

Exhibition celebrates the historical connection between MAM São Paulo and the Mário de Andrade Library in the development of modern Brazilian art

The exhibition brings together rare books and works by Brazilian and foreign artists from the collections of MAM and the Library, unveiling how modernism took shape in the country.



Henri Matisse, Jazz, 1947.
Mário de Andrade Library,
Rare Works and Special
Collections Center

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From October 4 to December 7, 2025, **Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo** and the **Mário de Andrade Library** present the exhibition *From the book to the museum: MAM São Paulo and the Mário de Andrade Library*, a group show that recovers the foundational relationship between the two institutions and their key contribution to the consolidation of modernism in Brazil.

Curated by **Cauê Alves** and **Pedro Nery**, the exhibition takes place at Mário de Andrade's Library and Newspaper Archive, both located around Praça Dom José Gaspar, in central São Paulo, and brings together mainly works from the 1940s and 1950s, a period in which modern art was consolidating in Brazil and in which spaces dedicated to its dissemination were emerging. Highlights include rare and seminal books such as **Henri Matisse's** *Jazz*, and **Fernand Léger's** *Le Cirque*,

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which drew Brazilian artists and researchers closer to European modernism.

The starting point of the exhibition is the trajectory of **Sérgio Milliet**, an essential cultural agent in the histories of both institutions. Milliet was director of the Library between 1943 and 1959, and also took part in the creation of MAM São Paulo. There he served as artistic director and organized the 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of the São Paulo Biennial, held at the time by the museum.

"Under Milliet's leadership, the Library and MAM complemented each other in the dissemination and institutionalization of modern art, making way for educational exhibitions that tutored artists and intellectuals and increased the visibility of modernist production," explains Cauê Alves. "It was also in the Art Section of the São Paulo Municipal Library (now the BMA) that the modernist works donated by American businessman **Nelson Rockefeller** reached the public, a milestone in the creation of MAM," he adds.

The exhibition also highlights the national production, presenting albums and artist books crafted almost entirely by hand, such as the gouaches of **Milton Dacosta** and **Di Cavalcanti's** *Fantoches da Meia-Noite* (1922), which combines prints and watercolors. The route continues to the first books produced in limited editions and with high-quality printing, such as those in the collection of the *Society of One Hundred Bibliophiles of Brazil*, an initiative led by art collector **Raymundo Castro Maya** which started in 1943.

Works from the MAM São Paulo collection are also part of the exhibition, bringing to light the tensions that marked modern Brazilian production — especially the controversy between **abstraction and figuration**, already present in the museum's inaugural exhibition, *From Figurativism to Abstractionism* (1949). The exhibition route also contemplates the emergence of the **concrete avant-garde** in the 1950s, in opposition to informal abstractionism, revealing the plurality of paths of modern art in Brazil.

"More than different functions, the Library and the Museum share a common origin and a converging mission: to preserve, organize and mediate knowledge. They are spaces for meeting and learning that stimulate research, reflection and imagination," adds Pedro Nery.

"As part of the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Mário de Andrade Library, the exhibition *From the Book to the Museum* reaffirms our historical bond with MAM. These are institutions that sprung from the same modernist impulse, and that a century later continue to demonstrate the strength of this legacy in São Paulo's cultural life," adds Rodrigo Massi, director of the Mário de Andrade Library.

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About the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo

Founded in 1948, the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo is a non-profit, civil society organization of public interest. Its collection holds more than 5,000 works produced by the most representative names in modern and contemporary art, mainly from Brazil. Both the collection and the exhibitions favor experimentalism, opening up to the plurality of artistic productions from around the world, as well as to the different interests of contemporary societies. MAM offers a wide range of activities including courses, seminars, lectures, performances, concerts, film sessions and artistic practices. The content of the exhibitions and activities is accessible to all audiences through guided visits conducted in Libras (Brazilian Sign Language), audio description of the works and video guides in Libras. The collection of books, periodicals, documents, and audio and video material comprises 65,000 titles. The exchange with museum libraries from several countries keeps the collection alive.

MAM has temporarily relocated out of its headquarters in the Ibirapuera Park since August 2024 due to the renovation of the building's marquee, carried out by the Secretariat of Green and Environment of the City of São Paulo. The museum's return to the Park is scheduled for the second half of 2025. The first semester's exhibition program is being presented at partner institutions such as Centro Cultural Fiesp and Sesc São Paulo. Follow our activities through MAM's website (www.mam.org.br) and social media (@mamsaopaulo).

About the Mário de Andrade Library

The Mário de Andrade Library (BMA) is the largest public library in the state of São Paulo and the second largest in Brazil, with an archive of approximately 1.38 million items including books, periodicals, rare collections and specialized collections. Inaugurated in 1925 as the Municipal Library, it has since been a reference for readers, researchers and artists. Since 1942, it occupies the building designed by Jacques Pilon, a landmark of modernist architecture in central São Paulo.

With free programming, the BMA brings together exhibitions, courses, debates, literary gatherings and book launches, drawing a diverse crowd and strengthening its role as a democratic space for access to culture.

In 2025, the institution celebrates 100 years of existence with a series of special activities that culminate in the 5th Mário de Andrade Festival, held from October 24–26, this year with the theme "Memory and Future".

About the Mário de Andrade Library's Newspaper Archive

The Mário de Andrade Library's Newspaper Archive is dedicated to preserving and granting access to periodicals—newspapers, magazines, almanacs and institutional bulletins. Opened in December 2012, it is located in a building attached to the

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Library's main building, at Rua Doutor Bráulio Gomes, 139. It brings together in one place one of the main public collections of its kind in Brazil, with around 12,000 titles spanning publications from the end of the 19th century to the present day.

In addition to enabling users to consult the collection, the Newspaper Archive houses the TEIA Centro, a collaborative workspace that offers internet access, meeting rooms, a lunchroom, and courses focused on entrepreneurship and creative economy, strengthening the Library's role as a place where people meet, experiment and learn.

Information:

Exhibition: *From the Book to the Museum: MAM São Paulo and the Mário de Andrade Library*

Venues: Mário de Andrade Library (R. da Consolação, 94 - República, São Paulo - SP) and Newspaper Archive of the Mário de Andrade Library (R. Dr. Bráulio Gomes, 139 - República, São Paulo - SP)

Curated by: Cauê Alves and Pedro Nery

Exhibition period: October 4 through December 7, 2025

Free admission

Suitable for all audiences

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