

# route

for visitors to the collection



The creation of Afro Brasil Museum is the result of more than two decades of research and exhibitions, showing the black ancestry of the people who effectively were and are black in Brazil, from past centuries to our days. It was yet another moment in the ongoing process of rediscovering the African roots of Brazilian culture.

To begin with, this history could not possibly be told from a deceiving official perspective, which minimizes the African contribution to the national identity, ignoring more than five centuries of history and 10 million Africans who died to construct this country.

Afro Brasil Museum unites History, Memory, Art, and Contemporaneity, weaving together all these dimensions in one single discourse, in order to tell a heroic African saga, stretching from before the tragedy of the slave trade to the present days, and including all possible contributions of African-Brazilians, their whole legacy, their participation, the rebellions, screams and whispers that took place in Brazil and, more broadly, in the circuits of the Atlantic communities.

It is a museum that presents a heritage in which blacks can see themselves reflected as in a mirror, strengthening the self-esteem of a marginalized population with a shattered identity. For them, the reconstruction of self-image represents a way to obtain the strength to overcome all hindrances to their inclusion in a society whose cornerstone was laid down by their ancestors.

It is a museum of art, both from the past and present, which shows appreciation for the popular recreation of tradition and reaffirms the talent of the educated blacks in the visual arts, theater, music and dance.

Above all, Afro Brasil Museum is a contemporary museum, in which black people today can recognize themselves. It incorporates in its museological program the wants and needs of the poor black youth, contributing to its educational and artistic formation, as well as to the intellectual and moral formation of black and white Brazilian citizens, for the benefit of the generations to come.

Emanoel Araujo  
Head Curator

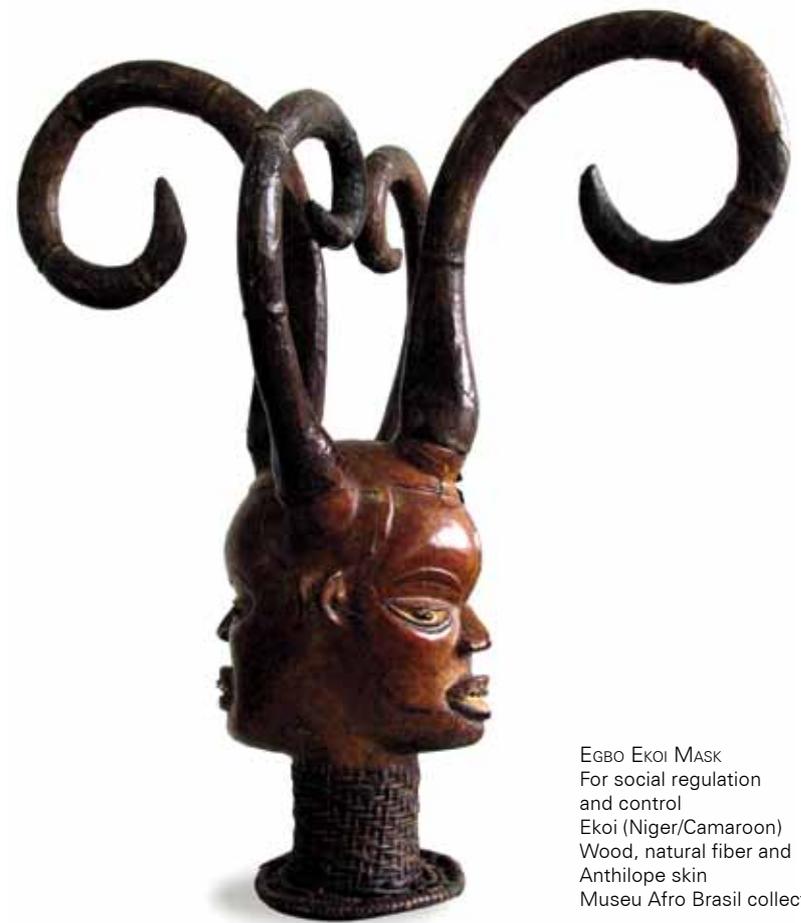
Africa, the origin of mankind as *Homo Sapiens Sapiens*, is also the origin and root of the cultures that were disseminated throughout the Americas in the trail of slavery from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This nucleus of the exhibition includes elements which show the tremendous diversity of African cultures and of the art they produced. Prints and photographs portray imposing figures from past African kingdoms as well as common daily situations, and show the ethnic diversity of the African peoples who were later enslaved in Brazil.

The art of these peoples is linked to a very different vision of the world from that of the West. In traditional African cultures there is no concept of a man's life as separate from his relationship to nature and the divinities, and this is expressed in both ritual objects and daily utensils. The masks and sculptures shown here are in general associated with ritualistic use; celebrating nature's cycles, transitional moments in human life in rites of passage, and invoking the protection of the gods for success in human dealings. The formal characteristics of abstraction and synthesis in African art, as described by George Preston, can also be noted in Afro Brazilian works of art in other nuclei of the exhibition.



MASK OF  
THE GUELEDÉ SOCIETY  
Used annually in fertility  
celebrations and for society  
member funerals  
Yoruba (Nigeria/Benin)  
Polychromed Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

The Gueledé is a female only association among the Yoruba. It is almost always composed of the elderly, those who have the power to regulate the fertility of women and the earth. It is interesting that although the society is exclusively for women, only men dressed as women wearing masks simultaneously covering both the face and head can dance in their rituals. This is a clear demonstration of respect and reverence for these women's power.

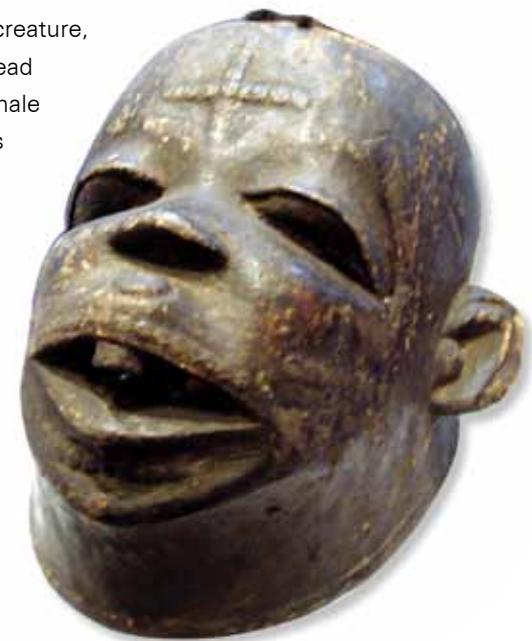


EGBO EKOI MASK  
For social regulation  
and control  
Ekoi (Niger/Camaroon)  
Wood, natural fiber and  
Antilope skin  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

In African tradition, masks are not merely a sculptured "face" or "head". They are, for the populations in which they originated, the "masked one" that wears and "dances" them. What we call an "African mask" is just one part of its whole; that which, in collections and museums, is preserved from the "mask's multimedia totalities".

Ola Balogun

The *Lipiko* mask of the *Makonde* is a representation of a non-human creature, invoked from the world of the dead that participates in the group's male initiation rites. In these, the boys must overpower this entity and remove the mask of the dancer wearing it, thus discovering the dancer's true identity.



MUTI WA LIPIKO MASK  
Male initiation celebration  
Mozambique/Tanzânia  
Wood and Human hair  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

STATUETTES OF  
THE *IBEJI* TWINS  
Yoruba (Nigeria)  
Wood, cloth and beads  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



This nucleus also holds the *ibeji*. These are sculpted by the Yoruba in honour of twins, which are considered such a great family blessing that, if one twin dies while still a child, the sculpture which represents it is “educated” alongside the surviving twin, and is fed and clothed in the place of the dead child.



BENCH TO SHOW OFF THE  
RESPLENDENCE OF THE FEMALE FORM  
Luba (Democratic Republic of Congo)  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



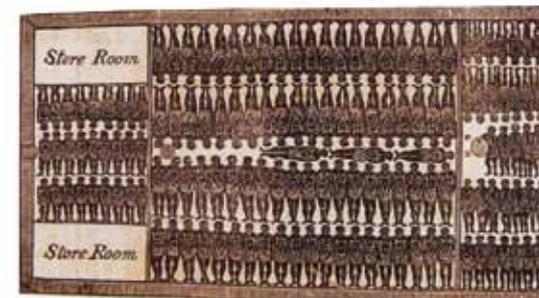
This shows carved animal figures considered primordial. According to the *Senoufo*, the crocodile, chameleon, python, tortoise and Abyssinian ground-hornbill were created before man and this is the reason they are represented here.

SENUFO DOOR  
Northern Ivory Coast,  
South Mali  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



In societies that revere the female as a power of fertility, the mother figure and the feminine divinities play an essential role. This is shown by the *bambara*, *attie*, *yombe e luba* sculptures, and the poems and the *orikis* [invocations] of the Yoruba *Grandes Mães* [Great Mothers] which are also exhibited in this nucleus. In these societies the female represents the earth’s fertility, the fecundity of women, and the force which circulates the vital energy of the world and enables the continuity of human life and civilization.

FERTILITY GODDESS  
*Attie* (Ivory Coast)  
Wood, cloth and beads  
Private collection



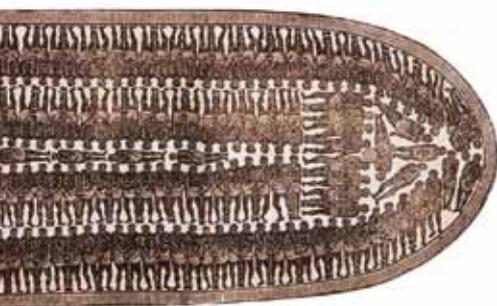
Unknown Author  
Plans and cross-nucleus of a slave ship  
Published by Thomas Clarkson in 1789

This nucleus focuses on the essential role in every area of economic development that the enslaved Africans and their descendents had in the building of Brazilian society. The cost of this process was the brutal violence which was used to control the slaves' bodies and souls. However, contrastingly it also instigated different strategies of resistance, from silent to outright rebellion.



According to tradition, before embarkation, the prisoners who had been sold to the slave ships were obliged to walk around a baobá tree; the "Tree of Forgetfulness", so as to lose their memories of family ties, languages and customs and their sense of belonging to a place or culture. This was supposed to guarantee that their torturers would not be to blame for their sufferings.

Both the image published by Thomas Clarkson in 1789, reproduced at the foot of the slave ship installation, and that of J. M. Rugendas in the centre, evoke the traveling conditions of the expatriated men. However, it was on these ships that the first bonds of solidarity between the slaves were sealed. These traveling companions became known as *malungos*.



**Zezé Botelho Egas**  
SLAVE, 1936  
Bronze  
Private collection

The *gargalheira* [an iron neck band with chains linked to the slave's limbs or to other slaves] and the *libambo* [an iron neck ring with either a bell or a tri-forked attachment to announce the slave's escape attempt or make another attempt more difficult] are examples of the tools of punishment which were used against the Black slaves. Slavery was enforced through violence and the slave masters' power over the slaves, which through punishment and humiliation reminded them constantly of their "inferior human" condition. They were considered and treated as merchandise.

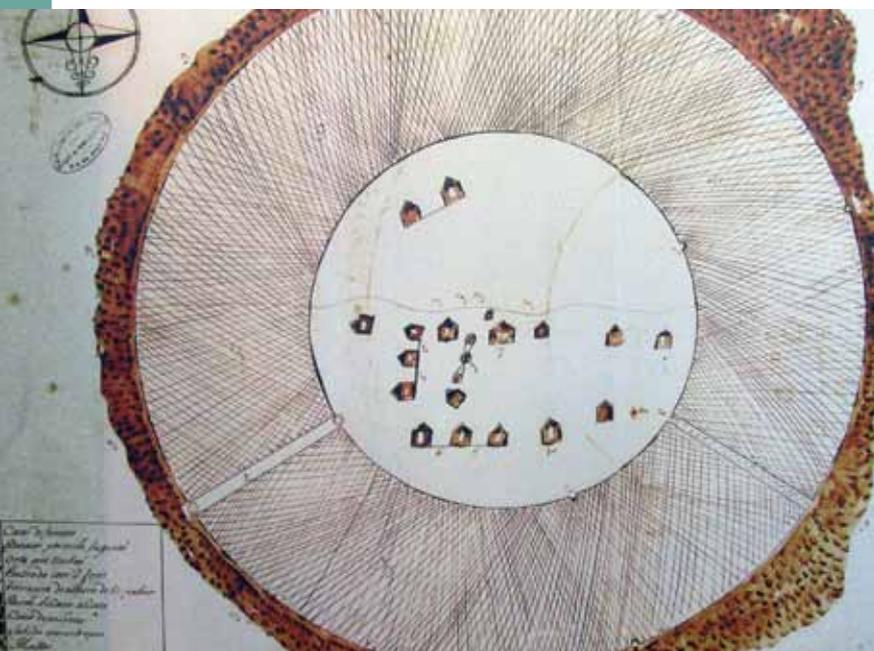
*LIBAMBO, VIRA-MUNDO [STOCKS], AND GARGALHEIRA, 19<sup>th</sup> Century*  
Iron  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

The complex society of the era is shown here in works like Stober's painting of a Black baptism, in which the proportions of the different figures show the view the Church had of Indian and Black slaves. Padre Antonio Vieira's text explains the religious values of the time that were used to justify slavery.

**F. J. Stober**  
BLACK BAPTISM, 1878  
Oil on Canvas  
Private collection



SÃO GONÇALO QUILOMBO [SLAVE REFUGE]  
Minas Gerais. 18<sup>th</sup> century  
Watercolor  
Fundação Biblioteca Nacional collection



The forms of slave resistance were innumerable, of which the most well-known were the escape attempts and the organization of the *quilombos* [slave refuges], which were symbolized by the *Palmares quilombo* most famously lead by *Zumbi*, in the current state of Alagoas. The *quilombo* at Palmares withstood Portuguese and Dutch attacks for around 100 years, until it was destroyed by the São Paulo *bandeirante* [adventurer and bandit] Domingos Jorge Velho in 1695.

Other forms of resistance are also shown in this nucleus. The print *Castigo de Escravos* [Slave Punishment] by Jacques Etienne Arago (popularly known as "Slave Anastácia"), shows the punishment inflicted on the slaves who ate earth to try and kill themselves.



SUGAR CANE MILL  
State of Pernambuco. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

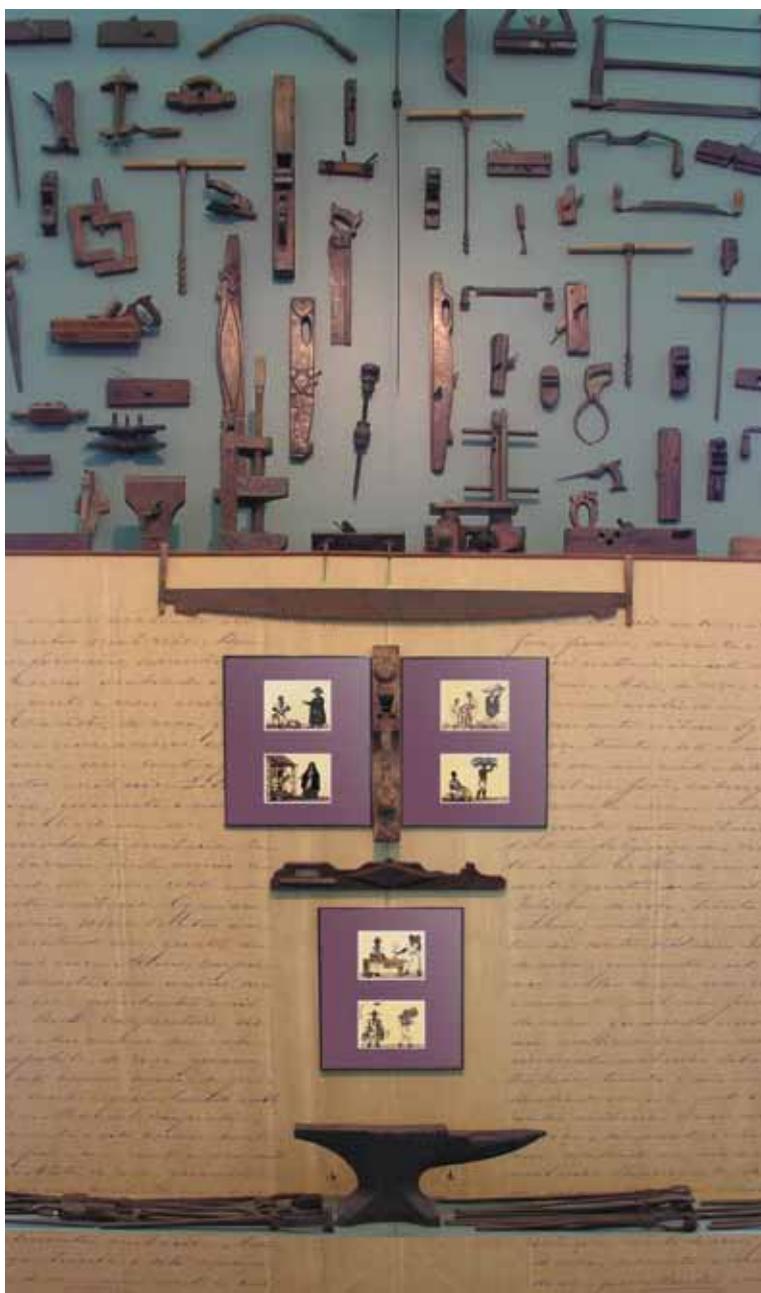


GOLD PAN  
State of Minas Gerais. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

This is the context of oppression and resistance in which slave labor became omnipresent in the history of Brazil. From sugar processing to gold mines and coffee production, and in all the arts and crafts, the quality of this labor was clear. Here we can see the mills and the sugar loaf moulds, the coffee sieves and fans, and prints and photographs that show the mining processes.

SUGAR LOAF MOULDS  
State of Pernambuco. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Metal  
Museu Afro Brasil collection





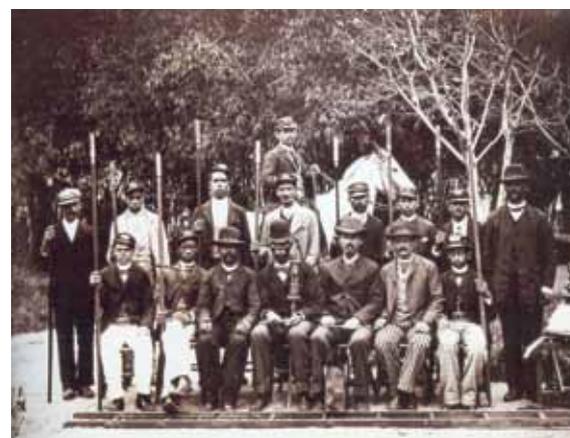
CARPENTRY AND SMITHY TOOLS MADE  
AND USED BY BLACKES  
Panel  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

The text about the administration of a coffee *fazenda* [plantation] shows the care with which the slave master treated his slaves, not due to respect for human rights, but so as to preserve his investment regarding labour. Together with the tools, the text at the bottom is the inventory of a *fazenda* which evaluates the slaves according to their different occupations, genders, ages etc. It is worth reflecting on the moral values of the Brazilian society shown in such documents which attribute the value of human rights according to these criteria.



WET-NURSE MÔNICA WITH  
ARTHUR GOMES LEAL  
Carte de Visite  
Fundação Joaquim Nabuco  
collection

Also note the extraordinary diversity of urban tasks undertaken by the slaves, from the work of the *negros de ganho*, slaves who worked in the streets selling products of all kinds for their masters, to female domestic help like the wet-nurse Mônica, shown here alongside the little boy Arthur Gomes Leal. The poem by Mello Moraes Filho shows the price paid by a slave for this work. Here, contradicting values are reflected which are integrated with the process of the constitution of Brazilian society, exercising a decisive influence in the formation of our culture.



**Virgílio Calegari**  
GAS-LAMP LIGHTERS  
c.1900  
Porto Alegre  
Photograph  
Private collection



**Jean Baptiste Debret**  
SLAVE, 1823  
Lithograph with watercolour

Slavery in Brazil connected the religions of different African peoples. These ended up assimilating and exchanging culturally similar elements. In this way rituals from different origins were superimposed and formed in a common amalgam from which the Afro-Brazilian religions arose. *Candomblé* is one of the most well-known Afro-Brazilian religions in the country with its pantheon of *orixás*, *iniquices e voduns*, *divinities* from the Yoruba, Bantu and Jeje respectively.

The Afro-Brazilian religions take different names depending on the place and style of their rituals. In the North-East there is the *Tambor-de-mina* from the state of Maranhão, the *Xangô* from Pernambuco and the Bahian *Candomblé*. This is also present in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul there is the *Batuque*. These show the African legacy and transformation in the Afro-Brazilian religions.



Positioned along the same axis in the slave ship, the figures of *Babá Egun* worshipped in Nigeria and Benin as well as in Brazil, refer to male ancestry, and testify the historical continuity of the African religious dimension which condenses important elements from the Yoruba world view.

The costumes shown here were made to represent and to allow the manifestation of the *eguns*, ancestral spirits, protectors of a village or community, who when still alive held important social positions such as kings, military leaders and founders of families, villages and towns.

In the Bantu culture of the Congo and Angola, religion is also centred on the veneration of ancestors who represented an energy which continued to sustain African life and give it meaning, even under slavery. In the Congo traditional culture, the universe is represented as two complementary halves that influence each other: the world of the living and the world of the dead which are separated by a river, *Calunga*.

The sea crossing – *Calunga grande* [Big Calunga] – in the slave ship was the equivalent of entering the world of the dead, in which only the power of the ancestors, invoked by the sound of the drums, would enable the slave to find the strength to survive.

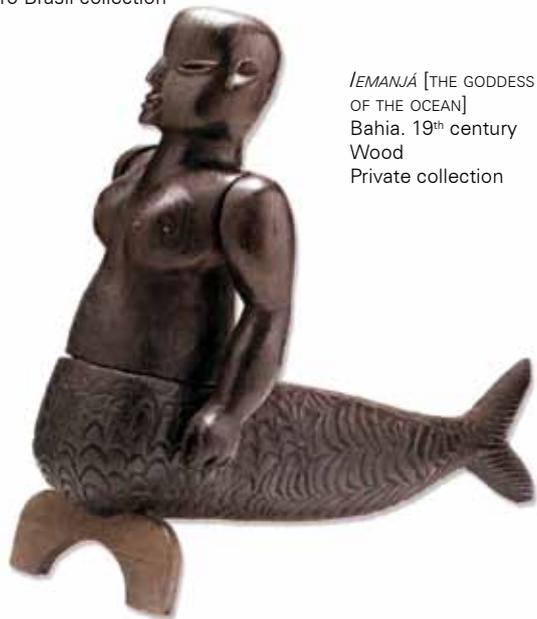
In this way, from African cultures with different roots, the world of the dead, represented by the ancestors, became a power to sustain life.



*BABÁ EGUM* COSTUME  
Bahia. 20<sup>th</sup> century  
Cloths, cowry shells  
Mirros and sequins  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



*Oxé* [DOUBLE EDGED HAMMER]  
Nigeria, 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



*IEMANJÁ* [THE GODDESS OF THE OCEAN]  
Bahia, 19<sup>th</sup> century  
Wood  
Private collection

From an historical viewpoint, all these forms of religion were considered by the European Christian colonizers and as dangerous expressions of idolatry and sin to be stamped out through conversion to guarantee the salvation of the slaves' souls. This view persists even now with Afro-Brazilian religious expressions like *Candomblé* and *Umbanda* often associated with rituals of satanic witchcraft.

In particular, the Christian doctrine aligned the *orixá* deity *Exu* with the figure of the devil, ignoring the fact that he represents a cosmic force of perpetual transformation that is associated with sexuality and the mythical time of the world's creation, for this reason he is the "dono dos caminhos" ["owner of the paths"] of the lives of men. Through common day-to-day images, Mário Cravo Neto's photographs show the attributes associated with the *orixá*, explaining them in the poem which pronounces:

*I am not black white or red  
I have the colors and forms that I choose  
I'm not a devil or saint, I'm exu.*



*Exu* Sculpture  
Nigeria  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

This nucleus also includes photographs of the *pejis* [altars] of the *candomblé orixás*, José Adário's "orixá tools", which represent their different attributes, and sculptures and other symbolic representations of the Afro-Brazilian religions.

#### **José Adário dos Santos**

ORIXÁ TOOL  
Beaten Iron  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

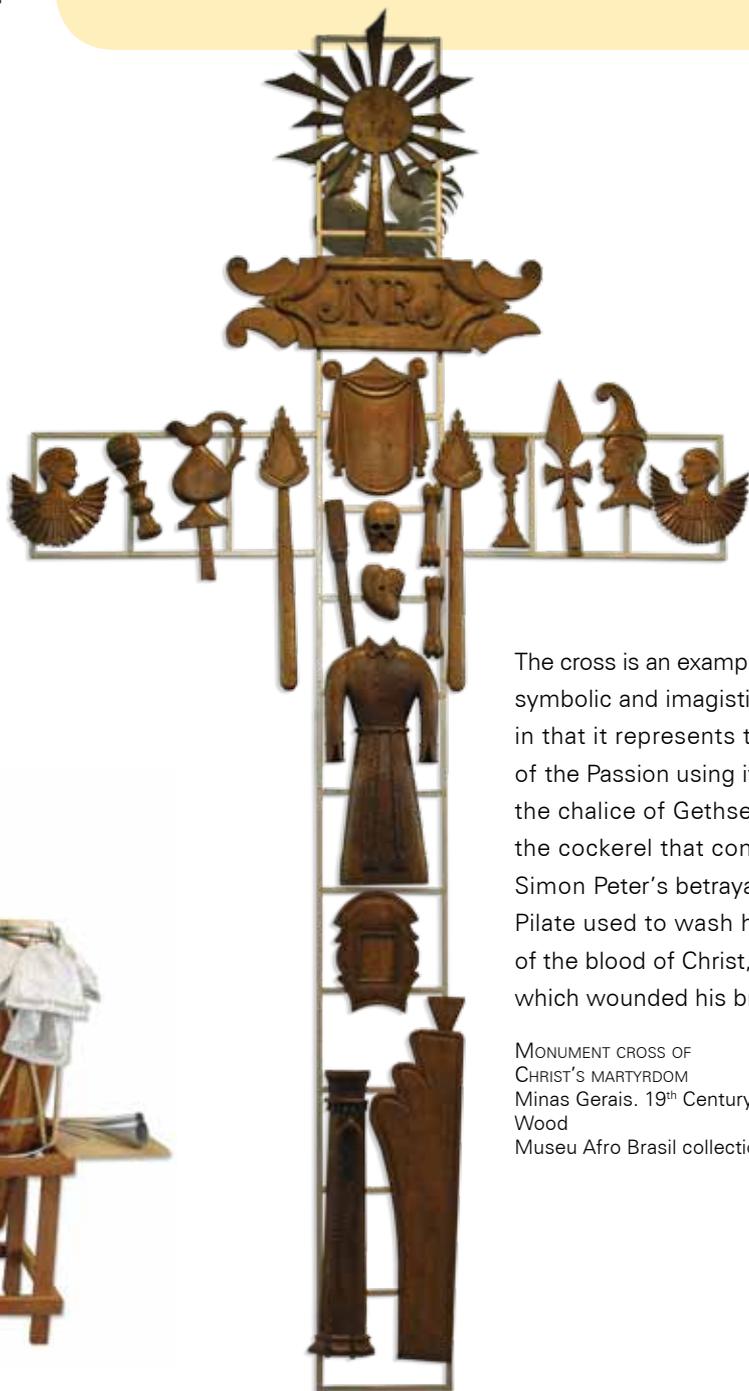


Pierre Verger's photographs reveal the African legacy in Bahian *Candomblé*. The watercolors by Carybé, the Argentinean artist and *obá de Xangô* [minister] of the *Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá* temple, show the different occasions when devotees lend their bodies to the *orixás* for them to be able to dance among men and dramatize the stories from the myths through their gestures and movements. Thus the body becomes a receptacle, and a vehicle of expression for an ancestral memory, a store for the intangible patrimony of the African cultures which are preserved and recreated in Brazil.

RUM, RUMPI E LÉ  
Drums used in *candomblé*  
religious ceremonies  
Private collection



The enslaved Africans found, in the Christianity imposed on them, significant social spaces that allowed them to preserve their mother cultures. Colonial baroque Catholicism always considered the spectacle of its festivals to be an instrument that could transmit the Christian doctrine to everyone, independent of their social status, through the symbolism of images, colors and sounds. As it legitimized the power of the Portuguese throne, it also increased the number of civic festivals in which the population was expected to participate; celebrations where worship was followed by diversion with theatre, fireworks, and bull runs, and reuniting in a single spectacle both the sacred and the profane. This nucleus shows how the African slaves and their descendents appropriated these festivities using their own roots as references, allowing them to preserve many of the original elements which can be found even today in popular Catholicism and in folkloric festivals.



The cross is an example of Christian symbolic and imagistic teaching, in that it represents the steps of the Passion using its insignias: the chalice of Gethsemane, the cockerel that confirmed Simon Peter's betrayal, the basin Pilate used to wash his hands of the blood of Christ, the spear which wounded his breast.

MONUMENT CROSS OF CHRIST'S MARTYRDOM  
Minas Gerais. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

VOTIVE OFFERING PANEL  
Wood  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



The wall of the *ex-votos* [votive offerings] behind the cross, shows parts of the human body carved in wood. These are found in the "*salas dos milagres*" [miracle rooms] of the larger sanctuaries (Juazeiro do Padre Cicero, Bom Jesus da Lapa, Aparecida do Norte) as payment of promises made by devotees who have been cured through their patron saints' intercession. Note however, how the text based on Luis Saia under the panel, emphasizes the magic function of these *ex-votos*, which rediscover African beliefs about the relationship between ailments and the evil forces which cause them. Also note the reductionist incisions of these pieces, the same as those of the African masks.



Johann Moritz Rugendas  
FESTIVAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY  
Detail of lithograph  
Private collection

Blacks also appropriated Catholicism in other ways. The most popular festivals of devotion, like that of the *Espírito Santo*, always included Blacks as the musicians for the celebrations. Other feast days originated from the worship of Black saints such as Saint Ifigenia and Saint Benedict, whom the Church promoted with a view to converting the slaves, just as it promoted the creation of brotherhoods of Blacks and half-castes like that of Our Lady of the Rosary. These confraternities, true societies of mutual support, guaranteed a dignified burial and in many cases even enabled them to buy their freedom.



**Adenor Gondim**  
SISTERS FROM THE SISTERHOOD  
OF THE GOOD DEATH  
Photograph  
Private collection

The *Sisterhood of the Good Death* in Bahia still shows traces of the old splendor of the confraternities' feast days. Preserving the "*jóias de crioula*" [Creole jewels] with which, in the past, the slave masters covered, their slave women in processions, the Sisters of the Good Death now

incorporate them in their costumes for the feast day of Our Lady of the Assumption. Many of these necklaces, bracelets and charms, in silver and gold, were made local jewelers, most of whom were African Blacks with great technical skill in metal craft.



CAVALHADA [JOUSTING RE-ENACTMENT] MASKS  
Pirenópolis, State of Goiás  
Painted papier-mâché  
Private collection



CAZUMBÁ MASK  
State of Maranhão  
Museu Afro Brasil collection

Other festivals of European origin were preserved thanks to the Black communities. *Folias de Reis* and Pastorals, devote acts, are today only seen as popular revelries, just as the *Cavalhadas* are, in which the blue and scarlet costumes of the knights remind us of the battles between the Christians and Moors. The ox and the ass from the nativity are converted into characters in the *bumba-meu-boi*, a socially critical dramatized burlesque dance that is still associated today with the festivities of *São João*.

In the *Reis Magos* [wise kings] celebration, it was the custom to crown a Black king in honor of Balthazar; this gave rise to the *Reis do Congo* [Congo Kings] processions which accompanied the Black fraternities' festivals, but which can also be found in the 'profane' *maracatu* revelries, with their sacred attributes from African royalty, the parasol which is twirled over the head of the kings and the *Calunga* puppet. These celebrations are another example of a festival from the Christian calendar which the Blacks took as their own and this is shown in Wagner Celestino's photographs of the *velha guarda* [old guard] from the São Paulo samba schools. In all these celebrations and revelries Blacks have imprinted traces of their original cultures, transforming rhythms and colors between the boundaries of the sacred and the profane.



JOUSTING WARRIOR  
Rural Maracatu, State of Pernambuco  
Cloth, wood and sequins  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



**Wagner Celestino**  
VELHA-GUARDA [OLD GUARD] FROM  
THE SÃO PAULO SAMBA SCHOOLS  
Photograph  
Private collection

The History and Memory nucleus is heralded by the Rafael Galvez sculpture depicting the death of *Zumbi dos Palmares* and the reproduction of Antônio Parreiras' painting of the same subject.

Confiscating slaves' memories by breaking their ties of belonging is an effective means of guaranteeing control over them. Hindering a free man from recognizing elements from the past which can serve as models for the present is one way of perpetuating this control: it denies them the right to a collective memory of their own history which could otherwise help to reconstruct their shattered identities. This is the situation of the Black memory in Brazil. A perverse demonstration of prejudice denies Blacks the right to their memory by "whitening" those Blacks and half-castes who contributed to our history; by forgetting their color, as if by having been successful, they must have been white.

This nucleus hopes to redeem the role of both past and present Blacks in the history of Brazil by presenting moments from history in which Blacks played a fundamental role, and by highlighting Black personalities of note in diverse areas from colonial times to now.

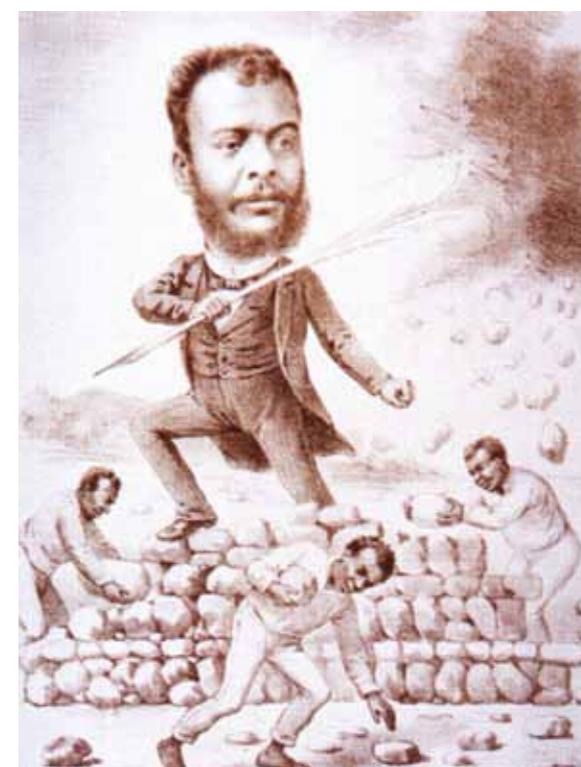


**Unknown Artist**  
 PORTRAIT OF HENRIQUE DIAS. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
 Oil on canvas  
 Museu do Estado de Pernambuco collection

The involvement of Blacks in Brazilian history is remembered in the battles which secured the country's territory and political sovereignty. From Henrique Dias in the battle against the Dutch, to the Black *Voluntários da Pátria* [patriotic volunteers] in the war against Paraguay, they helped guarantee a freedom for Brazil that was denied to their own race. This stirred the abolitionist campaign with leaders like Luís Gama, seen as the precursor of the movement, and José do Patrocínio. Even so, little is known about the position of Blacks such as respected professionals and artists in other areas of society, as if their participation in the construction of Brazilian society was limited to a menial role or the few obligatory exceptions in text books. This nucleus aims to correct this distorted memory of our history.



**Militão Augusto de Azevedo**  
 LUÍS GAMA  
 (b. Salvador, Bahia, 1830 –  
 d. São Paulo, São Paulo, 1882)  
 Photograph (albumen print) c.1880  
 Private collection



JOSÉ DO PATROCÍNIO  
 (b. Campos, Rio de Janeiro, 1854  
 – d. Rio de Janeiro,  
 Rio de Janeiro, 1905)  
 Litograph  
*Revista Ilustrada*  
 Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros  
 collection  
 Universidade de São Paulo - USP

The exhibition shows a paradox. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries there is the noteworthy presence of illustrious Blacks in the arts – from classical music to the fine arts, architecture and literature – and in areas such as engineering, law, medicine and politics. However these become increasingly rare towards the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From then on Blacks figure principally in the areas of music, dance, theatre and sport.



**JULIANO MOREIRA**  
(b. Salvador, Bahia, 1873 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1933)



**Madalena Schwartz**  
PELÉ (b. Três Corações, MG, 1940)  
Photograph, 1982  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection



**JOSÉ MARIA MACHADO DE ASSIS**  
(b. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1839 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1908)  
Photograph (albumen print)  
*O Estado de São Paulo* Archive



**Fernando Goldgaber**  
PORTRAIT OF CAROLINA MARIA DE JESUS  
(b. Sacramento, MG, 1914 –  
d. São Paulo, SP, 1977)  
Private collection



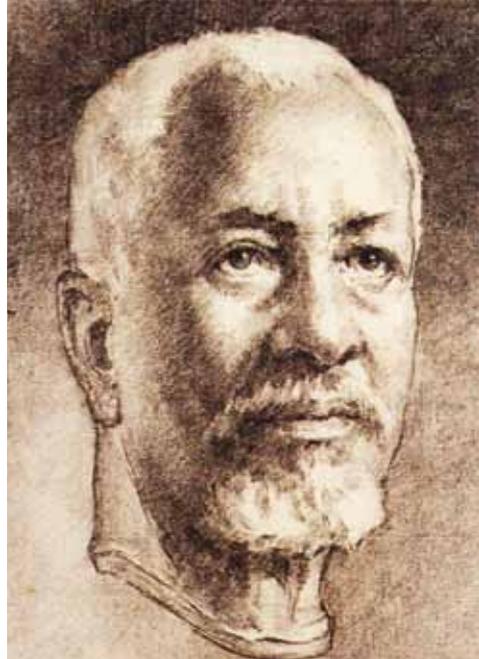
**Madalena Schwartz**  
ISMAEL IVO  
(b. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1937)  
Photograph, 1968  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection

It seems that under slavery, Blacks were successful in areas that later, as free men, they were denied access! Education is a factor which can partly explain this paradox. In a society where until the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was common for slave masters to have illegitimate children with their slave-women; education was a roundabout way of guaranteeing them a future. In addition to this, the relative social mobility of the emancipated Blacks, in conjunction with the efforts of philanthropic and abolitionist organizations, meant that many saw education as a favorable way of redeeming the evils of slavery.

After abolition this discontinued, and without any other social benefits for the ex-slaves, this drive died out in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century denouncing the social inequality which even today is imposed on Blacks. This makes the people presented here all the more significant.



**ANDRÉ REBOUÇAS**  
(b. Cachoeira, BA, 1838 –  
d. Funchal, Ilha da Madeira, 1898)  
Museu Histórico Nacional collection



**TEODORO SAMPAIO**  
(b. Bom Jardim, BA, 1855 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1937)  
Private collection



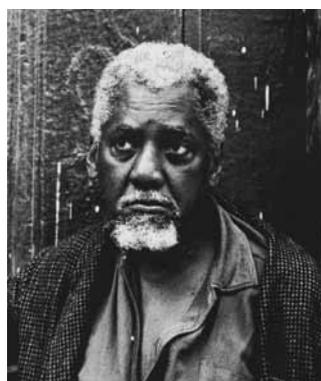
**Madalena Schwartz**  
ABDIAS DO NASCIMENTO, c. 1981  
(b. Franca, São Paulo, 1914)  
Photograph  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection



**Madalena Schwartz**  
CLEMENTINA DE JESUS, 1978  
(b. Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1902 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1987)  
Photograph  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection



**Madalena Schwartz**  
MÃE MENINHA  
(b. Salvador, BA, 1894 –  
d. Salvador, BA, 1986)  
Photograph  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection



**Madalena Schwartz**  
SOLANO TRINDADE, 1969  
(b. Recife, Pernambuco, 1908 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1974)  
Photograph  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection

Without forgetting figures such as Luís Gama, André Rebouças, Teodoro Sampaio or Juliano Moreira (whose biographical data are included in the exhibition), or Carolina Maria de Jesus, the author of *Child of the Dark*, in whose honor the library at the Museu Afro Brasil is named; it is important to remember other examples who are closer to us. Maria da Conceição Escolástica Nazaré, *Mãe Menininha do Gantois* (1894-1986), preserved the *Orixá* cult in the famous Salvador *terreiro* [temple] for more than 60 years, through one of the periods of greatest persecution against the Afro-Brazilian religions. Clementina de Jesus (1902-1987), was a daughter of Angolan ex-slaves from Rio de Janeiro, who only became known for her work songs, *jongos*, *benditos* and *ladainhas* [song styles] in 1965. The poet Solano Trindade (1908-1974), from the state of Pernambuco founded the Teatro Popular Brasileiro [Brazilian Popular Theater] in São Paulo and developed an artistic center in *Embu das Artes* that focussed on preserving traditional Afro-Brazilian culture and on denouncing racism. Abdias do Nascimento (b. 1914, Franca, São Paulo) was involved in the *Frente Negra* [Black front] in 1931; he was a federal deputy and senator, and also founder in 1944 of the *Teatro Experimental do Negro*, [Black Experimental Theatre] together with the Rio de Janeiro actress Ruth de Souza (1931) whose name the Museum's theatre bears. These are just some of the Blacks whom the Museum honors, justifying the redemption of their memory as eminent figures in our history.



**Madalena Schwartz**  
RUTH DE SOUZA  
(Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1931)  
Photograph, 1983  
Instituto Moreira Salles collection



**Pereira Netto**  
THE MOURNED ARTIST ESTEVÃO SILVA  
Lithograph  
*Revista Ilustrada*  
Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros collection  
Universidade de São Paulo - USP

This nucleus talks about Brazilian art from the Baroque and Rococo, going through XIX Century Academy and the Academics, as well as the arts of popular origin, to finally arrive at the Contemporary Art, through the perspective of an Afro-Brazilian hand in the roots of their creation.

In it we can find examples of how Afro-Brazilian artists or descendants, from the colonialism through present date have been exposing their artistic sensitivity, either by the tension that has marked and still marks the inclusion of Blacks in Brazilian society.



**José Teófilo de Jesus**  
(b. Salvador, Bahia, 1758 –  
d. Salvador, BA, 1847)  
SÃO FRANCISCO. 19<sup>th</sup> Century  
Oil on Canvas  
Private collection

Manual labor was considered beneath respectable members of the dominant upper-class in colonial Brazilian society. Therefore in all its forms, and in the most divergent areas of activity and even in the field of artistic production, manual labor always required or even demanded slaves and freedmen to work, in general under the guidance of the Portuguese masters in workshops. Within the workshops, the artistic creations were produced collectively;

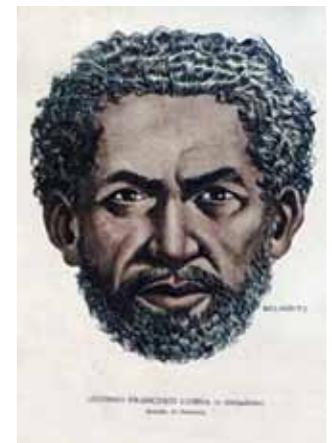
this allowed the slaves and freedmen to learn a range of skills which in turn sustained production. This explains the boom in creativity from the Black and half-caste artists which dominated 18<sup>th</sup> century art, encouraged by the Church through orders for sacred icons, paintings for church ceilings and liturgical objects in gold and silver, as well as architectural plans for places of worship.

The products of this period, which correspond with the predominance of the Baroque style, are considered the first artistic expression with uniquely Brazilian characteristics. Works by the architect and sculptor from Minas Gerais, Antonio Francisco Lisboa (*Aleijadinho*), the Bahian painter José Teófilo de Jesus and the São Paulo born Frei Jesuino do Monte Carmelo, are characteristic examples of this style. It was only

**Antônio Francisco Lisboa** (Aleijadinho)  
(b. Vila Rica, MG, 1730 – d. Vila Rica, Minas Gerais, 1814)  
FRAGMENT OF A CARVING. 17<sup>th</sup> century  
Wood  
Private collection



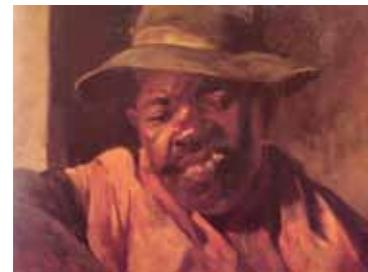
**Belmonte**  
(b. São Paulo, São Paulo, 1897 –  
d. São Paulo, São Paulo, 1947)  
PORTRAIT OF ALEIJADINHO, c. 1940  
Ink on paper  
Private collection



at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that Brazilian artists abandoned religious themes to depict others; examples are the public works by the architect and sculptor Mestre Valentim and the paintings of Leandro Joaquim which announced the Neoclassical style.



**Júlio Martins da Silva**  
(b. Niterói, Rio de Janeiro, 1893 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1979)  
LANDSCAPE WITH STAGS  
Oil on card on hardboard  
Museu Afro Brasil collection



**Arthur Timóteo da Costa**  
(b. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1892 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1922)  
BLACK PORTRAIT, 1906  
Oil on canvas  
Private collection

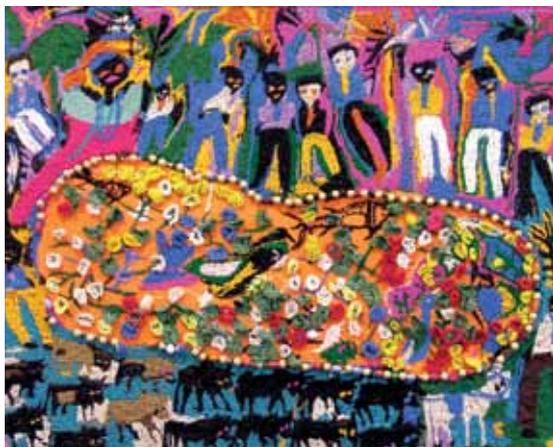


**Estevão Roberto Silva**  
(b. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, c.1845 –  
d. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1891)  
STILL LIFE, 1884  
Oil on canvas  
Private collection

The Royal family's visit to Brazil contributed greatly to this transformation. Bringing with him the *Missão Artística Francesa* headed by Lebreton, in 1816 D. João VI brought the beginning of a profound aesthetic and conceptual change for art produced in Brazil.

The subsequent creation by royal decree of the *Real Academia de Belas Artes* [Royal Academy of Fine Arts], consolidated the French Neoclassical influence. Because the formation of fine artists was the institution's responsibility this consequently brought about the extinction of the workshops. From then on, because they were no longer connected to corporative artistic training through 'apprenticeship', the Black artists had to be recognized for their individual talents, following the criteria established by the Academy, which decided the styles and genres that should be cultivated. Even so, in the so called "academic painting", in which predominated still-lives, landscapes, portraits and historical themes, there were distinguished Black artists such as Estevão Silva, Rafael Pinto Bandeira, the brothers João e Artur Timóteo da Costa and several others whose works are shown in the Museum collection.





**Madalena dos Santos Reinbolt**  
 (b. Vitória da Conquista, BA, 1919 –  
 d. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1977)  
 UNTITLE  
 Acrylic wool woven on  
 sackcloth  
 Museu Afro Brasil collection



**Rosana Paulino**  
 THE BALL  
 Installation  
 Private collection

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the artistic division created by the officialization of an academic art widened. On one side there were distinguished Black artists who, because they were outside the canon of elitist art, were considered merely to be talented craftsmen or, at the most “popular artists”. On the other side there were the artists allied with the current trends or who innovated within the erudite scene and so were recognized as such. By putting these artists side by side the Museum would like to highlight the historical and ultimately arbitrary nature of this separation, and emphasize the intrinsic value of the works by Black artists for which these distinctions lose all meaning. To name but a few of the countless artists who feature in the exhibition, this nucleus includes those who have in common classical styles, genres and themes, such as the landscape in Jílio Martins da Silva and Cincincho or the still-lives and flowers by Yedamaria. It also includes artists who consciously or unconsciously recover a stylistic, emotional or religious Afro-descendent memory like Madalena dos Santos Reinbolt, Heitor dos Prazeres, Mestre Didi, Ronaldo Rego, Maurino de Araújo, Agnaldo Manoel dos Santos or Rubem Valentim, as well as artists who were dedicated to constant formal and stylistic research like Rosana Paulino, Genilson Soares or Edval Ramosa.

**Rubem Valentim**  
 (b. Salvador, BA, 1922 – d. Brasília, DF, 1991)  
 Emblematic Object 3, 1969  
 Painted Wood  
 Museu Afro Brasil collection



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