

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS

MUSEUMS OF ART AND EDUCATION

by

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The experiment carried out by the Museu de Arte of Sao Paulo, Brazil, over a period of a little more than two years, and of which a report was presented to the last Congress in Mexico, shows once more that a modern museum attracts young people only if it varies continually its cultural activities, offering lectures, exhibits, concerts and so on.

ACTIVITIES

The Museu de Arte endeavoured to maintain constant contact with the public by means of several courses on History of Art, History of Music, Architecture, General History, concerts, movies, debates, etc., so as to spread knowledge of artistical, estetical and artistical problems. The museum has been inviting specialists, foreign and Brazilian, to debate these questions.

A group of specially trained assistants offer explanations and information to people and students who sometimes come from distant cities. The Museu de Arte tries thus to be a living organism, a school museum, interested exclusively in education.

EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS

One of the most important sections of the museum, the Educational Exhibits, consist of 84 big glass plates mounted on aluminium tubes, and show periodically panoramas of the History of Art. For these panorama photographs, coloured reproductions, texts and explanations are employed.

The first exhibit referred to History of Art in general, the second showed a sequence on the Evolution of Abstractionism and the third, organized for the opening of the new installations of the museum, is presenting examples of Pre-History and Primitive History of Art.

ART CLUB FOR CHILDREN

Ever since its inauguration, the Museu de Arte has been holding art classes for children aged four to twelve years. Exhibits of their paintings, drawings and ceramics are being held from time to time. The Club owns a puppet theatre organized by the children themselves.

CINEMATOGRAFICAL ACTIVITIES

One of the two auditoriums belonging to the Museu de Arte is air-conditioned, seats 350 persons and has complete installations for movie projections. It is used mainly for regular movie sessions accompanied by debates and explanations, besides courses on the Evolution and History of the Film.

The Centre of Cinematographical Studies which is in charge of these activities, has been organizing seminars and a course given by Alberto Cavalcanti, especially invited from London. This invitation was the cause of conversations with national producers and the subsequent foundation of a new Brazilian cinematographical company. For the re-opening of the museum, Henry-Georges Clouzot has been invited, who gave a lecture followed by a debate. At the present moment, the Centre is offering a Film Festival, constituted by twenty chosen pictures, considered among the best actual productions.

A Film Department has been created to co-ordinate all activities related to film exhibitions, loaning of the auditorium to film clubs and other entities who wish to make use of it for cultural purposes, for instance, the first Brazilian Film Congress, to take place during July.

MUSIC

The musical activities of the Museu de Arte have the same educational scope as all its other enterprises, consisting of debates, concerts accompanied by explanations and so on. Three courses were organized: Music and Society, Evolution of Musical Forms and a Short History of Musical Styles. The next course will be on History of Musical Instruments.

Concerts are varied, for adults or children, either recorded or presenting soloists or small ensembles. Very interesting proved to be those dedicated to modern music, especially the so-called experimental concerts. The museum is also interested in popular music and folklore.

PUBLICATIONS

Special attention is dedicated to the editing of art books. Besides illustrated catalogues, as the ones referring to exhibitions of works by Portinari, Sambonet, Malfatti, the following books were published: Massaguassu (paintings

by Sambonet done during his stay in Brazil); Neutra (architecture); The Arlesienne (presenting the paintings by Van Gogh).

Monographies to come out shortly: Lasar Segall (a survey of his complete work with 40 reproductions in colour and 100 in black and white); Ernesto de Fiori (complete collection of his work with 120 illustrations); A Critical Reader on Le Corbusier (illustrated review of his work); Max Bill (architecture, paintings, sculptures); Collection A.C. (a small volume presenting some of the art objects of the museum).

A library of about 4,000 volumes, loaned by the director of the Museu de Arte, is at the disposal of any one interested.

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

The Institute is an essentially modern school, endeavouring to make its students relate the plastic arts to the trend of the modern age. The Institute comprehends a Preliminary Course, to start during July, on Theory and Study of Forms; knowledge of materials, cultural elements of architecture, History of Art, psychology and sociology. A course of specialization (metal work, ceramics, weaving, graphic arts, photography, etc.) and additional courses given by specialists complement the programme.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITS

Two galleries are reserved specially for these exhibits. Works of the following artists and countries have been shown: Portinari, Ernesto de Fiori, Roberto Sambonet, Anita Malfatti, Giorgio Morandi, Carlo Hauner, Ardengo Soffici, Lisa F. Hoffmann, Emidio Souza, German Expressionists, Art of the Brazilian Indian, Art of the Brazilian Northeast, Japanese Art, a survey of the evolution of the chair, etc.

In the large gallery, with a size of 400 square metres, is mounted at present an exhibit by Le Corbusier. The small gallery, used for exhibit of contemporary Brazilian artists, is showing sculptures by Mario Cravo.

THE COLLECTION

The collection of art objects, doubtless the most important of South America, is now housed in a salon sized 1,000 square metres. The new installation has movable walls, constant ventilation and diffused illumination from a metallic roof, being thus the most modern art gallery in the world. Paintings belonging to the collection are by: Rembrandt, Velasquez, Goya, Perugino, Tintoretto, Botticelli, El Greco, Gainsborough, Murillo, Bassano, Pellegrini, Magnasco, Tiepolo, Van Gogh, Cezanne, Renoir, Manet, Modigliani,

Picasso, Utrillo, Portinari, Leger, and sculptures by: Bernini, two Greek statues, Rodin, Brancusi, Lipchitz, Calder. One small gallery is dedicated to tapestries and another one to drawings. The art gallery too is pre-eminently didactic, having explanatory texts affixed where necessary.

This complex of activities, essentially educative, conquered the sympathy of the young public who found in the Museu de Arte a centre of culture where the study of art and its problems are considered a social necessity.