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BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT LEADS WESTERN HEMISPHERE IN ENCOURAGING MODERN ARCHITECTURE. EXHIBITION OF BRAZILIAN ARCHITECTURE OPENS AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART.

The Brazilian Government leads all other national governments in the Western Hemisphere in its discriminating and active encouragement of modern architecture. This is the conclusion reached by Philip L. Goodwin, F.A.I.A., noted New York architect who spent several months in Brazil last summer making a survey of its architecture for the exhibition Brazil Builds, which opens at the Museum of Modern Art Wednesday, January 13. Commenting on the leadership which the Brazilian Government is taking in modern architecture in the Western Hemisphere (now, because of the war, this position is preeminent in the world), Mr. Goodwin said:

"Even before the advent of the Vargas government in 1930 there were Brazilian experiments in modern architecture. From modest beginnings the movement, happening to coincide with a building boom, spread like brushfire. Almost overnight it has changed the faces of the great cities, Rio and São Paulo, where it has had its most enthusiastic reception.

"The construction of impressive new buildings to house all government and public service departments is evidence of the realization of the Brazilian Government and its forty million citizens of the great importance of their country, third in area in the world. Rio de Janeiro has the most beautiful government building in the Western Hemisphere, the new Ministry of Education and Health. Sr. Gustavo Gapanema, Minister of Education and Health, has given the most active and practical encouragement to progressive architecture. He has also recognized the important contribution well-related painting and sculpture can make to architecture. The Ministry of Education and Health boasts a gigantic mural in tile by Portinari, Brazil's leading modern painter.

"Other capital cities of the world lag far behind Rio de Janeiro in architectural design. While Federal classic in Washington, Royal Academy archeology in London, Nazi classic in Munich, and neo-imperial in Moscow are still triumphant, Brazil has had the courage to break away from safe and easy conservatism. Its fearless departure from the slavery of traditionalism has put a depth charge under the antiquated routine of governmental thought and has set free the spirit of creative design. The capitals of the world that will need rebuilding after the war can look to no finer models than the modern buildings of the capital city of Brazil."

Although the emphasis is on modern building in Brazil, most of it erected in the last decade, the older architecture has not been neglected, for the exhibition embraces a period of almost three centuries, from 1652 to 1942. Brazil's beautiful old buildings, its early churches with their elaborate gold-encrusted interiors and the picturesque fazendos comprise almost a third of the exhibition. It has been installed in several galleries and the main hall of the first floor of the Museum and is composed of enlarged photographs, architectural renderings, drawings, plans, maps, and continuous
screen projection of forty-eight color slides. Three models will also be shown:


2. Joao Aarnstein House, Sao Paulo, Bernard Rudofsky, architect, 1941


When he made his survey of Brazilian architecture, Mr. Goodwin was accompanied by G. E. Kidder Smith, A.I.A., who is well known as an architectural photographer. The 300 pictures in the exhibition have been selected largely from the thousand or more black-and-white and color photographs made by Mr. Smith in Brazil. Mr. Goodwin and Mr. Smith undertook this survey of Brazilian architecture under the joint auspices of the Museum and the American Institute of Architects. The Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs assisted the project in every way possible.

The installation for the exhibition has been designed by Alice M. Carson, Acting Curator of the Museum's Department of Architecture. Mr. Goodwin wrote the introduction of the 200-page book with 300 illustrations, four in full color, which will be published by the Museum in conjunction with the exhibition. Mrs. Elizabeth Mook assisted in editing and in the design for the layout of the book. The book jacket is by E. McKnight Kauffer.

At the entrance to the exhibition a wooden map of Brazil is superimposed on an outline of South America painted on the wall. Aerial views of the Brazilian coastline border the wooden map. Cities and States in the exhibition are indicated on the map. The visitor next sees a small screen on which forty-eight color slides of new and old architecture and scenes of Brazil are continuously projected.

The first gallery of the exhibition is devoted to the colonial architecture of Brazil. This is followed by several sections of modern architecture: Government buildings; transportation buildings including seaplane base and hangars; and a section on schools. The central section of the exhibition is devoted to Brazil's great contribution to modern architecture: the control of heat and light externally through sun breaks rather than internally through expensive artificial air cooling or inadequate Venetian blinds. In this section models show the principal types of Brazilian sun breaks, especially louvers which may be fixed or movable, vertical or horizontal. In
his introduction to the book Mr. Goodwin writes on this subject of
sun control as follows:

"Brazil's great original contribution to modern architecture
is the control of heat and glare on glass surfaces by means
of external blinds. North America has blandly ignored the
entire question. Faced with summer's fierce Western sun,
the average office building in the United States is like a
hot-house, its double-hung windows half closed and unpro­tected. The miserable office workers either roast or hide
behind airless awnings or depend on the feeble protection of
venetian blinds--feeble because they do nothing to keep the
sun from heating the glass. It was our curiosity to see how
the Brazilians had handled this very important problem that
really instigated our expedition. As early as 1933, Le
Corbusier had used moveable outside sunshades in his unexecu­ted
project for Barcelona, but it was the Brazilians who first
put theory into practice.

"As developed by the modern architects of Brazil, these ex­ternal blinds are sometimes horizontal, sometimes vertical,
sometimes moveable, sometimes fixed. They are called quebra-
sol in Portuguese, but the French term brise-soleil is more
generally used.

"In no case has the sunshade been more successfully integrated
with the architecture than in the Ministry of Education and
Health. The cool south side exposes its wall of double-hung
sash without protection. On the north, however. (remember
that in Brazil the sun comes from the north), the floors, re­duced to thin concrete slabs, are cantilevered out to about
four feet in front of the window face. Similar vertical
divisions, spaced four feet apart, divide the facade into a
gigantic egg-crate of rectangular shapes. The upper part of
each rectangle contains three horizontal louvers of asbestos
in steel frames—all three regulated by a crank inside the
building. The blue-painted louvers can be turned with the
movement of the sun, admitting plenty of air yet keeping out
all direct sunlight and reducing the glare to the most
desirable amount of reflected light. As the small blue planes
are moved to various angles in different parts of the build­ing,
there is a charming variety of light and shade. A
similar example of the horizontal blind is found in Corrêa
Lima's Coastal Boat Passenger Station in Rio.

"At the Pampulha Yacht Club in Belo Horizonte, Niemeyer has
repeated the vertical, adjustable type of sunshade first used
by him at the Obra do Bem in Rio. There a bank of tall
louvers some six feet high by one wide, can be worked by one
of the nuns with no more trouble than it takes to turn a
door handle.

"The brothers Roberto have used a very different kind of
vertical blind on the A. B. I. building. The two hot sides
of the building are faced with rows of diagonally fixed con­crete slabs, each thirty-two inches deep and two and three­quarters inches thick, opening on a narrow continuous passage.
Some of the rooms have glass on the inner side of the passage;
others are left open."

Following the section devoted to Brazil's use of the sun break,
the exhibition next continues with a gallery which shows a group of
miscellaneous modern buildings such as the Institute for Snake Sorums,
a water tower and an anatomical laboratory. Succeeding galleries
show hotels, apartments and private houses. A section of recrea­tional buildings follows showing the casino near Belo Horizonte, a
yacht club and a restaurant. The final section is devoted to views
of a day nursery
housed in the most modern of buildings.

Continued on reverse side.
A preliminary sketch-model of proposed monumental sculpture by Jacques Lipchitz, now in this country, for the auditorium wall of the Ministry of Education terminates the Exhibition.

After the Exhibition closes at the Museum of Modern Art on March 7, it will be circulated to schools and colleges throughout the country.