

**A ARTE NO BRASIL: DOS PRIMORDIOS AO SÉCULO VINTEÉ: UMA BIBLIOGRAFIA SELETA, ANOTADA / ART IN BRAZIL FROM ITS BEGINNINGS TO MODERN TIMES: A SELECTED, ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY** / José Neistein.--Washington, D. C.: Brazilian-American Cultural Institute, Inc.; São Paulo, Brazil: Livraria Kosmos Editora. 1997.--538 p.: n.p.

In her preface, Aracy Amaral, an internationally recognized authority in the field of Brazilian art, makes it clear that this publication is a welcome addition to the field. She declares it to be a landmark work. Considering the lack of bibliographic materials which treat the subject of Brazilian art, Amaral's statement must be accepted as being accurate. Searching revealed only three formal bibliographies, inclusive of the present title and a fourth in Aracy Amaral's own book, published in 1984, *Arte para que?: a preocupacao social ne arte brasileira, 1930 - 1970* (Sao Paulo: Nobel, 1984), which includes a substantial 25 page bibliography. The volume in hand is a work of 538 pages containing 1,704 annotated titles.

This book is actually a compilation of citations which were previously published in the Handbook of Latin American Studies (HLAS) between 1950 and 1992. Those appearing before 1968 were selected and written by Robert C. Smith and Mário Barata for periodic issues of the HLAS. After that date José Neistein is the author. Notwithstanding this fact, the publication of these annotations in a single volume, apart from the sometimes ponderous HLAS, makes a meaningful contribution to the literature of the history of art in the Americas. The subjects covered here range from reference and theoretical works through urban planning and folk art to Afro-Brazilian and Indian traditions. It is apparent that there are weaknesses and the author states, "...that a number of important publications were involuntarily omitted..." Deficiencies exist, too, in the areas of pre-colonial history and in the brief section on photography. The greatest shortcoming here is the fact that the latest entries are from 1992. However, given the nature of bibliographies as collected works of published knowledge, the same could be said of most publications of this sort. The cutoff date can not be construed as a defect, only a regret. In his preface Neistein challenges scholars to be "...stimulated by the flaws in my book...to publish works that rectify, improve, and augment it."

The text is laid out in accessible side-by-side translations in Portuguese and English. Each section of the broad subject headings included in the table of contents, is introduced by an annual summary of the related publishing history and important art related events. For example, the entry for twentieth-century art for 1951 notes that the year was prominently marked by the opening of the first Biennial Exhibition in São Paulo. The most useful mechanism of these summaries, aside from their historical content, is inclusion of references to annotated items in the subsequent list of publications. Within each subject division the publications are arranged by the year of the original publication of the HLAS. Books and serial citations are in a single sequence, 1 - 1704.

Users of *A Arte no Brasil* could have profited by a "How to Use this Bibliography" section in an introduction, because there seems to be an assumption that many are familiar with the HLAS itself. Most likely, researchers will depend heavily upon the

extensive names index. Before the first citation, there are instructions for accessing the HLAS via the Web and it would be possible to use these two resources in tandem. The book's design is simple and utilitarian, as is the text, the English translation of which is occasionally a bit awkward. Well bound in sewn signatures that allow for easy photocopying, no illustrations are included and the quality of the paper is not indicated.

There is an established and growing audience for this book and others like it. In light of the lack of comprehensive, annotated bibliographies in the field of Latin American art, this publication--while it may not set a standard--certainly is a notable example of the vast richness of the existing body of literature on the topic. Its authors and editors are to be commended in their endeavor. Any collection with a specialization in Latin American art or history, as well as academic and comprehensive art collections should acquire this reference source.

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