

Modernity and identity in São Paulo during the 1950's: three murals from Cândido Portinari

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Abstract

In the 1950s, São Paulo knew a great vertical growth, driven by the economic prosperity of the period after the Second World War. Inserted into this impulse is a remarkable number of buildings that expressed an idea of modernity and identity. These works joined architects and artists, adapting in a specific way the European concept of synthesis of arts and New Monumentality, brought by some intellectuals, like Le Corbusier and Sigfried Giedion. This presentation aims to introduce, through the study of three murals from the Brazilian artist Cândido Portinari, hypothesis on how some regional topics - linked to the memory and identity of São Paulo and the Latin America - were related to the modern architecture and the debates observed in Europe. The first mural analyzed is the one made by Portinari to the Ministry for Health and Education, designed by Lucio Costa in Rio de Janeiro, in 1937. This is an important example, due to its place as a model of the synthesis of art, and its modernity, praised in international magazines by the time. The project established the first significant connection between the modern architecture and the national identity in Brazil, and the bridge to that was the murals by Portinari.

The second mural was made for a Hotel in São Paulo, in 1951. In this work, Portinari represented a very specific chapter of the colonial history of São Paulo, and linked it to the 400th anniversary of the city, that was three years ahead. In 1953, the artist delivered the third mural analyzed in this presentation, to decorate the wall of a gallery designed by Oscar Niemeyer. This project is worthy of attention due to the debates it evokes. The first sketches by the artist and some documentation allow us to know that Portinari designed a mural about colonial explorers, as the one made for the Hotel in 1951, but due to some happenings, Portinari ended up making a geometric abstract mural, a polemic choice to a mural by that time.

Keywords: Candido Portinari - Muralism - São Paulo - Identity - Modern Architecture

The first mural, the great example

In 1935 began a huge work to raise a modern building in Rio de Janeiro to be the house of the Health and Education Ministry. The project were ordered by the then president Getúlio Vargas, and had as its administrator the Minister Gustavo Capanema, well known as a patron for the modernists in Brazil. Initially, a contest was opened to elect the group that would be in charge of the preliminary design. However, the winning proposal was considered too conservative, and the minister rejected the project. Lucio Costa was then elected as responsible for implementing the headquarters of the Ministry.

Under the command of Costa, architects who had presented preliminary modernists designs in the contest were called, among which were: Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Carlos Leon, Jorge Moreira, Ernani Vasconcellos and Oscar Niemeyer. The group worked together for some time, but they thought that the project could be better, and that is when Lucio Costa invited Le Corbusier to come to Brazil, give some lectures and suggest solutions for the building project. In 1936, Le Corbusier landed at Rio and helped the Brazilian architects to come up with a very modern design. This new approach included the use of local materials, like tiles - a legacy of Portuguese colonial past - royal palms inserted in the landscaping, *brise-soleils*, pilotis, and a concept Le Corbusier regarded as the topic of the day: the synthesis of the arts.

Capanema had many artists in mind to decorate the building. In 1944, almost by the time to deliver the building finished, the Minister tried to bring three foreign artists to make murals on some of the walls: Marc Chagall, Fernand Léger and André Masson. The Minister made contact with these artists and asked them the price for two murals, not too large. Although the prices were a lot cheaper than the price paid to Portinari's murals, for no found reason, only the Brazilian artist got to decorate the walls from the Ministry. The murals made by Portinari represent the economic cycles in Brazil, from the agriculture to the work with iron and precious metals [Fig. 01]. Two elements induces us to conclude that the period of the characters on the murals is the colonial time: there is no sign of an industrial work, and there is a massive presence of black slaves, used in Brazil as a workforce till the beginning of the 20th century. The choice of a historical theme is an important feature, since these works of art were ordered by a government that put a great effort to set a visual representation of the national identity.

Portinari was, then, the artist chosen to translate this identity in visual symbols, something that could be easily recognized as national, and still could be considered modern. The idea of the hard work, common to all his eight big murals, is a very important aspect of this translation, and reveals how Portinari was able to comprehend and express a language that was the same used by the government. Work was the greatest value of all, and, according to the president Vargas, was the strength behind the country's progress. This president was also known as the creator of the labor laws - made as a mirror of the Mussolini's Labour Charter, from 1927. Even in more liberal and revolutionary contexts, the murals were the space to address the colonial history and the work, ideas that in a way were related to the national memories and identities, not only in Brazil, but in all Latin America.

By the same time Portinari was delivering the murals to the Ministry in Rio de Janeiro, the artist was called to decorate the new Hispanic Room, in the Congress Library, in Washington, DC. Robert Smith was the vice-director of the Library, and in 1940 had seen a solo exhibition by Portinari at the Museum of Modern Art of New York. Smith was looking for a painter who could make a mural in the Hispanic Room which would represent the Portuguese speakers and their history. The choice of the Brazilian painter shows Portinari's prestige in the international scene, and confirms the idea that he was considered an artist who could successfully understand and express what was the identity of Latin American people.

Portinari made four murals, designed to depict different aspects of the colonial history [Fig. 02-05]. Although it is possible to recognize some of the Brazilian roots in the murals, the artist was asked to represent scenes from all the Latin American history. The letter Portinari sent to the Brazilian writer Mário de Andrade on 1941, shows some comments on the themes and the technique he chose for the murals: "(...) The themes are common to all the countries of America: Pioneers Discovery Catechesis Gold. Quick I send photographs. I'll make it in egg tempera on the wall ... (emphasis by the author)". The fact that Portinari refers to these issues as common to all America shows how these elements could be a sign of the importance of the colonial history for the creation of a common memory.

Modernity and identity in São Paulo

During the 1950s, we can attest a massive and steady growth of mural painting in São Paulo, linked to the modernist architecture and observing certain important issues of the period, as the reflection on the city's identity, raised by the celebrations of the city's IV Centenary, in 1954. São Paulo's anniversary was the trigger for a series of projects in art and architecture, linked to the glorification of the city. These projects touched upon two related matters: they either evoke the city from the past, emphasizing explorers, taken as a source of strength and synthesis of ideas of courage and initiative; or envisioned and extolled the future, conceived as progress and update of the architectural and artistic forms. Linked to these proposals are the topics covered by most of the figurative murals executed in this period.

Among the most remembered character from the history of São Paulo were the pioneers called *Bandeirantes*. These men were the first explorers to systematically engage in expeditions to travel through the unknown parts of the Portuguese colony, in order to populate this parts, explore gold and diamonds, and also capture fugitive indians and slaves. The Portuguese crown financed some of those trips, but the majority came from private initiative and left from São Paulo. The leaders of these expeditions were taken over by historiography as central characters to the foundation of the nation. During the 1950's, and specially because of the celebrations of the city's IV Centenary, those characters were taken back in an effort to nominate a collective hero.

The reasons for the choice of this specific character among all others might be observed in the mural *Bandeirantes*, made by Portinari, in 1951 [Fig. 06]. The work was commissioned by the then luxurious Comodoro Hotel, to adorn its restaurant, on the 1st floor. The hotel was built in order to accommodate the large influx of people in the city, in the 1950's². It had luxurious and modern elements, like a remote control allowing the guest to open the door without getting out of the bed, in addition to the updated decoration, which was highlighted in the pages of the magazine *Habitat*, a very important modernist magazine of that period.

By observing the mural, one can notice the idea of the march for progress, suggested by the arms pointing the way to go in the middle and on the right end of the panel. The big banner left, beside which stands the character with the typical clothes from the *bandeirantes* indicate it is a historical passage. On the left side, a man carries a child on his shoulders, while a soldier rests his sword behind him. At his feet, an animal - something between a dog and a goat - stares him with serenity. This almost family group follows in the pointed direction in this abstract scenario created by Portinari. In the background of the scene, three figures walk, barefoot, with little or no clothes, carrying on the head heavy objects. This group represents the indians, made slaves and prisoners by the explorers. They are also a way the artist found to emphasize that this praised figure that was the pioneer was also the one who once took the liberty of others, and after the Second World War this statement was a very strong one.

What the pioneers represented and what made them the symbol of the identity to São Paulo's inhabitants during the 1950's was the way this period read them as the origin of the men from the modern times: an enterpriser, a person who can solve problems in a hostile environment, can conquer his enemies and above all, can succeed by his own effort and hard work. This Brazilian approach of the american self-made man concept is the key to understand why these colonial explo-

ers were the subject of monumental works of art in the 1950's, even being so controversial. They are allowed to exist in the 1950's due to the idea of progress by the work that they evoke.

But the mural of an artist who produced at the same period of Portinari shows an alternative translation to the idea of work and its enhancement in vogue in the 1950s [Fig.07]. Representative of another group that also sought their identity expression in the city, the Italian painter Fulvio Pennacchi received in 1952 the order to decorate a Bank in São Paulo. Although inserted inside a workspace, directly linked with the financial life of the city, Pennacchi did not appeal to the narrative of the colonial explorers.

His painting, on the contrary, portrays the symbols of São Paulo's industrial growth: airplanes, skyscrapers, ships and smoking chimneys. His worker is not an ancestral figure, but the urban man, who contributed with his strength for the effective construction of the city. The artist shows, with his choices, a profile consistent with the role of the community to which he belongs, highly linked to the industrialization of the city. Pennacchi also chose to use the fresco, a technique he was very familiar with, since he studied it in Lucca, before coming to Brazil, in 1929. This choice might seem usual for muralism in general, but it stands in contradiction with most of the murals made in São Paulo by that time.

As the mural made by Portinari to Comodoro Hotel, most of the murals made in São Paulo during the 1950's were made with glass mosaic. Although the mosaic was used for monumental art for a very long time, the glass mosaic that Portinari used was a very modern one, made in São Paulo for artistic mosaics as well as coating for bathrooms and kitchens. The use of materials made originally for the civil construction market enabled the artists to keep up with the accelerated pace of the vertical growth of the city.

This is because this technique allowed the artists to work in their creation by distance and in a small-scale. After this, they used to send this models to the mosaic factories, who were responsible for work on the scale and finally execute the mural on the proper wall. Based on this information, it is possible to understand how Portinari - who was working on several projects and at his home in Rio de Janeiro - was able to deliver the mural from Comodoro Hotel while finishing another mural, this time ordered by Oscar Niemeyer, to his California Gallery.

The California Gallery

The California Gallery is an office building, designed in 1951 and delivered in 1953 to its opening, with an abstract panel by Portinari at the entrance of a movie theater, at the ground floor [Fig. 08, 09]. The building was built on a land in the shape of "L" and is open to two streets, in São Paulo's downtown. The internal passage for pedestrians within stores and restaurants, was part of the investment in a new type of buildings, which would provide the passerby a mobility space and easy translocation between tours and shopping areas. The California Building program also predicted thirteen floors of offices, which should rise above the gallery, and a panel, which was asked to Candido Portinari from the start of the project.

In an interview with the scholar Daniela Leal in 2002, the architect assistant to Oscar Niemeyer, Carlos Lemos said to be of utmost concern of Niemeyer that artists like Portinari and Di Cavalcanti were involved in his projects. In Lemos' words: "Oscar always tried integrating the arts."³ But for Otavio Frias and José Escorel, both employees of the National Real Estate Bank (NREB)⁴, the reasons for the presence of Portinari's panel in the building were linked to commercial aspects, reflecting another aspect of the union between art and architecture in the period. However, although in this case is explicit certain commercial use of the synthesis of the arts, the constant presence of panels in modern designs in the 1950s demonstrates the effort to apply precepts internationally brought of interconnection between the high arts: visual arts, sculpture and architecture.

In addition to the discussion of the circumstances that led Niemeyer asking Portinari's collaboration, there is the weight of the demands of National Bank in implementing this project. Just days before the opening of the gallery, the newspapers of the period stamped on its pages the good qualities of Niemeyer's modern design:

"The Building and Gallery California, for its architectural projection, will be known throughout São Paulo. [...] Located in the artery that is our art center, elegance and refinement, born of an architectural design of sharp relief, the Building and Gallery California, from the reception - in its hall majestically decorated by a large panel of Portinari representing the 'Epic of Piratininga *Bandeiras*', until the last floor, will be highlighted throughout Barão de Itapetininga Street, becoming its peak of assembly, attraction."⁵

For those who know the great abstract mural by Portinari, the shock is inevitable while reading the words: "hall majestically decorated by a large Portinari panel, representing the 'Epic of Piratininga *Bandeiras*.'" Initially, the artist presented a panel project, under the "Epic of *Bandeiras*" title. However, the work was shown to be too complex to implement in the time required by the National Bank, which pushed for a new deal to be agreed.

Carlos Lemos then traveled to Rio de Janeiro in order to bring back with him the model card to the panel, whose advance of 50% of the total amount had already been paid to Portinari. The letter sent by Lemos to Portinari, on October 12th, 1953, reported on this meeting:

“As we agreed in our meeting at your residence, I forward glass mosaic samples of 'vidrotil'⁶. These samples belong to the current stock, which was already fully booked for your panel. There is enough white tablets for general background. I chose then the light gray tablet. White will only in panel design itself.”⁷

A few days later, Portinari answered Lemos' letter with the following statement:

“I am sending the model to the mural according to the colors that you sent me; just added a few rows of red vidrotil. I hope this does not cause disorder and that our panel does not suffer any modification.”⁸

Through the analysis of the three models that Portinari did [Fig. 10, 11, 12]- at least the ones we have record by artist's *raisonné* catalogue - and guided in by the above transcript excerpts, we have assumed that the first model presented was the figure 10. The white background and the wide red part subsequently reduced, support this suggestion.

The second model has a drastic reduction in the red area, compared with the previous one. The white background is invaded by large spots in grayscale, keeping just the black fence as a reminiscence of the previous study. Finally, the one that seems to be the last model, because of its similarity to the actual panel, shows more uniformity in the distribution of tones. Variations in the gray scale decreases and the design became contained within the lines.

Changes in models for the panel are not explained in any correspondence, and even the disposition of them is only a hypothesis. However, some conclusions can be drawn based on the study of correspondences and reproductions. The first concerns a technical issue. In the letter to Portinari, Lemos mentioned the lack of white tablets and this may have been one of the reasons for the change in the final drawing. With short deadlines and urgency for delivery, the choice may have been the decrease of white space at the expense of an increase in gray areas.

In addition, another important aspect of the panel making is the choice for glass mosaic, which according to another letter, this time sent by the National Bank to Portinari, may not have followed the project since its inception. The correspondence from May, 1952, states:

“[...] The payment of Cr\$ 60,000.00 (sixty thousand cruises), corresponding to the last 3 plots for the painting of a mural, to be performed in Building and Gallery California, under construction in this city.”⁹

Although the terms “paint of a mural” may have been used randomly, it raises the possibility that Portinari have prepared himself for a big painted mural, a technique he had been worked with for at least a decade and a half. The only exception to this *modus operandi* would be the contemporary panel *Bandeirantes*, to the Comodoro Hotel, made, as seen in glass mosaic. The recent Portinari's experience with the Comodoro Hotel may have set a new parameter for this type of work. The rapid placement of the pads, as well as the fact that the artist would be able to coordinate the project from a distance, may have been providential to the new conditions established to the work in late 1953.¹⁰

The hurry to deliver the mural may also have messed with the theme chosen for the work. There is ample documentation, newspaper articles, receipts, letters and testimonies that prove the claim of the artist to make a panel on São Paulo's colonial history. The artist Luiz Ventura, Portinari's assistant, said in testimony to the Portinari Archives:

“[...] And he returned to make this whole series, and many other projects, like a *bandeirantes*, to a building in São Paulo; instead of the original project, was carried out another work, the only abstract work that I know, at the entrance of a gallery [...]. In *Barão de Itapetininga Street*. His project, he wanted to paint, were *bandeirantes* on horseback, that whole thing. Afterwards he ended up just doing a work in glass mosaic, is an abstract work.”¹¹

In addition to supporting the hypothesis of the changes from painting to glass mosaic, Ventura also confirms the first choice of a figurative work, with the theme of the *bandeirantes*. Despite the historical sources allowing us to ensure that between 1951 and 1953 Portinari worked with the commissioning of a historical panel¹², there is no mention of studies that he may have made in the models cataloged by the Portinari Archives. Yet again some possibilities can be substantial.

Although Portinari's main catalog describes the model *Bandeirantes* as “model for mural or panel '*Bandeirantes*' not executed [Fig. 13],” without linking it to the California Gallery project, due to the temporal proximity of the studies with the *Abstract* panel, one can infer that these projects occupied Portinari by the same time of the panel commissioned by Niemeyer, in 1951. In addition, the description of the Ventura “*bandeirantes* on horseback” matches the model in question, eliminating the possibility of this being a study for the Comodoro Hotel, for example.

In another homonymous sketch, the artist projects his design on an inclined plane, painting an end higher than the other [Fig. 14]. Noting the space in which is the actual panel, we see the suggestion of dialogue between the slope down in the study and the ramp between the ground floor and the basement, in the lobby for the then *Cine Barão* [Fig. 15]. The change of topic may even have caused problems on the adequacy of the new draft to the wall, since it is noticeable a range between the end of Portinari's panel and the corner. This space was filled with gray mosaic, but one can still clearly see where the work ends [Fig. 16].

Finally, another important issue raised by Portinari's mural is the artist's choice of an abstract theme still in the early 1950's. The choice of abstraction in São Paulo's muralism is late, and only gained strength in the 1960s. Still, some exceptions in the 1950s can be added to the Portinari's mural, as Di Cavalcanti's mural for another building by Niemeyer, Montreal Building [Fig. 17].

Despite this, and the fact that Portinari himself already presented in his formal research an approach with geometrical forms, the work of the California Gallery can be regarded as exceptional in the artist's career. The firm black fence and the various shades of gray, in no way resemble the heavily populated panels that Portinari had done up to that point. The pure lines only return to occupy the artist's work in the 1960s, with the affirmation of abstract experiences in Brazil.

After so many setbacks, the initial proposal of colonial history subject, so familiar to the works of Portinari - and, as seen also to a certain taste of the time - became not a disguised geometry, dynamic and with some decorative desire as expressed by Di Cavalcanti. One year before the 400th anniversary of São Paulo, Portinari have chosen the principle of form, of the pure geometry, which sought to, as defined by Giulio Carlo Argan, "delete all 'historical forms' as if they came from an unclean environment, under the suspicion of bringing the seeds of nationalist infection"¹³.

Argan is describing the *De Stijl*, or Neoplasticism, a movement led by Theo Van Doesburg, in Netherlands in 1917, which, as the art historian notes, "is born from moral revolt against the irrational violence of war that ravaged Europe". The call to pure forms is an appeal to reason and order. These should be understood as expressions of the human spirit, and therefore should avoid any disguising aspect of local, national or political influence. Nothing can be more universal, so in this sense, that mathematics, line and color. When Portinari turned his epic pioneer in Mondrian, he had come to unveil all these issues, tensioning the relations between the mural art and the nationalist theme, whose tradition included even himself.

It is interesting to notice that Portinari's option for abstraction was by no means ignored by critics. The reception of the work seems to have been, in some way, a concern of the artist and builder, as shown in the letter from Portinari to the National Investment Company, on October 23, 1953: "Despite the short time to design and production, I am sure you will have the same reception by the public of my other works."¹⁴

The major criticism of his work came from the art critic Mario Pedrosa, who in March of 1954 wrote an article accusing Portinari of not knowing:

"[...] disgracefully how to resist to the melancholy coquetry of going out on skirts above the knees¹⁵ to also perpetuate his grotesque 'Mondrian' in glass mosaic on a wall of this colossal abortion by Niemeyer which is the California Building of *Barão de Itapetininga Street*, in São Paulo."¹⁶

The criticism shows the indisposition of Pedrosa, before a not obvious choice for the artist's works set, but also for a mural. Pedrosa accuses Portinari of following a fashion of his time, the abstraction vanguards, and compare it to an old lady that goes out with skirts above the knees, embarrassing herself and others. This mismatch Pedrosa saw on artists with recognized figurative works present abstract variations was not exactly a condemnation of abandoning figuration, but the renunciation of the message. What the art critic missed in Portinari's abstract mural was his well known appreciation of the social, historical, the narrative of certain values and ideas. This would be exactly what most orthodox currents of abstraction tried to eliminate from art, as seen in the proposal of the Neoplasticism. Under the muralism, this discussion became more complex, since, at least at this point in São Paulo, the production of this type of monumental art was tied up tightly to figuration, to the importance of the symbols, and what they represented: the common identity.

Conclusion

The analysis of this three murals by Portinari shows how the ideas of modernity and identity can change according to each period and culture. The first mural, made in a government building, represented the official statement about what should be the symbols of the national identity. Inserted in a modern project, the mural also linked its visual vocabulary to contemporary debates around the synthesis of arts and the role of the painters and architects in a world recently free from the totalitarian governments. It was a time to rebuild the concept of monumental public art, and inside this initiative, Brazilian artists, intellectuals, architects and politicians gathered together to rethink also a new way to express themselves and their identity.

This visual concept of identity was so well managed that few years ago, in São Paulo, the same equation of modern architecture associated with murals with historical content was migrating from the official power, to the daily routine, absorbed by the less known architects, in projects for banks and hotels. This movement opened space for some breaches in that formula. The link between the colonial characters and the idea of work and progress weekend when another translations gained place in São Paulo. The foreign artists brought other ways to think about those concepts and added complexity to the definition of the collective identity in the city.

Finally, the mural made by Portinari to the California Gallery revealed even more that there was not only one way to comprehend the relation between the monumental art and the identity in São Paulo in that moment. Other issues were

entering the Brazilian art scenery, as, for the example, the debates between figurative and abstract art. The absence of a figurative aspect in art in general was being praised for many new artists as a way to apart art from political issues. This approach was related clearly with the will to avoid some kind of politicized uses of the visual arts and architecture, as seen few years before, in Europe. Although Portinari's decision could be seen as a statement in the path of freedom to arts, as seen trough the words of the critic of art Mario Pedrosa, inside the world of muralism in São Paulo, some changes were still to come before the artists could loosen up the message and consequently the figuration.

Bio-note

Patrícia Freitas has a Master degree in History from the State University of Campinas, and currently a doctoral student in Art History from the same university, where she develops the research "Muralism in São Paulo: Arts convergence between 1950-60", supervised by Prof. Jorge Coli and funded by FAPESP. This article is the result of research undertaken for the thesis in development.

Images



Fig. 01: Cândido Portinari, *Os doze ciclos econômicos* (the twelve economic cycles), 1938. Fresco, 280 x 248 cm. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Fig.02: Cândido Portinari, *Land Discovery*, 1942. Egg tempera, Washington, DC, USA.



Fig.03: Candido Portinari, *Entry in the forest*, 1942. Egg tempera, Washington, DC, USA.



Fig.04: Candido Portinari, *Teaching the Indians*, 1942. Egg tempera, Washington, DC, USA.



Fig.05: Candido Portinari, *Gold Discovery*, 1942. Egg tempera, Washington, DC, USA.



Fig.06: Candido Portinari, *Bandeirantes*, 1951. Glass mosaic, 250 x 750 cm. Comodoro Hotel, São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig.07: Fulvio Pennacchi, *mural for Bank*, 1952. São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig.08: Oscar Niemeyer, *California Gallery*, 1951-1953. São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig.09: Candido Portinari, *Abstract*, 1953. Glass mosaic, 600 x 2000 cm. California Gallery, São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig. 10:, 11, 12: Candido Portinari, *models for the mural Abstract*, 1953. *Raïsonné* Catalogue, São Paulo, Brazil.

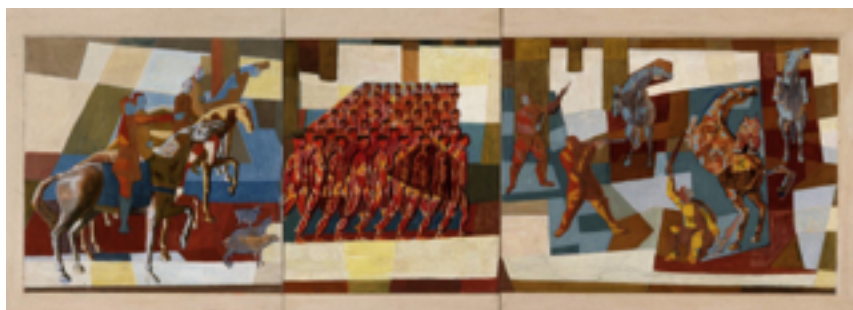


Fig.13: Candido Portinari, model for mural or panel '*Bandeirantes*' not executed, 1951. *Raïsonné* Catalogue, São Paulo, Brazil.

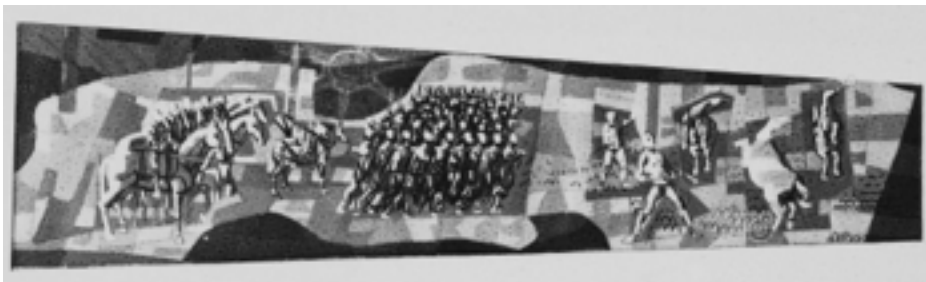


Fig.14: Candido Portinari, model for mural or panel '*Bandeirantes*' not executed, 1951. *Raisonné Catalogue*, São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig.15: Candido Portinari, *Abstract*, 1953. Glass mosaic, 600 x 2000 cm. California Gallery, São Paulo, Brazil.



Fig.16: Candido Portinari, *Abstract (detail)*, 1953. Glass mosaic, 600 x 2000 cm. California Gallery, São Paulo, Brazil.

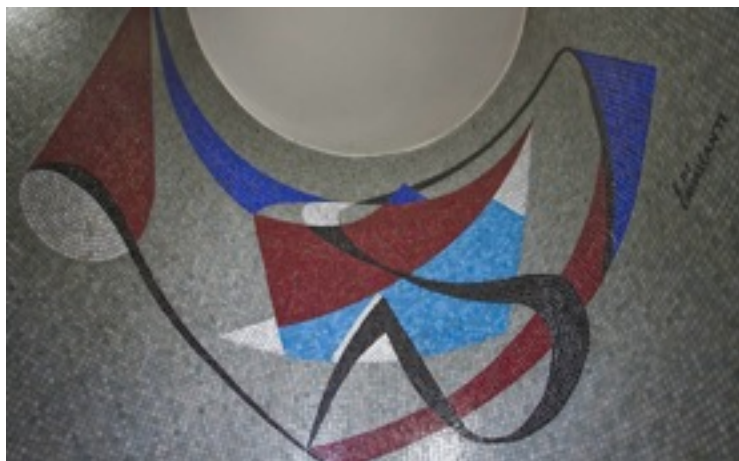


Fig.17: Emiliano Di Cavalcanti, *Abstract (no title)*, 1951. Glass mosaic, Montreal building, by Oscar Niemeyer, São Paulo, Brazil.

Endnotes

¹ Candido Portinari letter (Washington, DC) to Mário de Andrade (São Paulo, SP), October, 07th, 1941, found at the Portinari Project collection.

²The hotel sector was the fastest to receive financial incentives that period, resulting from the large number of people who visited the city at the time of its 400th birthday. Along with the Hotel Comodoro, we can mention other projects for modern hotels: Hotel Cambridge and Hotel Paris, both by Francisco Beck; Hotel Copan, designed by Henry Midlin (not built); and the Jaragua Hotel, situated on the upper floors of the aforementioned newspaper's office building *O Estado de S. Paulo*, by Franz Heep. Cf. MONTEIRO, Ana Carla. *Os hotéis da metrópole: o contexto histórico e urbano da cidade de São Paulo através da produção arquitetônica hoteleira (1940-1960)*. Thesis. FAU-USP, São Paulo, 2006.

³For more information on the aforementioned interview, see: LEAL, Daniela Viana. *Oscar Niemeyer e o mercado imobiliário de São Paulo na década de 1950: o escritório satélite sob direção do arquiteto Carlos Lemos e os edifícios encomendados pelo Banco Nacional Imobiliário*. Master's Thesis in History - Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences, State University of Campinas, Campinas, 2003.

⁴The National Real Estate Bank (NREB) was the Gallery California project developer, along with other buildings designed by Niemeyer's office in São Paulo. Due to the high demand of Niemeyer's work in this period, the architect decided to open an office in São Paulo, to be administered by a team led by Carlos Lemos. Thus, Lemos was responsible for managing the projects executed, often simultaneously in the city. Niemeyer oversaw the buildings, coming to the capital for some sporadic spurts, in which he took care mainly of administrative issues at City Hall. One can attest, so, that most of the practical decisions were taken by Lemos. See LEAL, Daniela Viana. Op. Cit.

⁵*Folha da Manhã*, 02.12.1953, session Assuntos Especializados, p. 7, consulted in LEAL, Daniela Viana. Op. cit.

⁶Vidrotil was the name of the factory which produced the glass mosaic Portinari used.

⁷Letter from Carlos Lemos to Candido Portinari of October, 12, 1953. Accessed on www.portinari.org on 05/05/2013. The letter precedes the news published by the newspaper *Folha da Manhã*, referred to above, raising the possibility that the press was informed of the panel theme change subsequent to December 1953.

⁸Candido Portinari letter to Carlos Lemos, October, 23, 1953. Accessed on www.portinari.org on 05/05/2013.

⁹Letter from National Real Estate Bank to Candido Portinari, May, 7, 1952. Accessed www.portinari.org.br on 05/05/2013.

¹⁰The work performed in this way really allowed to speed up the invoice of the panels, as shown by Carlos Lemos, in a letter to Portinari (10.12.53): "[...] The wall is already being prepared and in a week 'vidrotil' (the glass mosaic company) shall perform the services that were ordered." Letter from Carlos Lemos to Candido Portinari of 12 October 1953. Accessed on www.portinari.org on 05/05/2013.

¹¹Luiz Ventura's testimony, 1983. Accessed at the Portinari Project, Rio de Janeiro, May 2013.

¹²As the receipt dated of 1951, sent by Portinari to the National Real Estate Bank attests: "I received the National Real Estate Bank SA, the importance of Cr \$ 20,000.00 (twenty thousand cruises), as the 9th installment of the payment for the execution of a wall of 18x5x3 depicting scenes for the Brazilian life or the theater. Rio de Janeiro, November 19, 1951, Candido Portinari." Receipt consulted in the collection of the Portinari Project, Rio de Janeiro, May 2013.

¹³ ARGAN, Giulio Carlo. *Arte Moderna*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992. p. 286.

¹⁴Portinari letter to the directors of the National Investment Company, October 23, 1953. Accessed on www.portinari.org.br on 05/05/2013.

¹⁵Referring to certain fashions of the time.

¹⁶*Diário Carioca*, March 14, 1954.