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RIO ARTISTS PREPARING FOR 1962 SEASON

In spite of the unpleasant heat which presently lingers over Rio, its artists are hard at work preparing for the various events-local, national and world-wide, which are being planned by different cultural departments — from governments, museum, private art societies to — last but not least, the art dealers. The other day, I visited young Ivan Serpa at his home in the suburb of Meier, where he lives with his librarian wife and 3 children; one of whom, a boy of 11, is already a junior painter in his own right, having one of his canvases gracing the Serpa living-room together with two of his father's latest creations in oils. Serpa is actively preparing for two big events scheduled later this year: the First Buenos Aires Biennial, opening in June, and the Rio National Salon of Modern Art, probably in October. At the latter he hopes to win the prize of a journey all over Brazil — although he was just returned from a 2 year trip over the European continent as a result of winning the 1957 Salon

“prêmio de viagem ao estrangeiro”, the most coveted of Brazilian awards, which corresponds to the famous “prix de Rome”. Serpa complains that Biennials all over the world are growing too much like mushrooms, thus forcing artists to produce more quantity than quality work. And indeed, having to Biennials per annum, these of São Paulo and Paris in odd number years, and the Buenos Aires and Venice in even number years, seems more than enough — but there are other Biennials, such as that of Mexico City, already in existence, and others being planned.

And the Rio Museum of Modern Art, a huge retrospective exhibition of Portinari's works has been decided upon. It is to open on May 24 and should fill all the so far constructed halls of the big Museum building. Collectors from all over the country are expected to send works, and an impressive catalogue is to be issued, written up by Antônio Callado, who published a biography of Portinari some 3 years ago. The sudden death

By Albert D. Hinrichsen

last week of this great artist of Italian parentage, apparently owing to slow poisoning from mercury fumes given off by the paint he used, came as a shock to all Rio. His funeral at the São João Baptista cemetery in Botafogo provided a rare example of how personalities from opposite camps can be momentarily united in the face of a greater cause. The grief over the loss of this man, who contributed so much to Brazil's international artistic repute, brought to his graveside both Guanabara governor Carlos Lacerda and communist leader Luiz Carlos Prestes, whom one would hardly see together on other occasions.

The Rio Museum of Modern Art was also the scene, on February 20th, of a film shown through the good offices of the British Council, illustrating the work of some of those British artists who were represented at last

year's São Paulo Biennial — William Scott, Lynn Chadwick and others.

At the “Instituto Brasil- Estados Unidos” an exhibition of oils and gouaches by 10 young Brazilian contemporaries has been on the panels for about a fortnight, but will soon come off to make room for 40 prints from the Pennell Collection of the Washington Library of Congress. Brought out through the intermediary of the State Department, the prints will be hung under the supervision of

Dona Matilde Pereira de Souza, one time Administrator of the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art.

Practically simultaneously with this, on March 13th, a special show of Brazilian painters and engravers will be opened to visitors at the American Ambassador's Residence in Rua São Clemente, Botafogo. This “vernissage” promises to be not only an interesting artistic event, but also a social gathering of the first magnitude.