

drawings

Com um abraço de  
Aldemir

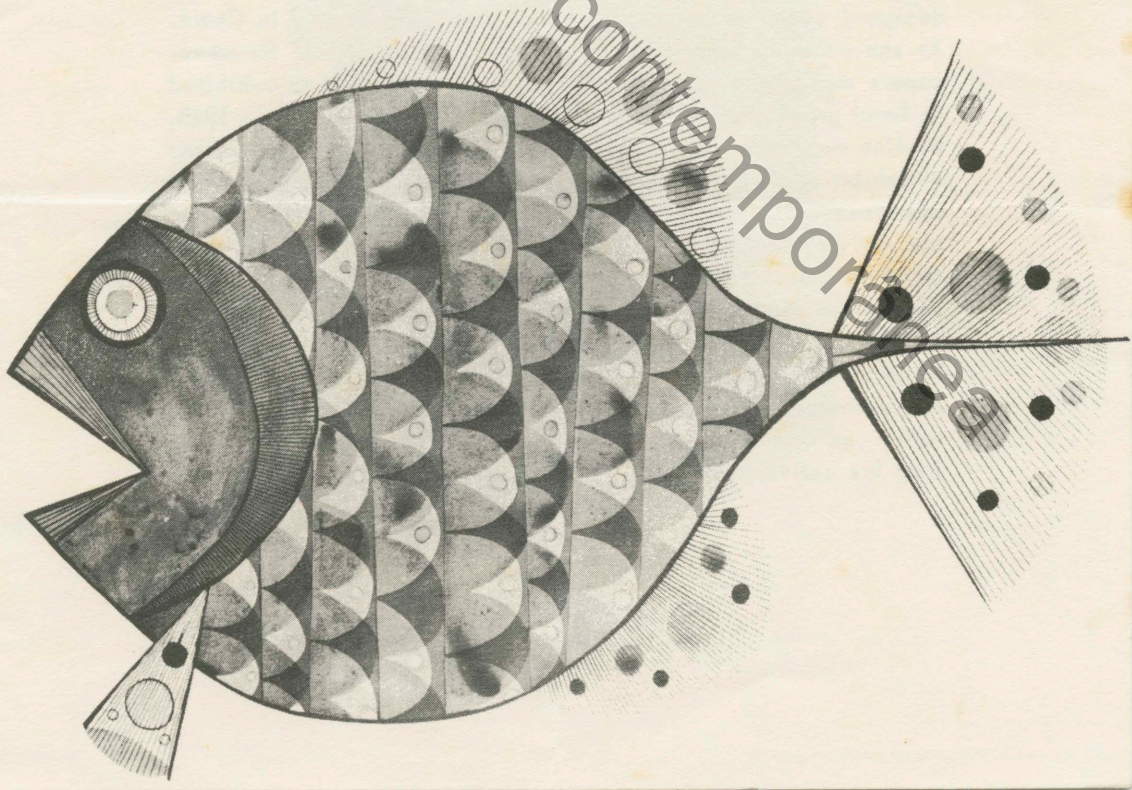
# aldemir martins

of BRAZIL

january 23 to february 18, 1958

PAN AMERICAN UNION

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## about the artist

Drawing has always provided a favorite vehicle of expression for Latin American artists; it is, moreover, seriously cultivated as an instrument for work in painting or sculpture. Many prominent Latin American painters began their careers in the field of drawing, later abandoning it, save for incidental use in connection with their pictorial production. The case of Aldemir Martins is rather different: he initially sought expression in drawing; then he turned from it to painting; finally, he gave up the latter, reverting to drawing as his sole medium.

Martins was born in Ingazeiras, in the state of Ceará, Brazil, in 1922. Although he began to practice design at an early age, he did not initiate regular production until his period of military service, in the years 1942-45, when he taught drawing, designed aerial maps, and founded a group of artists in Ceará. At the same time he began a career as an illustrator for newspapers and magazines of the region, and his work was exhibited in local group shows. Upon his discharge from the army in 1945, Martins went to Rio de Janeiro, where he participated in a number of exhibitions. The following year he moved to São Paulo, which has been his place of residence ever since. Immediately after his arrival there he held his first one-man show at the local Institute of Architects. In 1950, Martins, who had been alternating between painting and drawing, decided to devote all of his efforts to the latter field, thereby unifying his artistic personality. While he has travelled throughout Brazil in search of subjects, he continues to derive the themes with which he has won a reputation as one of the outstanding younger artists of his country from his native Northeast.

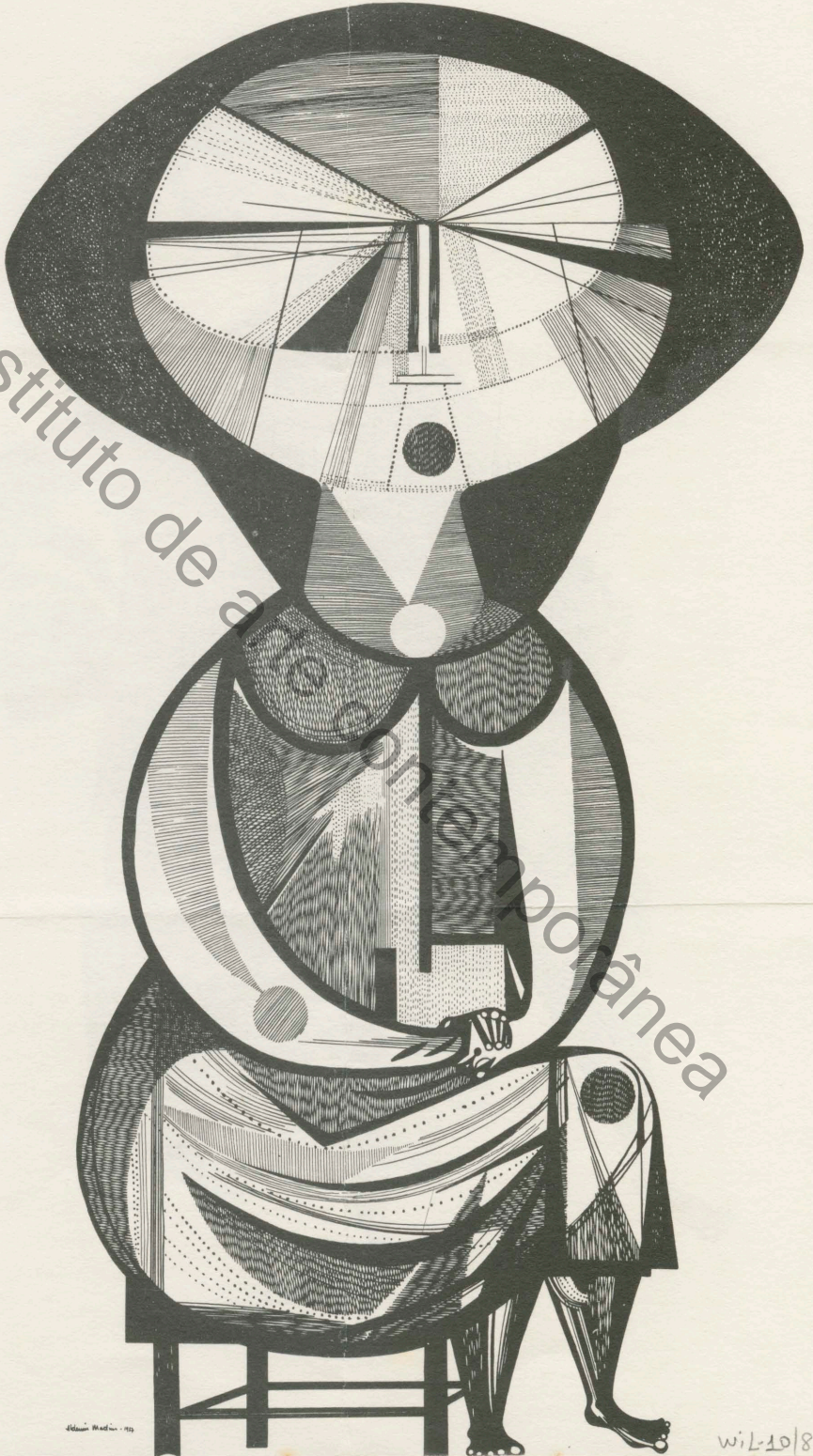
Aldemir Martins has participated in numerous group shows in Brazil and in all four São Paulo Biennials. At each of the latter he won awards, including a first prize for drawing in 1955. He has, moreover, worked in other aspects of the graphic arts, contributing prints as well as drawings to group shows of Brazilian art in Bolivia, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Japan, México, Peru, Switzerland, and the United States. At the last Venice Biennial, in 1956, he won the international first prize for drawing. Martins held a one-man show at the "Friends of Art" Gallery in Montevideo in 1956, and in the same year he appeared in a joint exhibit with his fellow countryman Livio Abramo at the Caetani Palace in Rome. He has held a number of highly successful individual exhibits in Brazil, and his show at the Bonino Gallery in Buenos Aires last year was a complete sell-out.

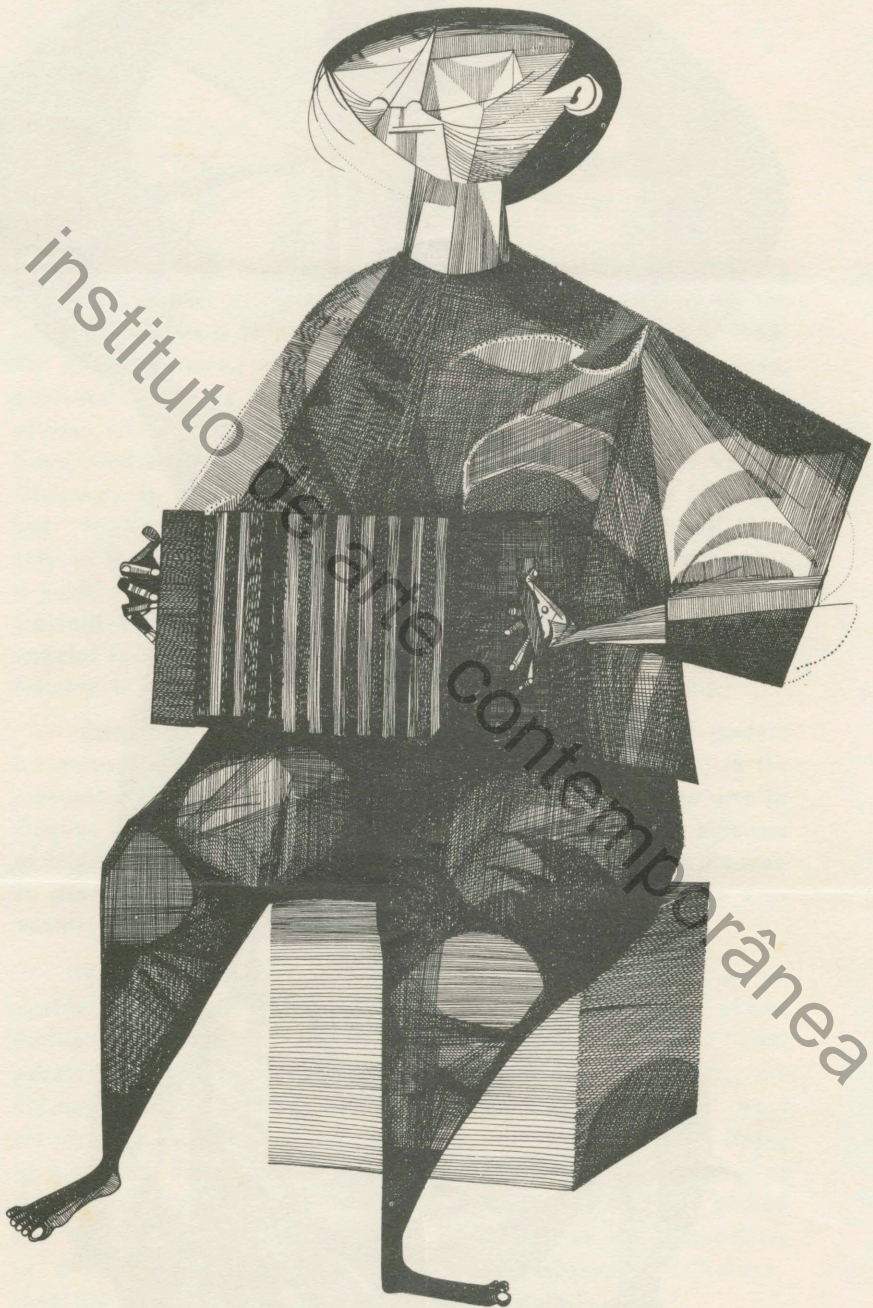
Examples of Martins' work are to be found in the modern art museums of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and New York; in the museum of Bahia (Brazil); in the national museums of fine arts in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Warsaw; in the state museum of São Paulo; and in the municipal building of Montevideo. Martins is also represented in numerous private collections in his own country, Europe and the United States.

Writing of the artist, the critic Marc Berkowitz sums up his motifs: scenes of the harsh, cruel life in the backlands of his native state; the bloodthirsty but dignified figures of the "cangaceiros", the lacemakers, often of a statuesque beauty; the shimmering elegance of fantastic fish; and, in Martins' most recent work, birds and cats. The birds are imaginary ones, living in a tropical forest of the artist's own creation; nevertheless, as Berkowitz says, they are "the very quintessence of birds and of the tropics." The cats, heraldic and at times Mephistopelian in air, likewise pertain to the realm of fantasy; nevertheless, they are expressive of "the very souls of cats."

This is the first individual presentation of Aldemir Martins' work in this country.

instituto de arte contemporânea





catalog

1. Seated woman
2. Blue fish
3. Man of Ceará
4. Iridescent fish No. 1
5. Iridescent fish No. 2
6. Figure
7. Green fish
8. Red fish
9. Yellow fish
10. Accordionist
11. Bird
12. Round cat
13. Blue cat
14. Bird
15. Black and grey bird
16. Rooster No. 1
17. Rooster No. 2
18. Rooster No. 3
19. Rooster No. 4
20. Lea and raft
21. Waiting for the raft
22. "Cangaceiro" in ambush
23. "Cangaceiro" No. 1
24. "Cangaceiro" No. 2
25. "Cangaceiro" No. 3
26. Wax palm in landscape
27. Shy bird
28. Holiday bird
29. "Patola"
30. Lacemaker No. 1
31. Lacemaker No. 2
32. Printed textile
33. Printed textile
34. Guinea hen (silkscreen)

Nos. 1 through 31 are drawings