

PRESS RELEASE

January 25th, 2019

Benches of the Brazilian Indigenous Peoples

April 6th (Saturday) – May 19th (Sunday) 2019

The Museum of Modern Art, Saitama

About the Exhibition

Benches made from single pieces of wood by the indigenous people of the Amazon and Xingu River Basins in northern Brazil, South America, are carved into the shapes of animals or functional forms with distinctive geometric patterns, and can be viewed as unique sculptural works of art. Benches were originally used in the daily lives of indigenous people, as well as for special occasions such as shamanistic ceremonies or weddings, and were linked to their lives, traditions, and original mythology as cultural and social symbols within their communities. Today, they are inspired by connections from outside those communities, producing even more diverse and free expression as they pursue their own identities with an eye toward nature, unfettered by

function or tradition.

In this exhibition, we'll introduce you to about 90 benches from the BEĨ Collection, produced by indigenous people, and explore the rich imagination of humankind made manifest in their shapes, created from unique sensibility.

About the BEĨ Collection

BEĨ Editora is an art and architecture publishing company based in São Paulo, Brazil. The company's name, BEĨ, means "a little more" in an indigenous Brazilian language, and represents the company's ethos of striving to challenge and overcome limitations. While maintaining their publishing business, the company has been collecting benches from indigenous people for more than 15 years. Rather than seeing the work of indigenous people as mere sample material, their activities recognize the pieces as contemporary expression unique to Brazil, and seek to appreciate and spread the beauty of their sculpted shapes.

This exhibition is a valuable opportunity to display a special selection from the company's collection of over 300 works of art.

Main Exhibits & Categories *Notation: Piece Name (Indigenous Group Name) by Artist

(left blank if artist is unknown)

(A) Traditional benches based in practicality and convention

Geometric Pattern (Karajá), Geometric Pattern (Asurini do Xingu)

(B) Traditional animal benches used in villages for religious purposes

Curassow (Kuikuro) by Kanari, Hummingbird (Palikur)

(C) Sculptural animal benches, proof of existence for indigenous people and born from creativity

Anteater (Mehinaku) by Uruhu, Tapir (Kayabi), Monkey (Mehinaku) by Mawaia, Jaguar (Mehinaku) by Kawakanamu & Yaruru

Related Events

■ Special Talk: Meeting the Mehinaku Siblings

Speaker: Toyojiro Hida (Director, Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum)

The director of the exhibition introduces us to the charm of the benches of indigenous people he found during his travels for research.

Date and time: April 14th (Sunday), 2019 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. (doors open at 2:00)

Location: 2nd floor Auditorium/Capacity: 80 people (first-come, first-serve)/Admission: free

■ Special Gallery Talk: MISAWA Atsuhiko Meets Brazilian Animals in Saitama

Speaker: Atsuhiko Misawa (Sculptor, Specially-Appointed Professor at Musashino Art University)

A sculptor who explores various animal shapes carved into wood talks freely about the animal-shaped benches created from the imagination of Brazilian indigenous people.

Date and time: May 12th (Sunday), 2019 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Location: 2nd floor Lecture Room/Capacity: 30 people/Special exhibition admission fee required.

■ Gallery Talk by Curator

April 20th (Saturday) & May 11th (Saturday)/30 minutes from 3:00 p.m./2nd floor Exhibition Room/Special exhibition admission fee required.

■ We will guide interested groups through the highlights of *Benches of the Brazilian Indigenous Peoples* (by reservation only).

For inquiries and reservations, please call 048-824-0110 for the head of education and PR.

Exhibition Info

1. Exhibition dates: April 6th (Saturday) – May 19th (Sunday) 2019
Closed: Mondays (open April 29th & May 6th)
2. Opening hours: 10 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. (admission to exhibition room until 5:00 p.m.)
3. Admission: General ¥1,100 (¥880), university and high school students ¥880 (¥710);
price in parentheses () for groups of 20+
*Free for junior high school students and younger, as well as disabled persons (and one attendant) upon presentation of ID booklet.
*Includes admission to the MOMAS Collection (1st floor Exhibition Room).
4. Organizers: Museum of Modern Art, Saitama; Nikkei Inc.
5. Supported by: The Embassy of Brazil in Japan
6. Special cooperation: BEÏ Editora
7. Cooperation from: CBMM, JR East Omiya Branch, FM NACK5
8. Number of pieces: 92 (planned)
9. Directions: Address: 9-30-1, Tokiwa, Urawa-ku, Saitama-shi, Saitama 330-0061,
Japan

Tel: 048-824-0111 Fax: 048-824-0119

<http://www.pref.spec.ed.jp/momas/>

The museum is located inside Kita-Urawa Park, a 3-minute walk from the West Exit of Kita-Urawa Station on the JR Keihin-Tohoku Line. JR Kita-Urawa Station is approximately 35 minutes by train from JR Tokyo or JR Shinjuku Station.

Parking is not available at the museum. Please use the coin-operated parking lot named “Mitsui Repark, the Museum of Modern Art, Saitama East,” which can be used at a reduced price (300 yen off for special exhibitions and 100 yen off for the MOMAS Collection). Please contact us prior to your visit if you are planning on coming by chartered bus. Persons with disabilities can use our business-use parking space. However, space is limited.

*For use of the images below, please contact the museum. Images will be provided by the museum as data. Please request via email: kouhou@aria.ocn.ne.jp (Mr. Yata, head of PR).

- This exhibition does not require application for copyright clearance in order to publish images.
- When publishing images, please include the captions below.
- Please refrain from cropping images of the artwork, adding text, etc.

Contact Us

Heads of exhibition: Mr. Shibuya, Ms. Okoshi/Inquiries regarding PR & images: Mr. Yata

Tel: 048-824-0111 (Main)/048-824-0110 (Curation Department) Fax: 048-824-0118

PR Images *Notation: Piece Name (Indigenous Group Name) by Artist

(A) Traditional benches based in practicality and convention



A-1 Geometric pattern (Karajá)



A-2 Geometric pattern (Asurini do Xingu)

(B) Traditional animal benches used in villages for religious purposes



B-1 Curassow (Kuikuro) by Kanari



B-2 Hummingbird (Palikur)

(C) Sculptural animal benches, proof of existence for indigenous people and born from creativity



C-1 Anteater (Mehinaku) by Uruhu



C-2 Tapir (Kayabi)



C-3 Monkey (Mehinaku) by Mawaia



C-4 Jaguar (Mehinaku) by Kawakanamu & Yaruru