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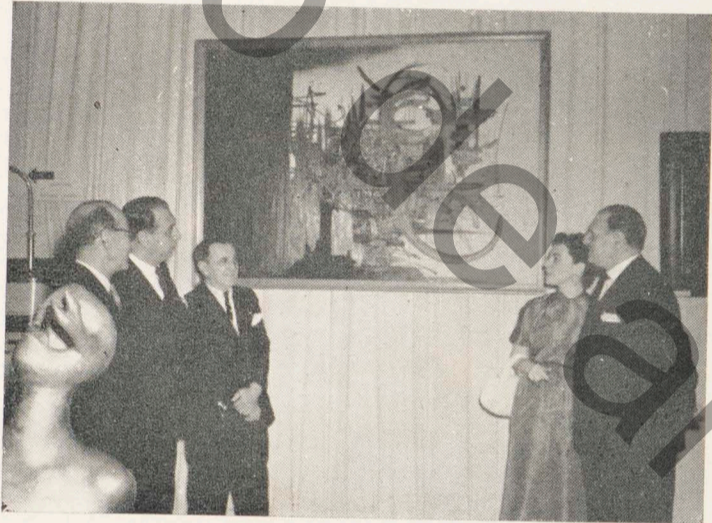
TÍTULO: Arts and the Man

ASSUNTO: Rio opens Museum of Modern Art.

page 40: from copy to Biennial Prize - winners.



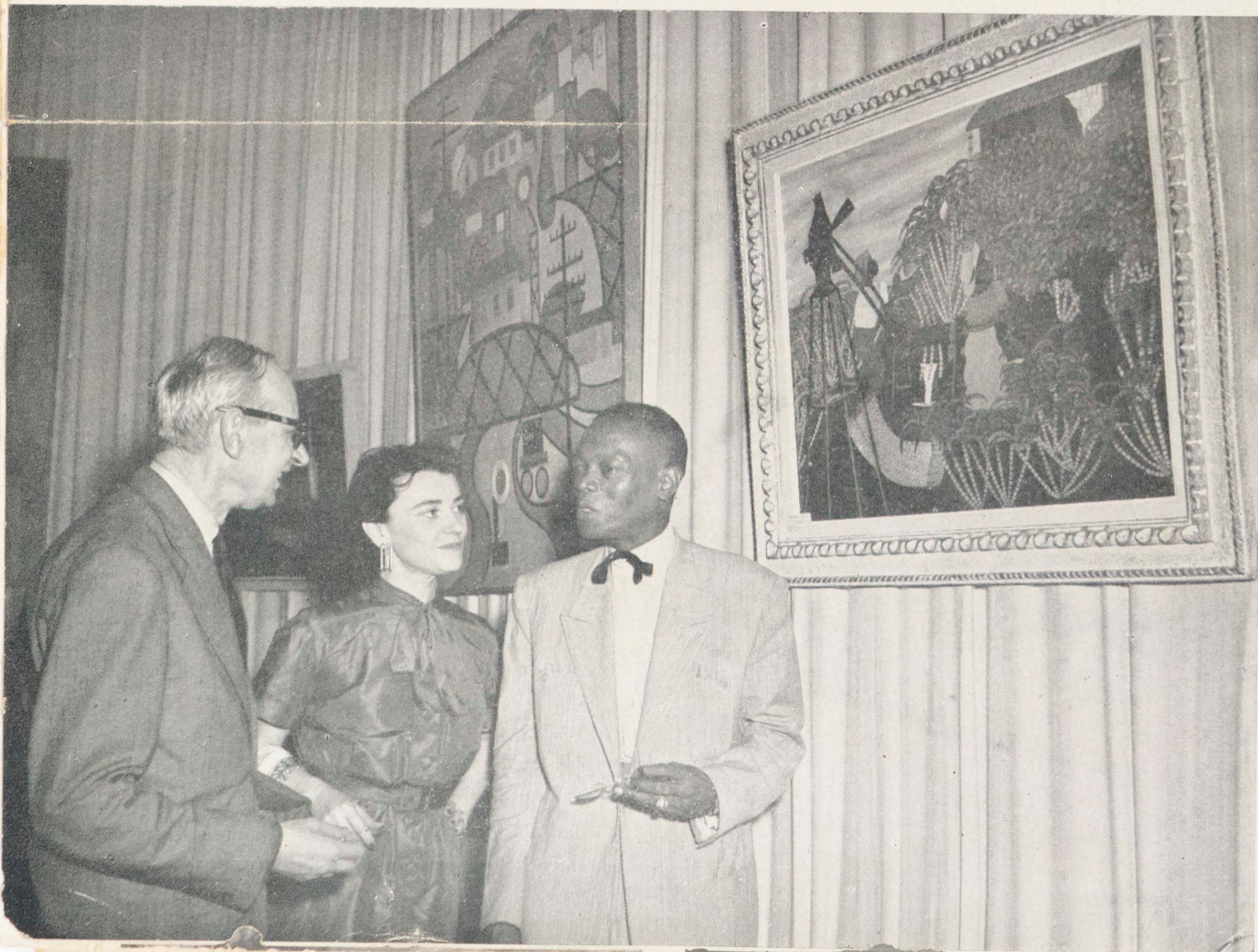
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ABOVE: Spanish Ambassador Rojas y Moreno and wife, with former Foreign Minister João Neves da Fontoura, admiring two of the earlier works of Spanish artist Juan Miro. BELOW: French art critic Michel Simon (left) chatting with Niomar Muniz Sodré and Biennial prize-winner Heitor dos Prazeres in front of his painting "Sugar-mill"; to the left, EFCB by Tarsila do Amaral's who is admittedly one of the pioneers of modern art.



Brazilian painter Camila (left) and friend are impressed by Bruno Giorgi's prize-winning statue "Spinning Woman" in wood of contrasting grain. The painting in back is Pignon's "Mending the Nets".

Arts and the Man

CRITICS AT THE CROSSROADS Rio opens Museum of Modern Art

by JOHN KNOX

It indeed imprudent for a politician to declare:

Fontaine, je ne boirai pas de ton eau!
With this sentiment, Minister of Education Simões Filho began his address at the opening of the Rio Museum of Modern Art on January 15. But such imprudence is not confined to politicians. To judge by the anathema which has been heaped on the works exhibited at São Paulo Biennial and at this more recent exhibition, many persons of the utmost respectability—and some not quite so respectable—seem to have decided that the pure spring of art has become obnoxiously sullied to the point of undrinkability ever since these objectionable modernists decided that it was not, perhaps, necessary for a painting to be a photographic reproduction of nature.

It is not surprising to find this opinion entrenched behind the bulwarks of conservatism—I had almost said capitalism. One imagines the aristocrat clinging sentimentally to the fading lines of dusky ancestral oil paintings or the plutocrat admiring the real, as a product of his own materialism. But when we find the bourgeois-baiters on the side of realism, touched up, it is true, by a certain amount of primitivism which is often little more than faulty draftsmanship, it is time to sit down in a nice empty room and try to puzzle out what all the commotion is about.

It is all very well, with Simões Filho, to believe in Art, to believe in its everlastingness. This is a convenient way of begging the question, of passing the buck to succeeding generations, who by some curious train of reasoning are expected to be able to judge better of what is going on now, than we who are onlookers. They will have, we are told, a better perspective—as though such a man-made convention as perspective had anything to do with the spiritual nature of art, as expressing the feeling of the artist with regard to himself and his times.

What exactly do we mean by Art with a capital. A? Is it not the transformation of the visible, the thinkable, into another medium and one which appeals to the artist as enabling him to extract from his subject what to him is the quintessence of its beauty? In this "to him" lies the essential component of true art. Essentially an artist must be free to express himself as he wills; for this, he has discarded, and quite rightly, the social mess of potage.

But we live in an age of proselytism. With the decline of religious faith, now that it appears no longer necessary to sally forth on crusades or trek into the wilderness to convert the heathen, too many of us sublimate this doubtlessly worthy urge into a selfmade duty of trying to henpeck everybody else into thinking along the stereotyped lines which we ourselves have adopted. The element of duty is entering far too deeply into the trivialities of life in general and into art criticism in particular. The general idea seems to be that the artist is in duty bound to divert, placate, titillate, educate, elevate, in fact, fit into the scheme of things as a cross between a missionary and a public servant, with a strain of burlesque thrown in for good measure. That—in reality right- and left-wingers agree—is his social significance, what in fact we pay him for.

Now it used to be thought that social significance could safely be left to political economists and, in a wider field, to philosophers. There were grounds to believe that the artistic genius was innately anti-social, though his work was of great value to society. It was felt—and even deplored—that an artist should concern himself with art and not with either money or morals. Is it, indeed, so great an advance that these two somewhat antithetical elements should acquire such prominence in the art world of today?

"Museum technicians", writes Mario Barata (must we have technicians even in art?), "were converted, from 1920 on, to the idea of museums of modern art, which should function as testing laboratories, control devices and zones of contact between the public and the painting and sculpture in effervescence, which characterize these tormented or ultra-sensitive days of our civilization."

Simões Filho talks about "the concept of the museum as an organ of democratic education of the masses" and Professor Santiago Dantas,

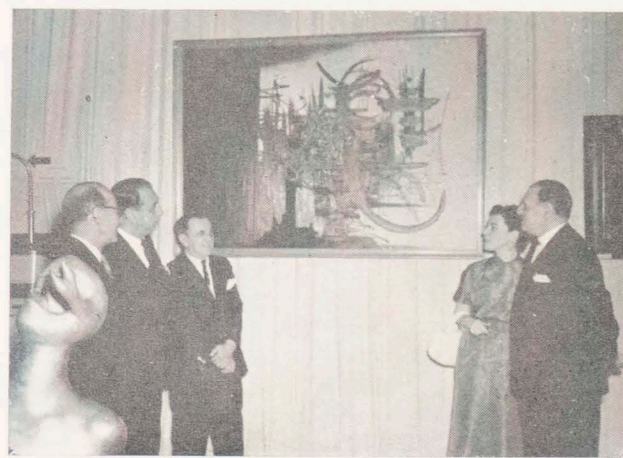
Arts and the Man

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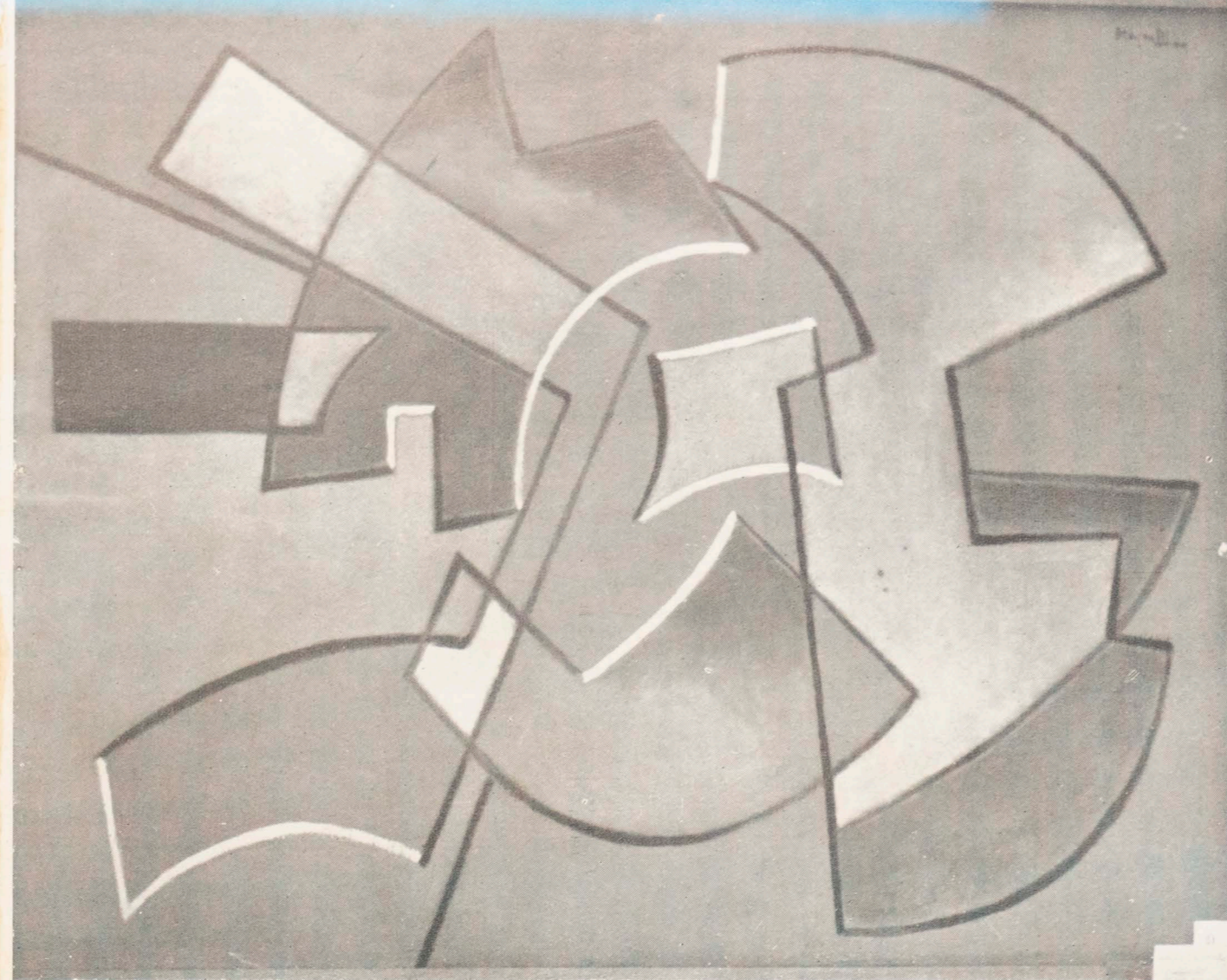
But we live in an age of proselytism. With the decline of religious faith, now that it appears no longer necessary to sally forth on crusades or trek into the wilderness to convert the heathen, too many of us sublimate this doubtlessly worthy urge into a selfmade duty of trying to henpeck everybody else into thinking along the stereotyped lines which we ourselves have adopted. The element of duty is entering far too deeply into the trivialities of life in general and into art criticism in particular. The general idea seems to be that the artist is in duty bound to divert, placate, titillate, educate, elevate, in fact, fit into the scheme of things as a cross between a missionary and a public servant, with a strain of burlesque thrown in for good measure. That—in reality right—and left-wingers agree—is his social significance, what in fact we pay him for.

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Magnelli, "Composition"

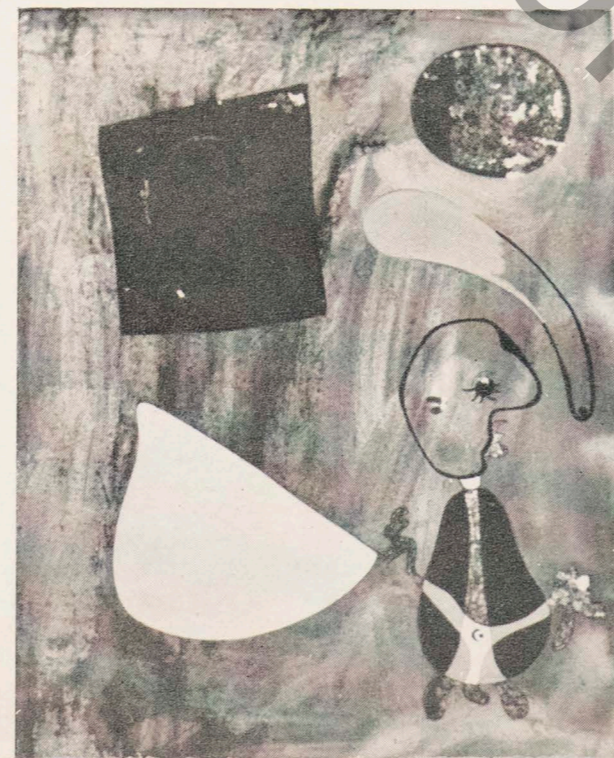
responding, stresses as primary mission of a modern "the drawing together of artist and public". He also believes that this generation is living through "a moment of rupture". "When the cycle of an artistic experiment tails off into sterile mannerism, devoid of sense, then the time is ripe for one of these drastic breaks in the line of historic continuity and for a new assault by the creative spirit on the untouched areas of the real world".

The speeches of the Minister of Education and of the Vice-President of the Museum, as much as Mario Barata's introduction to its catalog, are full of admirable intentions, couched in the most elegant phrases, but somehow the water of these sparkling fountains, though eminently drinkable, yet carries the bitter taint of subterranean conflict. What telluric forces are they striving to overthrow or divert into streamlined culverts of education, pointing every which way?

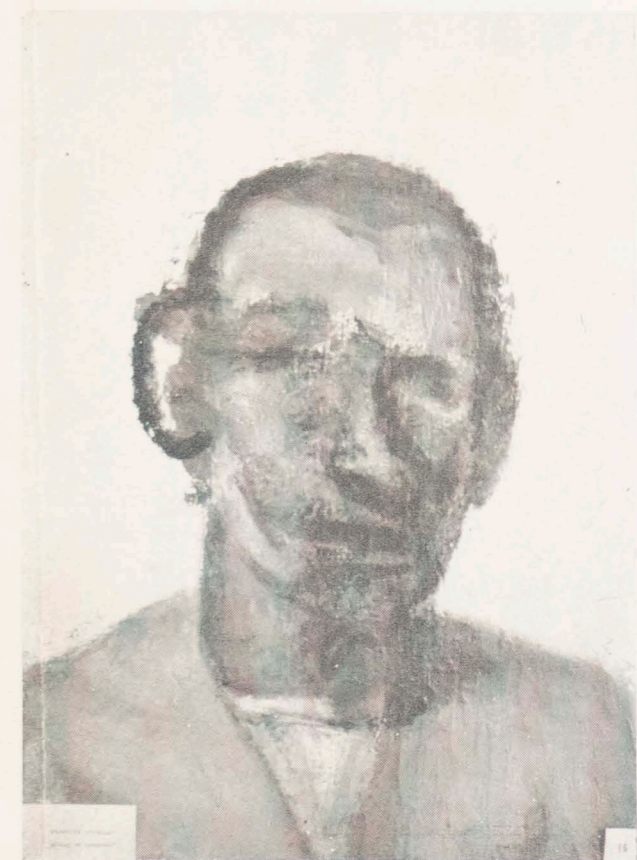
To this Philistine, any museum and especially a museum of modern art should be a peaceful haven where he can enjoy what he admires and tolerantly endeavor to comprehend what, as yet, he does not. It should not be a battle-ground of conflicting ideologies or a classroom for a course of indoctrination. Having cast this perhaps inflammatory oil on troubled waters, let us review objectively this Museum of Modern Art, temporarily installed on the ground floor of the Ministry of Education.

Oscar Niemeyer's design of sinuously curving walls is pleasing and the drapes which cover the inside do not set off the exhibits to ill effect,

Miro, "Personage in a Landscape"



Campigli, "Two Actresses"



Permeke, "Portrait of a Countryman"

do Amaral's contribution EFCB was interesting, especially considering the date: 1924, but then Tarsila must be considered the pioneer of modern art in Brazil. Di Preti's Lemons (\$20,000) (Continued on page 31)

Diego Rivera, "Mexicans"





LEFT: Oleg Tupine, premier danseur of the Monte Carlo Ballet and his wife Natalie Clare, soloist in the same company, which, it is rumored, is going to visit Brazil in the course of the 1952 season. CENTER: Indian dance group headed by Mrinalini Sarabhai gave outstanding performance, refreshed the stale atmosphere. RIGHT: American Ballet Theater in "Fall River Legend", virtuosistically brilliant. TOP RIGHT: Coconut dance from the Northeast, by pupils of Helena de Sá Esp.



SHARPS AND FLATS MUSIC IN 1951

by MARC BERKOWITZ

THERE is something quite impressive about the list of concerts and recitals of the 1951 season—at least at first sight. But that is only the first and most superficial impression. Questions come up at once: Did we hear any new and important compositions? Did we witness a memorable performance by a new recitalist, and were there any outstanding new recitalists? The answer to all these questions is: "No". In my opinion a good musical and artistic season is not only a series of events, but above all a series of events that are new, stimulating, different, that help us discover new works and new interpreters. There were a few exceptions, but they were too few to really influence the season.

Three newcomers to Rio brought something new and valuable—two groups and one recitalist: the "Angelicum" from Milan, the Indian Ballet and the pianist James Wolfe.

The "Angelicum" is a group of Italian singers and instrumentalists who specialize in chamber music and chamber opera. Their performances of 18th century music—especially a Vivaldi Festival and some charming operas by Cimarosa, Mozart, etc.—were absolutely delightful. The instrumentalists played with a deeply moving feeling for style and an impressive simplicity—it was music at its best without any virtuosistic trimmings.

The Indian dance group headed by Mrinalini Sarabhai brought something very refreshing

into the rather stale atmosphere of Ballet. Based on traditions which are thousands of years old, Indian dancing has nevertheless not gone stale, even though it is obviously academic in certain instances. The Indian dances express a philosophy of life, a religion, everything that is dear and important to the people, while occidental dance—especially as seen at the Ballet Theater, an American group that visited us in 1951—occidental dance has become a mere display of virtuosistic brilliance, a search for personal success. The Indian dancers, with few exceptions, are repeating movements and gestures that are as old as their culture, but their sincerity and their faith give them a new meaning. Western dancing, despite some attempts at innovation by some talented choreographers, has become a series of enchainements mechanically repeated by the dancers. I may be sounding a bit harsh here, but quite frankly, after having seen the Indian dancers, Western ballet seemed to me very shoddy and artificial.

James Wolfe is a young North American pianist who came to Brazil under the auspices of the Instituto Brasil-Estados Unidos. Neither a brilliant virtuoso nor a great technician, Wolfe is above all a musician—and that is not such an obvious statement as it may seem at first. In the last few years we have been "visited" by quite a number of young pianists: Byron Janis, Friedrich Gulda, Sigi Weissenberg, Robert

Weisz, Aldo Ciccolini, Jorg Demus, and William Kapell. Of these, only Kapell is an absolute exception, being, I think, one of the great pianists of our time. The others impressed me with their sometimes fabulous technique, and with their sporting and even businesslike approach to music. Virtuosi—yes, but musicians—no, not yet, in any case. James Wolfe offered a sincere and deep-going musicianship, and I liked his interest in modern composers; he played quite a few of them, and he played them very well. On the whole, the United States could hardly have chosen a better musical ambassador.

The most freakish event of the season was probably the arrival of William Kapell, who came to give a series of recitals in Rio and in São Paulo (apart from playing in other South American countries), and who ended up by playing only in Niteroi. He had been engaged by the ABC (Associação Brasileira de Concertos), and his arrival coincided with the official opera season here and in São Paulo, and it was said that the respective Municipal Theaters could not be had. The peculiar thing is that after the directors of the ABC only remembered this after the arrival of Kapell!

The symphonic season—in the hands of the "OSB" (Orquestra Sinfônica Brasileira)—brought us a number of good conductors, among them Eleazar de Carvalho, who is constantly

Arts and the Man.

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prize) have not even the advantage of looking like lemons, while Maria Leontina's *Still life* would not be a bad sketch for a student, but is scarcely the work of a budding genius. The rapt, wooden expression of the two workers in Heitor dos Prazeres' *Sugar-mill* is probably full of social significance to the initiated but the symbolism, unless the pervading verdigris green stands for hope, is not very clear and the studied naivety depressing. Yet there were many good paintings in the general division, among others Djanira's *Flute-Players* and Almir da Silva Mavignier's *Forms N.º 17*. On the other hand Oswaldo Goeldi's woodcuts fully deserved the \$1,500-prize they were awarded; *Cranes*, revealing Chinese influence, and *The Haunted House* are particularly impressive.

With the exception of Max Bill's *Unité tripartite*, a vibrant composition in endless bands of stainless steel, justly awarded the \$20,000 prize, the sculpture is disappointing. Bruno Giorgi's *Spinning woman*, a life-size figure carved in wood of a warm flesh-color, is full of movement, but the back lacks concision and harmony. Cravo Junior's *Cockfight* is interesting but not very substantial, while Brecheret's *Indian and suaçupara* (a kind of deer), while not unpleasing in form, is marred by the appearance of cracks in the terracotta, which can hardly be considered intentional. Robert Couturier's bronze *Jeune fille lamelliforme*, is far more dynamic than the prizewinning *Foret*, by Germaine Richer. In this connection, "Presença" apologizes for an error in the last issue, when the latter title was given to another bronze by Couturier, rightly entitled *Jeune homme*. While many deplore the surrealist sensuality revealed in the work of the Brazilian sculptress, Maria, two of whose bronzes figure in the exhibition, this critic can scarcely condemn them on these grounds, if, which is not quite certain, the artist is really sincere.

Among the paintings donated to the Museum, Diego Rivera's *Mexicans* is remarkable; it is indeed regrettable that he did not send in a contribution to the Biennial. The Magnelli is good, but not so skilfully balanced as the Biennial prize-winner. The two Fernand Léger gouaches are also fine abstract compositions.

The paintings on loan include a number of interesting canvasses, but the Kandinsky woodcut vies with Magnelli's *Avec mesure* as the best composition in the whole exhibition. Campigli's *Two actresses* is among his best works. Miro's *Personage in a landscape* is an advance on his large *Composition*, but both were painted some years before the last war and fail to give the sensation of rhythmic movement peculiar to his more recent work. Special mention must be made of the four oils by Permeke, loaned by the organizers of the São Paulo Biennial when the sad news arrived of the death of this great Belgian artist on January 4. His *Portrait of a countryman* is admirable in its simplicity, and the interplay of cobalt and ochre, skilfully combined, forms a sort of muted corn-colored symphony which reveals the simple soul of the peasant model. *Landscape with yellow sky* is a fine composition, tragic without undue emphasis, but the remaining two canvases are more banal, less intrinsically Permeke.

On the whole, the exhibition is representative of the trends and development of modern art. More important, though, is the fact that Rio now has its modern art museum, which it is intended shortly to house in a permanent building of its own. Interest has been keen, if controversial, and more than 12,000 people visited the exhibition during the first fortnight. As was to be expected, the younger generation have proved more readily accessible to modern conceptions in art, but the majority of visitors appear somewhat dazed, if not actively hostile. Yet if a museum is to be educative, no better educator could be found than Maria Barreto, who is acting as official cicerone to all who stand in need of her generous advice.

The President, Raymundo Ottoni de Castro Maya, one of the most active supporters of the arts in Rio de Janeiro, and the Deliberative Council are thus to be congratulated on the courage and energy which has ensured the success of this venture. With a wider, more comprehensive knowledge of the message that modern art is striving to express, the storm clouds of dispute will no doubt be dispelled; in the meantime the cloudburst is replenishing so spectacularly the fountain at which so many refuse to drink, that some at least are liable shortly to acquire a taste for its waters, whether they like it or not.

The People's Choice

(Continued from page 8)

Various social security institutes have built no less than 11,236 residential units in the different states and 21,163 are planned for 1952, apart from those to be erected by the Popular Housing Foundation. The Government created 3,000 new schools in the past year and more than a million readers have been printed and distributed by the authorities in connection with the Campaign for the Education of Adults.

Considerable flood control construction work has been carried out, particularly in Porto Alegre and Juiz de Fora, and extensive drainage canals and dykes have been completed in the Federal District, the states of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Pernambuco, and the water-logged valleys of Rio Grande do Norte. The manpower surplus resulting from the serious drought in the Northeast at the beginning of the year was absorbed in railroad and highway construction work, apart from the building of dams as part of a far-reaching plan to protect the farmer and stock-raiser from the disastrous effects of this periodic calamity.

In general, to sum up this year of government, no miracle could have been expected and Getulio Vargas has advanced cautiously but steadily on firm ground without making any sensational decisions. The determination to abide by the letter of the law with regard to the withdrawal of profits by foreign investors was perhaps unwise in that it may tend to discourage foreign capital, but it is in line with a policy which aims above all at strengthening the home economy. On the whole, the Brazilian people seem satisfied with their choice of President and make due allowance for difficulties which are by no means confined to their country. The year 1952 will undoubtedly reveal more clearly how far this choice was justified.

Stars in the Tropics

(Continued from page 13)

There they were introduced to some of the prettiest of Rio's debutantes and, among other beauties, to the enchanting Marina Cunha, fully living up to the distinction of having been elected Miss Federal District.

As the first wave of enthusiasm began to calm down, more and more couples were drawn onto the dance floor by the strains of the excellent orchestra and even the two stars could shake off their admirers and try out a samba together. But the king's time is not his own and at the height of the revels, Kathryn Grayson was persuaded to stand up to the microphone and deflect the revelers with extracts from her operatic repertoire, notably *Traviata* and *Manon*. Kathryn is far from the early days when a caretaker used to encourage her to sing every day on the stage of the empty Saint Louis Municipal Theater, vigorously applauding her efforts. Only on the day she said goodbye to him did she learn that her ardent admirer was stone deaf!

Now, there is no need to be hard of hearing to appreciate Kathryn Grayson's lively soprano and the applause was enthusiastic. Howard Keel then took her place on the orchestra stage and his rendering of some well-known favorites proved equally popular. The talents of the principal actors of *Showboat*—Brazilian title: *Barque of Illusions*—were thus seen to be no illusion and the small hours of the dawn saw many *senhoritas* on their way home with a romantic light in their eyes.

Hollywood and the United States are indeed overwhelming, and the magnificence of the world's most powerful industrial country spills over into Kathryn Grayson's parting words to Presença's reporter: "The Cariocas are formidable and they can be proud to possess the most beautiful city in the world. Good luck!"

BIENNIAL PRIZE-WINNERS

THE FOLLOWING WORKS OR ART EARNED PRIZES FOR BRAZILIAN AND FOREIGN EXHIBITORS AT THE FIRST BIENNIAL EXHIBITION OR MODERN ART IN SÃO PAULO AT THE END OF LAST YEAR:

Section	Artist	Country	Title of work	Materials	Award*
Painting	Roger Chastel	France	Lovers in a café	Oil on canvas	\$ 5,000
	Alberto Magnelli	Italy	With measure	"	\$ 2,500
	Willi Baumeister	Germany	Cosmic gesture	Oil on fiber	\$ 1,500
	Eduard Pignon	France	Mending nets	Oil on canvas	\$ 1,250
	Danilo di Preti	Brazil	Lemons	"	\$ 5,000
	Maria Leontina	"	Still life	"	\$ 2,500
	Tarsila do Amaral	"	EFCB (Central Brazil Rly)	"	\$ 2,500
	Heitor dos Prazeres	"	Sugar-mill	"	\$ 1,250
	Ivan Ferreira Serpa	"	Forms	"	\$ 500
	Engraving	Giuseppi Viviani	Italy	Baptistry, sail and sea	Etching
Prunella Clough		Great Britain	Eel-net	Lithograph	\$ 250
Robert Adams		"	Still life with pears	"	\$ 250
Arnaldo Ciarrocchi		Italy	Figures with tree	"	\$ 250
			Standing figures	"	
			Self-portrait	Etching	\$ 250
			Landscape from studio	"	
			Venice	"	
			Lovers surprised	"	
				"	
Sculpture	Oswaldo Goeldi	Brazil	Herons	Woodcut	\$ 1,500
			Malediction	"	
			Fishermen	"	
			Red fish	"	
	Marcelo Grassman	"	Composition	"	\$ 250
	Max Bill	Switzerland	Tripartite unity	Stainless steel	\$ 5,000
	T. Roszack	Poland	The young fury	Steel & bronzed copper	\$ 2,500
	Germaine Richer	"	The forest	Bronze	\$ 1,500
	Luciano Minguzzi	Italy	The Persian cat	"	\$ 500
	Victor Brecheret	Brazil	Indian and deer	Terracotta	\$ 5,000
Bruno Giorgi	"	Spinning woman	Wood	\$ 2,500	
Mario Cravo Jnior	"	Cock-fight	Bronze	\$ 500	

* In dollars, converted of Cr\$ 20 to the dollar.

Avenida São João with the new Bank of Brazil building (left) in construction, followed by the National City which is shortly to erect new premises on this site, the São Paulo State Bank (center) and the Martinelli Building (right), one of the earliest skyscrapers. Note maze of electric cables,