

The maps that the Europeans began to draw from the sixteenth century, artistically represented the distant lands then explored. They sought to trace the different regions based on their most striking attributes: the products that were discovered there. Some members of the expeditions were present only to draw, give a name to everything they saw ... or imagined, to produce a documentation gathering the most information. In the region to the south of the Americas for example, they discovered lands called by the natives: Pindorama (Land of Palms), a gigantic surface, difficult to be represented given the magnitude of the mysteries which surrounded it, with a very diverse population and a very old agricultural, religious and social tradition. The first references to Pindorama, were found on a map designed by Pedro Reinel and Lopo Homem in 1519, mentioning the land of the Tupy Guarani Indians under the name of **Terra Brasilis**, referring to the wood of the forest trees which, as in an exuberant gesture of the power of nature, completely covered the interior of the land, forming a fortress to protect itself from invaders.

Brazilian photography in France: a beautiful unknown?

Brazilian photography is born thanks to the research of the Franco-Brazilian naturalist painter Antoine Hercules Romuald Florence, at the beginning of the 19th century, then develops under the impulse of the emperor Dom Pedro II, himself a daguerreotypist. The photographic relations between France and Brazil, the emulation between the inventors of the two continents is then in good shape.

In the 1940s, two phenomena will intensify the presence of Brazilian photography internationally and in France in particular:

- On the one hand, the emergence of the Foto Clubes Cariocas (Rio de Janeiro Photography Clubs) which, while democratizing the use of this hitherto elitist medium and mainly oriented towards photojournalism or portraiture, makes it possible to establish contacts with other Western photography companies;
- on the other hand, the craze for Brazilian modernism and the presence in Paris of a large number of its representatives that allows some painters and photographers like Geraldo de Barros to acquire a certain notoriety.

From 1964 to 1985, during the period of the military dictatorship, the situation of Brazilian photographers became complex, however, and Brazilian artists suffered from a lack of means and a lack of recognition that took them away from the international art scene for a time.

In 1985, thanks to a policy of liberation of artistic expression and an opening of the Brazilian market to new technologies, Brazilian photography gained a new lease of life, and from the 1990s there was a new revolution in Brazilian creative thinking, post-modern, which allows the emergence of an accessible, free, popular and creative photography.

However, with the exception of a few exhibitions such as “Territoires et Vies” (Territories and Lives) by Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado at the BnF in 2005, and Miguel Rio Branco's “Plaisir de la douleur” (Pleasure of Pain) the same year at the MEP, contemporary Brazilian photography still remains quite unknown in France.

This collection highlights the dynamism of the Brazilian contemporary photographic scene and offers a journey reflecting the different facets of Brazil: its history, its urban or natural landscapes, its ethnic interbreeding, and it also evokes the repercussions of globalization in this country prey to new ecological and socio-political challenges.

Beyond the themes addressed, it is also to propose a selection of works, among the most representative of the transition period between Brazilian modernist, postmodernist and current photography. It is a question of showing the strength of these movements which marked the history of the photography in Brazil and which accompanied the technical upheavals of the medium.

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