

SIDE GALLERY

HEITOR DOS PRAZERES



Table

Designed by Heitor dos Prazeres
Brazil, 1960s
Wood and oil painting

Measurements

75,5 × 69,2 × 42h cm
29,7 × 27,2 × 16,5h in

Details

Unique piece

Provenance

Artist's collection
Private collection, Belo Horizonte

Exhibitions

36th Bienal de São Paulo: Nem todo viandante anda estradas – Da humanidade como prática, São Paulo, Brazil (2025)
Heitor dos Prazeres é meu nome, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil – CCBB, Rio de Janeiro (2023)

Literature

Margareth Telles (ed.), Heitor dos Prazeres é meu nome, Rio de Janeiro: MT Projetos de Arte, 2024, p. 130, illustrated.

Biography

Heitor dos Prazeres (1898–1966) was a Brazilian visual artist, composer, samba musician, and costume designer, and a key figure in the cultural life of Rio de Janeiro during the first half of the twentieth century. A self-taught artist, he first entered Rio's artistic circles through music and became closely associated with the development of samba and the cultural life of the area between Cidade Nova and the Port of Rio de Janeiro, known as "Little Africa."

By the mid-1930s, Prazeres began to dedicate himself increasingly to painting. His vibrant compositions, characterized by expressive color and rhythmic figures, drew directly from his own surroundings and experiences. Popular celebrations, samba, bohemian life, Afro-Brazilian religious traditions, and scenes of everyday urban life became recurring subjects in his work. Through these representations, Prazeres placed Brazilian Black culture and experience at the center of his artistic practice at a time when they remained largely marginalized within the country's established cultural institutions.

His work received significant recognition during his lifetime. In 1951, he was awarded third place at the 1st Bienal de São Paulo for Moenda, now in the collection of MAC USP. The following year, he participated in the Venice Biennale with Mercado and Batuque. He was given a Special Room at the 2nd Bienal de São Paulo in 1953–54 and later participated in further editions of the Bienal. In 1966, the year of his death, he represented Brazil at the First World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar, Senegal.

Prazeres' work is held in major international and Brazilian institutional collections, including The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro; Museu Afro Brasil Emanoel Araújo; Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP); and Pinacoteca de São Paulo, among others. His work was the subject of the major retrospective Heitor dos Prazeres é meu nome at CCBB Rio de Janeiro in 2023 and was included in the 36th Bienal de São Paulo in 2025.