

Brasil y su Arte



Unlike what happens in Argentina, Brazilians have supported their artists for decades. Despite a serious recession, overspending during the Football Cup (13,6 billion USD) and an enormous budget for this year's Olympics, a 2% decrease of its GDP, a national currency loss of 45%, lack of exports to China and the Petrobras corruption scandal, Brazilian artists are strongly in demand.

The *SP-Arte/2016*, just finished, a city whose GDP is greater than the whole of Argentina, with the participation of 124 galleries and 23,000 visitors. Let us consider some of the Brazilian artists most in demand at present: Vik Muñoz (54) has a great international market. Approximately 80 of his works are sold annually at auctions at an average of 43,000 USD. Some of his works have fetched 300,000 USD, values which no Argentine artist has obtained so far. A few months ago, a show was held in Buenos Aires with 90 of his works, which incorporate photos of famous characters or paintings.

Sergio Camargo, who died in 1980, worked his reliefs and painted white wood. He sculptured with pieces of painted white wood. Approximately 30 of his works are sold every year at an average of 332,000 USD. A piece sold in New York three years ago quadrupled its estimate, fetching 2,2 million USD.

Beatriz Milhazes (55) is the most prominent artist of the Brazilian market and one of the ten most sought-after contemporary figures worldwide. Three years ago, the MALBA organized a show with 30 of her works full of color. Approximately seven are auctioned annually at an average of 350,000 USD, some of them reaching 2 million USD. Adriana Varejão (51), in turn, has obtained similar values; at least four of her works are auctioned yearly at an average that has exceeded 400,000 USD; five years ago, one of her works reached 1,8 million USD.

Cândido Portinari (1903-1962) held a show in Buenos Aires in 1947 and 1958. Some of his works remained in our country and he also made some portraits while he was here. Approximately six works are auctioned annually at an average of 200,000 USD. One of his smaller paintings was auctioned at Christie's in New York in 2013 for 1,4 million USD. The MALBA has one of his master paintings, "Festa de São João", big in size and of great value, wisely acquired some years ago by Eduardo Costantini. Few works by Lygia Clark (1920-1988) appear on sale and their average price exceeds 700,000 USD for her small aluminum pieces; a few works have exceeded 2 million USD. A great show of her artwork was held at the MOMA in New York, which further enhanced her importance as an artist.

One of my favorites is Alfredo Volpi, who died in 1988 and I was fortunate to meet. He made some 1,300 artworks in a period of 70 creative years and today his works are sold at an average price of 300,000 USD. One of them will be the star at Sotheby's next auction of Latin American Art to be held next month. For this reason, they are holding a presentation in Miami with some of the items that will be on sale. The MALBA held a beautiful show in 2007 with 80 of Volpi's works. Another great artist was Emiliano Di Cavalcanti (1897-1976). Approximately eight of his works are auctioned annually at an average of 100,000 USD and we can enjoy three of his works at the MALBA.

Love it or leave it is Brazil's motto. Twenty-five years ago I had the luck of being invited by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and his Ambassador in Buenos Aires, our dear friend Marcos C. de Azambuja, to help broaden Brazil's image from being regarded simply as a country that celebrates its annual carnival and loves football. We planned exhibitions in the United States and Europe and during the last decade we can see the results. Perhaps we need the Argentine government to organize shows in key places so that our artists, who are currently so undervalued, can become known and appreciated throughout the world.

□ Fuente: Ignacio

Gutiérrez Zaldivar