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# Camargo's new white reliefs

By Guy Brett

Art Critic *gbs*

Brazil and Venezuela are two of the Latin American countries that are at the moment producing very remarkable artists. Curiously enough between Rio and Caracas (though many of their artists have left and now live in Europe) there is a difference rather like the celebrated one between Venice and Florence in the Renaissance. Caracas seems to have produced painters (the delicate moiré vibrations in Soto's pictures, the minutely enjoyed common object in Otero's assemblages) and Brazil chiefly sculptors (there is a strong sense of the body and physical movement in Lygia Clark's and Helio Oiticica's work, and in Camargo's white reliefs, at present on show at *Gimpel Fils, 50 South Molton Street, W.1*). You can surely find echoes of the same differences in the popular life and culture of each place.

Camargo's reliefs may appear to be closer to painting than sculpture; in fact it is by working on the borderline that they make their effect. He glues to the surface identical cylindrical units (varying them in size, concentration, direction, and the angle at which their ends are cut) and then he paints the whole work white, which opens it to the light. The curve of each cylinder gives an impression of body, while the flat end works in a graphic way. Therefore in the changing values of ordinary light the surface is constantly shifting, giving a sensation of volume, of body, which is never specific and delineated as it is with free-standing sculpture.

His work is constructed with fine logic. At Gimpel you can follow his use of the same basic means from minuscule networks covering the whole surface to groups of a few pieces warmly revolving around and turning upon each other. Each successful piece appears to be perfectly regulated within itself; only occasionally do the relationships seem over-precious and rather polite.

One work (the only "sculpture in the round" appears to be a kind of structural key to the others. It is a vertical column sliced in pieces at different angles, and the pieces then reversed, producing a mysterious undulating image. It has the clarity of all Camargo's work. You can see the components, and the whole that they fuse together to produce, simultaneously. Evidently he hates the idea of mystification, that the immediacy of simple relationships should be obscured by the imitation of natural effects, that the "tools" should themselves appear to be other than they are. In some of the most striking recent reliefs he has deliberately broken the rectangular shape, prolonging a cool white area as a board out into space.



Camargo with one of his works.

## GUTHRIE PRODUCTION FOR BROADWAY

Sir Tyrone Guthrie is to stage Barrie Stavis's *Lamp at Midnight*, the play about Galileo in which Peter O'Toole appeared at the Bristol Old Vic 10 years ago. The production, which opens out of town in December and goes on tour under the aegis of the Overland Stage Company, Inc., will be presented on Broadway in the autumn of next year.