELO CONTE
Monumento a um poeta, 1963
 mixed media on canvas

ACHILLE PERILLI
L'odore della sera, 1969
 oil on canvas

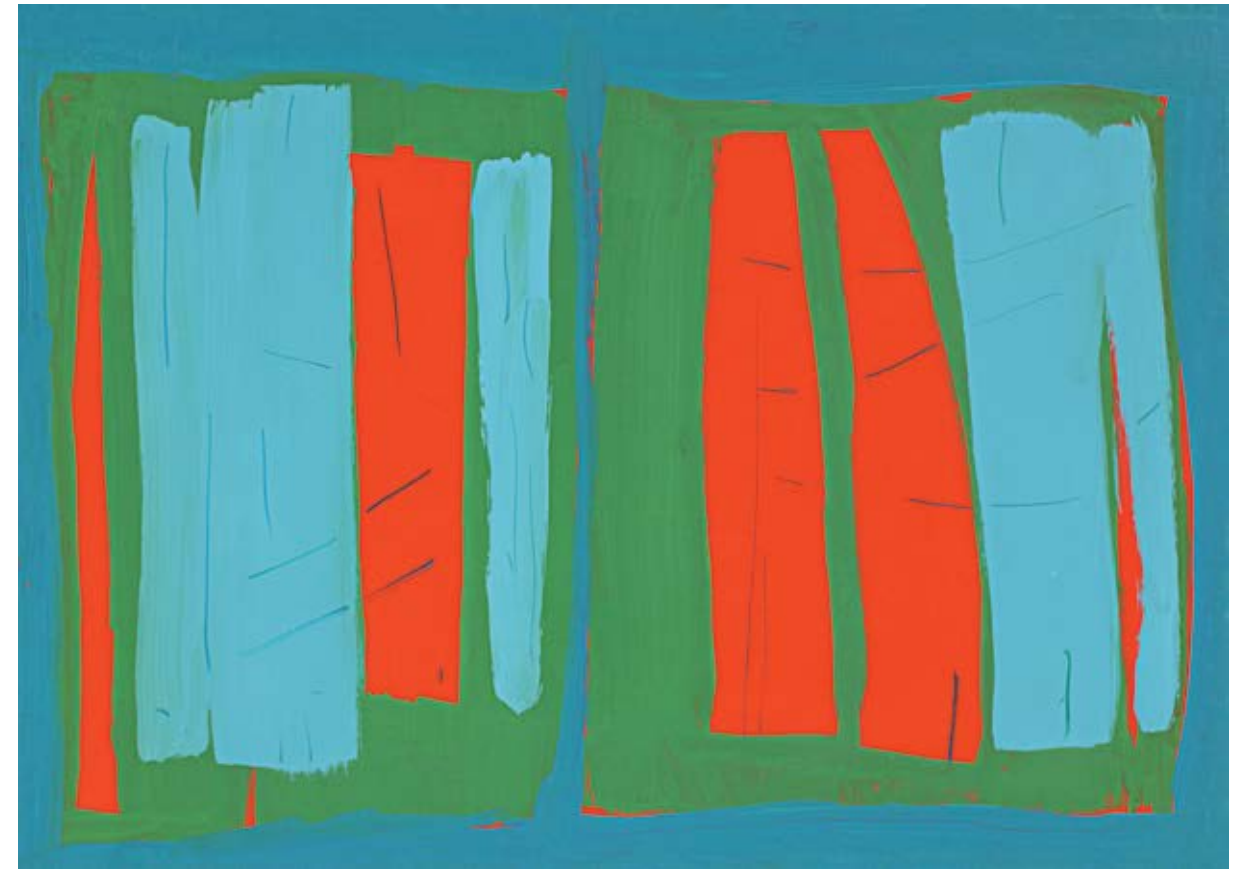


182

ALDO CALÓ
Untitled, 1961
bronze



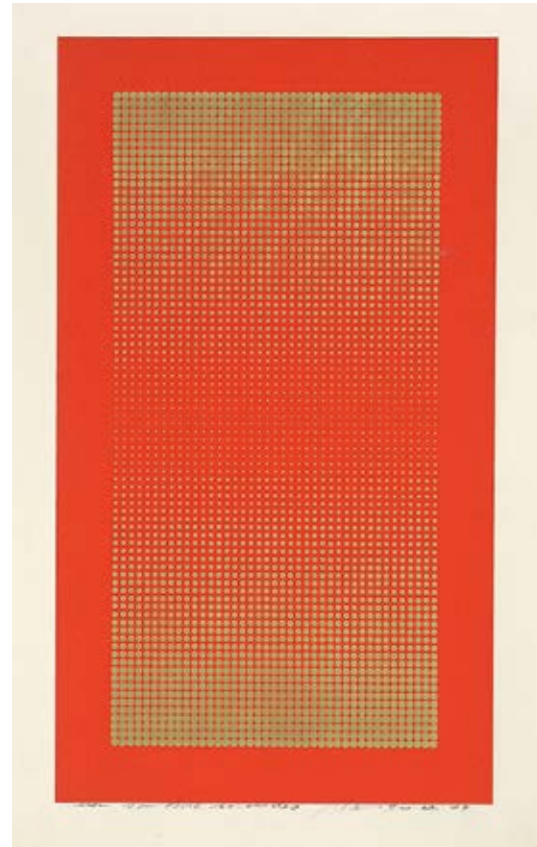
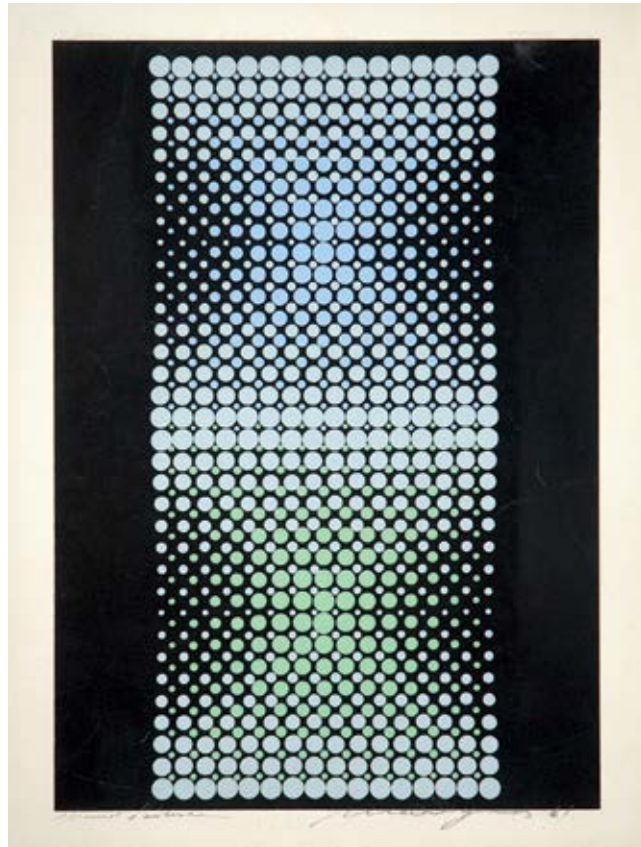
183



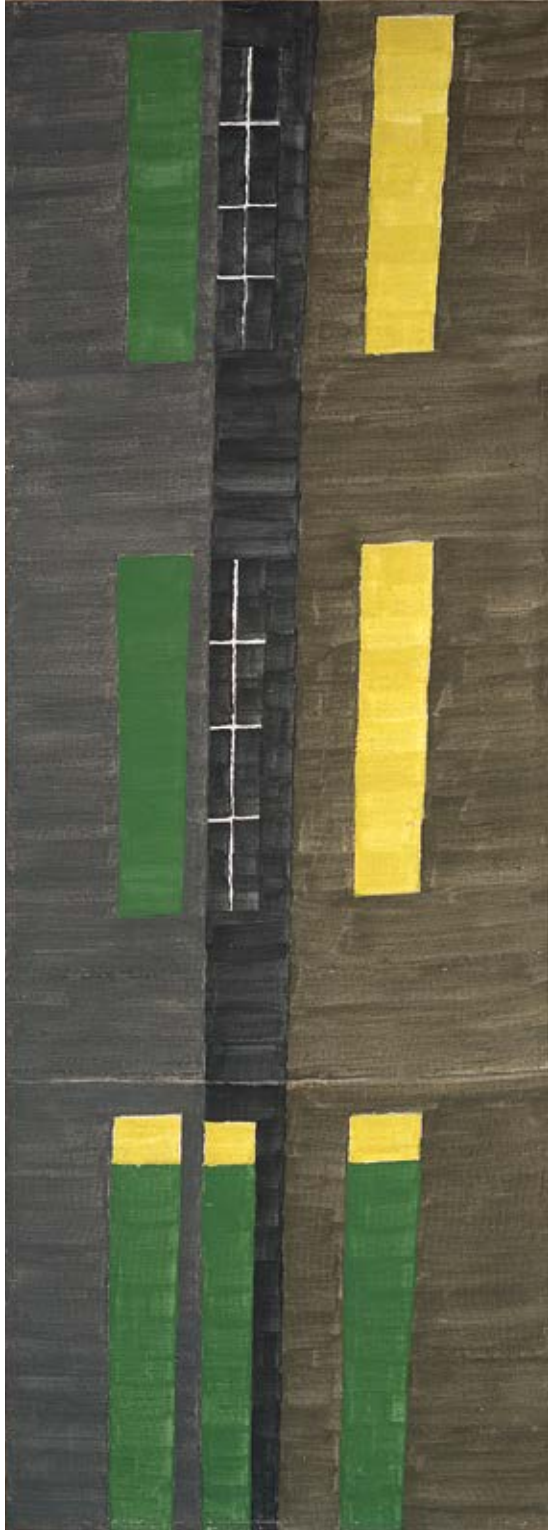
ANTONIO CORPORA
Untitled, 1971
oil on paper

ALMIR MAVIGNIER
 Untitled [Permutations], 1961
 silkscreen

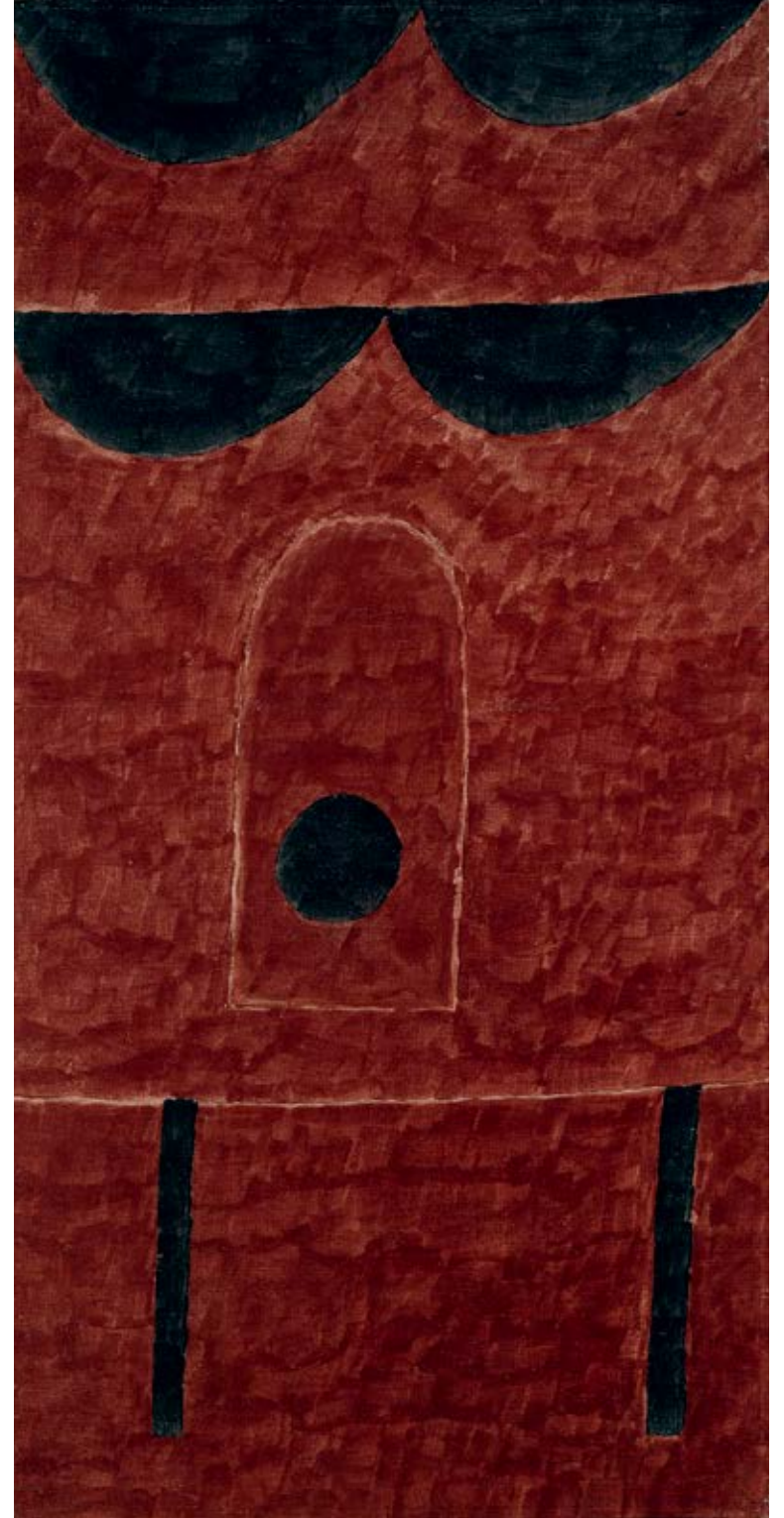
Untitled, 1966
 silkscreen



LUCIO FONTANA
Concetto Spaziale,
Attese, 1960
 watercolor on canvas

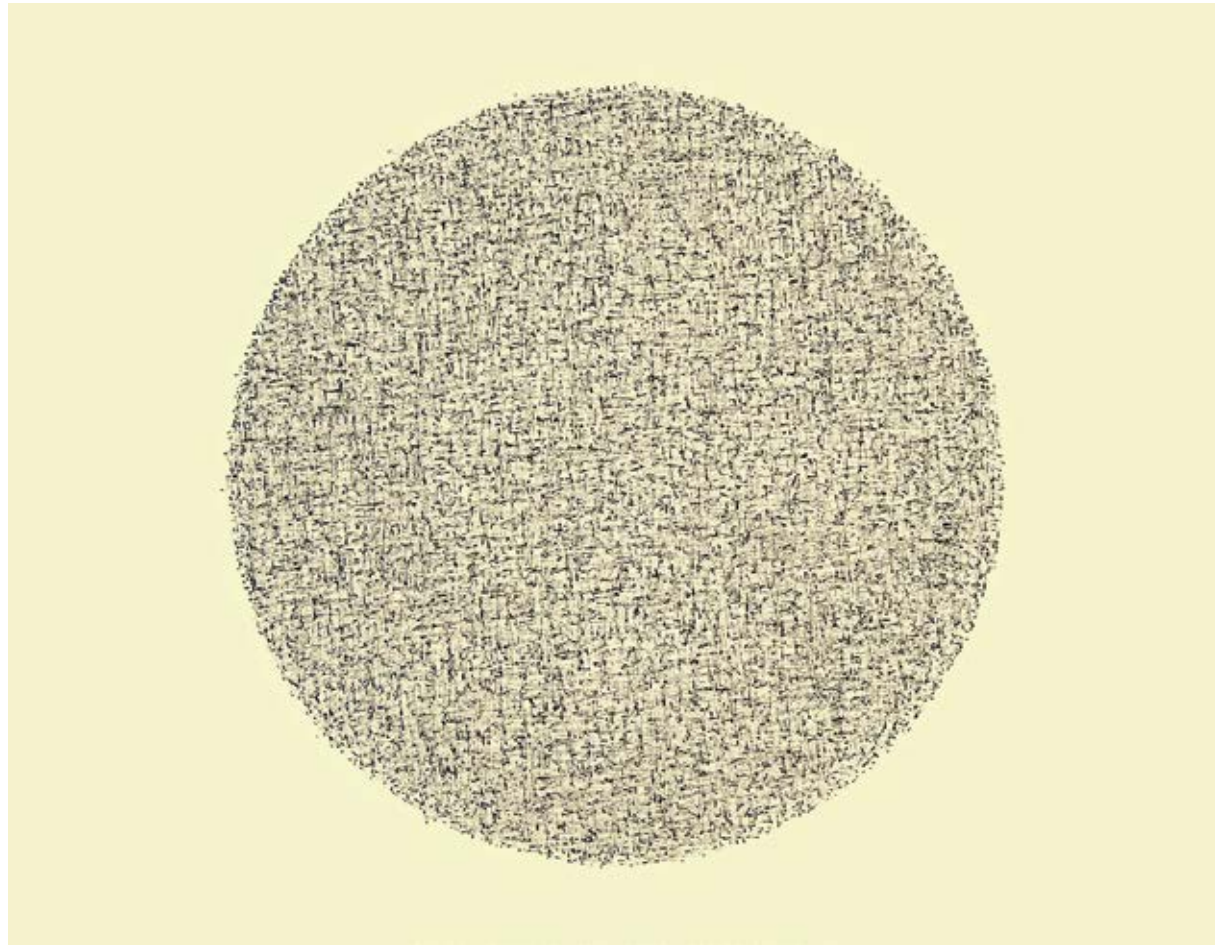


ALFREDO VOLPI
Fachada, 1960s
 tempera on canvas



ALFREDO VOLPI
 Untitled [Club], 1960s
 tempera on canvas

FRANZ WEISSMANN
Untitled, 1963
China ink on paper



FRANZ WEISSMANN
Amassado, 1964
aluminium plate



FRANS KRAJCBERG
Relevo n. 1, 1960
gouache on paper
embossed on canvas



MARIA BONOMI
Situação I, 1963
 woodcut

Situação II, 1963
 woodcut

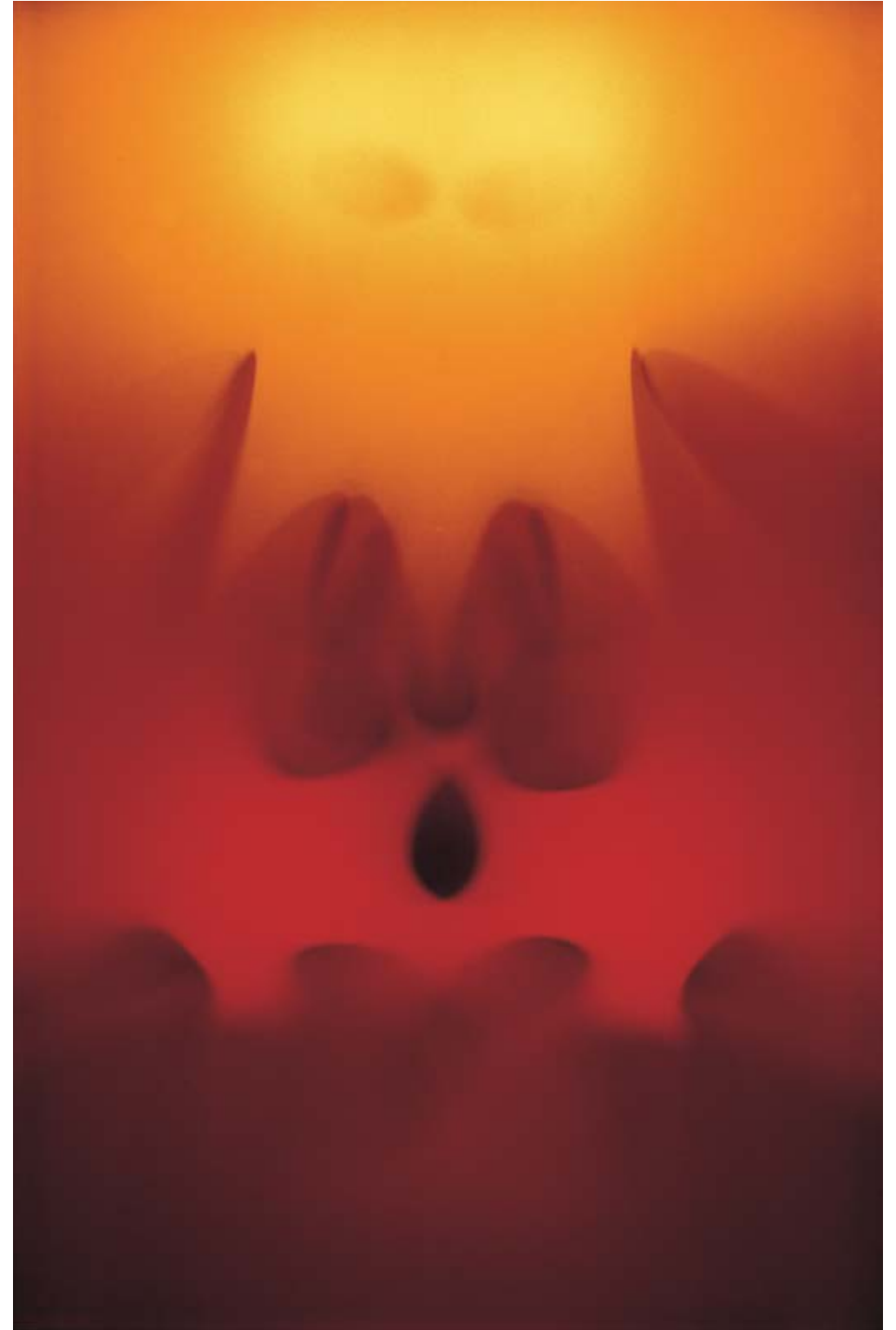


MARIA BONOMI
Situação III, 1963
 woodcut

GLAUCO RODRIGUES
Vermelho, n.d.
oil on canvas



ABRAHAM PALATNIK
Aparelho cinecromático, 1958
laminated wood box,
nylon screen, light bulbs,
and motor



LIST OF WORKS IN
THE EXHIBITION

ABRAHAM PALATNIK

Natal, RN, 1928 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2020

Aparelho cinecromático, 1958

laminated wood box, nylon screen, light bulbs, and motor
112 x 74 x 19,4 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP. Acquired by MAC USP and AAMAC
P. 195

ACHILLE PERILLI

Rome, Italy, 1927 – Orvieto, Italy, 2021

L'odore della sera, 1969
oil on canvas
65,4 x 81,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 181

ALBERTO DA VEIGA GUIGNARD

Nova Friburgo, RJ, 1896 – Belo Horizonte, MG, 1962

Retrato de Ismael Nery, 1930
oil on paperboard
34,7 x 26,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 86

Retrato de Murilo Mendes, 1930
oil on canvas
60,3 x 52,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 87

Santa Cecília, 1933
oil on canvas
60,4 x 50,1 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP. Donated by Paola Rezende
P. 89

Evocação, 1949
full-color photography on paper
32,4 x 24,2 cm
Collection MAM São Paulo. Donated by Paulo Kuczynski, 2006
P. 88

Untitled, 1949
full-color photography

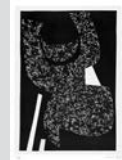
on paper
32,1 x 21,8 cm
Collection MAM São Paulo. Donated by Paulo Kuczynski, 2006
P. 88

ALBERTO MAGNELLI

Florence, Italy, 1888 – Paris, France, 1971

Pedras, 1933
oil on paper
65,3 x 50,4 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 165

Untitled, 1948
collage on paperboard
47,3 x 39,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
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Untitled, from the album *collages di Magnelli*, 1970
silkscreen
79,6 x 59,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Alexandre Dornelas/© Magnelli, Alberto/AUTVIS, Brasil, 2023

Untitled, from the album *collages di Magnelli*, 1970
silkscreen
79,9 x 59,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 169

Untitled, from the album *collages di Magnelli*, 1970
silkscreen
79,9 x 60 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 168

Poem by Murilo Mendes, from the album *collages di Magnelli*, 1970
silkscreen
80,1 x 60 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

ALDO CALÓ

San Cesario di Lecce, Italy, 1910 – Rome, Italy, 1983

Untitled, 1961
bronze
17,1 x 18,5 x 6,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 182

ALFREDO VOLPI

Lucca, Italy, 1896 – São Paulo, SP, 1988

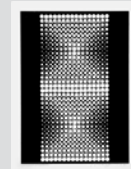
Fachada, 1960s
tempera on canvas
140 x 50 cm
Private collection
P. 186

Untitled [Club], 1960s
tempera on canvas
117 x 58 cm
Private collection
P. 187

ALMIR MAVIGNIER

Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1925 – Hamburg, Germany, 2018

Untitled [Permutations], 1961
silkscreen
39,8 x 29,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 184



Untitled [Permutations], 1961
silkscreen
39,8 x 29,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Nina Cristofaro

Untitled [Permutations], 1961
silkscreen
39,8 x 29,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

Untitled, 1966
silkscreen
38,1 x 24,9 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 184

ANTONIO CORPORA

Tunis, Tunisia, 1909 – Rome, Italy, 2004

Untitled, 1971
oil on paper
47,5 x 66,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 183

ARPAD SZENES

Budapest, Hungary, 1897 – Paris, France, 1985

MM ouvindo música, 1940
China ink on paper
31,6 x 23,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 130

Vieira da Silva no ateliê, 1946
oil on canvas
115,5 x 89 cm
Collection Gilberto Chateaubriand MAM Rio
P. 131

AXL LESKOSCHEK

Graz, Austria, 1889 – Vienna, Austria, 1975

Untitled (Figure 10 – Illustration for the book “The Brothers Karamazov” by Fiodor Dostoiévski, vol. 2, Rio de Janeiro: Ed. José Olympio), 1961
woodcut on paper
17,5 x 11 cm
Collection Biblioteca Brasileira Guita e José Mindlin – USP
P. 111



Untitled (Figure 15 – Illustration for the book “The Brothers Karamazov” by Fiodor Dostoiévski, vol. 2, Rio de Janeiro: Ed. José Olympio), 1961
woodcut on paper
11 x 9 cm
Collection Biblioteca Brasileira Guita e José Mindlin – USP
Photo: Marcello Vitorino

Untitled (Figure 5 – Illustration for the book “Demons” by Fiodor Dostoiévski, Rio de Janeiro: Ed. José Olympio), 1962
woodcut on paper
17,5 x 11 cm
Collection Biblioteca Brasileira Guita e José Mindlin – USP
P. 111

BRUNO GIORGI

Mococa, SP, 1905 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1993

Figura, 1951
patinated plaster
81,2 x 80 x 44,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP. Donated by Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo
P. 144

Pastor com corça, c. 1962
bronze
41 x 32 x 9 cm
Collection Museu Castro Maya – Ibram/MinC
P. 145

CANDIDO PORTINARI
Brodowski, SP, 1903 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1962

Retrato de Murilo Mendes, 1931
oil on canvas
81 x 65,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 85

Untitled, n.d.
China ink and oil on paper
25,5 x 18,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 84

CARLA ACCARDI
Trapani, Italy, 1924 – Rome, Italy, 2014

Untitled, 1963
gouache on paper
55,7 x 69 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 176

CARLOS MOSKOVICS
Budapest, Hungary, 1916 – ?, 1988

Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, 1940s
b&w photography – reproduction
60 x 35 cm
Collection Instituto Moreira Salles
P. 141

O pintor Árpád Szenes Rio de Janeiro-RJ, n.d.
b&w photography – reproduction
60 x 60 cm
Collection Instituto Moreira Salles
P. 141

CÍCERO DIAS
Escada, PE, 1907 – Paris, France, 2003

Untitled, 1928
oil on canvas
67 x 149,5 cm
Private collection
P. 94-95

Cena-violão, mulher e soldado, c. 1928
gouache on paper
31 x 30,5 cm
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 91

Untitled, 1920s
watercolor and China ink on paper
51 x 36 cm
Collection Tatyane and Rubens Henriques
P. 93

Arcos da Lapa, 1930
watercolor on paper
49,5 x 32,5 cm
Collection Tatyane and Rubens Henriques
P. 92

Saudades, 1931
watercolor and China ink on paper
14 x 14 cm
Collection Ana Carmen Longobardi
P. 90

DJANIRA DA MOTTA E SILVA
Avaré, SP, 1914 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1979

O circo, 1944
oil on canvas
97 x 117,2 cm
Collection Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram
P. 126

Autorretrato, 1945
oil on canvas
87 x 70 cm
Private collection
P. 122

Retrato de Cecília Meireles, 1948
oil on canvas
73 x 60 cm
Collection Victor Adler
P. 127

ETTORE COLLA

Parma, Italy, 1896 – Rome, Italy, 1968

Untitled, n.d.
silkscreen
69,2 x 48,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 170

FAYGA OSTROWER
Lodz, Poland, 1920 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2001

Duas mulheres e uma criança, 1950
etching, lavis aquatint, and drypoint on paper
19,2 x 19 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 114

Untitled, c. 1953
full-color linocut and gouache on paper
13,5 x 20,6 cm
Collection Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Purchased by Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2009
P. 115

Untitled, c. 1954
full-color etching and aquatint on paper
28,6 x 34,8 cm
Collection Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo.

Purchased by Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2009
P. 115

Untitled, n.d.
metal engraving
34,5 x 35 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 114

FLÁVIO DE CARVALHO
Barra Mansa, RJ, 1899 – Valinhos, SP, 1973

Cabeça do poeta Murilo Mendes, 1951
graphite on paper
53,6 x 68,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 124

FRANS KRAJCBERG
Kozienice, Poland, 1921 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2017

Relevo n. 1, 1960
gouache on paper embossed on canvas
70,2 x 200,2 x 2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP. Acquired by MAC USP
P. 190-191

FRANZ WEISSMANN
Knittelfeld, Austria, 1911 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005

Untitled, 1963
China ink on paper
50,1 x 65 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 188

Amassado, 1964
aluminium plate
60 x 54 cm
Collection Fabio Faisal
P. 189

GASTONE BIGGI
Rome, Italy, 1925 – Langhirano, Italy, 2014

Variabile N, 1967
acrylic on canvas
50 x 50 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 177

GEORGE ROUAULT

Paris, France, 1871 – Paris, France, 1958

Figura e árvore, 1928

engraving
43,5 x 33,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 154

GEORGES BRAQUE

Argenteuil, France, 1882 – Paris, France, 1963

Untitled, n.d.
etching
46,2 x 34,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 147

GERALDO DE BARROS

Chavantes, SP, 1923 – São Paulo, SP, 1998

Untitled, 1950
lithography and gouache on paper
26,5 x 36,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 117

GINO SEVERINI

Cortona, Italy, 1883 – Paris, France, 1966

Untitled, 1961
drypoint
49,6 x 38,4 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 170

GIORGIO DE CHIRICO

Volos, Greece, 1888 – Rome, Italy, 1978

Cavalli in riva al mare, 1932-1933
oil on canvas
54,7 x 45,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP.
Donated by Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho
P. 118

Manequins, n.d.

lithography
56 x 44,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 149

GIORGIO MORANDI

Bologna, Italy, 1890 – Bologna, Italy, 1964

Untitled, 1931
etching on paper
24,4 x 29 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP.
Donated by Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho
P. 172

Natura morta, 1956

oil on canvas
30,7 x 35,5 cm
Collection Luiz Carlos Ritter
P. 173

GIUSEPPE CAPOGROSSI

Rome, Italy, 1900 – Rome, Italy, 1972

Banhistas no trampolim, 1931
oil on canvas
119 x 80 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP.
Donated by Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho
P. 120

Superfície 455, 1961

oil on canvas
50 x 70 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 178

GLAUCO RODRIGUES

Bagé, RS, 1929 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2004

Vermelho, n.d.
oil on canvas
81 x 65,4 cm
Collection Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram
P. 194

HANS RICHTER

Berlin, Germany, 1888 – Minusio, Switzerland, 1976

Untitled, 1970
mixed media and collage on paper
20,8 x 14,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 166

Untitled, 1970
mixed media and collage on paper
21 x 14,8 cm

Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 166

IONE SALDANHA

Alegrete, RS, 1919 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2001

Quarto Murilo Mendes, 1956
oil on paper
31 x 25 cm
Collection Gilberto Chateaubriand MAM Rio
P. 128

Casario, 1950s
oil on canvas
54 x 88 cm
Collection Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand. Donated by Neyde Ugolini de Moraes, 2021. MASP:11163
P. 129

ISMAEL NERY

Belém, PA, 1900 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1934

Mulher sentada com ramo de flores, 1927
oil on paperboard
62,5 x 51,5 cm
Private collection
P. 70

Enseada de Botafogo, 1928

China ink and watercolor on paper
36 X 28 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 71

Homem e mulher, 1928

gouache on paper
22 x 12,2 cm
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts
Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 75

Como meu amigo Chagall, 1920s
watercolor on paper
26 x 38 cm
Collection Orandi Momesso
P. 77

Retrato de Adalgisa Nery, 1930
oil on paperboard
55 x 46 cm
Artistic and Cultural

Collection of the Palácios do Governo do Estado de São Paulo
P. 83

Autorretrato

(*verso Casas*), n.d.
oil on plywood
35,5 x 27,3 cm
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts
Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 79

Duas irmãs, n.d.

oil on hard paperboard
40,3 x 32,8 cm
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts
Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 78

Duas mulheres pensam em mim, cujo nome viram impresso num jornal e num programa, n.d.

pencil on paper
25,9 x 20,3 cm
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts
Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 74

Elisa era o nome de sua mulher, n.d.

blue ink on paper
15,7 x 21,4 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 72

Elles repetiram cinco vezes a mesma história, n.d.

blue ink on paper
15,8 x 23,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 72

Retrato de Adalgisa, n.d.

oil on canvas
35 x 24 cm
Private collection
P. 81

Untitled, n.d.
China ink and watercolor on paper
17 x 11,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte

Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 69

Untitled, n.d.
oil on canvas
32,8 x 41 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 73

JAMES ENSOR

Ostend, Belgium, 1860 – Ostend, Belgium, 1949

Insects singuliers, 1888
drypoint
22,3 x 28 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 155

Le roi peste, 1895

engraving
24 x 29,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 155

JEAN ARP

Strasbourg, France, 1886 – Basel, Switzerland, 1966

Le Voilier dans la forêt, n.d.
silkscreen
32,3 x 25,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 171

JESÚS RAFAEL SOTO

Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela, 1923 – Paris, France, 2005

Untitled, 1975
acrylic and painted metal
102 x 102 x 17 cm
Collection Sergio, Luiza and Pedro Quintella
P. 175

JOAN MIRÓ

Barcelona, Spain, 1893 – Palma, Spain, 1983



Untitled, 1967
lithography on paper
11,2 x 32,8 cm (each)
Collection Museu de Arte

Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Nina Cristofaro/
© Successió Miró/AUTVIS,
Brasil, 2023

JORGE DE LIMA

União dos Palmares, AL, 1893 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1953

Fotomontagem: possibilidade de capa para o livro de poemas "O sinal de Deus", de Murilo Mendes, c. 1936
collage and b&w
photography on paper
15 x 12 cm
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 99

Fotomontagem: Figura humana sem rosto, vestida com casaco de pele, c. 1939

b&w photography on paper
15,7 x 11,4 cm
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 98

Fotomontagem: Mulher com cabeça de escafandro - O Julgamento do Tempo, c. 1939

b&w photography on paper
15,4 x 11,5 cm
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 98

Fotomontagem: Mulher com perfil de gorila, c. 1939

b&w photography on paper
14,9 x 11,3 cm
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 97

Fotomontagem: Paródia da "Ressurreição de Lázaro", c. 1939

b&w photography on paper
11,7 x 15,7 cm
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP
P. 97

Altair e Violante, 1953

oil on canvas
87 x 80 cm

Fund Alexandre Eulalio – Cedae/IEL – Unicamp
P. 96

JOSÉ MEDEIROS

Teresina, PI, 1921 – L'Aquila, Italy, 1990

Adalgisa Nery, 1942
b&w photography - reproduction
60 x 35 cm
Collection Instituto Moreira Salles
P. 99

LASAR SEGALL

Vilnius, Lithuania, 1889 – São Paulo, SP, 1957

Maternidade, 1936
cast bronze
56 x 40,4 x 44 cm
Collection Museu Lasar Segall – Ibram/Minc
P. 142

Jovem de cabelos compridos, 1937

oil on canvas
65 x 50 cm
Collection Museu Lasar Segall – Ibram/Minc
P. 143

LÍVIO ABRAMO

Araraquara, SP, 1903 – Asunción, Paraguay, 1992

Untitled, 1951
woodcut
27,6 x 21,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 112

Untitled, n.d.
woodcut
27,3 x 23,1 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 113

LI YUAN-CHIA

Guangxi, China, 1929 – Carlisle, United Kingdom, 1994

White Book (1=65), 1966
dry embossing
23,7 x 23,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

White Book (2=65), 1966
dry embossing
23,7 x 23,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

White Book (3=65), 1966
dry embossing
23,6 x 23,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

White Book (4=65), 1966
dry embossing
23,7 x 23,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

White Book (5=65), 1966
dry embossing
23,7 x 23,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

White Book (Prefácio de Murilo Mendes), 1966

dry embossing
24,1 x 23,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

LUCIO FONTANA

Rosario, Argentina, 1899 – Comabbio, Italy, 1968

Concetto Spaziale, Attese, 1960
watercolor on canvas
40,5 x 38 cm
Private collection
P. 185

MARCELO GRASSMANN

São Simão, SP, 1925 – São Paulo, SP, 2013

Untitled, 1949
woodcut
30,4 x 24,6 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
P. 116

MARIA BONOMI
Meina, Italy, 1935

Situação I, 1963
woodcut
42 x 29 cm
Private collection
P. 192

Situação II, 1963
woodcut
50 x 30 cm
Private collection
P. 192

Situação III, 1963
woodcut
50 x 30 cm
Private collection
P. 193

MARIA HELENA VIEIRA DA SILVA

Lisbon, Portugal, 1908 – Paris, France, 1992

Le jeu des cartes, 1942
China ink and gouache on paperboard
40 x 50 cm
Collection Gilberto Chateaubriand MAM Rio P. 133

Interior (Casa da artista em Santa Teresa - RJ), 1944
oil on canvas
41,5 x 41,5 cm
Collection Orandi Momesso P. 132

Untitled, 1940s
oil on canvas
24 x 33 cm
Collection Gilberto Chateaubriand MAM Rio P. 134

Les terrasses, 1952
oil on canvas
63 x 98,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro P. 135

Untitled, 1963
gouache on paper
26 x 24,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 134

Croquis para os discípulos de Emaús, n.d.
China ink on paper
32,7 x 21,9 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 137

Ilustração para Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper
15,3 x 12,9 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 139



Ilustração para Janelas Verdes, n.d.

China ink on paper
25 x 17,4 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Alexandre Dornelas/© VIEIRA DA SILVA, Maria Helena/AUTVIS, Brasil, 2023

Ilustração para Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper
25,3 x 17,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 138

Ilustração para Janelas Verdes, n.d.
China ink on paper
25,6 x 17,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 138

Projeto de capa para Discípulos, n.d.
China ink on paper
19 x 22 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 136

Untitled, n.d.
China ink on paper
18,9 x 16,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 140

Untitled, n.d.
China ink on paper
26 x 15,9 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 140

MARIA MARTINS
Campanha, MG, 1894 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1973

Tamba-tajá, 1945
bronze
58,5 x 39 x 40,5 cm

Collection Fernanda Feitosa and Heitor Martins

Untitled, 1945
metal engraving
12,3 x 21 cm
Collection Banco Itaú

Untitled, 1945
metal engraving
13,5 x 17,5 cm
Collection Banco Itaú

Impossible, 1946
metal engraving
17,3 x 15 cm
Collection Banco Itaú

MAX ERNST
Brühl, Germany, 1891 – Paris, France, 1976

Deshabillés, 1920
collage
24,8 x 19 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 151

Danse, n.d.
lithography
56,7 x 38,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 152

MICHELANGELO CONTE
Split, Croatia, 1913 – Rome, Italy, 1996

Monumento a um poeta, 1963
mixed media on canvas
162 x 97 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 180

MILTON DACOSTA
Niterói, RJ, 1915 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1988

Ciclistas, 1941
oil on canvas
46 x 55 cm
Private collection P. 121

Dois cavalos, 1942
oil on wood
46 x 38 cm
Collection Banco Itaú P. 119

Figura (Cabeçada), 1942
oil on canvas
64,5 x 48,5 cm

Collection Fabio de Albuquerque P. 125

Interior de ateliê, 1944
oil on canvas
87 x 80 cm
Collection Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram P. 123

OSWALDO GOELDI
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1895 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1961

O paraquedista, 1942
crayon on paper
47,8 x 33 cm
Collection MAM São Paulo. Donated by Patrícia Mendes Caldeira, 1970 P. 109

O ladrão, n.d.
woodcut
33,5 x 25,8 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 110



Untitled, n.d.
woodcut
13,3 x 16,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Nina Cristofaro/© Goeldi, Oswaldo – Projeto Goeldi/AUTVIS, Brasil, 2023



Untitled, n.d.
woodcut
16,4 x 13,2 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF
Photo: Nina Cristofaro/© Goeldi, Oswaldo – Projeto Goeldi/AUTVIS, Brasil, 2023

PABLO PICASSO
Málaga, Spain, 1881 – Mougins, France, 1973

Mujer sentada con sombrero y mujer cubierta de pie, 1934
etching
44,1 x 33,5 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 153

PIERO DORAZIO
Rome, Italy, 1927 – Perugia, Italy, 2005

Nel Silenzio, 1960
oil on canvas
178 x 158,3 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 179

SOPHIE TAEUBER-ARP
Davos, Switzerland, 1889 – Zürich, Switzerland, 1943

Untitled, n.d.
silkscreen
23,9 x 23,9 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 156

VICTOR VASARELY
Pécs, Hungary, 1906 – Paris, France, 1997

Untitled, n.d.
lithography
69,7 x 49,7 cm
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF P. 174

DOCUMENTS, PHOTOS AND PUBLICATIONS (IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

Ismael Nery Exhibition – Rio, 1929: List of works and note from Antonio Bento to Mário de Andrade, 1929
Exhibition catalogue (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP

CÍCERO DIAS
Escada, PE, 1907 – Paris, France, 2003

“Murilo Mendes por Cícero Dias”, 20 Nov. 1930
Magazine *Para Todos* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 12, n. 627, p. 20 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/124451/29868>

Illustrated letter to Murilo Mendes #1, 1930
pen ink on paper
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP

Illustrated letter to Murilo Mendes #2, 1930
pen ink on paper
Collection Mário de Andrade. Visual Arts Collection of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP

MURILO MENDES
Poemas, 1930
Book published by Companhia Dias Cardoso (Juiz de Fora, Brazil)
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

História do Brasil, 1932[?]
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Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

“Pintura e Política”, 16 Nov. 1935
Magazine *O Cruzeiro* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 8, n. 2, p. 27 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/003581/13021>

Notebook with the Poems “O SINAL DE DEUS”, c. 1936
Fund Mário de Andrade. Archive of the Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP

ADALGISA NERY
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1905 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1980

Poemas, 1937
Book published by Pongetti (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

Poemas, 1937
Book published by Pongetti (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Private collection

UNKNOWN AUTHOR
Murilo Mendes with Portrait of Adalgisa Nery, 1937[?]

b&w photography - reproduction
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

UNKNOWN AUTHOR
“Notícia sobre Ismael Nery” (Murilo Mendes’s room with paintings by Ismael Nery), 12 Nov. 1938
Magazine *O Cruzeiro* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 11, n. 02, p. 5 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/003581/21062>

MURILO MENDES
A poesia em pânico, 1938
Book published by Cooperativa Cultural Guanabara (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

JORGE DE CASTRO
?, ? - ?, ?

Murilo Mendes Beside a Painting by Ismael Nery, 1939
b&w photography - reproduction
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

UNKNOWN AUTHOR
Murilo Mendes, Rio de Janeiro, 1941
b&w photography - reproduction
FASVS Archive, Lisbon

MURILO MENDES
O visionário: poemas (1930/33), 1941

Book published by Ed. José Olympio (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

JORGE DE LIMA
A pintura em pânico, 1943
Book published by Tip Luso-Brasileira (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Collection Mário de Andrade. Biblioteca do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros da USP

A pintura em pânico, 1943
Digital facsimile of the work originally published by Tip Luso-Brasileira (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
Photo retouching: César Barreto
Collection, research, and reproductions: Simone Rodrigues

MURILO MENDES
Mundo enigma (1942); Os quatro elementos (1935), 1945
Book published by Livraria do Globo (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
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“Mozart”, 03 Feb. 1946
Newspaper *A Manhã – Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 6, n. 1.377, p. 1 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/114774/1>

JORGE DE LIMA
“Cachimbo do Sertão” (illustration by Lasar Segall), August 31, 1947
Newspaper *A Manhã – Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 2, n. 53, p. 12 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/114774/718>

MURILO MENDES

“Cântico” (illustration by E. Martim Gonçalves), 09 Nov. 1947
Newspaper *A Manhã* – *Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 2, n. 64, p. 12 – reproduction
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“O céu”, 14 March 1948
Newspaper *A Manhã* – *Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 2, n. 78, p. 6-7 – reproduction
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“Recordação de Ismael Nery” (drawing by Ismael Nery), 12 Sept. 1948
Newspaper *A Manhã* – *Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 3, n. 98, p. 5 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/114774/1193>

Janela do caos, 1949
Book published by Imprimerie Union (Paris, France), including 7 engravings by Francis Picabia
Collection Museu de Arte Murilo Mendes – UFJF

“Importância de Segall”, 12 May 1951
Newspaper *A Manhã* – *Letras e Artes* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), year 6, n. 208, p. 1 – reproduction
Collection Fundação Biblioteca Nacional – Brazil. Available at: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/114774/2675>

FIÓDOR DOSTOIÉVSKI

Moscow, Russia, 1821 – Saint Petersburg, Russia, 1881

Obras completas e ilustradas de Dostoiévski:

O idiota, 1952

Book published by Ed. José Olympio (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
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Murilo Mendes and Arpad Szenes at the Artist’s Studio, Denfert-Rochereau, Paris, c. 1952
b&w photography – reproduction
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Obras completas e ilustradas de Dostoiévski: Os Irmãos Karamázovi, 1953

Book published by Ed. José Olympio (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
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XXe Siècle, June 1955

Magazine *Nouvelle série*, n. 5 (double), with text by Murilo Mendes, “Magnelli à Bruxelles”, and others
Collection Júlio Castañon Guimarães

Habitat – Arquitetura e Artes no Brasil, December, 1955

Magazine, edition n. 25, with text by Murilo Mendes
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Maria, 1956

Exhibition catalogue (Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
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Corpora, 1960

Exhibition catalogue (Galleria Pogliani, Rome, Italy), with text by Murilo Mendes
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Murilo Mendes with Max Bill in Zurich, 1962
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Mavignier 75 (MAM São Paulo, 2000)

Sculture di Calò, 1962

Exhibition catalogue (L’Obelisco, Rome, Italy), with text by Murilo Mendes
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MURILO MENDES

Vedova, el hombre, 1962
Book published by Palma de Mallorca (Madrid, Spain)
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Habitat – Arquitetura e Artes no Brasil, March 1963
Magazine, edition n. 71, with text by Murilo Mendes
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Capogrossi, 1963
Exhibition catalogue (Galleria d’Arte, Milan, Italy), with poem by Murilo Mendes, “Grafito para Capogrossi”
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Conte, 1964

Exhibition catalogue (Galeria d’Arte della Casa do Brasil, Rome, Italy), with texts by Murilo Mendes, Hugo Gouthier de Oliveira Gondim and Enrico Crispolti
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Brazilian Pavillion at the 32nd Venice Biennale, 1964
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XXXII Esposizione Biennale Internazionale D’Arte Venezia 1964 - Brasile, 1964

Exhibition catalogue (32nd Venice Biennale, Italy), with text by Murilo Mendes
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Alberto Magnelli, c. 1964
Book published by Dell’Ateneo (Rome, Italy)
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Antonio Calderara. Pintura dal 1925 al 1965, 1965

Exhibition catalogue (All’insegna del Pesce d’Oro, Milan, Italy), with text by Murilo Mendes
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CORTESÃO
Porto, Portugal, 1913 – Lisbon, Portugal, 1975

Murilo Mendes with “armed eye” by Lygia Clark, 1968

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Arpad Szenes, 1970

Exhibition catalogue (Musée de Rouen, Musée de Rennes, Musée de Lille, Musée D’Orléans and Musée de Dijon, France), with texts by Murilo Mendes and Claude Esteban
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Vieira da Silva, 1970

Exhibition catalogue (Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal), with texts by Murilo Mendes, João Gaspar Simões, Mário Cesariny, René Char, and José-Augusto França
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Sonia Delaunay. Opere 1908-1970, 1970-1971

Exhibition catalogue (Il Collezionista d’Arte Contemporanea, Rome, Italy), with texts by Murilo Mendes, Alberto Magnelli,

Sonia Delaunay and Apollinaire
Collection Júlio Castañon Guimarães

Arp, 1971

Exhibition catalogue (Rome, Italy), with texts by Murilo Mendes, Jean Arp, Tristan Tzara, and Giuseppe Ungaretti
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VARIOUS AUTHORS (ALEXANDRE EULALIO AND OTHERS)

Behind-the-scenes of the short-film “Murilo Mendes: A Poesia em Pânico”, 1971
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Collection Carlos Augusto Calil

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Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1932 – São Paulo, SP, 1988



Murilo Mendes: A Poesia em Pânico, 1971-74/1977
digitized movie film, 20’
Collection Carlos Augusto Calil

L. Fontana. Mostra di Disegni e Opere Grafiche di Lucio Fontana, 1972

Exhibition catalogue (Istituto Italo-Latino Americano, Rome, Italy), with text by Murilo Mendes and others
Collection Júlio Castañon Guimarães

ANNALISA CIMA

Milan, Italy, 1941 – Lugano, Italy, 2019

Murilo Mendes: di domenica, c. 1973
Book published by All’insegna del Pesce D’Oro (Milan, Italy)
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Murilo Mendes: di

domenica, c. 1973

Book published All’insegna del Pesce D’Oro (Milan, Italy)
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Achille Perilli, 1974

Exhibition catalogue (Galleria d’Arte Spagnoli, Florence, Italy), with texts by Murilo Mendes, Claudia Terenzi and Paul Seylaz
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Mendes – Soto, 1975

Book published by De Luca Editore (Rome, Italy), with images of works by Jesús Rafael Soto and texts by Murilo Mendes
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MURILO MENDES

Murilo Mendes: o olhar do poeta, 1987

Book published by Gulbenkian (Lisbon, Portugal)
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Janelas Verdes, 1989

Book with preface by Luciana Stegagno Picchio, drawings by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, published by Galeria 111 (Lisbon, Portugal)
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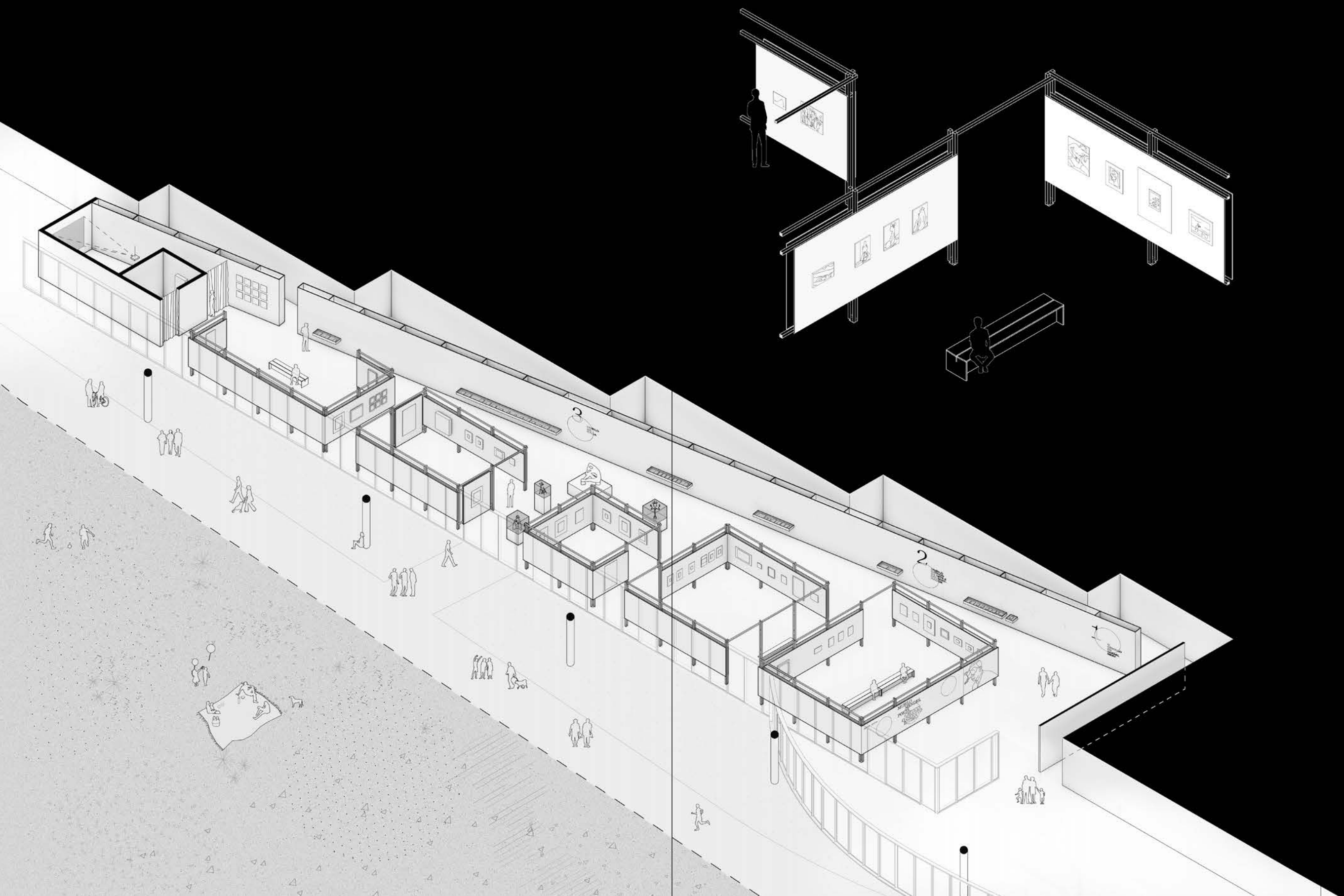
L’occhio del poeta, 2001

Book organized by Luciana Stegagno Picchio and published by Gangemi Editore (Rome, Italy)
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Letter from Murilo Miranda

About Jorge de Lima’s Photomontage, n.d.
pen ink on paper
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