

# NYBG

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## **NYBG Presents Its Largest Botanical Exhibition Ever, *Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx***

Garden-wide Exhibition Celebrates One of the Most Significant Brazilian Artists of the 20th Century and His Contributions to Plant Discovery, Conservation, and Garden Design, Through Lush Gardens, Vibrant Art, and the Sights and Sounds of Brazil That Inspired His Life and Work

On View June 8–September 29, 2019



Modernist Garden at NYBG

**Bronx, NY**—The New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) presents *Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx*, celebrating influential Brazilian modernist artist, landscape architect, and plant explorer and conservationist Roberto Burle Marx, from June 8 through September 29, 2019. NYBG's largest botanical exhibition ever, it is also the first to combine a horticultural tribute to Burle Marx's design work, featuring lush gardens, with a curated gallery of his vibrant paintings, drawings, and textiles, revealing deep connections between his artistic practice and his commitment to environmental conservation. Engaging public programming showcases the sights and sounds of Brazil and its lively contributions to music and dance evoking Rio de Janeiro, the "Cidade Maravilhosa" ("Wonderful City") that Roberto Burle Marx called home and inspired his life and work.

Burle Marx (1909–94) was a principal figure in the modernist art and garden movement in Latin America during the second half of the 20th century. His powerful modernist vision produced thousands of gardens and landscapes, including the famous curving mosaic walkways at Copacabana Beach in Rio.

NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Visitors to NYBG will learn how his garden designs were fully integrated with his artistic work, his passion for botany and plant exploration, and his longtime advocacy for plant conservation. The exhibition highlights his modern landscape designs, executed in vivacious color and fluid geometric forms; his dynamic and influential works of art; and his celebrated contributions to botanical exploration and plant conservation in his native Brazil.

### **Installations at the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory Inspired by Roberto Burle Marx's Landscape Designs and Plant Explorations**

Burle Marx's boldly creative yet precise landscape designs come to life through vast and immersive gardens, highlighting tropical plants including Brazilian natives, as well as a sculptural water feature, a living wall, and other design elements. Contemporary landscape architect Raymond Jungles, FASLA, who was a protégé of Burle Marx, has designed a Modernist Garden on a portion of NYBG's Conservatory Lawn, an Explorer's Garden in a *Seasonal Exhibition Gallery* of the Conservatory, and a Water Garden in the Conservatory's Hardy Courtyard.

In the Modernist Garden, strikingly patterned paths lead through extensive curvilinear planting beds to an open plaza with a large pool framed by a wall carved in relief, its creation influenced by a Burle Marx installation in the Banco Safra headquarters in São Paulo. Other inspirations include Burle Marx's work in private landscapes, such as the garden of the residence of Edmundo Cavanelas in Petrópolis; constructed landscapes, such as the roof garden at the Ministry of Education and Public Health and Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro; and large parks, such as the Parque del Este in Caracas, Venezuela. The plant palette includes bromeliads, elephant's-ears, colorful annuals, and other plants characteristic of Burle Marx's pioneering work. Mature palm specimens, primarily Brazilian and Caribbean natives, dotted throughout the site provide a sense of scale and enhance the tropical nature of the garden.

The Explorer's Garden highlights many of the tropical rain forest plants, including those that were among Burle Marx's favorites and were often incorporated into the landscapes he designed. The more intimate indoor installation is inspired by Burle Marx's efforts to introduce Brazilians to their country's remarkable biodiversity through his landscape designs. The bold forms of philodendrons, elephant's-ears, bromeliads, and other plants favored by Burle Marx are on display.

The Water Garden explores Burle Marx's plantsmanship, celebrating his use of plants from a variety of tropical regions in his designs in Brazil and beyond. Palms create scale, bromeliads provide texture, and a wall of staghorn ferns lends a sense of botanical whimsy. A pool contains hardy water lilies from NYBG's collections, augmented with tropical water lilies and other aquatic plants favored by Burle Marx, including a hybrid of the enormous, much-celebrated *Victoria amazonica*, which produces leaves that can grow to nine feet in diameter.

### **Burle Marx's Art and Garden Lifestyle Philosophy Examined in the Library Building**

An exhibition of Roberto Burle Marx's paintings, drawings, and textiles, inspired by the culture and nature of Brazil, from the final 30 years of his career and life (1964–94) in the Art Gallery of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library allows visitors to better understand the interconnected threads of Burle Marx's career and artistic practice. The art exhibition is curated by Edward J. Sullivan, Ph.D., the Helen Gould Shepard Professor of the History of Art and Deputy Director, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

The Art Gallery features a grouping of Burle Marx's abstract, vibrantly colored paintings, drawings, and textiles, which engaged with complex and diverse abstract forms. The tapestry and paintings on fabric demonstrate the range of media the artist employed, and a series of lithographs depicting Brazilian ecosystems dating to 1991 offer a rare example of figurative art from this late period. Collectively these works showcase Burle Marx's ongoing exploration of abstract geometric and biomorphic forms as well as his engagement with Brazilian and tropical plants.

The Library Building's Britton Rotunda brings to life the Sítio Roberto Burle Marx, the estate the artist purchased in 1949 and where he lived and worked for decades. The site houses a nursery, multiple gardens, greenhouses, and a studio, as well as Burle Marx's home, where he lived, worked, and famously entertained friends and colleagues, many of whom were leading botanists, artists, and cultural figures in Brazil and worldwide. Large-scale wall graphics re-create the hand-painted tile walls of the Sítio's loggia studio. Interpretive panels introduce the Sítio as the site of Burle Marx's creativity, center of his plant studies, and gathering place for prominent figures in Burle Marx's circle, including architects Lúcio Costa, Rino Levi, and Oscar Niemeyer; botanist Henrique Lahmeyer de Mello Barreto; botanical artist Margaret Mee; and landscape architects Conrad Hamerman, Raymond Jungles, and Haruyoshi Ono.

In the Britton Science Gallery, an exhibit focusing on botany and conservation features plants of three key biomes of Brazil: the dry region surrounding Brasília known as the Cerrado, the world's most biologically rich savanna, which is home to more than 10,000 species of plants; the geographically isolated Atlantic Coastal Forest, which has one of the highest percentages of species of plants found nowhere else; and the Amazon, Earth's largest tropical rain forest, which is home to more than 30 million people, including 350 indigenous and ethnic groups. Displays explore plants of particular ethnobotanical and economic importance in Brazil, Burle Marx's own botanical study of Brazilian plants, and the work of NYBG's scientists in the region.

A full-color illustrated catalogue, published in association with the exhibition, features essays by Dr. Sullivan and other scholars and includes an interview with Raymond Jungles.

### **Complementary Exhibition Programming**

A diverse and engaging schedule of public programming for all ages accompanies *Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx*, celebrating the sights and sounds of Brazil that inspired Burle Marx's life and work. Highlights include extended summer hours, a scholarly symposium, live Brazilian music and dance performances, hands-on activities for young visitors and their families in the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and the Brazilian Modern Interactive Mobile Guide.

### **Bring Home a Bit of Brazil**

Round out your *Brazilian Modern* experience with a visit to NYBG Shop. Lush tropical plants, bold colorful pottery; books about Roberto Burle Marx and by Guest Designer Raymond Jungles; luxurious personal care products made with native Brazilian ingredients, such as castanha, acai, and maracuja; and original lithographs signed by Burle Marx are among the many exhibition-related items available for purchase.

*Brazilian Modern: The Living Art of Roberto Burle Marx* is part of NYBG's year-long #plantlove series of exhibitions, programs, and projects exploring the essential connections between plants, people, and the environment.

For more information, including updates on ticket availability, please visit [www.nybg.org](http://www.nybg.org).

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The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road. It is easy to reach by Metro-North Railroad, bus, or subway. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and Monday federal holidays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *All-Garden Pass*, which includes admission to the grounds as well as to seasonal gardens, exhibitions, and attractions such as the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory, Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and Tram Tour. For ticket pricing, please check our Web site. For more information, please call 718.817.8700 or visit [nybg.org](http://nybg.org)

The New York Botanical Garden, 2900 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, New York 10458

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