

Art, architecture, and urbanism were fundamentally interconnected in Brazil from the 1920s through the 1960s. In this revelatory book, Adrian Anagnost shows how modernity was manifested in locally specific spatial forms linked to Brazil's colonial and imperial past. Artists and architects understood urban planning as a tool to reorganize the world, control human action, and remedy social problems, and Anagnost offers a nuanced account of the seeming conflict between modernist aesthetics and a historically disenfranchised urban public, with particular attention to regionalist forms of urban development. Close considerations of Flávio de Carvalho's performative urbanism, the construction of the Ministry of Education and Public Health building, Lina Bo and Pietro Maria Bardi's efforts to modernize Brazilian museums, Waldemar Cordeiro and Lygia Clark's approaches to Concrete and Neoconcrete space, and Hélio Oiticica's interstitial works offer insights into the ways that modernist theories of urbanism shaped the art and architecture of twentieth-century Brazil.

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"Not only very original but also a very necessary, long overdue, and refreshing corrective of ingrained and perceived ideas about Brazilian modernism."

—Anna Indych-López, The Graduate Center & City College (CUNY)

"*Spatial Orders, Social Forms* is a much-needed account and reconsideration of the many important works, ideas, and social intentions of twentieth-century Brazilian art, architecture, and space."

—Luis E. Carranza, author of *Modern Architecture in Latin America: Art, Technology, and Utopia*

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Spatial Orders, Social Forms

Art and the City in Modern Brazil

Adrian Anagnost

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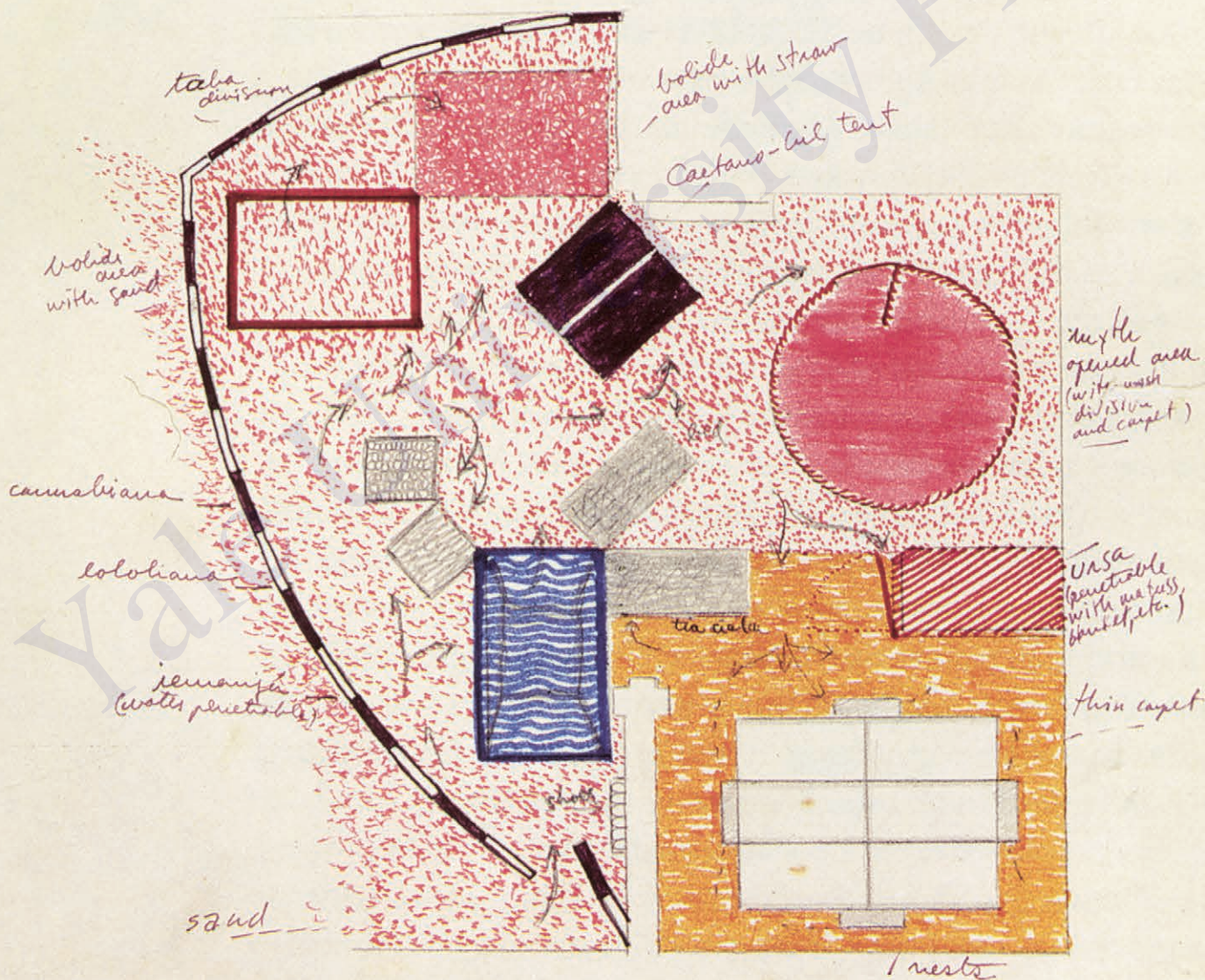
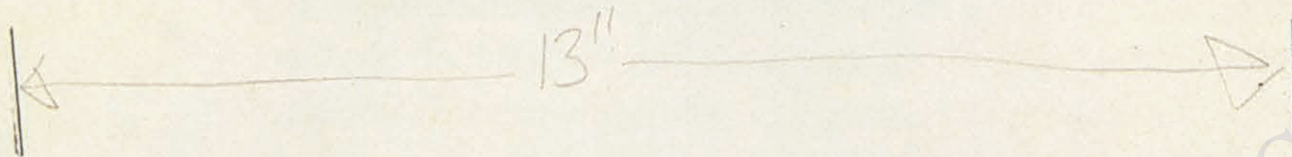
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5 Eden

Hélio Oiticica's Spatial Disorder

In 1965 artist Hélio Oiticica created a disturbance at the Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro (MAM/Rio), with a performative work that blurred interior and exterior, museum and street. The artist brought his artwork to the museum for the opening of *Opinião 65*, an exhibition featuring young Brazilian artists “draw[ing] inspiration from both the immediacy of urban nature, and life itself with her daily cult of myths.”¹ The exhibition’s title echoed the raucous, protest-filled musical showcase *Show Opinião* presented by dramatist Augusto Boal earlier that same year, which offered politicized takes on popular musical styles (northeastern folk, Rio de Janeiro samba) for middle-class urban audiences.² Similarly, most of the artists in the *Opinião 65* art exhibition presented local takes on pop art and assemblage, dubbed “Nova Figuração.” As a reaction to the prior artistic generation’s emphasis on seemingly depoliticized abstraction, both geometric and gestural, this Nova Figuração attempted to construct a new aesthetics of social engagement.³ Oiticica’s participation in the *Opinião 65* exhibition consisted of a number of *Parangolés*, cape-like, sculptural works that fellow artist Carlos Zilio has called “a type of abstract costume [*fantasia*]” (fig. 92).⁴ Borrowing the bric-a-brac aesthetic of informal architectures in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas, the *Parangolés* consisted of heterogeneous material—fabric, paper, plastic, aromatic substances, objects—in looping, layered formations, featuring unanticipated bulges, varied textures, and hidden pockets.⁵ To activate the *Parangolés*, Oiticica invited a number of predominantly Afro-Brazilian musicians and dancers from the famed Mangueira samba school to wear *Parangolés* at the museum while drumming, singing, and dancing. They were denied entry.⁶

The official refusal to allow the *sambistas* (samba musicians and dancers) into the museum is a well-known story, one held to exemplify hidebound bourgeois cultural norms and—by extension—the shadow of repression by the military regime that had taken power in Brazil only a year prior.⁷ Yet, writing from exile in Paris around 1970,

Brazilian critic Roberto Schwarz offered a stinging critique of the cultural situation during the period 1964 to 1969: “Despite the existence of a right-wing dictatorship, the cultural hegemony of the left is virtually complete. . . . The only truly radical material produced by this group is for its own consumption.”⁸ That is, even as political action was stymied, the regime largely turned a blind eye to artistic production, at least that produced by university students and children of the bourgeoisie.⁹ Moreover, as with Flávio de Carvalho’s *Experiência n. 2* (1931), discussed in Chapter 1, Oiticica himself was afforded some protection due to his position as a wealthy, white, well-connected male Brazilian (albeit one whose queerness and bohemian lifestyle would have counted against him). Like Carvalho’s performative *Experiência n. 2*, Oiticica’s *Parangolés* have been seen as pioneering performance art that challenged prevailing political and social forms. But where Carvalho sought to reform the city and its buildings along modernist lines, thwarting the disorderly eruption of non-elite bodies, Oiticica saw embodied spontaneity as a tool to challenge overbearing social norms. Yet despite their political differences, these artists ultimately share a reliance on the seemingly undisciplined bodies of lower-class Brazilians as material for aesthetic interventions in urban social relations. With



Fig. 92. Hélio Oiticica, *Parangolé*, 1964, opening of *Opinião 65*, Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, 1965. Photograph by Desdémone Bardin. Courtesy Sebastian Bardin-Greenberg, Jerry Greenberg, and César and Claudio Oiticica.

Afro-descendent Brazilians entering quasi-public spaces within which they were usually absent, the space was itself redefined by use, a strategic sociability of site.

Throughout the 1960s, Oiticica would bring this ambiguity of site from the museum to the street and back again, foregrounding interstices and thresholds as sites for charged social relations. In the early 1960s, he “spatialized” color in the so-called *Relevos espaciais* (Spatial reliefs; 1959), *Bilaterais* (Bilaterals; 1959–60), and *Núcleos* (Nuclei; 1960–66). Around the same time, Oiticica created his first foray into architectural composition, with the maquette *Projeto de Cães de Caça* (Hunting dogs project), named for the spiraling constellation Canes Venatici. With these artworks, the boundaries between interior and exterior became blurred, and the space of aesthetic encounters newly redrawn. In the mid-1960s, Oiticica’s *Parangolés* expanded this spatial exploration into urban sites. The *Parangolés* were inextricable from embodied encounters in Rio de Janeiro’s interstitial spaces, bridging street and interior. In his large-scale environments—*Tropicália*, first presented at the MAM/Rio in 1967, and *Eden*, first presented at the Whitechapel Gallery in London in 1969—Oiticica returned to the interior of the museum as an experimental zone. For Oiticica, the driving question was how his works could create “a total spatial system” (*sistema total espacial*) or a “total universal system of space” (*sistema universal total do espaço*), even within the gallery.¹⁰ In working within the architectonic space of the museum, Oiticica’s environments might thus be understood as maquettes of a city, laboratory zones for spontaneous social encounters. Such encounters would be spurred precisely by these environments’ lack of crisp boundaries, by Oiticica’s refusal to establish clear edges between being within the art and looking upon it.

The clear development from one environment to the next was predicated both upon Oiticica’s changing audiences—from the local art audience of Brazil to the international art world of London’s Whitechapel Gallery in 1969—and upon his evolving understanding of space as something collectively constructed. Even after shifting his artistic practice back into gallery environments, he remained focused on embodied experiences of shared space. Evoking both the utopian modernism of Brasília and the seeming dystopia of the favela, *Tropicália* staged the extremes of the modern city.¹¹ In contrast, *Eden* drew upon a romantic image of Indigenous settlements to foreground interstitial spaces, creating spaces for walking, waiting, idling, those intentional—yet unpurposeful—activities that characterized a threatened conviviality. If older models of art and the social—such as those of Flávio de Carvalho—had proposed aestheticization as a way to rationalize urban social relations, Oiticica’s artworks created conditions for spontaneous interactions that seemed increasingly fragile in Brazil’s modern cities.

PAINTING IN SPACE

From 1959 through the mid-1960s, Oiticica created works that straddled painting and sculpture, foregrounding threshold spaces where the artwork’s inner logic and exterior

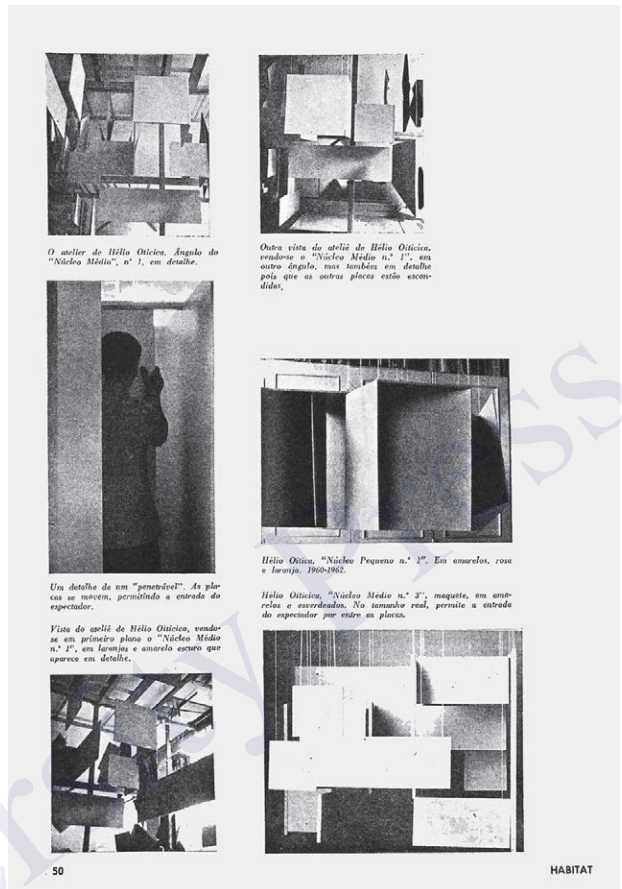
space intermingled.¹² His *Relevos espaciais*, *Bilaterais*, and *Núcleos* consisted of monochrome wooden planes in various geometric shapes. The *Relevos espaciais* are typically composite objects formed from rhomboid and triangular shapes painted in bright red, orange, or yellow oil paint. Planes at the scale of a human torso fan out from one or more axes, closed off at some junctures to create internal crannies and crevices. The *Bilaterais* and *Núcleos*, often painted in tertiary colors, are more resolutely planar, and formed from groups of discrete objects—typically individual painted planes suspended from the ceiling at some distance from gallery walls. As a series of discrete objects, these works thus demarcate volumes within the space of the gallery, with the interstices of the *Núcleos* large enough that early viewers even tucked themselves among the hanging planes (though recent installations have been off-limits to viewers). Created during the period of Oiticica's affiliation with the Rio de Janeiro-based Neoconcrete group, the *Relevos espaciais* and *Bilaterais* might be considered the first step in Oiticica's increasing engagement with "real space," an implication of viewers' bodies that presaged his participatory works and environments of the later 1960s and 1970s.¹³ Oiticica's three series suggest that various monochrome paintings have splintered, suspending fragments in space—or, as Oiticica wrote, "It is as if the pieces (cross, red octet, tees) that split themselves into labyrinths [in the *Relevos espaciais*] disintegrated [to create the *Núcleos*]."¹⁴

The painted planes of Oiticica's *Pequeno núcleo NC1* (Small nucleus NC1; 1960), for example, proliferate outward from a central cavity in a process that seems unfinished, a strategy that owes much to Oiticica's friend and colleague Lygia Clark. But Clark's *Unidades* paintings incorporated the gallery wall as an intrinsic part of the artwork; *Unidades* consists of seven wood panels painted black, with white recessed lines along edges or as central axes, positioned to create a sense of rotation that animates the gallery wall. Oiticica's works took this strategy and repurposed it in three dimensions, activating a volume of space expanding outward from a central cavity. At first, with many of the *Relevos espaciais*,



Fig. 93. Hélio Oiticica, *Relevo espacial*, c. 1960. Paint on cut-out wood, 45 × 45 × 10 in. (114.3 × 114.3 × 25.4 cm). Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, The Adolpho Leirner Collection of Brazilian Constructive Art, museum purchase funded by the Caroline Wiess Law Foundation, 2005.1023. © César and Claudio Oiticica.

Fig. 94. "A transição da côr do quadro para o espaço e o sentido de construtividade," *Habitat 70* (December 1962), showing photographs of Hélio Oiticica's studio with the artworks *Núcleo médio n. 1* (top, bottom left), a *Penetrável* (middle left), *Núcleo pequeno n. 1* (middle right), and a maquette for *Núcleo médio n. 3* (bottom right).



this expansion remains planar, with painted planes dispersing outward along a single horizontal axis (fig. 93). With Oiticica's later *Núcleos*, the dispersal occurs both horizontally and vertically, without the sense of a central core (fig. 94, see fig. 85). Instead, the planes are placed along parallel axes throughout a cubic volume of space. As Oiticica wrote, "The planes of color, orthogonal, overlapping each other on three levels, would not intersect if projected onto a flat surface; . . . [the planes] are as important as the space."¹⁵ It is as if two sets of painted parallel planes, one set perpendicular to the other, were fragmented into staggered quadrilaterals. Thus, while Oiticica's earlier *Relevos espaciais* often unpeeled or unfolded from a central core, the early 1960s *Núcleos* were deduced from an absent grid.

Based on the planning process of these *Núcleos*, Oiticica seemed to think about these "paintings in space" as discrete works featuring an internal formal logic, whose placement would be oriented to the human body rather than any particular architectural setting. In various plans from late 1960 for the *Grande núcleo n. 1* (Large nucleus no. 1), *Núcleo médio n. 1 NC₃* (Medium nucleus no. 1 NC₃), and *Núcleo médio n. 2 NC₄* (Medium nucleus no. 2 NC₄), for example, Oiticica described the arrangement of individual painted planes in the two-dimensional field of the paper or exhibition space, and designated the different heights at which the components should be hung in relation to eye level (*altura da*

visão).¹⁶ This emphasis on the body, rather than the exhibition venue, is especially notable given that Oiticica developed these plans in November 1960, in preparation for the 2a Exposição Neoconcreta. This exhibition was held within curtained walls underneath the building of the Ministry of Education and Public Health, now reorganized as the Ministry of Education and Culture. There is no evidence that the works' intended setting shaped Oiticica's approach to size, scale, shape, or layout of the *Grande núcleo*. Thus, during this early 1960s period, Oiticica addressed space as a function of an artwork's internal formal logic rather than its relationship to a specific site.

Even when he proposed a public art space that broke with traditional mediums, Oiticica maintained the autonomy of the artwork. His 1961 *Projeto de Cães de Caça* is a tabletop-sized, maze-like architectural maquette for a public art space (fig. 95). Upon entering the *Projeto de Cães de Caça*, visitors were to traverse a passage of raked sand and ascend various raised platforms or descend to subterranean caverns. These spaces were to include five semi-enclosed *Penetráveis* (Penetrables) structures by Oiticica himself, plus permanent installations of *Poema enterrado* (Buried poem) by Ferreira Gullar and poet Reynaldo Jardim's *Teatro Integral*, for a single audience member.¹⁷ Oiticica constructed the maquette in plywood painted in a similar red, orange, pink, yellow, and white palette as his *Relevos espaciais* and *Núcleos*, taking the "painting in space" from the gallery to the city. "This [*Cães de Caça*] project would be something like a garden, open to the public, in any city, preferably in a spacious place, as if it were a park, with its exits not leading directly onto streets."¹⁸ Though Oiticica positioned the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* as a publicly accessible site within a city—and, at the time, art-viewing in Brazil almost invariably took place in the largest cities, albeit within formalized arts institutions—he sought to isolate the work from its urban surroundings. Viewers would enter the work at transition points leading them from spontaneous encounters of urban life to the controlled atmosphere of an autonomous work of art, marked off from the city by being located underground and raised on a series of platforms in a setting of raked sand. Oiticica explained that individuals entering the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* would "take refuge, just as someone entering a museum, for experiences [*vivências*] of an aesthetic order [*ordem estética*]."¹⁹ As Irene V. Small notes, "The work's utopianism followed here from its privacy and retroactive unrealizability rather than its anticipation of a future public form."²⁰ Even as it proposed to envelop visitors' bodies, the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* would offer an aesthetic experience carefully scripted by the artist, uncontaminated by the unpredictability of the city street.

Such notions of artistic autonomy and refuge would break down around 1964, a year that saw the death of Oiticica's father and a coup that ushered in Brazil's two-decade military dictatorship.²¹ Beyond this personal and political turmoil, 1964 also marked the beginning of Oiticica's sustained engagement with the Mangueira favela and its samba school.²² Unsurprisingly, his works began to respond to the pressures of this engagement, to incorporate locally tangible aspects of social inequality and, ultimately, Mangueira itself. This was true, if perhaps unconscious, even in his works that seem to be strictly

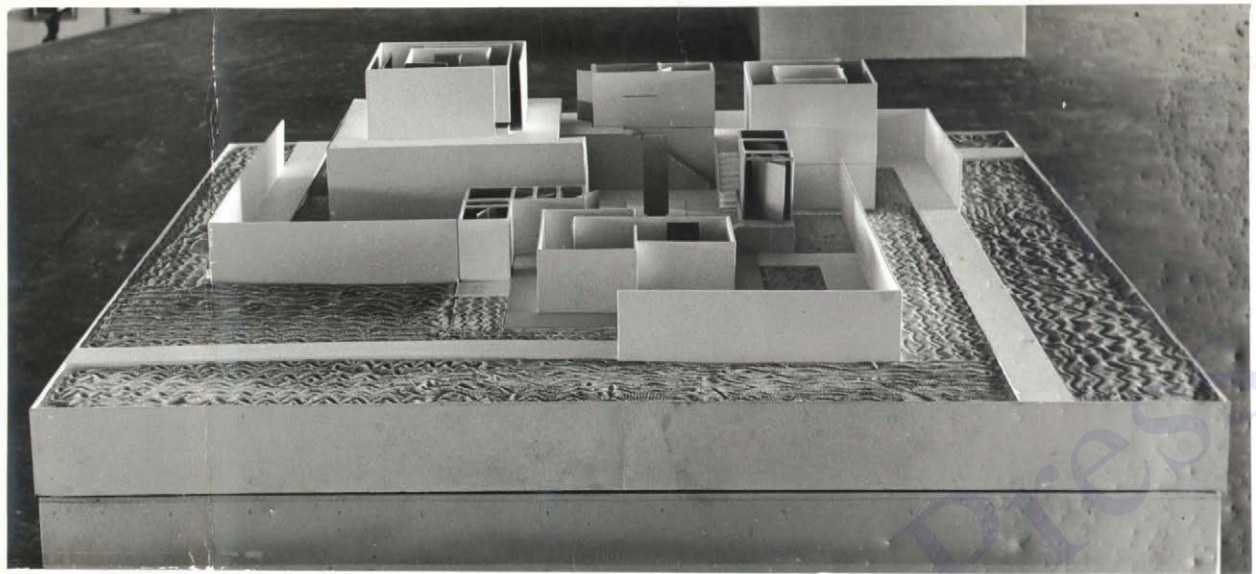


Fig. 95. Hélio Oiticica, *Projeto de Cães de Caça*, 1961. Dossier BR RJANRIO PH.0.FOT.37026, photo 5, Arquivo Nacional do Brasil, Brasília.

formal experiments, such as the *Bólides* (Meteors), sculptural containers (painted wooden boxes and pigment-filled glass flasks, among other forms) seeking to capture the tactility of color. A handful of *Bólides* incorporated overt references to contemporary social relations—most famously with *B33 Bólido Caixa 18 “Homenagem a Cara de Cavallo”* (B33 box *Bólido 18 “Homage to Horseface”*; 1965–66), dedicated to a Brazilian gangster killed in a police shoot-out, and which heroized his marginal position vis-à-vis an ideal of social order. But staged photographs of *Bólides* demonstrate that Oiticica’s works were no longer isolated from the segregation of urban space in Rio de Janeiro.

As with photographs that placed artist Lygia Pape’s *Livro da Criação* in vignettes across Rio de Janeiro, numerous photographs depict Oiticica’s *Bólides* engaged with spaces outside the gallery. These photographs appear to be demonstration images, offering ways to interact with the *Bólides* that foreground their capacities for revelation: opening doors and covers, pulling out trays, looking from above into their interior crevasses, prodding colorful, textured substances. While images of *Bólides* in studio and gallery spaces show them on tables or rough wooden plinths, these exterior photographs show *Bólides* set directly upon the ground, and there are crucial parallels between the depicted person and his (as it is invariably a male) setting. In a set of photographs dated to 1964 or 1965, Oiticica or a young white boy manipulate a “box” *Bólido* resting on large, square paving stones, the terrace of an upper-class residence (figs. 96, 97). The scene is bright daylight, and the background reveals bits of the urban skyline, its geometries of wall and window rhyming with the solids and voids of *Bólido* doors swung open and trays pulled outward. In another handful of photographs, from a year or two later, “Mosquito,” a small Afro-descendent boy from Mangueira, poses barefoot upon one of Rio de Janeiro’s characteristic patterned sidewalks with a glass flask *Bólido* on the ground beside him (fig. 98). It appears to be nighttime, likely during an evening event for Oiticica’s 1966 exhibition at G4 gallery, and Mosquito



Fig. 96. Hélio Oiticica, *B11 Bólide Caixa 9* (B11 box Bólide 9), Rua Engenheiro Alfredo Duarte, Rio de Janeiro, 1964/65. Photograph by Claudio Oiticica.



Fig. 97. Hélio Oiticica, *B18 Bólide Vidro 6 "Metamorfose"* (B18 glass Bólide 6 "Metamorphosis"), Rua Engenheiro Alfredo Duarte, Rio de Janeiro, 1964/65. Photograph by Claudio Oiticica.



Fig. 98. Mosquito wearing Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolé P10 capa 06 "Sou o mascote do Parangolé, Mosquito da samba"* (Parangolé P10 cape 06 "I am the Parangolé mascot, Mosquito of samba") and standing beside Hélio Oiticica's *B17 Bólide Vidro 5 (Homenagem a Mondrian)* (B17 glass Bólide 5 [Homage to Mondrian]), 1965. Photograph by Claudio Oiticica.

is also wearing one of Oiticica's garment-like *Parangolés*. In these photographs, race is mapped onto the very ground of the city: daylight, whiteness, shod feet, and the manicured flora of upper-class Brazilian domesticity are counterpoised to night, Blackness, bare feet, and the irregular mosaic sidewalks of Rio de Janeiro's streets.²³ Where Oiticica and the white child manipulate the *Bólides*, Mosquito dips in a dance-like move that causes his body to echo the *Bólides's* bulbous glass form. The yellow and pale blue of Mosquito's *Parangolé* and his T-shirt beneath even match the colors of the *Bólides* beside him. In these scenes, white bodies are actors, while Black bodies become the very substance of an artwork. These *Bólides* photographs allude to the spatialization of social distance. With his *Parangolés*, Oiticica made explicit this tension between interior and exterior, between art as intentional acts of invention and art as spontaneous expressions of the body.

THE CITY AND THE CITY: OITICICA'S *PARANGOLÉS*

As numerous commentators have pointed out, any interpretation of Oiticica's *Parangolés* must account for the segregation of Brazilian cities—by race, by class—and for the *Parangolés's* evocation of Brazilian Carnival as a performative gesture that alternately challenges and reifies spatial configurations of perceived social hierarchies.²⁴ Oiticica's staged collision between Mangueira sambistas and elite Brazilians has been described as an artistic "appropriation" of collective manifestations understood to be quintessentially Brazilian, such as samba schools.²⁵ But additionally, by incorporating the performative quality of Rio de Janeiro's spatial injustice into the very structure of the *Parangolés*, the work parallels the ambiguity of Carnival itself. Members of samba schools famed for performing during Carnival were often inhabitants of informally constructed favela communities located on Rio de Janeiro's hillsides (*morros*), often Afro-descendent, and almost invariably poorer than the average museumgoer at *Opinião 65*. Those museumgoers, in turn, were likely to have been residents of wealthier areas on flatter ground along Rio de Janeiro's coastline, and to have rarely ventured into hillside favelas—though those boundaries are perhaps more fluid than this sketch suggests (and, as photographs of Oiticica's terrace demonstrate, Rio de Janeiro's hills are not entirely covered with favelas). As accounts from the time of the *Parangolés* describe, this hill-asphalt (*morro-asfalto*) spatial divide is most visibly disrupted during Carnival each year, when "the hillside descends" (*o morro desce*) and samba schools parade in the center of the city.²⁶ Spontaneous, unscripted encounters (that is, not as employer and service industry worker) between Brazilian elites and largely Afro-descendent sambistas were much more likely to take place during the temporal heterotopia of Rio de Janeiro's pre-Lenten Carnival than at a museum opening.

Oiticica's *Parangolés* thus evoked the social disruption of Carnival, when people might take time off work, playfully reverse gender roles, place leisure above labor, live life in the street, and venture beyond their everyday spatial zones. For Brazilian

anthropologist Roberto DaMatta, this carnivalesque universe is, following Bakhtin, the preeminent space of social inversion.²⁷ And for anthropologist Victor Turner, “During Carnival, those centers of Brazilian hierarchy—the house, office, and factory—are emptied and closed. The whole city becomes a symbol of Brazilianity [*sic*], of a single multi-colored [*sic*] family brought into the open, which is transformed into a home. Carnival may, indeed, invade the sacred homestead itself, as masked revellers swarm through it and out again.”²⁸ Here, Carnival is taken to puncture the boundaries between public and private, its libidinous excess temporarily disrupting spatial norms. Oiticica’s *Parangolés* attempted to carve out just such a realm of carnivalesque permeability at the entrance of the MAM/Rio.

But by staging this type of encounter, Oiticica risked affirming the very divides that created it, a tension that broader discussions of the carnivalesque have explored. Reversals can also reaffirm hierarchies by taking for granted the rigid boundaries between quotidian life and its inversion. As Soviet Commissar of Enlightenment and Education Anatoly Lunacharsky maintained, carnival can act as a “safety valve” by opening up the possibility of free ridicule of the ruling classes by the lower classes, with such class discontent remaining frivolous rather than efficacious, and remaining confined to a single time of year.²⁹ For Carnival’s social inversions—men dressed as women, parents submitting to children’s whims, poor Brazilians of color in the center of elite spaces—to remain humorous and novel, these reversals must be merely temporary. “Carnival,” writes Terry Eagleton, “is a licensed affair in every sense, a permissible rupture of hegemony, a contained popular blow-off as disturbing and relatively ineffectual as a revolutionary work of art.”³⁰ Pragmatically, energies that might otherwise be dedicated to political agitation are turned to costuming, float building, and an intensified conviviality.

Indeed, in Brazil the idealized notion of Carnival as a spontaneous, harmonious, and playful disruption of public and private was already, in the mid-1960s, giving way to a spectacularized staging of Carnival on the broad avenues of Rio de Janeiro’s center and, later, on the television screen.³¹ Carnival was shifting from spontaneous encounters mediated by the built environment to pleasingly consumable images of Brazilian sociability. As recently as the late 1950s, accounts of Carnival-period social mixing demonstrated a popular middlebrow sensibility that understood the descent of morro inhabitants as an invasion of the city below—as in a samba ditty parodying an old woman’s fear of the “flood” of “dirty and brutal” people coming down the hill.³² By the early 1960s, Rio de Janeiro’s Carnival was becoming increasingly formalized, with professional artists replacing community members as the designers of samba school displays, and the introduction of admissions fees and bleacher seating for the samba school parades on Avenida Rio Branco and Avenida Presidente Vargas, diminishing the sense of an unauthorized descent by morro dwellers.³³ Rather than a raucous inversion of social hierarchy, Carnival was becoming a time when middle- and upper-class viewers could buy a ticket and sit to watch the favela samba schools perform. One 1963 article described this choreographed social

encounter as “Carnaval, the maximal Brazilian party, when the hillside [*morro*] descends to the avenue and comes to show our samba.”³⁴ The social inversions and disruptiveness of Carnaval were subdued by the reified performing-watching dichotomy of the streets versus the bleacher seats, with wealthier, whiter Brazilians watching performances of samba on the Avenidas.³⁵ Of course, the neighborhood parading groups (*blocos*) still processed in the streets (as they do to this day). Beginning in the 1960s, however, the primary collective experience of Carnaval would be the spectacularized *desfile* (parade) of the large samba schools on the Avenidas and, later, televised (beginning in 1974) from Oscar Niemeyer’s monumental Sambodrome (beginning in 1984).³⁶

Oiticica’s *Parangolés* responded to precisely this condition of spectacularized sociability by working to create a participatory “‘watching-wearing’ cycle” (*ciclo “vestir-assistir”*) whereby the boundaries between viewers and participants were dissolved. Oiticica’s *Parangolés* thus embodied an alternative interpretation of Carnaval, not as an expression of social togetherness, nor as a safety valve, but as itself a performance of social conflict and contradiction in Brazil’s ambiguously public spaces.³⁷ The presence of Afro-descendent sambistas at the MAM/Rio did not, of course, effect any systemic change to Brazilian social relations, nor did it register as a political protest. In fact, Oiticica’s social position as an artist was what made the sambistas’ presence at the museum intelligible as art rather than social unrest or general unruliness in the first place. The *Parangolés* did, however, stage a collision between elite expectations about properly sedate behavior for a museum and the boisterous samba music and dance associated with Carnaval—or, perhaps, between the types of bodies expected to be at the MAM/Rio and those associated with the *morros*. In a radical democratic reading, these conflicting claims to shared urban space demonstrate the antagonistic character of social relations in democracy.³⁸ But in the conditions of mid-1960s Brazil, as Tania Rivera has highlighted, Oiticica’s *Parangolés* sculpted social relations into something like a Möbius strip, “annul[ing] the distinction between inside and outside—not because both are united in a gapless conjunction, but because something happens between subject and object, in a torsion, displacing them from the position of masters of space, of the visual field and of the object.”³⁹ What this poetic formulation points to are the intimate inequalities that characterize social relations in twentieth-century Brazil.

The *Parangolés*’ challenge to the site of the MAM/Rio was not, then, directed primarily at the site’s identity as an *art* institution, and thus its ability to nominate selected objects and activities as *art qua art*, but as an ambiguously public urban space. Though the museum was a private institution, it was—and still is—located within a huge public park, the Aterro do Flamengo, one created by razing a *morro* and displacing its inhabitants’ informal housing.⁴⁰ In 1965, with the sambistas refused entry to the *Opinião 65* exhibition, they proceeded to make music and dance on the ground beside the pilotis of the museum. The sambistas occupied the underbelly of the MAM/Rio, beneath the suspended volume of its exhibition halls, literally situated between public parkland and private museum.

Staged in this threshold space, Oiticica's *Parangolés* were suspended between the specific institutional setting of the museum, with its ambiguous publicness, and the more obviously public spaces of the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

SLOUCHING TOWARD EDEN, 1967-69

The late 1960s saw Oiticica bring this ambiguous publicness into the space of the gallery, with a new interest in architectonic formations as a way to structure behavior. In 1967 he created his first immersive environment, *Tropicália*, for the group exhibition *Nova Objetividade Brasileira* (fig. 99). *Tropicália* is a sand, gravel, and potted-plant environment centered on two *Penetráveis*, wooden-frame structures of fabric and plastic. The roofless "Pureza é um mito" (Purity is a myth) *Penetrável* evokes a beachside shower stall, with its partially translucent swinging door and interior space approximating the scale of a single body. Inside the larger "Imagetical" *Penetrável*, one navigates a narrow, maze-like spiral. Passing through an entrance with a ceiling of string, one enters a darkened inner coil, bumping into hanging scented sachets and stepping on sand and pebbles, before arriving at a dead end with a staticky broadcasting television set on a crate. Both *Penetráveis* are set atop a ground of sand and gravel, strewn with potted tropical plants, slates marked with bits of poetry by Roberta Camila Salgado, and two live macaws. *Tropicália's* material and sensorial heterogeneity seems intended to overwhelm visitors' faculties: heaps of sand and gravel and puddles of water to navigate, colorful walls in textures ranging from flimsy homespun to shower curtain plastic, aromatic herbal sachets hung at nose level, darkened cabins, fragments of poems on white paper leaning against potted tropical plants, two brightly colored and animated rain forest birds, the loud buzz of a television set turned to static at high volume.⁴¹ Oiticica first exhibited *Tropicália* in *Nova Objetividade Brasileira*, where the environment shared the space with mid-1960s works by Brazilian artists practicing Nova Figuração, with a handful of now-historic Neoconcrete works from 1959 to 1960, and with new participatory experiments such as Lygia Clark's 1967 *O eu e o tu: Roupa-corpo-roupa* (The I and the you: Clothing/body/clothing).

The *Nova Objetividade Brasileira* exhibition occurred at the height of mid-1960s efforts to define a new artistic avant-garde in Brazil as something that might break with older models of high culture. In his text for the exhibition catalog, Oiticica argued that artists should go beyond staking out a new array of formal parameters, and he emphasized "the urgent necessity of taking a position in relation to political, social and ethical problems."⁴² Yet his essay focused primarily on formal arguments. In opposition to "exterior dominion" (*domínio exterior*) of "cultural colonialism" (*colonialismo cultural*), Oiticica explained Brazilian artists' search for "a cultural character by which we differentiate ourselves from the European, weighed down by his millennia of culture, and from the North American, with his super-productivity."⁴³ In this context, *Tropicália's* juxtaposition of television's technological spectacle with hackneyed national tropes—tropical plants and



Fig. 99. Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália*, 1967. Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro.

animals, the informal urbanism of favela constructions, perhaps even the basic geometries of Brazil's new capital city, Brasília—might be understood as a Brazilian reaction to pop, a mobilization of local popular culture. The design of the *Nova Objetividade Brasileira* catalog plays with such forms by intentionally evoking the sleeve of an LP record, and Oiticica's colorful *Tropicália* environment was even used as the backdrop for a photo shoot of swinging sixties fashions in a local general interest magazine (fig. 100). For artist and critic Carlos Zilio, who also exhibited works in *Nova Objetividade Brasileira*, *Tropicália*

was centered on the television at the center of its labyrinth, around which “on the scale of a model, were diverse representations of Brazilian culture, its aromas of cults and traditions, its ‘typical’ images, such as the macaw, enmeshed among plants and pebbles of tropical jungle-gardens,” a pop culture for a nation where notions of the people (o povo) remained in flux.⁴⁴

Oiticica himself explained that *Tropicália* was “the very first objectively conscious attempt to impose an obviously ‘Brazilian’ image on the current context of the vanguard and of manifestations of national art in general.”⁴⁵ For Sérgio B. Martins, *Tropicália* thus “frictionally juxtaposed” two myths of the city, the 1950s-era progressivist myth of modernization and the “primitivist” myth of the favela.⁴⁶ But *Tropicália*’s architectonic forms did not simply reflect or critique perceptions of Brazil’s underdevelopment—economic and cultural—during the 1950s and 1960s.⁴⁷ One might instead interpret *Tropicália* as a psychogeography of Rio de Janeiro, mimicking the fragmentary cities of Situationist *dérives*, or the vision of a “new urbanism” promoted in the Situationist International.⁴⁸ Oiticica himself emphasized that *Tropicália* was “a kind of map. It’s a map of Rio and it’s a map of my imagination. It’s a map that you go into.”⁴⁹ What goes unstated here is the underlying sense that there is some particularly Brazilian experience of urban space, some blend of controlled chaos and spontaneous order.

In discussions of Brazil’s emergent cities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, social scientist Gilberto Freyre sought to trace the continued legacies of the colonial plantation’s structured social strata as a particularly Brazilian mode of being, versus the anonymous, leveling potential of the urban street.⁵⁰ If public space were to exist at all in modern Brazil, Freyre’s account proposed that it remain structured by “private, hierarchical networks of power”; rather than the impersonal laws of bureaucracy, a personalist, clientelist system of social exchange would govern urban encounters.⁵¹ By the late twentieth century, Brazilian anthropologist Roberto DaMatta would reiterate this social divide as a synchronic disjuncture, as a spatial differentiation between the paternalistic and hierarchical realm of the house (*casa*) and the impersonal and individualistic realm of the street (*rua*) that characterized Brazilian society from the colonial period and persisted into the present.⁵² Brazil’s modern history would be characterized, then, by a struggle for the “house” to extend its patterns of patriarchal, racialized power over the realm of the “street.”⁵³

As the morro–asfalto divide demonstrates, public spaces in 1960s Rio de Janeiro remained shaped by overlapping private networks and spatial segregation. Oiticica’s environments thematize the inability of Rio de Janeiro’s threshold spaces to resolve into one or the other. Oiticica’s emphasis on interstitial spaces, on the temporal and spatial zones of activity set apart from everyday life, is thus less about the autonomy of art in some high-modernist sense than about art as an act of refuge: a private, individualistic, and temporary deformation of public space, “to give a simple opportunity to participate.”⁵⁴ The *Parangolés*, for example, make manifest implicit behavioral norms governing urban space



Fig. 100. “Moda em Vanguarda,” *Cigarra* 53, no. 9 (September 1967), showing Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicália*, 1967.

in Rio de Janeiro, the simultaneous proximity and distancing between elite and non-elite in everyday life, that often maps directly onto racial differentiation.

The *Parangolés*’ status as art was intended to push both watchers and wearers beyond rote reiteration of accustomed social roles. Writing in 1969, Oiticica described his search for a characteristic “Brazil-root” (*Brasil-raiz*) of a “culture in formation,” whose geste would be spontaneously and inadvertently revealed when a Brazilian (in Oiticica’s telling, Afro-descendent Jerônimo of Mangueira) donned a *Parangolé*.⁵⁵ Oiticica thus

deployed the autonomy of art as a tool in staging the social conflicts submerged in everyday encounters, and perhaps even to model new behaviors.

While Oiticica's practice might simply be regarded as a successful manipulation of art world norms, his work in fact takes up this specific local impotence of Brazilian public space—the equivocal publicness of public spaces in Brazil, one might say.⁵⁶ The modern city of Rio is similarly reimagined as a conflictual space in *Tropicália*, which Oiticica described in retrospect as one of the natural evolutions from the *Parangolés* to “a complete environment-behavior.”⁵⁷ Like the *Parangolés*, *Tropicália*'s “transgression,” according to architectural historian Guilherme Wisnik, is its very subversion of the museum as “a space of publicness.”⁵⁸ By introducing the refuges of the cabin-like *Penetráveis*, by formally mimicking the poor domesticity of the favelas, *Tropicália* refused the type of public address contained in traditional artistic models—rational, Gestaltist, with an internal formal coherence aimed at an upright, standing spectator.⁵⁹ Oiticica's works thus treated the phenomenological experiences of Brazilian public and private spaces as themselves something to be appropriated, as a found experience to be restaged in the space of the gallery.⁶⁰

In staging a durational, if staccato, experience, *Tropicália* thus remained antithetical to the slick and instantaneous legibility of pop. As Carlos Zilio continued, “There is a constructive logic structuring all the [labyrinthine] elements. But in this ‘exotic’ environment, rationality is transcended by an ironic laughter of counter-acculturation that completely disconcerts.”⁶¹ Sérgio B. Martins offers a similar analysis: “A number of different elements come into view . . . the spectator has no time to make sense of each element, as new ones pile up before that can be done. The disconnectedness of accumulation comes before one can make any sense of thematic coherence, and is further enhanced in the vertiginous dive into the Imagetical labyrinth, which keeps narrowing as one advances, urging a rhythmic pace against the possibility of assimilation. . . . Encounter is staged as fantasy. . . . One is brought to face the ‘Brazilian image’ as a radically contingent experience rather than as a well-finished or clearly localisable proposition.”⁶² For Martins, *Tropicália* does not simply traffic in a parodic image of Brazil but instead illustrates the mechanisms of mythification through an accumulation of discrete images, an almost cinematic, flicker-film effect.⁶³ Likewise, for Carlos Zilio, *Tropicália* drew back from figuration as something reductively denotative, and instead exhibited a form of figuration “raised to the maximum intensity, with the sense of annulling itself.”⁶⁴

This is, however, an effect dependent upon specific configurations of *Penetrável* structures within the gallery. Rather than the sprawling arrays favored for recent re-installations of Oiticica's work in white cube gallery spaces, the spiraling, fragmented, accumulative experience of *Tropicália* hinges upon the tight, diagonal juxtaposition of the two *Penetráveis* in the low-roofed school section at the MAM/Rio in 1967, or—somewhat later—in a small sand patch surrounded by reed mat walls at the Whitechapel Gallery in London. Perhaps as a way to match the way that the low ceilings of the MAM/Rio school

section had contributed to a claustrophobic feeling of dysphoria, Oiticica would carve out discrete sections within in the soaring halls at Whitechapel into which he could tuck his environments (*ambientes*).

FORMS OF VIVÊNCIA: EDEN (1969)

Already in 1967, Oiticica had written to British art critic and curator Guy Brett with the first inklings of his ideas for “a big project,” *Eden*, as a setting for “supra-sensorial experiments.”⁶⁵ Clarifying this term in a text from December of the same year, Oiticica described his passage from object to environmental art (*arte ambiental*) as “a passage towards experiments increasingly involved with the individual behavior of each participant; I must say that there is no demand here, for a ‘total conditioning’ of the participant, but for the overthrow of all conditioning, the demand of individual freedom. . . . [This approach would not] dilute structures, but give them an overall sense, overcoming the structuralism of abstract art, instead inciting growth everywhere, like a plant, embracing an idea focused on the freedom of the individual.”⁶⁶ Oiticica made clear the relationship—potentially causal—between architecture and behavior (*comportamento*), as the foundation of his environmental works. But overthrowing conditioning, Oiticica explained, could not be achieved through the absence of structure but by reimagining structure as something procedural, evolving.⁶⁷

The resulting environment, *Eden*, was a spiraling composition whose forms echoed the geometries of Brazilian Concretism, leavened with the vernacular materiality of 1960s Rio de Janeiro (fig. 101).⁶⁸ Like *Tropicália* at MAM/Rio in 1967, *Eden* consisted of structures set on a field of sand inside a gallery, but in place of *Tropicália*'s two beachside, cabin-like



Fig. 101. Hélio Oiticica, *Eden*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 1969. Photograph by Guy Brett. Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

Penetráveis, *Eden* included waist-high “nests” of books and grass; low straw- and sand-filled *Penetráveis* without walls; snug, closet-like *Penetráveis* with pools of water or bumpy sand-bags for the floor; an all-too-erotic enclosed *Cama-bólida* (Bed-bólida) of wood and jute; various of Oiticica’s earlier *Parangolés* and *Bólida* sculptures to wear and carry and open and explore; and a nearby billiards table that became a hangout for young Londoners.⁶⁹ Where *Tropicália* leads visitors on a labyrinthine progress toward the central television, *Eden* spirals outward.

While there are superficial formal similarities between *Tropicália* and *Eden*, they offer starkly different approaches to the built environment. *Tropicália* plays with parodic symbols of Brazilianness in order to intervene in the process of mythmaking. In this intervention, the architectonic is imagistic, presenting “Brazil” through structures that evoke the beach and the favela. *Eden*, however, is less a series of images than a series of spaces activated by the body. As one London reviewer explained, Oiticica’s Whitechapel exhibition contained “‘Parangolés’—structures of material to wear and carry; ‘bolides’ [*sic*]—boxes and various containers with elements to handle and manipulate; and ‘penetrables’—labyrinths and cabins to explore, nests and other areas to succumb in.”⁷⁰ *Tropicália* poses the architectonic in terms of discrete, iconic structures, while *Eden* offers architecture as a way to sculpt space—and, by extension, to sculpt the behaviors possible within it.

Oiticica’s environment reformulated the gallery as an ambiguously public space, with enclaves whose privacy was not fully assured. In *Eden*, Oiticica used sand, gravel, straw, water, and other materials of indeterminate form, demarcated into various zones of activity.⁷¹ Whether corralled by wooden frames, heaped in mounds around the *Penetrável* structures, or forming the ground viewers-cum-participants traversed, these amorphous materials seem to exist in a process of centrifugal dispersal, a moving away from the center. In *Eden*, wooden frames impose order only contingently, gathering what would otherwise be kicked and scuffed about, halting the organic process of sand and straw strewn from their original placements by bodies moving through the environments. In placing these materials on the ground of the gallery, Oiticica implicated the passages between and among disparate structures, just as his *Núcleos* were formed out of painted planes and the spaces in between. With *Tropicália* and *Eden*, the spaces in and around each component structure are thus both part of the total system of space and privileged sites for social encounters.⁷² Oiticica’s environments are not a formal proposition for, or models of, social relations, but experiential settings intended to provide experimental conditions for viewers’ comportment within the space. The bed of straw, heap of gravel, uneven pathways of sand, curtained cabins, and coffin-like *Cama-bólida* propel viewers through the space in ways that seem to defy traditional modes of art-viewing: vertical, contemplative.

Even as *Eden* encompasses some of the basic forms and typologies from Oiticica’s earlier oeuvre, its construction proposes new aesthetic commitments to enclosure and refuge, to *crelazer*, meaning leisure as a primary—and productive—form of experience. *Tropicália* had featured visible posts and beams, the “Pureza é um mito” *Penetrável* with

its door swung wide open, and the “Imagetical” *Penetrável* entered via an open portal. In contrast, *Eden*’s draped structures offer mute geometries upon expanses of empty sand, a proposal of enclosure or refuge that echoes the sequestered urban art park of Oiticica’s *Projeto de Cães de Caça* (1961). But in contrast to *Cães de Caça*, *Eden* foregrounds activities characterized by a certain defocused attention, activities that take place in interstitial spaces: walking, waiting, idling, looking. If the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* proposed aesthetic experience as a refuge *from* the city, *Eden* reformulated urban experience as itself a refuge, those spontaneous interludes of rest or leisure that break up the structure of urban space in Brazil. For Oiticica, “The seeds of Eden propose visions towards crelazer: The Bed-Bólíde where one enters and lies under a jute structure: the concentration of leisure. . . . The trajectory of bare feet across sand interrupts itself with successive entries into penetrables containing water, ‘Iemanjá,’ dried leaves, ‘Lololiana,’ straw, ‘Cannabiana.’ Traversing yet more sand, one arrives at the delimited sand of bólíde-area 1 and the straw of bólíde-area 2, where one basks as if beneath an internal sun, a non-oppressive leisure. The enigmatic black tent concentrates one upon *hiding oneself*, like an egg; within, the music of Caetano [Veloso] and [Gilberto] Gil.”⁷³ *Eden* contains the refuge of the womb-like tent, the concentrated leisure of the isolated *Cama-bólíde*, the delimited zones of sand and straw, and, in between, still more passages of sand. *Eden* proposes a mode of urban *vivência*, or experience, then imperiled—by the specific local reality of Brazil’s dictatorship, by the insufficiencies of Brazil’s broader modernization project, and by a more general postwar turn toward technological rationalization in the industrialized West.⁷⁴ Of course, with the move from Rio de Janeiro to London, *Tropicália*’s images were perhaps too legible as stereotypes of Brazil that Oiticica hoped to surpass, hence *Eden*’s retreat from materiality specifically evoking the favela to a more generic exploration of “primitive” construction techniques and a premodern—even mythological—spatiality.

Oiticica also placed *Eden* in dialogue with experimental art practices promoted by the London gallery Signals, led by artist David Medalla, gallery director Paul Keeler, and critic Guy Brett. Indeed, Brett originally proposed Oiticica’s exhibition for Signals, but the gallery closed unexpectedly in 1966 and Brett re-proposed the show for the Whitechapel Gallery.⁷⁵ Oiticica’s work may seem like an odd fit for Signals, best known for its championing of kinetic artworks by an international cadre of artists. In fact, it was not Oiticica’s environments, but his *Parangolés*, that first caught the attention of Medalla and Brett, as they fit what Pamela M. Lee has called the gallery’s interests in “articulating new perceptual models for the spectator, anticipating the effects introduced by modern science through seeing works of art as vehicles of energy.”⁷⁶ The shift from Rio de Janeiro to London also marked a shift from Nova Figuração’s Brazilian take on pop to the kinetic experiments and conceptual works that broke with the artwork as static object in favor of dynamism and flow. Oiticica himself distinguished between *Tropicália* and *Eden* in terms of spectators’ movements and behaviors.

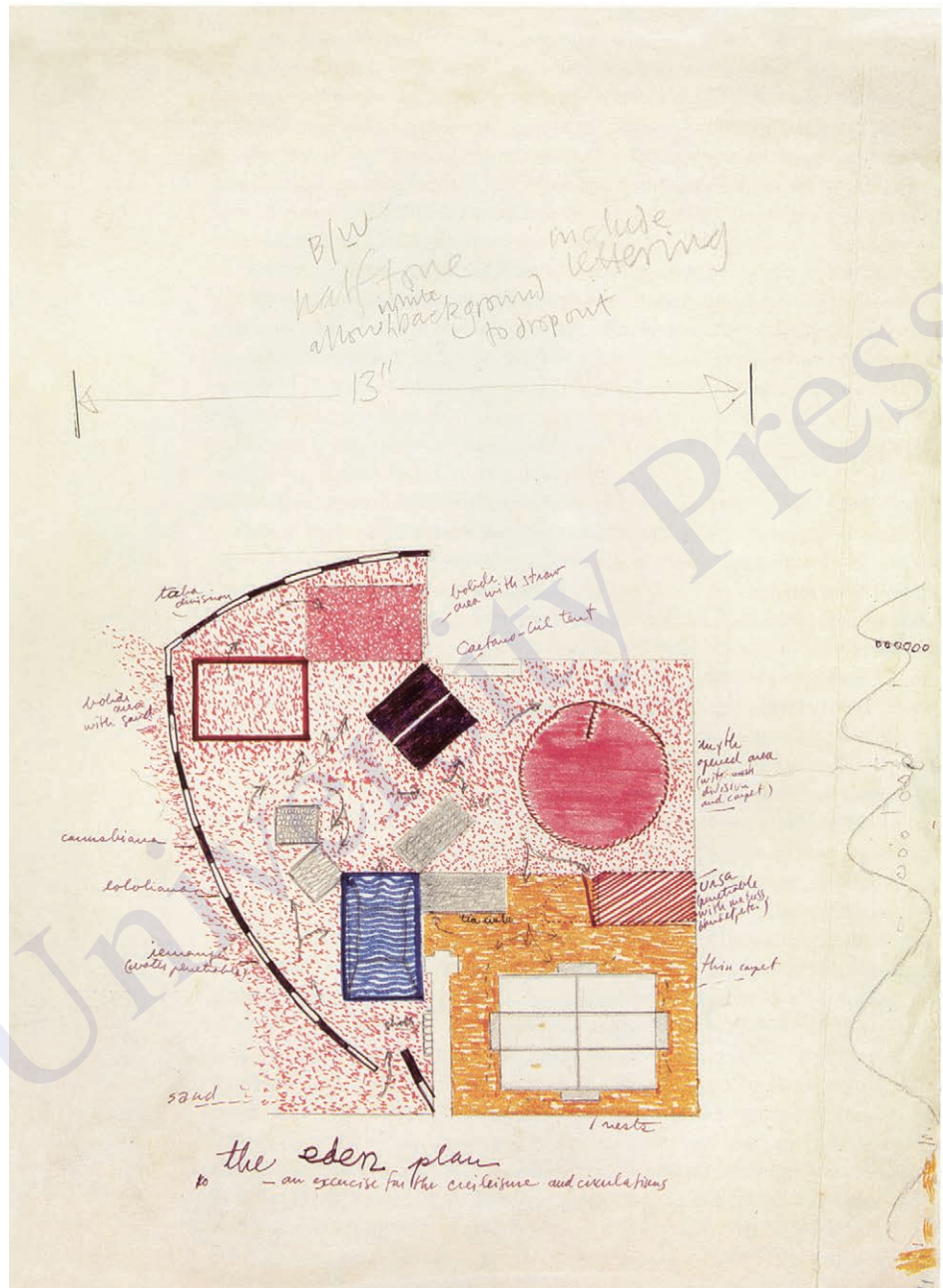


Fig. 102. Hélio Oiticica, *The Eden Plan*, 1969. Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

Eden offered an experimental space for participation. In a direct comparison to *Tropicália*, he explained that *Eden* would be “a kind of liberation from the imagetic obsession of the [*Tropicália*] penetrable.”⁷⁷ Instead, *Eden* would act as a staging ground for a non-repressive, Marcuse-ian productive leisure that he called “crelazer” (an invented term evoking creation, faith, pleasure, and leisure). For Oiticica, *Eden* was a “place for feelings,

for acting, for making things and constructing ones [sic] own interior cosmos. . . . 'Open' propositions are given, and even raw material for the 'making of things,' that the participant will be able to do."⁷⁸ Yet Oiticica himself expressed frustration when visitors did not participate in the ways he imagined or desired. This exceeded even the desires of the Whitechapel Gallery to maintain order, though gallery director Mark Glazebrook did cite the imperative to regulate visitors' behavior as one reason for the high costs of the exhibition.⁷⁹ It was Oiticica himself who, responding to a British reporter's questions about the exhibition, complained that "many people are participating, but not in the right way. Some of them are throwing sand about."⁸⁰ The article closed with a vignette of Oiticica "explaining firmly to [the exhibition guides] that only one person was to be allowed in the bed [cama-bólido] at a time."⁸¹ Oiticica's aesthetics are thus emancipatory insofar as they order bodily experience, providing a structure for experimentation.

Oiticica's sketch for the installation of *Eden* at the Whitechapel Gallery, entitled *The Eden Plan* and subtitled "An exercise for the creileisure [sic] and circulations," shows how he intended viewers to navigate a spatial field through the environment (fig. 102). Using a sequence of arrows, Oiticica indicated potential paths through the work, between and around the component parts.⁸² He marked a single entrance, and while the arrows do not follow a single route through the space, there is a general trajectory, an unfolding. Split-headed arrows show a sequence of local choices about which adjacent cabins or *Penetráveis* to visit first, but there is an overall guiding circuit through the *Eden* environment, a clockwise spiral. As with the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* nearly a decade earlier, Oiticica sought to choreograph viewers' experiences of the environment. But where the *Projeto de Cães de Caça* left open the order in which the various *Penetráveis* might be visited, Oiticica's *Eden Plan* shows that he imagined viewers encountering the *Penetráveis* in a roughly consistent sequence, creating a choreographed pattern of bodies in motion and bodies at rest. Passing from each of *Eden's* spaces to the next, the trajectory of bare feet over sand would be interrupted with successive entries into the Iemanjá, Lololiana, and Cannabiana *Penetráveis*, creating a rhythmic sequence of bare feet upon sand-water-sand-leaves-sand-straw before passing to the music tent and open myth area. Asking visitors to alternate between movement and idleness, between seemingly aimless meandering and directed activity, *Eden* becomes a stage on which to rehearse patterns of stillness and movement, isolation and togetherness.

TOTAL UNIVERSAL SYSTEM OF SPACE: FAVELA TO TABA

From *Tropicália* to *Eden*, there is a shift from architecture to space, from the compositional logic of a building type to artistic environments as staging grounds for bodies in motion and at rest. No longer is the constructed *Penetrável* or *Bólido* a privileged figure upon ground: here, visitors are asked to attend to their experience of both figure and ground, to feel the experience of both as equally crucial. But this move from structure to space is

also, for Oiticica, a shift in emphasis from the favela, with its overdetermined connotation of Afro-Brazilianness, to ideas about space linked to Indigenous Brazil. If *Tropicália* can be understood to critique the heroic monumentality of Brasília by invoking the structures of the favela—typically coded Afro-Brazilian—*Eden* drew upon spatial configurations of Indigenous Amazonian villages.

As the spatial and social zone that refuses to be assimilated into a utopian vision of Brazilian urbanity, the favela and its relevant cultural manifestations—informal architecture, samba, Blackness—are sometimes understood as the very content of Oiticica's aesthetic experimentation. In the catalog for his Whitechapel exhibition, Oiticica included numerous photographs from the Mangueira hill (morro), whose activities he had appropriated for works such as the *Parangolés*, and whose architecture he juxtaposed with *Tropicália*.⁸³ Alongside an installation view of *Tropicália* at the MAM/Rio, Oiticica's Whitechapel catalog includes a photograph of informal structures receding into space atop the "Morro de Mangueira" (fig. 103). Yet Oiticica's references ranged beyond the favela. Immediately following *Tropicália* and Mangueira architecture, a two-page spread depicts a photograph of dancers, primarily Afro-descendent children, at a "Samba lesson in Mangueira" (fig. 104). Below this image is a photograph labeled as a "Ritual funeral dance" from the Paiwe tribe, an image borrowed from anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss's chronicle of his time in Brazil, *Tristes Tropiques*.⁸⁴ Thus, Brazil's other unassimilable social category, Indigeneity, comes to the fore.

Oiticica effects this transition from Blackness to Indigeneity by way of architecture and behavior, even ritual. The following pages of the catalog include a photograph



Fig. 103. Hélio Oiticica, Whitechapel Gallery catalog, 1969, showing *Tropicália* at the Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro (left), and Mangueira morro (right). Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

of a Kirdi hut from Cameroon, taken from Bernard Rudofsky's 1964 *Architecture without Architects*, alongside a lengthy citation from *Tristes Tropiques* on the spatial organization of Bororo villages (fig. 105). In the passage, Lévi-Strauss described the vertiginous experience of encountering Bororo dwellings, "majestic in size in spite of their fragility . . . not so much built up as knotted together, plaited, woven, embroidered and mellowed by use."⁸⁵ He went on: "Instead of crushing the inhabitant under an indifferent mass of the

Fig. 104. *Hélio Oiticica*, Whitechapel Gallery catalog, 1969, showing Manguera Samba rehearsal playground (left), funeral dance of the Paiwe clan, Caduveo, Brazil (from *Tristes Tropiques* by Claude Lévi-Strauss) (below), and Roberto with the *Parangolé*, *Capa 2* (1964). Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

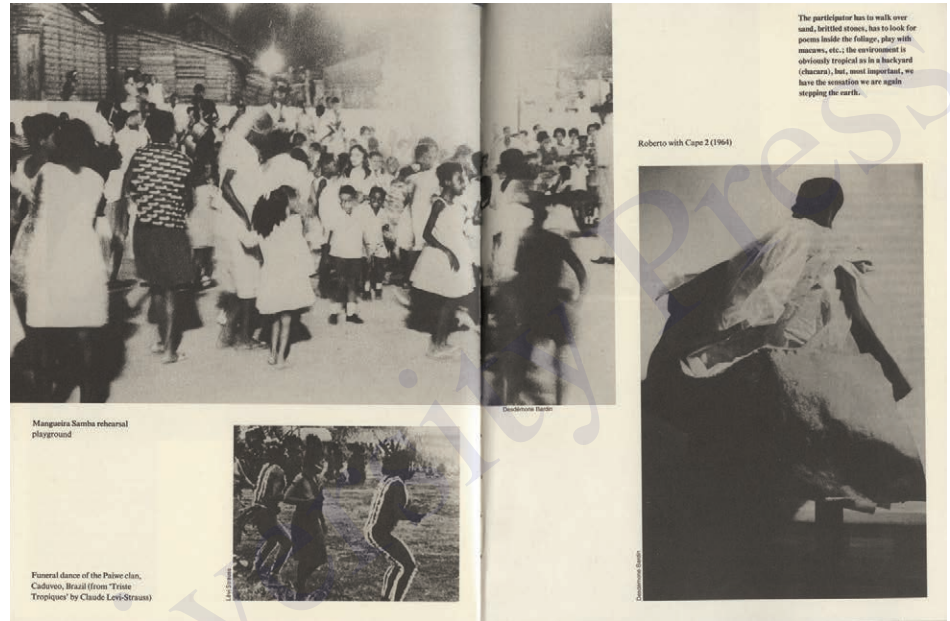


Fig. 105. *Hélio Oiticica*, Whitechapel Gallery catalog, 1969, showing Kirdi Hut (from Cameroon) (from *Architecture without Architects* by Bernard Rudofsky) (left), text from *Tristes Tropiques*, *Cama-bólde 1*, from *Eden* (right). Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.



suggestive sequence of arrows showing movements into and out of the central house, echoing the route traced in arrows in *The Eden Plan* (see fig. 102). And in Lévi-Strauss's writings, Oiticica would have read that Bororo social structures were neatly concretized in the spatial organizations of their villages.⁸⁹ Bororo villages were divided into discrete zones of activity—for example, prayer, young men's leisure, lovemaking, and women's labor—arranged around a pie wedge system rather than a grid. As Oiticica sought new ways to relate behavior and space, the Bororo model offered an alternative to modernist rationalism or the seemingly irrational and disorderly agglomeration of the favela.

Eden's invitation to *crelazer*, as a state of productive leisure, might then be predicated on a romantic conception of Indigenous labor as itself enjoyable, with *Eden's* spatial organization echoing the layout of Indigenous villages: architectonic volumes and broad open spaces are zones for specified behaviors. Though the diagram of *Eden* does not formally resemble the concentric structure of Bororo villages, there is a shared privileging of open space, an emphasis not only upon the built structures but the passages between them. Just as Lévi-Strauss distinguished between zones of productive labor (fishing, hunting) outside the village, versus the men's-only house for leisure (fig. 107) and an open-air dance area, Oiticica likewise had strict ideas about the relation of space to corresponding behaviors (fig. 108), as demonstrated by his complaint about Whitechapel visitors "participating, but not in the right way."⁹⁰ Like the lounging figures in the men-only house of the Bororo village, *Eden* invited participants to recline or crouch—in ways that even formally evoked the anti-vertical bodily comportment of the Bororo—in demarcated zones (see figs. 107,



Fig. 107. Claude Lévi-Strauss, Ritual meal of male dancers during a funerary ceremony, Brazil, Bororo people (Vermelho River/Kejara), 1935–36. Print on baryta paper mounted on cardboard, 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (22.5 × 29.3 cm). Musée du quai Branly—Jacques Chirac, Paris.



Fig. 108. Hélio Oiticica, *Eden*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 1969. Photograph by Guy Brett. Whitechapel Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery Archive, London.

108). While asking participants to engage in open-ended activity, *Eden* thus suggested that transformative aesthetics, like emancipatory politics, require some formal structure.

This mode of spatial organization was foreshadowed in the work of Brazilian civil engineer-cum-artist Flávio de Carvalho, whose 1930 *Cidade do homem nu* proposed a rationalized division of the city into clearly defined zones of activity, including labor, reproduction, and death.⁹¹ Carvalho and Oiticica shared a desire to shape the behavior of people inhabiting the spaces they created. There is, however, a generational and temperamental divide between the two men. Carvalho—perhaps paradoxically—sought to rationalize human behavior to its limit, assuming the distanced, controlling aerial view of a rational, twentieth-century urban planner. Oiticica, however, emphasized direct corporeal experience, in a city where “public space” was shot through by private networks, familial obligations, binds of patronage, and clientelism competing with an insurgent impersonal and bureaucratic modernity. Perhaps Oiticica’s return to an Indigenous model was, then, an act of nostalgia for an imagined premodern situation of human liberty, a final rebuke to the vision of modernist architecture and urbanism ushered in by Carvalho’s generation.

If Hélio Oiticica’s works evoke the urban, this is an effect rooted not in the combination of modernist architecture’s geometric forms and the precarious materiality of Brazil’s informally built favelas, but in the ways that these artworks compel viewers to experience space. Oiticica’s environments are deeply engaged with the spaces in between

structures (buildings, tents, *Penetráveis*, nests), analogous to interstices within the built environment of Brazilian cities. City buildings are not represented or modeled in the gallery, and instead Oiticica created zones dedicated to focusing on typically unnoticed sensorial activities, activities that seem to lack purpose: waiting in lines, sitting, sleeping, scuffling through gravel. Interstices and thresholds were the very forms that split the difference between spontaneity and control, the city as a space that mandates human behavior, or the city as resulting from human action. In interstices, one might evade both the moral weight of the patriarchal house and the bureaucratic regulations that sought to eliminate disorder on the street. But one arrives at a final question, concerning the displacement of the favela by the *taba* in his work. Does this shift simply allow Oiticica to avoid concrete political questions by transposing the central figure of his art practice—from proximate encounters with Afro-descendent favela dwellers in Rio de Janeiro to dreamlike encounters in a distant Amazonian hinterland, an imagined Brazilian Eden?

Suplemento Dominical do Jornal do Brasil, October 31, 1959.

88. For Sérgio B. Martins, the relative lack of institutional spaces and virtual absence of an art market in 1950s and 1960s Brazil renders moot the importance of “site” in Rosalind Krauss’s sense. Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde*, 203–4n74. Rosalind E. Krauss, “Sculpture in the Expanded Field,” *October* 8 (Spring 1979): 30–44.
89. The under-the-terrace exhibition space of the Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, at the Ministry of Education and Health was flanked by curtains. Oscar Niemeyer’s Palácio das Indústrias building, where the 2a Exposição Neoconcreta was held, is famed for its curving walls, which make hanging art somewhat difficult.
90. Ronaldo Brito, “Neo-Concretism, Apex and Rupture of the Brazilian Constructive Project,” trans. Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro with Irene V. Small, *October* 161 (Summer 2017): 125, 130. Ronaldo Brito first published on this topic in the mid-1970s in the Rio de Janeiro arts journal *Malasartes* and the exhibition catalog *Projeto Construtivo Brasileiro na Arte (1950–1962)*, ed. Aracy A. Amaral (Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro; São Paulo: Pinacoteca do Estado, 1977), 303–10. He released a revised and expanded version as a book in 1985, reprinted in 1999. Ronaldo Brito, “Neoconcretismo,” *Malasartes* (Rio de Janeiro) 3 (April–June 1976): 9–13. Ronaldo Brito, *Neoconcretismo: Vértice e ruptura do projeto construtivo brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Funarte, 1985).
91. Brito, “Neo-Concretism,” 134.
92. On Clark’s oeuvre, see Suely Rolnik, “Molding a Contemporary Soul: The Empty-Full of Lygia Clark,” in *The Experimental Exercise of Freedom: Lygia Clark, Gego, Mathias Goeritz, Hélio Oiticica, and Mira Schendel*, ed. Rina Carvajal and Alma Ruiz (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000), 55–108.
93. Cordeiro, “Para uma justa proporção.”
94. Waldemar Cordeiro, “arte, arquitetura e vida,” *ad: arquitetura e decoração* (São Paulo), no. 26 (December 1957): 1.
95. On this point, see Holston, *Modernist City*, 101–7.
96. Cordeiro, “arte, arquitetura & vida.”
97. Antonio Candido, “Sous-développement et littérature en Amérique latine,” *Cahiers d’histoire mondiale* (UNESCO) 12, no. 4 (1970): 618–40, repr. as “Literature and Underdevelopment,” in Antonio Candido, *On Literature and Society*, trans. Howard Becker (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 120–21.
98. Waldemar Cordeiro, “O concretismo e o problema da organização da cultura,” *ad: arquitetura e decoração* (São Paulo), no. 22 (March/April 1957): 24. Fabricio Vaz Nunes has pointed out that Cordeiro was echoing the title of Antonio Gramsci’s classic: *Gli intellettuali e l’organizzazione della cultura*, 4th ed. (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1949). Fabricio Vaz Nunes, “Waldemar Cordeiro: Da arte concreta ao ‘pop-concreto’” (MA thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2004), 45n87.
99. While Cordeiro is taken here as an arch-modernist, he also developed a more resolutely contemporary body of work in the later 1960s and early 1970s, with combine-like assemblages he called “pop-cretos” (combining pop art and Concrete art), a media practice that offered a protoconceptual approach to the newspaper as medium/media, and, finally, a digital media practice cut short by his death.
100. Waldemar Cordeiro, “Conceituação do paisagismo enquanto comunicação e arte/Conceptualization of Landscaping as Communication and Art, São Paulo,” typewritten text (paper for the Institute of Brazilian Architects [IAB] Seminar “O Homem e a Paisagem Paulistana/Man and São Paulo’s Landscape,” São Paulo, November 1964), repr. in *Waldemar Cordeiro: Fantasia exata*, 486.
101. Waldemar Cordeiro, “Planejamento e Design Paisagísticos/Landscape Planning and Design” (paper for First Meeting of Architect-Urban Planners, Curitiba, Brazil, May 1966), repr. in *Waldemar Cordeiro: Fantasia exata*, 512.
102. Waldemar Cordeiro, “Uma nova variável para modelo de organização territorial/A New Variable for the Model of Territorial Organization: The Evolution of Electronic and Communication Media” (paper for the VIII Congress of the Sociedade Interamericana de Planificação [SIAP], Salvador, November 1970), 520.
103. Waldemar Cordeiro, “Mário Cravo, Escultor/Mário Cravo, Sculptor,” *Folha da Manhã* (São Paulo), July 30, 1950, repr. in *Waldemar Cordeiro: Fantasia exata*, 88.
104. Waldemar Cordeiro, “o objeto,” *ad: arquitetura e decoração* (São Paulo), no. 20 (November/December 1956).

5. EDEN

1. Ceres Franco, *Opinião 65* (Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, 1965), n.p.
2. Christopher Dunn, *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 52–55.
3. Sérgio B. Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde: Art in Brazil, 1949–1979* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2013), 86.
4. “Parangolé” is a slang word, already little used by the time Oiticica appropriated it from a grafitto, that roughly connotes hubbub, syncopated rhythm, conviviality, and explosive energy. See Irene V. Small, *Hélio Oiticica: Folding the Frame* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 188. See also Carlos Zilio, João Luiz Lafeté, and Lígia Chiappini Leite, *O nacional e o popular na cultura brasileira: Artes plásticas e literatura* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1982), 28.
5. See Small, *Folding the Frame*, 202.
6. This story is recounted in Claudir Chaves, “Parangolé’ impedido no MAM,” *Diário Carioca* (Rio de Janeiro), August 14, 1965, 7. See also Paola Berenstein Jacques, *Estética da Ginga: A arquitetura das favelas através da obra de Hélio Oiticica* (Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra, 2001), 37.
7. For a critique of such interpretations, see Small, *Folding the Frame*, 181–86.
8. Roberto Schwarz, “Remarques sur la culture et la politique au Brésil, 1964–1969,” *Les temps modernes* (Paris) 288 (July 1970): 37–73, repr. as “Culture and Politics in Brazil, 1964–1969,” in *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, ed. John Gledson (New York: Verso, 1992), 127 (emphasis in original).

9. Schwarz, "Remarques sur la culture," 140.
10. Hélio Oiticica, "Os 'Bólides' e o sistema espacial," June 8, 1964, 0144/64, p. 01/13, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.
11. Art historian Angela Varela Loeb has also pointed to fascinating parallels between several of Oiticica's early 1960s *Bólides* and mid-1960s *Penetráveis* (some of which were later included in Oiticica's *Eden* environment) and the ersatz street shelters crafted by poor and unhoused people in Rio de Janeiro. Angela Varela Loeb, "Um percurso nos Bólides de Hélio Oiticica" (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2009), 100–101. See also Angela Varela Loeb, "Os Bólides do Programa Ambiental de Hélio Oiticica," *ARS* (São Paulo) 9, no. 17 (2011): 48–77; and Sabeth Buchmann and Max Jorge Hinderer Cruz, *Hélio Oiticica and Neville D'Almeida: Block-Experiments in Cosmococa—Program in Progress* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2013), 102n49.
12. See Small, *Folding the Frame*, 20, 57–59.
13. The application of the phrase "real space" to the works of artists who had been affiliated with Neoconcretism seems to originate with Brazilian art critic Ferreira Gullar's 1959 "Teoria do não-objeto" and articles on Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark by Brazilian art critic Mário Pedrosa: see his "Os projetos de Hélio Oiticica," *Jornal do Brasil*, November 25, 1961; and "A obra de Lygia Clark," *O Estado de São Paulo, Suplemento Literária*, December 28, 1963, repr. in *Textos escolhidos: Acadêmicos e modernos*, ed. Otilia Beatriz Fiori Arantes (São Paulo: EdUSP, 1995), 347. See also Paulo Herkenhoff, "Lygia Clark," in *Lygia Clark* (Barcelona: Fundacio Antoni Tapies, 1998), 38; and Monica Amor, "From Work to Frame, In Between, and Beyond: Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica, 1959–1964," *Grey Room* 38 (Winter 2010): 27.
14. Hélio Oiticica, untitled manuscript, August 7, 1961, 0182/61, p. 05/06, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.
15. Oiticica, untitled manuscript, p. 06/06. On the importance of the plane as a fundamental formal trope for Oiticica, see Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde*, 43.
16. See Hélio Oiticica, "Estudo em guache para o núcleo médio nº 1 (NC3)," *Estudos para Núcleos*, 0188/60, p. 05/15, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro; and Hélio Oiticica, "Planta de teto NC3," *Notas para Grande Núcleo nº 1*, 0191/60, partial document 2/7, p. 05/06, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.
17. See Small, *Folding the Frame*, 88–90.
18. "Esse projeto seria algo como um jardim, aberto ao público, em uma cidade qualquer, de preferência num lugar amplo, como se fosse um parque, a não dando saída diretamente para ruas." Hélio Oiticica, "Projeto Cães de Caça e Pintura Nuclear," 0024/61, p. 01/06, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.
19. "O indivíduo aqui se refugaria, assim como quem entra num museu, para vivências de ordem estética." Oiticica, "Projeto Cães de Caça," p. 02/06.
20. Small, *Folding the Frame*, 90.
21. Jacques, *Estética da Ginga*, 27. For a response to Jacques, see Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde*, 70–71; and Sérgio B. Martins, "Hélio Oiticica: Mapping the Constructive," *Third Text* 24, no. 4 (2010): 417–19.
22. For a careful consideration of Mangueira's importance for Oiticica's work, see Michael Asbury, "O Hélio não tinha Ginga/Hélio Couldn't Dance," in *Fios Soltos: A Arte de Hélio Oiticica*, ed. Paula Braga (São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2008), 27–65.
23. For a similar analysis of a Brazilian artist using Black bodies to activate artworks, see Adrian Anagnost, "Lygia Pape in Transit: Performing Site in 1960s–1970s Rio de Janeiro," *ASAP/Journal* 2, no. 3 (September 2017): 531–32, 536–37, 540.
24. On the *Parangolés*, see Monica Amor, *Theories of the Nonobject: Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, 1944–1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016), 137–71, 222n32; Anna Dezeuze, "Tactile Materialization, Sensory Politics: Hélio Oiticica's *Parangolés*," *Art Journal* 63, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 65–67; and Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde*, 212n97.
25. Zilio, "Da Antropofagia," 28.
26. See "Carnaval se aproxima," *Correio da Manhã*, February 17, 1963, 4; and José Antônio, "Quando o samba desce do morro," *Revista do Domingo, Jornal do Brasil*, February 14, 1965, 2. The web of associations around Carnaval, favelas, poverty, *mestiçagem* (racial mixture), dance and song, and African and syncretic religious traditions is neatly summed up in Miran Monteiro de Barros Latif, "Abrigo na Cidade," in *Uma cidade no trópico: São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Agir, 1965), 193–98. See also Maria Livia de Sá Roriz Aguiar, "Uma história a partir dos 'trabalhos de memória': O Carnaval e a Velha Guarda," *Parágrafo* (São Paulo) 2, no. 2 (2014): 228–42.
27. Roberto DaMatta, *Carnavais, malandros e heróis para uma sociologia do dilema brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1978), trans. as *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991). See also Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky [Elena Aleksandrovna Izvol'skaja] (London: MIT Press, 1968).
28. Turner's view, it must be said, is wildly utopian and completely essentializing. Victor Turner, "Carnival in Rio: Dionysian Drama in an Industrializing Society," in *The Celebration of Society: Perspectives on Contemporary Cultural Performance*, ed. Frank Manning (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University, 1983), 114.
29. See A. V. Lunacharsky, "О смехе" [On laughter], *Литературный критик* [Literary critique] 4 (1935): 3–9, originally delivered as a speech to the Languages and Literatures section of the Soviet Academy of Sciences on January 30, 1931. This notion of carnival as a safety valve has also been discussed by Victor Turner's mentor, South African/British social anthropologist Max Gluckman. Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956). See also John Docker, "Dilemmas of World Upside Down," in *Postmodernism and Popular Culture: A Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 193–94; and Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (1976), trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 4.

30. Terry Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin, or, Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (London: Verso, 1981), 148.
31. On the watching/wearing cycle, see Hélio Oiticica, "Anotações sobre o Parangolé" (November 1965), in *Aspiro ao grande labirinto* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1986), 70–72; Martins, "Mapping the Constructive," 419; Small, *Folding the Frame*, 180–82; and Anagnost, "Lygia Pape in Transit," 538–39.
32. Álvaro Armando (Helena Ferraz), "Coisas de leitura: Carnaval de ontem a de hoje," *Leitura* 7 (1958): 10. See also essayist Miran Monteiro de Barros Latif's imagistic history of the architecture of Rio de Janeiro. Latif, "Abrigo na Cidade," 193–98.
33. Fabio Ponso, "Após Praça Onze, samba vive era de ouro na Presidente Vargas e na Candelária," *Acervo O Globo*, February 14, 2017, <https://acervo.oglobo.globo.com/em-destaque/apos-praca-onze-samba-vive-era-de-ouro-na-presidente-vargas-na-candelaria-20926036>. See also Aguiar, "Uma história," 234.
34. "O Carnaval, máximo de festa brasileira, quando o morro desce para a avenida e vem mostrar o nosso samba." "Carnaval se aproxima."
35. The 1960s were also the period during which samba school activities on the morros were increasingly attended by middle-class, predominantly white Brazilians, e.g., the famed Gigi of Mangueira, and Oiticica himself. See Martins, "Mapping the Constructive," 417–19.
36. On this history of Carnaval, see also Marianna F. M. Monteiro and Paulo Dias, "Os fios da trama: Grandes temas da música popular tradicional brasileira," *Estudos avançados* 24, no. 69 (2010): 349–71.
37. See Natalie Zemon Davis, "Women on Top," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 124–50; and Docker, "Dilemmas of World Upside Down," 194–95.
38. The idea that antagonism lies at the root of democratic politics comes from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, 2nd ed. (1985; repr., London: Verso, 2001), 1–2. This notion of antagonism was taken up in art historical analyses beginning with Rosalyn Deutsche, who questioned the potential for public art to host or inculcate "democratic culture." Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (1996; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), 269–70. Deutsche's work has further influenced readings of Laclau and Mouffe found in Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004); Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* 110 (2004): 51–79; and Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 118–19.
39. Tania Rivera, "O reviramento do sujeito e da cultura em Hélio Oiticica," *Arte e Ensaio* (Rio de Janeiro) 19 (2009): 110. See also Tania Rivera, "Ethics, Psychoanalysis and Postmodern Art in Brazil," *Third Text* 26, no. 1 (January 2012): 58–61; and Martins, *Constructing an Avant-Garde*, 212n99.
40. On the significance of the Aterro do Flamengo site for the Parangolés, see Anagnost, "Lygia Pape in Transit," 533–39. On the social segregation of Rio de Janeiro more generally, see Zuenir Ventura, *Cidade partida* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994); and Lorraine Leu, *Defiant Geographies: Race and Urban Space in 1920s Rio de Janeiro* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020).
41. See Cynthia Canejo, "The Resurgence of Anthropophagy: Tropicália, Tropicalismo, and Hélio Oiticica," *Third Text* 18, no. 1 (2004): 61–68.
42. Hélio Oiticica, "Esquema geral da Nova Objetividade," in *Nova Objetividade Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Museu de Arte Moderna, 1967), n.p.
43. Oiticica, "Esquema geral da Nova Objetividade." See also Michael Asbury, "Hélio Oiticica e a Ditadura Militar," in *Em 1964: Arte e Cultura no Ano do Golpe* (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Moreira Salles, 2014), <https://em1964.com.br/helio-oiticica-e-a-ditadura-militar-no-brasil-por-michael-asbury>.
44. Zilio, "Da Antropofagia," 30–31.
45. "A primeiríssima tentativa consciente objetiva, de impor uma imagem obviamente 'brasileira' ao contexto atual da vanguarda e das manifestações em geral da arte nacional." Hélio Oiticica, untitled text [*Tropicália*], March 4, 1968, in Oiticica, *Aspiro*, 106.
46. Martins, "Mapping the Constructive," 418. On the "weird combination of the archaic and the modern" of the broader tropicalist movement in music and popular culture, see Schwarz, "Culture and Politics in Brazil," 142.
47. The argument about *Tropicália* and underdevelopment can be found in Michael Asbury, "Changing Perceptions of National Identity in Brazilian Art and Modern Architecture," in *Transculturation: Cities, Spaces and Architectures in Latin America*, ed. Felipe Hernández, Mark Millington, and Iain Borden (New York: Rodopi, 2005), 71–72. Cf. Small, *Folding the Frame*, 102.
48. See Gilles Ivain [Ivan Chtcheglov], "Formulary for a New Urbanism," *Internationale Situationniste* (October 1953): 17–19, repr. in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), 2–3.
49. Guy Brett and Hélio Oiticica, "Hélio Oiticica Retrospective at the Whitechapel Gallery, until 6 April 1969/Oiticica Talks to Guy Brett," *Studio International* (London) 177, no. 909 (March 1969): 134.
50. The word "*mocambo/mucambo*" can refer to communities formed by escaped slaves prior to abolition, and there is an implicit racialization of these architectural forms. Gilberto Freyre, *Sobrados e mucambos: Decadência de partiarchado rural no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1936). See also Christian Edward, Cyril Lynch, and Pía Paganelli, "The Culturalist Conservatism of Gilberto Freyre: Society, Decline and Social Change in *Sobrados e Mucambos* (1936)," *Sociologia e Antropologia* (Rio de Janeiro) 7, no. 3 (December 2017): 879–903; and Brodwyn Fischer, "Unequal Ties: Gilberto Freyre's Recife and the Challenges of Urban History in the Global South" (unpublished manuscript presented at Latin American History Workshop, University of Chicago, March 6, 2015), n.p.
51. Fischer, "Gilberto Freyre's Recife," n.p.
52. Roberto DaMatta, *A casa e a rua: Espaço, cidadania, mulher e morte no Brasil* (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1985). See also Richard M. Morse, "Cities and Society in Nineteenth-Century Latin America: Brazil," in

- The Urban Development of Latin America*, ed. Richard Schaedel, Jorge Enrique Hardoy, and Nora Scott Kinzer (The Hague: Mouton, 1978), 289–90.
53. Brodwyn Fischer, “Freedom’s Bonds: From Slavery to Informality in Urban Brazil” (lecture given at Tulane University, New Orleans, February 7, 2019).
 54. Hélio Oiticica, “Parangolé: Da anti-arte às apropriações ambientais de Oiticica” (1966), *GAM: Galeria de Arte Moderna* (Rio de Janeiro) 6 (May 1967): 27.
 55. Hélio Oiticica, “Barracão,” August 19, 1969, 0440/69, p. 01/01, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro, repr. in Oiticica, *Aspiro*, 116.
 56. See Marcel Hénaff and Tracy B. Strong, “The Conditions of Public Space: Vision, Speech, and Theatricality,” in *Public Space and Democracy*, ed. Marcel Hénaff and Tracy B. Strong (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 1. On the particular conditions of public space in Latin America, see Pablo Piccato, “Public Sphere in Latin America: A Map of the Historiography,” *Social History* 35, no. 2 (May 2010): 165–92. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989); and Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (1977; repr., New York: W. W. Norton, 1992).
 57. Oiticica, “Barracão,” 117.
 58. Guilherme Wisnik, “Public Space on the Run: Brazilian Art and Architecture at the End of the 1960s,” *Third Text* 26, no. 1 (2012): 128.
 59. The most extensive discussion of this topic comes with Rosalind Krauss on “the fronto-parallel organization of the Gestalt, with its drive to verticalize everything as image, to align everything in accordance with the viewer’s upright body,” as opposed to the formlessness and material *bassesse* (lowness) theorized by Georges Bataille and elaborated upon by artists of the 1960s and 1970s. Rosalind E. Krauss, “Horizontality,” in *Formless*, ed. Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss (New York: Zone, 1997), 94, 97.
 60. Luiz Renato Martins, *The Long Roots of Formalism in Brazil* (Boston: Brill, 2018), 23–26.
 61. Zilio, “Da Antropofagia,” 31.
 62. Martins, “Mapping the Constructive,” 415–16.
 63. The cinematic would form a core principle for Oiticica’s 1970s environments.
 64. Zilio, “Da Antropofagia,” 46.
 65. Zilio, “Da Antropofagia,” 46. Sections of this letter were printed, in edited form, in the exhibition catalog *Hélio Oiticica* (Rotterdam: Witte de With; Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1992), 12–13.
 66. Hélio Oiticica, “Aparcemento do Suprasensorial,” December 1967, 0108/67, p. 01/04–02/04, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro.
 67. See also Small, *Folding the Frame*, 113–15.
 68. This spiraling composition has some parallels to Robert Smithson’s engagement with the “primordial infrastructure” of the geologic, that crystalline sense of time evident in the “premonitions, labyrinths, cycles, and repetitions” of certain monumental premodern architectures. However, Smithson’s works draw their material inward toward a central spine, axis, or core, while the formless materials (straw, sand, water) of Oiticica’s works are spread or strewn to form a ground. Robert Smithson, “Ultramoderne,” *Arts Magazine* (September–October 1967): 31–33, repr. in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 2nd ed., ed. Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 62–65. See also “Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson” (1970), in Flam, ed., *Robert Smithson*, 249.
 69. Ian Dunlop, “You Can Even Paddle at This Show!,” *Evening Standard* (London), March 3, 1969.
 70. Elizabeth Glazebrook, “Art: Elizabeth Glazebrook on Helio [sic] Oiticica and Jann Haworth,” *Queen* (London), February 19, 1969, n.p.
 71. Oiticica also imagined additional behavior-altering activities taking place in his environments, namely drug use. As Irene Small describes, “Oiticica had also hoped to provide sensory experiences of the narcotic kind in Eden, with marijuana in the *Cannabiana* cabin and nitro benzol, commonly called ‘Lolo’s smell’ in Rio, in the *Lololiana* cabin. Although Brett desisted from providing such ‘materials,’ it is almost certain that many of Eden’s most enthusiastic visitors indulged on their own.” Irene V. Small, “Hélio Oiticica and the Morphology of Things” (PhD diss., Yale University, 2009), 110n85. This note was not included in Small’s *Folding the Frame*.
 72. Likewise, Irene Small has discussed the *Penetráveis*’ permutations on the scale of the human body as allowing different-sized groups to congregate, and foregrounding participatory conviviality. Small, *Folding the Frame*, 107–9.
 73. Hélio Oiticica, “As Possibilidades do Crelazer,” May 10, 1969, AHO/PHO 0305.69, 165, p. 01/03–02/03, Archives of the Projeto Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro, repr. in Oiticica, *Aspiro*, 115 (emphasis in original).
 74. On the latter, see Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2004), esp. xix–xx, 25–34. On action as a direct relationship between humans, encompassing “the sense of initiative,” of beginning, and as a precondition for politics, see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed., introduction by Margaret Canovan (1958; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), esp. 9, 34–35.
 75. Small, *Folding the Frame*, 104, 187.
 76. Lee, *Chronophobia*, 127.
 77. The discussion of the “imagic” *Penetrável* is found in Hélio Oiticica to Guy Brett, April 12, 1967, WAG/EXH/2/122, OITICICA 1969, Whitechapel Gallery Archives, London.
 78. Hélio Oiticica to Guy Brett, October 27, 1967, WAG/EXH/2/122, OITICICA 1969, Whitechapel Gallery Archives, London.
 79. Mark Glazebrook to Antonio Olinto, March 5, 1969, WAG/EXH/2/122, OITICICA 1969, Whitechapel Gallery Archives, London. Mark Glazebrook was the director of the Whitechapel Gallery, and Antonio Olinto was the Brazilian cultural attaché in London.
 80. “Whitechapel Wonderland,” *Evening Standard* (London), February 17, 1969.
 81. “Whitechapel Wonderland.”
 82. Small, *Folding the Frame*, 114.

83. Sérgio B. Martins argues that, despite these images, Oiticica opposed understandings of his work as folkloric or primitivist. See Martins, "Mapping the Constructive," 417.
84. *Hélio Oiticica* (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 1969), n.p. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques* (Paris: Plon, 1955), image 15.
85. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, 249.
86. Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, 249–50.
87. Oiticica to Brett, October 27, 1967. See also *Hélio Oiticica* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1992), 12. This description bears some resemblance to the *Cidade do homem nu* proposed by Flávio de Carvalho in 1930, as discussed in Chapter 1.
88. César Albisetti and Angelo Jayme Venturelli, eds., *Enciclopédia Bororo* (Campo Grande: Museu regional Dom Bosco, 1962). Oiticica may have come across this publication during his time working at Brazil's Museu Nacional, 1961–64. See Small, *Folding the Frame*, 193–200.
89. See Claude Lévi-Strauss, "Contribution à l'étude de l'organisation sociale des Indiens Bororo," *Journal de la société des américanistes* 28, no. 2 (1936): 269–304. Cf. Richard Sennett, *Respect in a World of Inequality* (New York: Norton, 2011), 228–30.
90. "Whitechapel Wonderland."
91. See Chapter 1.

AFTERWORD

1. Lina Bo Bardi, "Casas de Vilanova Artigas," *Habitat 1* (October–December 1950): 2.
2. Brodwyn Fischer, *A Poverty of Rights: Citizenship and Inequality in Twentieth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).
3. See Marcos Steuernagel, "Who Wants Money? Performing Radical Aesthetics amid the Conservative Turn," and Reighan Gillam, "I Africanize São Paulo: Vision, Race, and Afro-Paulistano Visual Culture" (papers presented at Superlative City: Experimental Urbanity in São Paulo Symposium, Mellon Foundation Initiative in Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., February 22–23, 2019).
4. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed., introduction by Margaret Canovan (1958; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 195. On the prepolitical, see also Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007), 10–16.
5. Arendt, *Human Condition*, 198.
6. Lina Bo Bardi, Untitled typewritten manuscript ["Exposição Nordeste"] (1963), Acervo do Museu de Arte Moderna da Bahia, Salvador.