



MADALENA SANTOS REINBOLT

ARTIST'S PORTFOLIO

BIOGRAPHY

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Madalena Santos Reinbolt (Vitória da Conquista, BA, 1919 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 1977), though she also worked with painting, is best known for her complex embroideries made with hundreds of vibrant colored threads—the so-called “wool paintings.” In these works, Reinbolt depicted everyday life in rural and urban settings, filled with Black characters: gatherings, festivities, celebrations, religious rituals, and communal meals.

Santos Reinbolt grew up on a small farm with her family, where she was first exposed to embroidery, weaving, ceramics, and painting during her childhood. In 1949, as a young adult, she moved to Petrópolis, where she worked on the Samambaia farm, the residence of architect Lota Macedo Soares (1910–1967) and her partner, American writer Elizabeth Bishop (1911–1979).

Although she was creatively inclined from a young age, it was only in the 1950s that the artist began dedicating herself to painting, crafting synthetic figures with expressive brushstrokes on fragile surfaces like paper or straw, highlighting the importance of materiality in her work.

By the late 1960s, Santos Reinbolt began creating her unique and pioneering “wool paintings,” produced with 154 needles in a variety of colors, much like a palette of paint, which she applied to burlap or canvas. In her practice, the needle became an extension of her hand, akin to a brush in painting.

Despite her rich and distinctive body of work, Santos Reinbolt operated outside the traditional art circuits of her time, and it is only in recent years that her work has begun to receive greater recognition.

Even today, museums and art spaces remain largely silent about the groundbreaking nature of her production—something the exhibition at MASP seeks to address, fostering dialogue around her history and contributions to Brazilian art.

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand

MADALENA SANTOS REINBOLT

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil



INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITIONS

2025

Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets
American Folk Art Museum, New York, USA

2022

Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets
MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

- 2025** Weaving the Morning: Modern Life and Nocturnal Experience in Brazilian Art
Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo - SP, Brazil
- 2025** In every corner: Casa Fiat de Cultura and Instituto Tomie Ohtake visit Vilma Eid Collection
Casa Fiat de Cultura, Belo Horizonte - MG, Brazil
- 2025** Instituto Tomie Ohtake visits Vilma Eid Collection - In every corner
Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo - SP, Brazil
- 2024** Women by Women
Galeria Estação, São Paulo - SP, Brazil
- 2023** Reverses and Transverses: artists beyond boundaries (and friends) at the biennials
Galeria Estação, São Paulo - SP, Brazil
- 2022** Crafting Modernity Design in Latin America, 1940–1980
MoMA, New York, USA

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS

2021 - 2022

Carolina Maria de Jesus: Brazil for Brazilians

IIMS - Instituto Moreira Salles, São Paulo – SP, Brazil

3 Frestas

Trienal das Artes, Sesc Sorocaba, Sorocaba – SP, Brazil

2021

Terra and Temperature

Galeria Almeida & Dale, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

2020

Women in Folk Art

Galeria Estação, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

2016

The Hand of the Brazilian People

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

2006 - 2007

“Viva Cultura Viva do Povo Brasileiro”

Museu Afro Brasil Emanuel Araújo, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

2000

“Arte Popular: Mostra do Redescobrimento”

Fundação Bial de São Paulo: Associação Brasil 500 anos Artes Visuais, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

1991

“A Mata”

MAC/USP - Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo - SP, Brazil

1969

The Hand of the Brazilian People

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo - SP, Brazil



Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets | Documentary Video

↗ [\(Click here to watch\)](#)

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Center Pompidou

Paris, France

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

New York, USA

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand

São Paulo - SP, Brazil

Museu Afro Brasil Emanuel Araújo

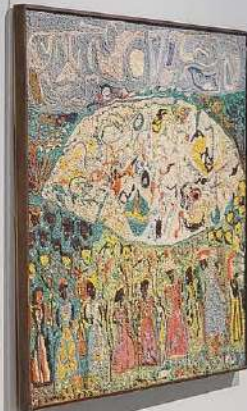
São Paulo - SP, Brazil

Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo

São Paulo - SP, Brazil

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- 2025** Weaving the Morning: Modern Life and Nocturnal Experience in Brazilian Art
Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo - SP, Brazil
- 2005** Pequeno Dicionário da arte do povo brasileiro século XX, Léila Coelho Frota
Rio de Janeiro – RJ, Brazil
- 2000** Arte Popular: Mostra do Redescobrimento
Fundação Bienal de São Paulo: Associação Brasil 500 anos Artes Visuais, São Paulo – SP, Brazil
- 1988** A mão afro-brasileira: significado da contribuição artística e histórica/ Emanuel Araújo, Tenenge
São Paulo – SP, Brazil
- 1978** Mitopoética de 9 artistas brasileiros: vida, verdade e obra, Léila Coelho Frota
Funarte, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil



EXHIBITIONS



Photo: ©Isabella Matheus

2022

Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand
São Paulo - SP, Brazil



Photo: ©Isabella Matheus

2022

Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets

MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand
São Paulo - SP, Brazil



Photo: ©AdimaMacena

2021-2022

Carolina Maria de Jesus: Brazil for Brazilians

IIMS - Instituto Moreira Salles
São Paulo - SP, Brazil



2021-2022

3 Frestas - Trienal das Artes

Sesc Sorocaba
Sorocaba - SP, Brazil



2021-2022

3 Frestas - Trienal das Artes

Sesc Sorocaba
Sorocaba - SP, Brazil



2021

Terra and Temperature

Galeria Almeida & Dale
São Paulo - SP, Brazil

2020

Women in Folk Art

Galeria Estação
São Paulo - SP, Brazil





WORK



Madalena Santos Reinbolt

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil

Untitled, 1969 - 1977

Tapestry

83 x 114 cm | 32.68 x 44.88 in

Photo: João Liberato



Madalena Santos Reinbolt

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil

Untitled, 1969 - 1977

Tapestry

86 x 117 cm | 33.85 x 46.06 in

Photo: João Liberato



Madalena Santos Reinbolt

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil

Untitled, 1969 - 1977

Tapestry

83 x 89 cm | 32.67 x 35.03 in

Photo: João Liberato



Madalena Santos Reinbolt

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil

Untitled, 1969 - 1977

Tapestry

84 x 106 cm | 33.07 x 41.73 in

Photo: João Liberato



Madalena Santos Reinbolt

1919, Vitória da Conquista - BA | 1977, Petrópolis - RJ, Brazil

Untitled, 1969 - 1977

Tapestry

95 x 110 cm | 37.40 x 43.30 in

Photo: João Liberato



THE GALLERY

Established in 2004 in São Paulo, Brazil, Galeria Estação inaugurated a curatorial program serving a wide-reaching community of noncanonical artistic voices. By creating trans-generational bridges between emerging contemporary and pioneering self-taught artists, Galeria Estação has inspired an integrative network of creative figures and makers from varied geographies and educational backgrounds.

Since 2008, the gallery's innovative artistic program, housed in a state-of-the-art architectural building, has exhibited contemporary Brazilian artists whose cultural backgrounds and vernacular practices complement the primacy of self-taught art —examining the country's under represented artistic styles, working methods, and historical narratives and legacies.

Galeria Estação's artistic director and founder, Vilma Eid, in collaboration with a distinguished group of invited guest curators, have proposed unexpected dialogues in presentations that have transcended

traditional accounts of the development of abstract and figural genres in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, initiating the past and present of Brazilian art.

As a result, Galeria Estação is an institutional reference in Brazil, a force for preserving Latin American memories and narratives otherwise dismissed, marginalized, or overlooked in the historiographies of Brazilian art.

Galeria Estação advances its mission to provide unprecedented opportunities for viewers to experience expansive local and global visions of Brazilian art.

Galeria Estação exhibits a large stable of self-taught artists: Agnaldo dos Santos, Agostinho Batista de Freitas, Amadeo Luciano LORENZATO, Artur Pereira, Chico da Silva, Chico Tabibuia, Conceição dos Bugres, Elza O.S, Geraldo Teles Oliveira – G.T.O, Gilvan SAMICO, Itamar Julião, Izabel Mendes da Cunha, José Antonio da Silva, Madalena dos Santos Reinbolt, Maria Auxiliadora, Mirian Inêz da Silva, Sebastião Theodoro Paulino da Silva – RANCHINHO, Suanê and Zica Bergami.

The growing roster of contemporary artists include: Higo José, José Bezerra, Julio Vilani, Rafael Pereira, Santídio Pereira, Cicero Alves dos Santos - Véio.

GALERIA ESTAÇÃO

RUA FERREIRA DE ARAÚJO, 625 - PINHEIROS

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