

# — Theatre

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## 1. Introduction

To learn about the theatre scene in Brazil,  
first a lesson in grammar:

In the Portuguese language words ending with  
the letter L, when they become plural, the letter L  
is dropped and substituted with the letter I.

For example:

*Real*, the Brazilian currency becomes *Reais*.

*EditaL*, a call for entries or a call for cultural  
subsidy requests, becomes *Editais*.

*Globo*, the main TV network which disseminates  
soap-operas or novelas becomes *Globos*...

But in the theatre scene actors who work for  
Globo become nicknamed: *Global*... a word  
ending in L. So a performance full of *Globais* will  
definitely bring in lots of *Reais*.

This is why theatremakers need as many institutional Editais as possible so that 'non-Global' (struggling) actors can work, travel and tour the many *Brasis*... plural of *Brasil*.

We Brazilians often speak of Brazil in the plural form to express its vast cultural and social diversity. And Brazil's performing arts and theatre manifestations are as numerous as our many *Brasis*. When we started to write this mapping, my desire was to find out who the excluded were in this country of many Brazil's so that the Dutch would not overlook the underprivileged when engaging with Brazil. But cultural policy under our Minister of Culture Gilberto Gil was one of 'inclusion' and 'decentralization', breaking a long-standing Rio-São Paulo-centric rule of culture (what we refer to as the Eixo Rio-São Paulo or Axis Rio-São Paulo). The Ministry has been seeking out and mapping cultural manifestations from all corners of the country. All are included: traditional storytellers, afro-descendants, Indians, culturas populares (what used to be called Folklore), culturas quilombolas (communities formed by descendants of escaped slaves), gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender, and gypsies. The cultural scene has been fortunate under the presidency of President Lula da Silva. To have Gilberto Gil as the minister of Culture is almost as if Bob Dylan became minister of culture in the United States.

So this little lesson in Portuguese theatrical plurals should help the Dutch begin to navigate the Brazilian theatre scene in Portuguese. One should consider this mapping as a guide to getting in touch with Brazilians involved in theatre who have a reach far beyond that of the organizations with which they work and organizations that have a reach far beyond their own territories.

Brazil is enormous. Names, given here, are multipliers - people who know more people. Hence we have attempted to give out contacts that would put the Dutch in touch with anyone in the theatre scene within one or two degrees of separation of anyone involved in theatre anywhere in the country. We will explain how to get in touch, we offer links to websites throughout the text, how to navigate certain sites in Portuguese in addition to offering a few cultural do's and don'ts when establishing contact.



## 2. A History

It is of course impossible to summarize 500 years of theatre tradition in a few pages. Therefore, we will take many big steps to mark the most important information.

### 1500s: Theatre as Crime

During the age of European colonization of the New World many crimes were committed against native peoples and centuries later we hear demands for apologies. Usually accusations are against peoples of a certain nationality or ethnicity. Recently, in the case of Brazil, a unique and historic accusation was made against an art form, which was theatre. At a seminar called the Theatricality of the Human held in 2008 at the Oi Futuro in Rio de Janeiro two keynote speakers sat at the same table. One speaker was Brazilian Indian Kaka Werá. The other, the world renowned Zé Celso of the Oficina Uzya Uzona. Kaka Werá at one point said:

*"...in my perception, just as terrible as war can be, just as terrible a disease brought from the other side of the ocean can be, and just as terrible slavery can be, theatre was to indigenous peoples. A war does away with bodies but the soul continues. A disease decimates families, tribes, but the spirit continues. But theatre staged in the past didn't do away with bodies. It did away with souls".*

Kaka Werá was talking about the theatre used by the Jesuits from Portugal during the colonization in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. In theatre history classes, we learn this to be the beginning of Brazilian theatre. Padre José de Anchieta (1534-1597) was a priest who taught and converted Indians through plays he wrote. The Indians' artistic manifestations of dance and music became fertile ground for conversion to Christianity. In these plays elements of indigenous culture were mixed with the dogmas of the Catholic Church. Indian deities and pajés, the holders of tribal wisdom, healers

and spiritual leaders, were all subverted in Anchieta's texts represented as demons and even Satan.

At the seminar, Zé Celso was thrown aback by Kaká Werá's talk and humbly responded: *"You don't know how completely complemented I just became"*. The evening ended with Zé Celso, Kaka Werá and the audience forming a large circle and engaging in a unplanned *pajelança* (an Indian ritual used to solve problems afflicting a person or collectivity). No demands for apologies were made. Just a symbolic moment in which Brazilian theatre came full circle; history and healing coming together in one moment.

### 1600s & 1700s

During the following two centuries theatre consisted of plays put on at religious festivities or civic commemorations. Some of these were representations of the battles fought during those centuries, for example, between the Portuguese and the Dutch. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century plays were presented in public squares, on wood stages and slowly opera houses or comedy houses started to appear. With them came the first theatre groups with actors hired from the poorer classes, mostly mulattos. The stage was off limits to women so men performed female roles as well. During this period Voltaire, Goldoni and Molière were performed.

### 1800s

In the beginning of the 1900s the royal house of Portugal moved to Brazil, fleeing Napoleon. Brazil became seat to the Portuguese crown for 14 years and there was a huge incentive to build theatres. Theatre companies started to appropriate themselves of theatres, the first being Companhia Teatral Brasileira in Niterói directed by actor João Caetano (1808-1863). The Portuguese prince declared Brazil's independence in 1822 and declared himself Emperor. Brazil as a nation was born into monarchy and Empire. In this climate of nationalism, foreign actors were substituted by

Brazilian actors. Colored people weren't allowed to attend theatre so actors, on the most part, were still mulattos wearing white and red make-up. Martins Pena (1815-1848) is seen as the founder of Brazilian theatre who wrote *comédias de costumes* (comedy of manners) a favorite genre amongst audiences, who preferred free prose without the formality of earlier works. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Brazilian theatre was renewed with the New Opera based on French influence by Joaquim Manoel de Macedo. Artur Azevedo (1855-1908) wrote operettas and vaudeville plays, the public's favorite genres. José de Alencar's (1829-1877) love for Brazil drove him to write the important novel *O Guarani*. His *O Jesuita* is considered the first Brazilian epic play. França Junior (1838-1890) continued the comedy of manners but took it to a more realistic and often vulgar level without the delicacy of the Martins Pena works. Coelho Neto (1864-1934) wrote *comedy of manners* with an intellectual tone and Paulo Barreto a.k.a. João do Rio satirized the Parisian Salons.

### Early 1900s

With the Great War European artists ceased to visit Brazil allowing Brazilians to focus on their own problems and customs in a mix of *comedy of manners* with nationalist themes. In the 20s and 30s leading actors of various companies became national idols, such as Leopoldo Fróes and Procópio Ferreira. Their presence on stage guaranteed the plays' success regardless of text, directors or other actors. The main actor as star was typical of the *Teatro Trianon*, a continuation of the comedy of manners of the 1800s. Joracy Camargo was one of the authors of this new genre, the *teatro de revista* (a type of Brazilian vaudeville) that packed the theatres in the Praça Tiradentes in Rio. In 1932 with the Companhia Procópio Ferreira, Joracy Camargo premiered *Deus Lhe Pague* in São Paulo, a work of Marxist ideology. Procópio Ferreira himself played the main role attracting over 10,000 spectators. Oduvaldo

Vianna's work was also political in that it contained hints of anarchism. His 1933 piece *Amor* was considered ahead of its time as it defended divorce (which only became legal four decades later in 1977). Also in this early part of the century Mario de Andrade's *Macunaíma* (1928), about an anti-hero Indian embodying the Brazilian people, should be mentioned. This novel became a classic of Brazilian theatre in Antunes Filho's adaptation in the 70s.

### Estado Novo & Post-War: Crimes against theatre

Under the Estado Novo (1937-1945), populist government of dictator Getúlio Vargas, theatre suffered censorship under the establishment of the National Service of Theatre. Themes that were not interesting to the government were suppressed. Only the *chanchada* were allowed a naive form of low-quality theatre that didn't threaten the government. The government hired intellectuals to write favorable articles about the government. Others who wouldn't collaborate (like Monteiro Lobato and Graciliano Ramos) were arrested. Some companies adhered to government demands. Others didn't and the first experimental theatre appeared. In 1938 diplomat Paschoal Carlos Magno founded the Teatro do Estudante do Brasil which engaged in psychological construction of characters and did away with the *ponto* (the souffleur). In 1943 Nelson Rodrigues wrote *Vestido de Noiva*, directed by Ziembinski. This was the beginning of modern Brazilian theatre. For the first time the director controlled the entire scene. The freedom of the leading actor, who once used to do whatever he or she pleased to attract an audience, was curbed. Nonetheless, it was Nelson Rodrigues who as playwright would change Brazilian theatre forever with themes never before seen on stage like sex, incest and most of the taboos of his time.



At the end of the 40s the Teatro Brasileiro de Comedia or TBC was formed with 30 of the greatest talents of the time giving rise to smaller groups in São Paulo. Television began to take on some of these actors. The Teatro de Arena founded by José Renato in 1957 prioritized Brazilian productions and artists and reacted against high prices of theatre tickets. Its most renowned author and actor Gianfrancesco Guarnieri wrote *Eles Não Usam Black Tie* (1958), *Gimba* and *A Semente* bringing to stage social problems caused by industrialization. Jorge Andrade, on the other hand, having been born on a farm, brought to light social issues of rural Brazil. A theatre of myths and tales, rural and religious themes was spearheaded (and still is) by playwright Ariano Suassuna born in Paraíba but moved early to Recife (State of Pernambuco). He is famous for *O Auto da Compadecida*. Another renowned North Easterner was Dias Gomes who surprised critics in 1961 with *O Pagador de Promessas*.

In 1958 Teatro Oficina was born first as an amateur company of students from the law school at Largo de São Francisco in São Paulo. They craved something different from elitist TBC and the nationalist Arena theatre companies. Oficina was home to José Celso Martinez Corrêa (the same Zé Celso humbled by Indian Kaka Werá at the seminar in 2008), Renato Borghi, Amir Haddad (who today directs the group *Tá Na Rua* in Rio) and Fauzi Arap. Zé Celso's group changed name to Oficina Uzyrna Uzona in 1971. Their production *O Rei da Vela* in 1967 gained notoriety and launched the famous Tropicalist Movement. Oficina invited the American group Living Theatre to Brazil and Oficina went international.

### The Dictatorship Years 1964-1985: More Crimes against Theatre

Dark pages in Brazilian History begin – a military coup in April of 1964 - one of many coups to take place in Latin America over the next years. In December of '64 Augusto Boal directs the hit show *Opinião*, (Opinion). Opinion was also the name given to the student movement against the dictatorship. Grupo Opinião gave voice to traditional artists and samba composers. But in 1968 the AI-5 (Institutional Act 5) required that all music, theatre, movies be screened and censored before public display. Police cut texts, invaded theatres during plays, beat up actors on stage, destroyed sets, prohibited performances - in essence declared war on all forms of artistic expression. Artists who resisted were arrested, tortured and went into exile. In spite of all this the theatre class remained steadfast in its opposition to the dictatorship, holding symbolic demonstrations and by writing subtleties in between the lines. But the middle class moved away from theatre being branded as violent, perverse and full of subversives. Although the Arena and Oficina Theatres opposed the dictatorship in their own ways, they accused each other of being politically alienated rather than joining forces. Arena believed that to resist censorship they had to work metaphors into their texts. Oficina believed in being more direct by questioning customs and moral values. Zé Celso of Oficina ended up spending 5 years in exile in Portugal returning in '79. Augusto Boal of Arena was arrested, tortured and exiled in 1971. In Argentina he established the Teatro Invisível. In '73 he went to Peru and started the Teatro Forum and developed it further in Ecuador with Indian populations under the name of Teatro Imagem. The technique of both theatres was based on facts; the oppressed and their oppressors confront each other, objectively defending their own interests and wishes. In this confrontation the oppressed loses. The audience is then invited by a facilitator to enter the scene and substitute the oppressed in order to find alternatives to the problem. After two years in Portugal

Augusto Boal went to Paris where he developed the Theatre of the Oppressed before returning to Brazil in 1986. In Rio he created the CTO, The Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. In the 70s the SESC promoted a project called Projeto Mambembe that put theatre groups on tour throughout the country including small towns and villages squares. These groups performed *comedia de costumes* (comedy of manners) and circus theatre. The term mambembe later came to describe a type of traveling theatre with little or no financial support.

A group appeared on the scene in Rio in the 70s, Asdrubal Trouxe o Trombone (Asdrubal Brought the Trombone) which put on reinterpretations of classics that influenced an entire generation of artists. They were known for their collective creative process, language experimentation, open-ended structures and improvisation. Ricardo Almeida and Miguel Magno from São Paulo and Pedro Cardoso and Felipe Pinheiro in Rio were the forerunners of a movement which took the 80s by storm and till this day fills theatres across the nation more than any other type of theatre: *besteírol* (a play on the word *besteira*, foolishness, with the suffix -ol making it sound like a medicine). Miguel Falabella, Mauro Rasi and Vicente Pereira were also proponents of this theatre. With the end of the dictatorship and theatre's newly achieved freedom of expression, unbridled humor and bad language took off through *besteírol*.

### Post-dictatorship to Current

Asdrubal Trouxe o Trombone spawned many comedic actors who moved on to television. *Besteírol* was and is still going strong. But at the end of the 80s Gerald Thomas came on to the Brazilian scene from New York with his highly experimental theatre (collaborators included Philip Glass and Heiner Mueller) and made controversial productions like Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*. In the 90s Cacá Rosset rocked Shakespeare in the Park Festival with his *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Bia Lessa impressed Brazilian audiences

with her creative productions of *Orlando* and *Cartas Portuguesas*. And mime artist Denise Stoklos amazed audiences with her Mary Stuart performing in her technique of Essential Theatre. A theatre/cultural centre named after her, is being erected in her home town of Irati, Paraná.

Since then we have seen groups, solo performers, comedians with varying lengths in careers entertain, move and confront audiences in Brazil and beyond. To name a few at random: Rio-based Enrique Díaz of Companhia dos Atores, São Paulo-based Ulysses Cruz of the Grupo Boi Voador; Antunes Filho with his Centro de Pesquisa Teatral, Nós do Morro of the Favela do Vidigal performing everything from Shakespeare to Machado de Assis; Paraíba based Piolim with their *Vau da Sarapalha*; innovative playwright Newton Moreno with his *Agreste*; the hysterically intelligent *besteírol* of *Os Melhores do Mundo* from Brasília with their *Tormentas da Paixão*; The Story of Rebecca Sinclair and the important work by Nilton Bonder, *A Alma Imoral* (The Immoral Soul) adapted to stage and performed by Clarice Niskier.

Few have been mentioned in this final section of current theatre but we hope that the rest of this document will shed some light on other recent activities. More current theatre productions, will be mentioned in chapter 5. *O Fervo / The Heat*, in which focal points of creative intensity in Brazil is discussed. Like, we mentioned before, Brazil is an enormous country and we simply can't mention everyone. For more names and dates of performances throughout Brazilian theatre history one can surf to the online article (in Portuguese):

<http://br.geocities.com/poligonal2000/historiadoteatro.html>

Itaú Cultural has an online encyclopedia with 726 references to theatre in Rio and São Paulo from 1938-2006:

[http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicExternas/enciclopedia\\_teatro/](http://www.itaucultural.org.br/aplicExternas/enciclopedia_teatro/)

*Overmundo* and *O Palco* are other important databases on the internet.



### 3. A few overall Tendencies

There is a tendency for theatremakers (not just set designers) to be hired by fashion designers during the fashion weeks of São Paulo and Rio. Two such theatremakers are Bia Lessa and Daniela Thomas. In comedy theatre, the English term 'stand-up' is starting to be used to describe solo comedians. And there is also a huge tendency towards new circus and working with clowns. Because of an ever more demanding market actors today are learning circus techniques in theatre schools.

There is a tendency for constant reenactments of classics by Chekov, Molière and Shakespeare. There is also a tendency for a liberal use of Anne Bogart's viewpoints in plays. Finally another tendency that seems unique to Brazil is for theatremakers to hire choreographers to do the '*direção de movimento*' (movement direction) of a theatre piece. Just as in Holland choreographers will hire a dramaturge to tie together a dance piece; in Brazil it is becoming common practice for directors to hire choreographers to direct the movement of the characters of a play on the stage. This is not about dance but rather how actors move their own bodies and how they move about the stage. They are also hired to do *preparação corporal* (body preparation) of actors which involves warming the actors up for rehearsal or even a premiere. This practice is not limited to physical theatre but to even the most conservative productions. Three important movement directors are Dudude Herrmann, Izabel Stewart and Andrea Jabor.

### 4. Financial Support

#### SESC - the First Model for Theatre Support

It is a common joke or saying among Brazilian actors and theatremakers that the SESC is the ministry of culture. But this perception should be taken with a grain of salt. Indeed SESC's (Social Service of Commerce) contribution to culture has been incalculable over the years. The SESC is a private institution established to carry out social welfare programs. By means of a mandatory tax collected from commercial and service corporations the SESC has built monumental facilities, containing sports, libraries, internet and meeting areas, hotels, pools, and cultural centres and theatres.

The SESC operates very much like a theatre in Holland. They are all independent of one another and they buy performances for a few nights, or they might put theatre companies on tour within a state. But its selection process is not based on editais, or calls for entries, which will be discussed later. It's based more on a continued contact and networking until your name or project has reached a critical mass within the SESC's. From then on, you are likely to perform in a SESC. This doesn't mean SESC is nepotistic. They just have their own time and dynamic. SESC is known to be very willing to sit down and listen to proposals.

The National SESC (SESC Nacional) puts theatre companies on tour nationally through a project called *Palco Giratório* (Rotating Stage). Every year the Palco Giratório puts up to 12 theatre groups on tour throughout Brazil. The selection involves programmers or *técnicos* traveling to the SESC headquarters and lobbying for pieces they have seen. The only foreign company that is known to us, that has toured with the *Palco Giratório* is Dos à Deux, a duo of Brazilians based in France. It is hard to say if a Dutch group could penetrate the Palco Giratório.

The SESC of São Paulo under Danilo Santos de Miranda was the first to implement this pioneering vision of placing culture at the centre of the development of citizenship and human growth. Santos de Miranda believed that this could generate change not just in individuals but also in society as a whole.

This talk of citizenship may sound nationalistic or even propagandistic to the Dutch but in Brazil it's a serious matter and part of our social debate. For example, in the State of Roraima in the north of the country, over 50 percent of the Brazilians don't have a birth certificate. Brazil is a vast country which until recently privileged the few; its contrasts between rich and poor have always been alarming. Social inclusion, bringing the excluded Brazilians into the fold of basic citizenship and civil rights, is at the center of the Lula administration. This discussion has trickled down to all cultural institutions. The result is that theatremakers as well as all artists who get art subsidies must always offer something in return to the less fortunate: a *contrapartida* or counterproposal.

SESC was truly a pioneer when it came to 'building new citizens' through cultural action even before the Lula government came into power. Over the years SESC São Paulo built monumental cultural centers, theatres with the best equipment and multiplied its number of SESC's around the State of São Paulo. There are now 32 SESC's in the State of São Paulo. SESC became the major cultural disseminator. ... hence the joke about it being the Ministry of Culture.

SESCs around the country started to model themselves after the SESC São Paulo and some now offer equally impressive facilities from North to South, East to West. As a consequence many SESC's across Brazil now buy performances as well as create innovative contexts like festivals and thematic showcases for theatre groups.

The SESC Pompéia in São Paulo is probably the most famous with its brutalist architecture by Lina Bo Bardi with an intense cultural program. But many artists have complained that SESC Pompéia workers

behave like bureaucrats and are machine-like in their operations. There are small gems like SESC in Campo Grande (State of Mato Grosso do Sul), which treat the artist with utmost care and SESC Pelourinho with exceptionally skilled technicians.

Another interesting component of the SESC is the ESEM (Escola SESC de Ensino Médio – The SESC High School). It is a boarding school for teenagers in high school most of which come from families that work for commerce though not exclusively. Acceptance is based on high grades, high scores on a national test, interviews and financial need. The school campus is enormous with teachers and students living on the grounds and is located next to the infamous housing project *Cidade de Deus*. Rather than have barbed wire fences protecting the grounds, which is the practice in the neighborhood, it has a moat. At first glance one wonders what these kids are doing far from their families and close to the *Cidade de Deus*. But the children are a very talented group, bright with a rich vocabulary and access to high quality facilities. In 2009 the ESEM will inaugurate a 603 seat theatre on their campus - a possible opportunity for the Dutch to collaborate with an exceptional bunch of Brazilian children in a state-of-the-art theatre. The theatre will also be available for use by the surrounding community including the *Cidade de Deus*.

In order for the SESC to remain at the top of innovative thought it must update and renew itself in relation to artists' needs and rethink its policy of events. SESC has expanded so greatly and so quickly and because it must keep its theatres and facilities active with cultural events, it has become a voracious consumer of performances which, in the vast majority, are presented once or twice. Some argue that this stimulates a policy of waste and does not create or educate audiences. Nor does it contribute to the maintenance or continuity of the works of theatre companies as they are continually confronted with a market obsessed with consuming one premiere after another.



If any country wants to work with the SESC it is a good idea to start early, sending project proposals to a number of SESC's and act on two fronts: national headquarters (São Paulo) and locally (the SESC's the artists would like to work with). The SESC website [www.sesc.com.br](http://www.sesc.com.br) gives a good overview of all the possibilities it has to offer. With the exception of a few bureaucratic SESC's it is, for the most part, a very pleasurable experience to work with them.

When talking to them you may find the use of the word technician or *técnico* confusing. The SESC's refer to their artistic directors as *técnicos*. When SESC is talking about *técnico de teatro* or *técnico de dança* they are NOT referring to the technicians who hang lights in the theatres.

### SESI

Apart from SESC there is another organization in the S-system, the SESI. The SESI is maintained by industry. The SESI of São Paulo on Avenida Paulista (the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue of Brazil) has an entirely coherent policy on support for theatre and has managed to keep its theatre filled with people who are willing to queue all afternoon for tickets.

They work with educating young audiences through the public school system that uses *monitores*, workers trained in bringing students in contact with works of art. The SESI *monitores* visit schools and talk about the pieces before the students go on a school trip to view a play. Unlike SESC, SESI recently started to work with *editais* or calls for entries. They keep projects for months in their programming rather than just a few days or weeks. Many of the SESI theatre-goers are part of the generation who grew up under these *monitores*. Even though some consider them conservative in their programming SESI demonstrates a responsible and dedicated method of audience-building.

### The Rouanet Law & Other Laws of Incentive: the Second Model of Cultural Support

The *Lei Rouanet* or The Rouanet Law is a Brazilian fiscal/cultural incentive law that allows any corporation to pay 4% of its owed income tax to finance cultural projects. It is the main mechanism for cultural financing today. An artist first has to (as we say in Brazil) 'insert the project into the Law'. Some producers specialize in inserting projects into the law. This means the project has to be filled out on the internet for approval from The Ministry of Culture (MinC). Once approved, the project is published in the *Diário Oficial*, the government's official publication. With this publication the project qualifies to be financed by any company, corporation or private individual. It is then up to the artist and/or producer to go after this owed tax money amongst sponsors. The Lei Rouanet is often referred to as Lei de Mecenato or Maecenas Law (from the Roman patron Gaius Maecenas) but this is wrong because the money involved is owed public money and not corporate or private money. Minister Juca Ferreira recently admitted: "It seems like its private money but it's not. We have created an addiction of patronage using public money."

The problem with this mechanism is that corporations will finance cultural works with which they want their brands to be associated. So productions containing *Globais*, or famous actors, from the entertainment industry are more likely to attract sponsorship than smaller or lesser-known productions. This is not patronage. It is money that the corporation would have had to pay as tax to the government. Yet corporations still get their logos attached to the project. In a way it is free advertisement for companies using taxpayer money. Frequently before performances begin there are long recordings listing sponsors and even promotional corporate videos of sponsors. The interest in sponsoring theatre is more for PR reasons rather than meeting the needs of the artist.

The Lei Rouanet, nonetheless, has become the model for theatre and cultural financing and has inspired state and municipal governments to establish their own *Leis de Incentivo* (Laws of Incentive). In 2009 the Ministry of Culture is working to improve the Lei Rouanet. It is now possible, for example, to enter a project into the Lei Rouanet via internet.

### **The Cirque du Soleil Incident**

In 2006 the Cirque du Soleil came to Brazil for the first time and, with the help of the *Lei Rouanet*, received 9 million reais. The fact that Cirque du Soleil used public money in addition to charging up to 400 reais (more than 120 euro's) per ticket caused a huge revolt in the cultural sector and the press to the point of the Ministry of Culture needing to post an official explanation of what happened on their website.

The production company CIE Brasil was responsible for bringing Cirque du Soleil to Brasil and submitted the project to the Ministry of Culture requesting 22.3 million for two projects: 16.6 million for presentations in São Paulo and 5.7 million for presentations in Rio de Janeiro. The Ministry of Culture approved 9 million. The approval of the project meant that CIE Brasil could ask (in this case) Bradesco Bank (the main sponsor) for the 9 million reais that the bank would have otherwise paid in taxes to the government.

After heavy criticism from the cultural sector the Ministry demanded that they present a plan of 'democratization of access' to classes of lower income and suggested ideas such as offering cheaper tickets, free presentations, the broadcast of the performance on public television, workshops for Brazilian professionals or anything the producer CIE Brasil might suggest. CIE Brasil's counterproposal was considered unsatisfactory and the remainder of the money they had requested was denied. Because of the Cirque du Soleil incident the Lei Rouanet has since been revised making the 'democratization of access' more

important. The Ministry of Culture's final statement on denying Cirque du Soleil access to more tax money was: "The premise that guides the Ministry of Culture is simple: public funds invested in cultural projects should benefit the largest possible audience." To read more on this incident (in Portuguese) go to: [www.digestivocultural.com/blog/post.asp?codigo=1039](http://www.digestivocultural.com/blog/post.asp?codigo=1039)

Dealing with the Lei Rouanet, one must be very cautious. The perception in Brazil is that Holland, as is any other European nation, is a rich country and, as in the case with Cirque du Soleil, Brazilians will not appreciate companies from richer nations using their public funds unless you have a good *contrapartida*, a concept, plan, workshop, something, that shows you are willing to facilitate access of your work to the excluded segments of Brazilian society.

The Lei Rouanet's position as the main mechanism for cultural funding may change by the time collaborations begin between Brazil and Holland. The Lula government hopes to implement by the end of it's term (2010) the new *Plano Nacional de Cultura*, a cultural policy which would involve direct funding from Brasilia as well as more State and municipal funding. This will greatly diminish the need for artists to depend solely on corporations that are mostly only willing to sponsor big names in the Arts and Entertainment industry.



### **Editais: the Third Model of Theatre Support**

*Editais* are proclamations or calls for entries for cultural projects. It is through *editais* that theatremakers in Brazil apply for subsidy. Many corporations, like banks, energy and communications companies put out *editais* once to twice a year for artists to apply for the opportunity to occupy their own theatres and (depending on the *edital*) to finance all aspects of the production including artistic fees and per diems. For foreigners to get into the *edital* system you will need a *proponente* or proponent, a producer or person in Brazil to submit the project.

Many *editais* allow theatremakers to submit whatever project they wish. You can choose touring (*circulação*), creation (*montagem*), company maintenance (*manutenção de companhia*), for example. But in all cases you have to determine ALL your conditions: where you are going to work, what you are going to do, travel expenses, salaries, taxes deducted, etc.

Some of these banks or communications corporations make use of *Leis de Incentivo* like the Rouanet Law to build their own cultural institutes.

Some of the most prominent corporate cultural institutes include:

- » **Instituto Cultural Itaú**  
A cultural center of Itaú Bank, located in the financial heart of São Paulo. In 2009 they sponsored the Encontro Internacional de Teatro Contemporâneo which will take place in the North and Mid-West.
- » **Instituto Votorantim**  
Located in the State of São Paulo.
- » **Oi Futuro**  
A hip venue in Rio de Janeiro oriented around new media. This year's cultural *edital* for Oi Futuro received 4000 submissions of which over 3000 were just from theatremakers

- » **Centro Cultural Banco do Nordeste**  
Based in Fortaleza.
- » **Espaço Cultural da CPFL**  
Campinas, State of São Paulo.
- » **Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil**  
Located in various cities.
- » **Brasil Telecom**  
Has a theatre in Brasilia.
- » **Furnas**  
Has a theatre in Rio de Janeiro.

Many corporations that don't have cultural facilities have *editais* for sponsoring theatre productions. To name a few: Light, Correios and Eletrobras.

### **Caixa Econômica Federal**

- » Located in various cities. The Theatre of the Caixa Econômica of Brasilia is a notoriously difficult theatre. With the exception of PR, (organising radio and television interviews), they give no attention to the artist in the theatre. The moment the artist arrives in the venue they are on their own. It is recommended that productions that come to this venue bring their own technicians. The organisation does a good job at keeping their theatre filled but has less attention for creating good conditions for an artist to work. On the other hand the Theatre of the Caixa Econômica of Curitiba is the exact opposite. This theatre is known to help the artist with everything they need.

### **The Occasional Fear of Getting Burned**

Often artists will get together and express dissatisfaction with a SESC or another organization like the infamous Caixa Econômica of Brasilia. But artists are worried about complaining directly to an organization out of fear of *se queimando* (getting burned) within an institution. Artists often fear putting in jeopardy any future work they might get with the few institutions that exist. So some organizations like Caixa Econômica de Brasilia remain uninformed about their ill practices and therefore are slow to improving.

## Petrobras

Of all the corporations that have *editais* that make use of the Lei Rouanet for cultural sponsorship, the most important by far is Petrobras, the semi-public Brazilian Energy Company headquartered in Rio de Janeiro. Of the 500 largest sponsors in 2007, 44% of the money came from only 6 companies: Note how Petrobras compares to the rest:

- » **Eletrobrás** – 14,3 million reais
- » **Banco Bradesco** – 20,2 million reais
- » **Banco do Brasil** – 20,5 million reais
- » **Telecomunicações SP** – 21,9 million reais
- » **Vale do Rio Doce** – 33,1 million reais
- » **Petrobras** – 172 million reais

The reason Petrobras can be considered the best is not only in the numbers. Every year it improves upon its policies of dissemination, production of new pieces, circulation of pieces and the maintenance of theatre companies that work with continuity. Petrobras also started to pay attention to smaller and lesser-known companies as well as alternative theatremakers interested in research and experimentation.

One part of Petrobras' activities occurs in conjunction with Funarte, the Fundação Nacional das Artes via the Myriam Muniz Prize which awards theatremakers, groups or projects all around Brazil in a clear attempt to decentralize resources so that they reach all corners of the country. One criticism to be made here, however, is the reduction of money awarded. Under their decentralization policy, rather than increase money awarded, budgets have been split up to serve a greater number of projects. It must however be noted that Petrobras is probably the only corporation involved in patronage because when it comes to contributing to artists, they pass the 4% of owed tax money that they can contribute to culture meaning that any contribution above the 4% is actually out of their own pockets.

Petrobras, which is a corporation of mixed capital with most coming from the State, has been used by the Lula administration to secure resources for culture. The Lula government and Petrobras are in constant dialogue. It is more than a partner. It can be said that Petrobras is practically an extension of the Ministry of Culture.

## MinC & Fundo Nacional de Cultura

The Ministry of Culture's main *edital* for theatre is the Myriam Muniz Prize. They have a number of other *editais* with new ones always coming out but one has to explore their site to see if anything is pertinent to theatremaking.

## The Fundo Nacional de Cultura

The National Culture Fund is another way of financing projects but not many people have a clear idea what they do. Rarely do theatremakers talk about it or apply for its funds. Their website however, is very clear. The application forms are available online and they publish their annual budget online as well. The fund directly subsidizes to the artist up to 80% of the funds applied for and it is up to the artist to raise the remaining 20%. The Fundo Nacional de Cultura is mentioned more and more in the context of Lei Rouanet reform and the new Plano Nacional de Cultura. It seems like this fund will be even more important in theatre subsidy in the near future.



### The Lei de Fomento: the fourth and newest model of theatre subsidy

São Paulo's Lei de Fomento or Law of Encouragement is the most advanced model for distributing public money directly to theatremakers. It was approved unanimously by São Paulo's City Hall in 2002 under the then mayor Marta Suplicy. It is now law in the city of São Paulo that a certain amount of money goes to theatre companies regardless of the mayor or government in office. In 2009 12 million reais was set aside to support (for one year) 30 theatre companies whose work requires long-term support. This is revolutionary for Brazil in that continuity from one government to the next is all but non-existent. Policies always change. São Paulo did away with this after a strong lobby of a political movement of theatremakers; a movement called Arte Contra a Barbárie (Art Against Barbarity).

Just as the SESC São Paulo inspired the rest of the SESC's in the country, the Lei de Fomento is now serving as a model for local and state governments around the country and even the federal government. The Plano Nacional de Cultura, which Lula would like to have complete before he leaves office, has not ignored the Lei de Fomento and has borrowed elements from it.

This activism and political consciousness of the theatre is growing. Artists have increasingly been maintaining an eagle eye on cultural policy to prevent attempts to undermine conquests like the Lei de Fomento. One politician attempted to do away with the Lei de Fomento but the backlash from activist movements prevented it from happening.

## 5. O Fervo/The Heat – where the Theatre Scene boils

Most Brazilians involved in theatre production will tell you that Brazil's hippest scene is the Praça Roosevelt (Roosevelt Square) in São Paulo. But in such a huge country it is unfair to focus in on one scene as a Ground Zero. The Brazilian theatre scene boils on different fronts and different levels. This chapter will try to shed light on some of these areas of intensity.

### Praça Roosevelt:

Praça Roosevelt was a decadent square in downtown São Paulo that was revived by the installation of eight theatre companies. The square was full of prostitutes, transvestites and drug dealers. The theatre companies didn't necessarily want to expel them, rather they allowed them to participate in the social and artistic transformation of the Square. The Satyros theatre group, for example, included the local transsexuals in one of their productions called Transex, the first in their Trilogy of Praça Roosevelt. Satyros director Rodolfo García Vázquez, describes the Praça Roosevelt as: *"an example of a fringe universe with a harmonious tension between nutcases, transvestites, prostitutes, little old middle-class ladies, artists and general public."*

The Praça Roosevelt movement inspired Hamburg director Dea Loher of the Thalia Theatre to write a play called *Das Leben auf der Praça Roosevelt*. Other theatres in the square included Studio 184 and Parlapatões, both of which were heavily involved in the Art Against Barbarity Movement (Arte Contra a Barbárie) which advocated the Lei de Fomento, São Paulo's unique theatre subsidy law. But São Paulo is a world on its own in terms of theatre. Some say *São Paulo respira teatro*, 'São Paulo breathes theatre'. Keep in mind that the population of the city of São Paulo equals that of the whole of The Netherlands.

### **A Teatro Mineiro?**

A number of theatre groups from the State of Minas Gerais have been gaining notoriety over the past years. And when the press speaks of one of them they automatically speak of a Mineiro Theatre movement, A Theatre of the State of Minas Gerais. Rather than having a style in common, what they do have in common is that these companies grew out of a generation of people attending the FIT-BH Festival Internacional de Teatro as well as performances, workshops and festivals promoted by the 25-year-old Grupo Galpão theatre company. One such festival of the Grupo Galpão is the Festival de Cenas Curtas (Festival or Short Scenes), prompting theatre experimentation. Everything they do takes place in their Galpão Cine Horto facility which also offers classes for actors (The Oficinão) and develops a deep relationship with audiences. Some works developed at the Galpão Cine Horto evolved into larger works and even theatre companies. Amongst the most important groups which grew out these experiences in Minas Gerais are: Luna Lunera, Companhia Clara which has its own 90 seat theatre and is now a partner with the FIT-BH Festival, and Espancal which came together because of the Festival of Short Scenes. Espancal is one of the most brilliant theatre groups in Brazil today, building a fascinating repertoire in a short period.

Other names from Minas Gerais are director Rita Clemente and Cida Falabella, director of the Grupo Zap 18 based in Belo Horizonte's poorer outskirts, in Brazil referred to as the *periferia*.

### **Movimento Redemoinho**

Born out of a meeting at Galpão Cine Horto in 2004, Redemoinho, the Brazilian Movement of Creation Spaces, Exchange and Theatrical Research (*Movimento Brasileiro de Espaços de Criação, Compartilhamento e Pesquisa Teatral*) works toward creating a national network of theatre spaces. They have also consolidated themselves as a national political movement and they actively lobby for a Federal Law of Theatre

Subsidy (*Projeto de Lei Federal: Programa de Fomento ao Teatro Brasileiro*). Approximately 70 theatre groups and cultural entities from 11 States are part of Redemoinho. Every year a national council is elected. In 2009 counselors are: Fernando Yamamoto of Grupo Clowns de Shakespeare (Natal), Marcelo Bones do Grupo Teatro Andante (Belo Horizonte) who is also the new coordinator of Performing Arts of FUNARTE, Tânia Farias of Tribo de Atuadores *Ói Nós Aqui Traveiz* (Porto Alegre) and José Fernando Azevedo do Teatro de Narradores (São Paulo).

To view the updated council go to: [www.redemoinho.org](http://www.redemoinho.org)

### **Vila Santa Isabel in Barão Geraldo in Campinas**

Campinas is known as Brazil's Silicon Valley, home to hundreds of computer and telecommunications companies. It contains several universities such as PUC-Campinas, Facamp, Universidade São Francisco and Unicamp and is therefore a region teeming with students. Santa Isabel in the Campinas district of Barão Geraldo is known for its intense cultural activity. At least eight theatre companies are based there some of which grew out of the university scene. Amongst them: Boa Companhia, Sarau, Seres de Luz (Argentinean), Barracão, Grupo Peleja, Grupo Tal, Matula, Grupo do Santo, Semente, and Lume. Lume, runs the Núcleo Interdisciplinar de Pesquisas Teatrais da Unicamp collaborating with theatre institutions in the USA, Denmark, Italy, Portugal and other countries. In addition, in the days leading up to Carnival there is the Feverestival which brings together national and international group as well as over 300 actors, directors and filmmakers for exchanges.



### **Movimento Lapada (Encontrão da Lapada)**

This is a movement that organizes artistic exchange to encourage the growth of theatre in the Northeast. It was organized by the groups: Bagaceira, Máquina (from Ceará), Clowns de Shakespeare (Natal), Estandarte (Rio Grande do Norte), Alfenim, Piolim and Ser Tão (Paraíba). For two years the movement has been discussing how to organize themselves at a national level. The first meeting was held in Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, where proposed themes were discussed and artistic practices were exchanged. Smaller meetings have been held in April 2008 in João Pessoa, for example, under the name of I Mostra de Teatro de Grupo. In this year's edition, the collective invited various other groups from nearby states to participate as observers.

### **Mostra Cariri**

The Mostra Cariri or Cariri Review of Culture is a SESC partnership which brings together a variety of cultural manifestations - everything from music, theatre (both national and international), Brazilian Indian rituals (which are seen rarely in theatre festivals), and *mestres* (or storytellers of popular culture) are invited. Few festivals bring together such diversity. The festival, which lasts a week, is very cool, to say the least, and takes place under very hot sun in three small cities: Juazeiro do Norte, Crato and Nova Olinda. Unlike almost all festivals in the world this one keeps the artists to the end so they can be part of the whole event including the *Overdoze*, the grand finale. Everyone who performed throughout the festival performs in the *Overdoze* one after another in 3 different theatres. Crowds move from theatre to theatre in the intense heat of the night. Northeastern food, drink, music are enjoyed on two intersecting streets that are closed off in front of the SESC Crato. It all ends with a breakfast at 7 in the morning. The amazing thing about this festival is that 10 years ago the municipality of Crato didn't even have a theatre and now the three towns are alive with theatres. Everyone from young to old, from business people to cab drivers all flock to see the

many performances - a vivid example of audience-building.

In Cariri in the small town of Nova Olinda one should not forget to mention Fundação Casa Grande, a theatre run entirely by children. They operate the lighting, shoot and edit a TV show, stage radio programs, and basically do everything in the theatre. All artists who attend the Mostra Cariri try to make it to Nova Olinda to check these kids out and always return fascinated with the children.

## 6. Culturas Populares

One choreographer recently placed Brazilian artists into two categories: the ones who know about *culturas populares* and the ones who don't. Many don't know what a *caboclo de lança* is or have never seen *Maracatu Rural* or have never been part of a *Festa do Boi*. The cultural manifestations we are talking about deal with deep traditions that mix European, Brazilian Indian and African cultures; a unique mix that differentiates us from our South American neighbors.

*Culturas Populares* is what until 10 years ago was known as folklore. Folklore is a term that is generally not used anymore in Brazil. The change of name to *Culturas Populares* was due to activist movements concerned with creating a term that would express the immense cultural diversity of Brazil. Under Culture Minister Gilberto Gil there has been a horizontalization, if you will, of our diverse cultures. There is less differentiation between high art or low art now. An Antonio Carlos Jobim is just as important as a Mestre Salustiano. Cultural manifestations deeply rooted in local traditions and rituals are gaining just as much importance as the 'high' art of urban centres mainly because there is now a recognition that this is where we Brazilians come from. Hence these areas of culture are being meticulously mapped by the government, various organizations and are even being funded by programs such as Pontos de Cultura which will be discussed in the next section. Activist groups were largely responsible for making *Culturas Populares* a category in Petrobras and Lei Rouanet subsidy applications.

Many manifestations are by the calendar and take place during Christmas, Easter, The Festas Juninas and Carnival. It must be noted that Brazil has the largest African population outside Africa with all the tales, religions, rituals, music and dance that came over with its diaspora. There are festivities related to each Orixá or African deity corresponding to saints in the Catholic calendar. In addition, all these festivities

have been influenced in some shape or form by the 220 Brazilian Indian nations. Consequently, these festivities vary from state to state, city to city, village to village.

Around Christmas there are the Auto de Natal, Reisado, Folia de Reis, Pastoril, Boi de Reis, or as it is celebrated in Pernambuco, the Cavalo Marinho. Some consider the Cavalo Marinho Brazil's *commedia dell'arte* since it is comprised of 76 different masks and characters. These festivities have never been given much value by the Brazilian elite. These festivities take place mostly in rural areas and small villages, urban peripheries and favelas.

The *Festas Juninas*, on the other hand, are very mainstream and are celebrated even in big cities. These festivities revolve around three saints who are celebrated in the month of June: São João, Santo Antonio, São Pedro (John, Anthony and Peter). The largest and most commercial is the São João of Caruarú. Northeastern square-dancing to forró music, Northeastern food and funny make-believe wedding rituals permeate the Festas Juninas. The Festas Juninas are always part of schools' calendars as well as parties for kids and teenagers.

Carnival has become so mainstream that some people living in cities try to get away from it and the tourists it attracts. The Carnival aesthetic is dominated by the samba rhythm and Rio de Janeiro's luxurious parade taking place at its Sambódromo designed by architect Oscar Niemeyer. It's considered the greatest show on Earth. But the Carnivals of Olinda and Salvador are also worth mentioning and are characterized by their different rhythms; *frevó* and *maracatu* in Olinda and *afoxé* and *axé* in Salvador.

The Festa do Boi is the most intriguing and theatrical, dramatizing tales that vary from region to region. It is widespread throughout Brazil, although even more concentrated in the Northeast, and takes place during Easter and Ascension. There are many variations: the *bumba-meu-boi* in the Northeast, (especially Maranhão), the *boi-bumbá* in Amazonas and



the State of Pará, the *boi-de-reis*, *boi-surubi* or *boi-calemba* throughout the Northeast, the *boi-de-reisado* in Alagoas, the *boi-de-janeiro* and *da Manta* in Minas Gerais, the *boi-de-mamão* in Santa Catarina. The *boi-bumbá* in Amazonas has taken on a mega-show dimension in the city of Parantins and can compare in sumptuousness to that of Rio's Carnival.

### Re-enactments:

The Festa do Divino, or Ascension, forty days after Easter, is particularly strong in the city of Pirenópolis, Goiás. The celebrations include the commemoration of the medieval victory of Iberian Christian knights over the Moors in a celebration called the *Cavalhadas*. Filmmaker Ricardo Calça's film *o Divino Maravilhoso* depicts these festivities.

Another reenactment which takes place in the entire Northeast is the Passion of Christ. Since 1968 Nova Jerusalem in Pernambuco puts on what can be considered Brazil's largest theatre production. Every Easter week a huge reenactment of the Passion of Christ takes place in what is claimed to be the largest open-air theatre in the world (70,000 square meters). An ecstatic audience of 8,000 watches hundreds of actors and extras. Actors lip-synch a soundtrack that is played throughout the piece.

In the academic sphere Brazilians seem to focus still very much on teaching the European classics and often forget to look at their own *culturas populares*. The likes of Villa Lobos, Oswald de Andrade with his *Cannibal Manifesto* and Adriano Suassuna became the standard bearers of an almost nationalist conversation, although it is not about nationalism; it's about looking to our ancestry – looking to what originates here and giving it its due value rather than disregarding it as second to European high culture. To counterbalance this self-colonization the Ministry of Culture created an initiative to preserve the oral

tradition of *mestres* of cultural groups and integrating their knowledge into the public school system so that children do NOT grow up with strictly American or European cultural references. This initiative is called *Ação Griô* (Action Griô). The word *griô* comes from griot which is a West African poet, praise singer, and wandering musician, considered a repository of oral tradition.

The mention of *Culturas Populares* in this mapping as one of the hip cultural scenes is important because these expressions of *cultura popular* are larger than just music, or folk rituals – they are a way of life that has fed all the arts in Brazil for centuries. For Holland it can be fertile ground to learn rare theatre techniques for actors, performers, storytellers and dancers outside the realm of academia. *Cultura Popular* brings together text, dramatization of tales, music, costume, performers and audience participation in forms that can be highly innovative for the Dutch.

### Pontos de Cultura

The Ponto de Cultura (Culture Point) is the flagship project of the *Cultura Viva* Program of the Ministry of Culture. It is the way the ministry found to fund existing cultural initiatives at community and grassroots levels. These initiatives enter a ministry *edital* which currently funds 650 Pontos de Cultura around the country. There is also the *Pontão de Cultura* which offer larger initiatives.

The Ponto de Cultura receives 185,000 reais divided into 5 installments donated each semester to be invested in the manner outlined in each project. Of the first installment 20,000 reais must be invested in multimedia equipment and software and whatever else the Ponto requires.

The Pontos de Cultura can be found on the website of the Ministry of Culture<sup>1</sup>. On this site you can search for Pontos de Cultura by state, municipality, by profile or keyword. If you select Todo o Brasil (All of Brazil) and if you select Palavra Chave and write in teatro (theatre) you will get 286 Pontos de Cultura to choose from that deal with theatre. You can narrow down your categories. Let's say you're looking for a Ponto de Cultura that deals with theatre, Indians and people at social risk in the State of Amapá, you can select all of these items and the search engine will narrow down your options.

### **MinC (Ministério da Cultura)**

It is fair to say that there is a creative intensity in the Ministry of Culture – a restlessness to identify, map and ideally fund the most remote cultural manifestations in Brazil. The policies of Gilberto Gil's mandate are long-lasting – his popularity with the art community is unanimous. The Ministry of Culture is in constant dialogue with the population and wants artists to define their art policies. All the work the MinC does is impressive and quite moving, though it's worth adding that a lot more can be done to keep up the interesting discourse and good ideas they have.

## **7. Key Figures**

Most of the people mentioned below work with large projects that go beyond the institutions they work for. They are networkers and multipliers; their areas of expertise cover huge territories which, combined, cover most of the country. We have attempted to give out contacts which will put the Dutch in touch with anyone in the theatre scene within one or two degrees of separation from any theatremaker anywhere in the country.

### **On a National Level**

- » Danilo Santos de Miranda – (SAO PAULO) - Regional Director of SESC São Paulo
- » Luciana Azevedo - (RECIFE) - Director president of Fundarpe - *Fundação de Patrimônio Artístico e Histórico de Pernambuco* – deals with Culturas Populares and theatre.
- » Sebastião Milarê – (SAO PAULO) Curator of the Centro Cultural São Paulo.
- » Luiz Bertipaglia – (LONDRINA) Head of Núcleo de Festivais (Network of Brazilian Festivals)
- » Eglá Monteiro – (SAO PAULO) - Actress and producer, creates projects to fill in voids in theatre scene - worked 13 years for SESC São Paulo developing socio-cultural programs – former coordinator of programming of SESC Pompéia and Ipiranga - created a one-year residency program called *Solos do Brasil*.
- » Sidnei Cruz – (SAO PAULO) - creator of *Palco Giratório*, an event that puts 12 companies a year on a grand tour of Brazil.

1. [www.cultura.gov.br/sys/skins/cultura\\_viva\\_capa/sistematizacao\\_fim.php](http://www.cultura.gov.br/sys/skins/cultura_viva_capa/sistematizacao_fim.php)



- » Ana Lúcia Pardo – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - actress and journalist, Ministério da Cultura representing the States of Rio and Espírito Santo - used to work for Funarte – coordinates a seminar called ATeatralidade do Humano (the theatricality of the Human) which brought together actors, directors, artists in many fields, academics, philosophers at Oi Futuro. She lived in the Amazon for 15 years and created the festival Mostra de Expressão Cênica Amazônida.
- » Guilherme Marques – (BELO HORIZONTE) producer of ECUM *Encontro Mundial de Artes Cênicas / World Meeting of Performing Arts*
- » João das Neves – (BELO HORIZONTE) founder of *Teatro Opinião Mineiro* – ties to Acre (see section on North).
- » Eliane Costa – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - Sponsorship Manager of Petrobras
- » João Carlos Artigos – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - organizer of *Anjos do Picadeiro* (International Clown Festival). with company *Teatro do Anônimo* based in Rio's *Fundação Progresso*. They do important work with street children.
- » Redemoinho representatives (National political movement of theatre subsidy policy):
- » Marcelo Bones of Grupo Teatro Andante (BELO HORIZONTE) who is also the new coordinator of Performing Arts of FUNARTE,
- » Tânia Farias of Tribo de Atuadores, Ói Nós Aqui Traveiz (PORTO ALEGRE).
- » José Fernando Azevedo of Teatro de Narradores (SAO PAULO).
- » Fernando Yamamoto (NATAL) of Clowns de Shakespeare

To view the updated council go to:  
[www.redemoinho.org](http://www.redemoinho.org)

### Brazilian Indians & Culturas Populares

- » Uilton Tuxá - APOINME *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Nordeste, Minas Gerais e Espírito Santo*. Coordination of Indigenous Peoples of the Northeast, Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo.
- » Kaká Werá – writer, environmentalist, lecturer, founder of Instituto Arapoty.
- » Jecinaldo Mayoruna - COIAB *Conselho das Organizações Indígenas da Amazonia Brasileira*. Counsel of Organizations for Indians of the Brazilian Amazon.
- » Ana Paula Jones – (RIO DE JANEIRO) (Actress, specializes in Culturas Populares, Director of Ponto de Cultura: Kariri-xocó (Northeast Brazilian Indians), lived in Olinda - works with Department of Community Arts of Cleveland Museum of Art, President of Instituto Raízes da Tradição, she sits on the National Commission of Pontos de Cultura and Conselho Nacional de Juventude (National Youth Council).

### In the Northeast

- » Dane di Jade – (FORTALEZA) Works for SESC Fortaleza and created the Mostra Cariri in the southern most tip of the State of Ceará, the Cariri region. A 5-day festival bringing together national and international groups.
- » Fernando Yamamoto (NATAL) - of Clowns de Shakespeare – is mapping theatre companies in the Northeast in association with ÁQIS, a centre for creative process studies of the Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina.
- » Lindolfo Amaral (STATE OF SERGIPE) of Grupo de Teatro de Rua Imbuassa
- » Marcio Mereilles (SALVADOR) director of the Bando de Teatro Olodum and Secretary of Culture of Salvador.
- » Carla Valença and Paula de Renot – (RECIFE) Independent producers from Recife which organize the Janeiro de Grandes Espetáculos Festival. A showcase of Recife's theatre works. They invite curators from all over Brazil to come to see these works.
- » Luiz Carlos Vasconcellos and Buda – (JOAO PESSOA) Piolim Theatre Company
- » Rejjane Reinaldo (FORTALEZA) - Festival de Teatro de Guaramiranga, Ceará – Rejjane is responsible for *Pontões de Cultura* (the larger Pontos de Cultura).
- » Kil Abreu – curator of Theatre Festival of Recife

### The South

- » Nitis Jacon (LONDRINA) – director and former vice-dean of UEL Universidade Estadual de Londrina – deep understanding of cultural policies - Head of FILO Festival Internacional de Londrina, a massive international Festival.
- » Luciano Alabarse - Porto Alegre em Cena Festival
- » Tânia Farias (PORTO ALEGRE) - of Tribo de Atuadores Ói Nóis Aqui Traveiz - politically militant theatre group - sits on the board of Redemoinho.



### Rio de Janeiro / São Paulo (Cities and States)

- » Alexandre Roit, (SAO PAULO) - organizes the Mostra Latino-Americana de Teatro de Grupo, for the Cooperativa Paulista de Teatro.
- » Ney Piacentini (SAO PAULO) – cultural policy - presidente of Cooperativa Paulista de Teatro. Politically active in representing the interests of theatre groups in the new Plano Nacional de Cultura.
- » Nilson Raman (RIO DE JANEIRO) – producer and agent of artists of commercial theatre - Associação de Produtores Culturais. Politically active in representing the interests of theatre producers and commercial theatre in the new Plano Nacional de Cultura.
- » Luiz Carlos Moreira - (SAO PAULO) - Arte Contra a Barbarie (Art Against Barbarity Movement which fought for the São Paulo's theatre subsidy law: the Lei de Fomento.
- » João Braune of Fomenta Produções/Casa da Glória - a colonial mansion in downtown Rio that holds cultural events. He is one of two Brazilian producers who regularly attends the IETM meetings in Europe (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts).
- » Marcia Dias – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - Theatre Festival RioCenaContemporanea
- » Fabio Ferreira – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - former curator of RioCenaContemporanea
- » Rodolfo Garcia Vasquez - (SAO PAULO) of Satyrus theatre company
- » Karin Acioli – (RIO DE JANEIRO) - Organizer of FIL - Festival Intercâmbio de Linguagens – a Children's theatre festival.
- » Antonio Araújo - through his company Teatro da Vertigem goes beyond the physical space of theatre performing in monumental site specific contexts. Has mentored many artists.
- » Instituto Pombas Urbanas - (SAO PAULO) - A Pontão de Cultura – they work with street theatre in periferias (poor neighborhoods in city outskirts).
- » José Fernando Azevedo (SAO PAULO) - Teatro de Narradores – sits on the Redemoinho national council - Part of movement Arte Contra a Barbarie.
- » Carlos Simione - (CAMPINAS) Lume Theatre and Núcleo Interdisciplinar de Pesquisas Teatrais da Unicamp
- » Guti Fraga – (RIO DE JANEIRO) Nós do Morro Theatre company based in the Favela do Vidigal.

### Minas Gerais

- » Chico Pelúcio and Eduardo Miranda - (BELO HORIZONTE) - of Grupo Galpão.
- » Lúcia Carmargo – (BELO HORIZONTE) Former Secretary of Culture of Paraná – former director of Municipal Theatre of São Paulo and currently director of Palácio das Artes a monumental theatre venue with various halls.

### North (Amazon)

- » Lenine Alencar in - (RIO BRANCO) - FETAC, Federação de Teatros do Acre.
- » Nonato Tavares in - (MANAUS) - actor, director, well networked worked in Acre.
- » Airton Braga – (BELEM) director of SIT Sistema Integrado de Teatros.
- » Raimundo Chacon – (BELEM) Representative of the National Commission of Pontos de Cultural of Amazônia.
- » Marcio Souza - (MANAUS) - of TESC – Teatro Experimental do SESC do Amazonas - former president of Funarte.
- » Karla Martins - (RIO BRANCO) - actress, producer, Fundação de Cultura e Comunicação Elias Mansur.
- » João das Neves- (MINAS GERAIS) - founder of Teatro Opinião Mineiro. In charge of the Núcleo de Artes Cênicas da Usina de Arte João Donato.

### Midwest and Federal District

- » Guilherme Reis – (BRASILIA) - curator of Cena Contemporanea Festival of Brasilia.
- » Francisco Araujo – (CAMPO GRANDE) – SESC Campo Grande.
- » Hugo Rodas – (BRASILIA) – theatre director and professor at the University of Brasilia.

### Critics Writers Academics

- » Jefferson del Rios – (SAO PAULO) - writes for *Estadão*, critic and former editor of Bravo Magazine.
- » Barbara Heliodora (RIO DE JANEIRO) – renowned theatre critic of *O Globo*.
- » Marcos Bulhões, (NATAL) Academic - from São Paulo but based in Natal.
- » Fernando Villar - (BRASILIA) - Academic, director.
- » Heloísa Buarque de Holanda, (RIO DE JANEIRO) – Academic.
- » Valmir Santos (SAO PAULO) - worked for *Folha de São Paulo* - has written books on theatre in Brazil.
- » Mariangela Alves de Lima – critic.

### International Networkers

- » Ricardo Fernandes – (SAO PAULO) - links with Germany, experienced in international collaborations
- » 'Janjão' João Couto Magalhães (SAO PAULO) – works a lot with France, FIAC Festival Internacional de Artes Cênicas - Brings many international works to SESC.



### Some more important people to mention:

#### Two names in the Musical scene:

- » Charles Möeller and Claudio Botelho are the big names in musicals. They have put on translations of *Sweet Charity*, *The Sound of Music*, *Three Penny Opera*, *Gloriosa*, *Sete* and others.

#### Two Important Globais:

- » Marieta Severo and Andrea Beltrão are two famous Rio-based actresses with long established careers in Rede Globo (as well as the film and theatre scene). Together they bought a house in the neighborhood of Botafogo in Rio de Janeiro transforming it into an excellent theatre venue, Teatro Poeira.

#### Three Grand Dames of Theatre

- » Fernanda Montenegro (of Brazil Central Station) is one grand dame. She is, occasionally, politically active regarding theatre subsidy policy. Marília Pera (Pixote) currently does a lot of musicals (the last two *Carmen Miranda* and *Gloriosa*). Maria Alice Vergueiro, São Paulo actress who became a YouTube sensation with *Tapa na Pantera* doing a skit as a 70 year old pot-head. She has worked with Zé Celso and was responsible for saving the archives of the Teatro Oficina from the dictatorship.

#### Two renowned set designers

- » Helio Eichbauer is Brazil's most important set designer who worked on historic productions in the 60s like Teatro Oficina's *O Rei da Vela*. He is still very active today. Gringo Cardia is another who deserves mention who has worked with many productions.

### For further contacts:

There is a widespread policy at Federal, State and Municipal levels to map all theatre companies in their areas. For further research into these data bases one should Google 'secretaria de cultura de (name of State)', call them up and ask who deals with theatre and then proceed to ask if a mapping has been done. The State of Acre, for example, which is 3.5 times larger than the Netherlands but has only 600,000 inhabitants, recently completed a cultural profile of each of its municipalities.

## 8. Residencies and the Desire to collaborate

There are practically no theatre residencies in Brazil in the European sense of the word. Residencies in Europe usually involve a theatre that brings in an artist, finances them to live, experiment, produce and perform a resulting work – artistic fees included. In Brazil the term residency is thrown around but it usually falls short of being a full residency; Brazilians are usually describing a collaboration or commission. The desire, however, for residencies is immense here and this is one area that the Dutch could emphasize in their exchange with Brazil – taking artists to Holland to experience residencies there and/or partnering up with theatres and setting up residencies here.

One thing that does happen when theatre-makers and groups fill out their Editais is that they will often include a residency-type or collaborative project. For example Piolim from João Pessoa and Companhia Clara from Belo Horizonte have been wanting to collaborate and have been seeking funds for two years. Espanca! of Belo Horizonte and Grupo Dezenove de Teatro through São Paulo's Law of Encouragement have been collaborating. Clowns de Shakespeare from Natal has drafted up a project to be directed by Grupo Galpão's director. This is becoming a growing practice amongst companies with sufficiently sophisticated facilities to offer production space. One success story is Companhia Clara of Belo Horizonte which has a project called Ilhas Livres (Free Islands) which resembles a residency in the European sense of the word. They have their own small theatre of 90 seats, the Caixa Clara. They offer companies (chosen through their own edital) 2,000 reais in expense money, technical support, rehearsal space, press releases, graphics and posters for a premiere, but not artistic fees. So in this sense they fall short of being a full-fledged residency.

The SESC Copacabana is now offering a residency to four dance companies which received up to 100,000 reais to produce new works. But SESC Copacabana facilities aren't adequate for rehearsal or production so companies rehearse in their own houses. In one case the choreographer rents a space with the award money meaning little is left over for artistic fees.

There are two SESCOs, however, that have two renowned theatremakers working and practicing as if they are in residency. This is the case of Marcio Souza at the TESC – Teatro Experimental do SESC do Amazonas in Manaus and Antunes Filho in SESC Consolação in São Paulo. They are permanent fixtures at their respective SESCOs producing theatre works as well as offering workshops.

In the year 2000 a one-year residency program called Solos do Brasil was produced by Egla Monteiro, (by means of Lei Rouanet and Petrobras). Fifteen of 2000 applicants were chosen from all over Brazil to create solo works following Denise Stoklos' directives of her Essential Theatre. Artists received a stipend for one year. Mentors involved were: Antonio Abujamra, Gianni Ratto, Hugo Rodas, Eduardo Coutinho, Luiz Fuganti, Caio Ferraz, Luís Louis and Ricardo Napoleão. After eight months of creating the actors did a three-month theatre run of their works.



## 9. Past and Present International Exchanges

Performance Dialogues Brazil-Spain: Hybrid Languages. This event took place at the Centro Cultural São Paulo in 2008 and showcased four theatre groups from Brazil and four from Spain. It was organized through a partnership between Centro Cultural São Paulo, Instituto Cervantes and the Centro Cultural da Espanha in São Paulo. Aside from performing, the theatremakers engaged in demonstrations in which they shared their creative processes and techniques. It was an event that offered a unique opportunity for academics and professionals in theatre to come in contact with works that went beyond the defined categories in the performing arts. It is not yet known if this event will have a second edition.

Theatre company Lume of Campinas maintains the Núcleo Interdisciplinar de Pesquisas Teatrais da Unicamp a Nucleus of Interdisciplinary Nucleus of Theatrical Research at Unicamp. They are constantly exchanging with an impressive number of institutions such as: EARTH Dance in the USA, Blue Lake in California, World Theatre in Denmark, Teatro Ridotto in Italy and Universities in Evora, Bologna, Nicaragua, among others.

On a smaller scale, in 2007 Brasilia-based director Plínio Mósca produced the play *Nietsfabriek* by Dutch author and playwright Judith Herzberg. It was sponsored by the Dutch Embassy in Brasilia.

The festivals 'Brasil na França' and 'França no Brasil' are probably the most notorious and publicized exchanges.

Copa da Cultura was an event promoted during the World Cup in Germany in 2006. The In Transit Festival, the annual theatre and dance festival at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt, featured Brazil. Amongst the performers were Ismael Ivo, Lia Rodrigues, Cena 11 Nova Dança, René Guimel, Michel Groisman. Even Minister of Culture Gilberto Gil performed. Most of the featured artists were dancers and musicians. In addition were exhibits about the Tropicalia Movement, lecture series with Affonso Roman de Sant'anna Heloisa Buarque de Holanda, site specific interventions, musicians like DJ Dolores, AfroReggae, Sandra de Sá, as well as a film series. The Copa da Cultura took place during the months of May, June and July leading up to the World Cup of 2006. There were 55,000 visitors. Partners involved the Brazilian Embassy, the Ministry of Culture of Brazil, the BMA, and production companies Natasha and New Ideas.

Cultural exchanges also take place with the Goethe Institute, British Council and Onda. The Festival Nordestino de Teatro in Guarimiranga Ceará is the only festival in Latin America which is part of the group of European ethno-music festivals (Rede de Festivais de Cultura Popular) which include Folkermesse (Piemonte-Italy), the Festival de Manresa (Spain) and the Festival Internacional de Gigantes (Palmela - Portugal), among others. Theatre companies are also involved in this festival.

London-based The Young Vic's most recent production is a piece called *Amazonia*, inspired by Brazilian people's hero Chico Mendes in which Brazilian and British theatre artists came together and created a spectacular Amazonian adventure.

## Brazilian Theatremakers with ties to, or living in, Holland

- » Carlos Lagoeiro and Cláudia Maoli – of Munganga.
- » Creso Filho – mime dancer and actor works in many operas and circus.
- » Duda Paiva – puppetry and dance.
- » Eveline Torres - children's theatre.
- » Marcus Azzini - is one of the new directors of the Toneelgroep Oostpool in Arnhem.
- » Marcos Rabello – Grupo de Teatro Odara.
- » Ricky Seabra – theatre maker and designer based in Rio, lived eight years in Holland – mentored at DasArts (Blok 28) - still performs in Holland – residencies in Flanders – collaborates with Dirk Verstockt.
- » Pedro Ascher – light designer - worked in the Teatro Ipanema and is currently with Munganga.
- » Claudia Trajano - dancer based in Holland but has worked in theatre.
- » Marcelo Evelyn - choreographer dancer, has a theatre in Teresina, Brazil.
- » Sergio Ulhõa - VJ with experience in theatre and dance.
- » Kris Niklison - (Argentinean-Dutch) has the Casa das Artes in Brazil, also works with film.

## Two divisions in the theatre scene

### Amazon and the rest of Brazil

Theatre experts interviewed for this mapping found it difficult to name festivals, companies or artists in the northern (Amazon) region. One must call Regional SESCOs and Secretarias de Cultura directly in those states to obtain substantive information. It sometimes seems as if Brazil were two countries – or two networks, rather. In addition, it seems that too many festivals that take place in the Amazon are for Amazonian companies - not out of a provincialism but because of small budgets and the high price of airplane tickets to the Amazon.

### Commercial and Art Theatre

A conflict has arisen between two camps in Brazilian theatre: the commercial theatre and the *teatros de grupo* (group theatre companies) or art theatre. The Lula government wants to create the Plano Nacional de Cultura, a series of laws and directives that will establish public funding for theatre directly from Brasilia. The problem is that the theatre scene cannot agree on how funds should be allocated to theatre. In one camp you have the producers of Rio and São Paulo like Nilson Raman, the Globo actors and commercial theatre names and producers making their demands and in the other camp you have people like Ney Piacentini defending the interests of group theatre companies making their separate demands. Both have distinct ways of producing and, they argue, require distinct funding mechanisms. In the commercial theatre camp a producer raises funds and hires a team to put on a play. A *teatro de grupo*, on the other hand, works together engaging in experimentation of innovative theatre languages over time and requires long term financing. Both camps deserve to receive subsidies to work and the MinC has to understand that there are disparate ways of making theatre. Communication between the two camps is difficult and breaks down at times. Some want dialogue; others want conflict. Both have their own agenda and want to influence the outcome of the Plano Nacional de Cultura. One opportunity of exchange would be for the Dutch to share how Holland deals with funding of commercial and art theatre. It would also be interesting if the Dutch suggested a mediation using their 'polder model' method of negotiation to help out with this divide.



## 10. Conclusions & Suggestions

Even with high quality venues and cultural centres like Itaú Cultural, Oi Futuro and CCBB Brazil is still a nation of contrasting and excluded populations. Brazil has achieved a quality of theatre production that rivals any first world nation. It has improved greatly as a nation since the years of dictatorship or the days of the Sarney-Collor years of 100% inflation a month. Brazil is stable now. Hyperinflation is not likely to happen again and the current international crisis hasn't hit Brazil as hard as the US and Europe. But the people that have access to this ameliorated Brazil remain few. Keep in mind the following statistics on Cultural Exclusion that were released by the Ministry of Culture: (Programa Mais Cultura, October 2007)

- » Only 13% of Brazilians go to the movies per year.
- » 92% of Brazilians have never gone to a museum.
- » 93.4% of Brazilians have never seen an art exhibit.
- » 78% of Brazilians have never seen a dance performance even though 28.8% go out dancing.
- » More than 90% of municipalities don't have cinemas, theatres, musea or multi-purpose cultural spaces
- » Each Brazilian reads on the average 1.8 books per year (versus 2.4 in Colombia and 7 in France).
- » 73% of Brazil's books are concentrated in the hands of 16% of the population
- » The average book price is R\$25, very high for Brazilians of low income.
- » Of the 600 municipalities that don't have libraries, 405 are in the Northeast, and just two in the Southeast.
- » 82% of Brazilians don't have computers at home, of these, 70% don't have any type of internet access (neither at work, nor at school).

- » 56.7% of the population working in the cultural sector make their money off the record as freelancers (hence not paying in to retirement funds or accruing any benefits).
- » The average Brazilian expenditure per month on culture per family is 4.4% of their total income, above education (3.5%). This doesn't vary between social classes, occupying the 6<sup>th</sup> place in monthly expenditures of the Brazilian household.

### A Series of Suggestions and Opportunities for Exchange:

#### Residencies

- The desire for residencies is immense but Brazilian artists or art centres really don't have the experience of a full-fledged residency – one that covers living expenses, production costs plus artistic fees to produce in a theatre facility. A suggestion can be that not only Brazilian theatremakers go to Holland to experience a residency but artistic directors of theatres as well as a few of the highest ranking personnel within the Ministry of Culture who deal with the Plano Nacional de Cultura. This way Brazilians who deal with theatre policy could learn from the Dutch model.

#### Theatre Technicians Exchange

- Theatres in Brazil can often be precarious and technicians many times have to do their best with the little the theatre has to offer. Technicians are often seen as doing a menial job. Exchange between Holland and Brazil should not only take place amongst artists but should include technicians too. A lot could be learned if Brazilian technicians had the opportunity to do internships in Holland and Dutch technicians gave workshops in Brazil.

### Amazon Burning - Holland Flooding

- One thematic opportunity of exchange is ecology and climate change. The burning and slow demise of Amazon jungle, melting of polar caps, rise of ocean levels and, consequently, the disappearance of Holland under water (as portrayed, for example, in the Dutch performance *Holland Tsunami*) is a possible link for discussion and artistic exchange. Just be aware that there is a Brazilian sensitivity towards their sovereignty over the Amazon. It can sometimes be noticed when foreigners start to voice their opinion about the rainforest.

### The emotional tie with Holland

- The emotional tie that people from Olinda, Recife and even Pernambuco have towards Holland is real. It's all quite romantic considering it is based on a tie that was so long ago and for such a short period. It can be said that there is a what-if-ness that the natives of Recife live with - *What if the Dutch hadn't been kicked out by the Portuguese?* This sentiment is alive today in the form of a 'carinho', a tenderness toward Holland. On the other hand many Dutch don't even know they once occupied Brazil. And few Brazilians know, for example, that Maurits van Nassau was actually known as *The Brazilian* in Holland. One suggestion would be to launch your cultural exchange in Olinda or Recife, then take it to the rest of the country.

### Ariano Suassuna

- Regardless of choosing Recife as a launching point it would be highly recommended to invite Ariano Suassuna to speak at any opening. Playwright and secretary of culture of Pernambuco, born in 1927, he is one of Brazil's most important theatrical figures whose work is based on *cultura popular*. Even though he was born in Paraíba he is an honorary native of Recife since he came to the city as a child. He'll probably have an interesting perspective on the Dutch influence in Pernambuco and his commentary on the Dutch presence will definitely be worth hearing.

### Cultura Popular

- Don't disregard this aspect of Brazil. It's one of Brazil's great treasures! When bringing over Brazilian artists to Holland to share their expertise with the Dutch, you shouldn't just look to the theatermakers of urban centers. Look to the *grios*, the *mestres* and *brincantes* of *cultura popular*. They will be able to share a unique training for actors and directors deeply rooted in traditions unknown outside of Brazil. What is for Brazil tradition could prove to be highly innovative for the Dutch. To find out about *mestres* and *grios* experienced in giving workshops the Instituto Raizes da Tradição is a good place to start.

### The divide in the Brazilian theatre scene

- The Dutch could be somewhat proactive in learning about the divide between commercial and art theatre. When meeting with Brazilian art policy makers the Dutch could simply share their experience with Brazilian policy makers or even suggest study groups between the two camps using the *Polder Model* in a Dutch Consulate or Embassy in Brazil.



### Some cultural tips

- Having lived in Holland for eight years I sometimes find that the Dutch have more in common with the Japanese than they do with the Brazilians. The Brazilian commitment to appointments and punctuality varies from region to region. Booking performances in Brazil doesn't take place a year ahead of time as in Europe. It can happen that performances are booked two months before an event. But beware of the Dutch straightforwardness. It could come across as extremely rude. If, in your dealings with Brazilians, you describe yourself as *pão pão queijo queijo* (brood brood kaas kaas) which means 'straight to the point', the Brazilians will understand where you are coming from.

### New places to perform

- Brazil is very open to welcome Dutch theatre-makers for performing and collaborating with Brazilians in venues like SESC's, Oi Futuro, Galpão Cine Horto and Itaú Cultural. These paths are worth taking and the crowds will appreciate Dutch performance. But there are very fresh, new places and audiences that deserve contact as well. As mentioned throughout this document, the public policy here is one of inclusion - to also perform for lower income crowds, in *periferia* neighborhoods or in far off places. A commitment to seek out and share with the excluded in the distant corners of Brazil will be well received.

