

Bispo do Rosario: All Existing Materials on Earth at Americas Society

The show, opening January 25, is the first solo exhibition in the United States of the

Afro-Brazilian artist.

January 5, 2023—Americas Society presents [*Bispo do Rosario: All Existing Materials on Earth*](#), the first solo exhibition in the United States of Afro-Brazilian artist Arthur Bispo do Rosario (b. 1909, Japarutuba, Brazil, d. 1989, Rio de Janeiro)—known as “Bispo.” During his career, Bispo created more than 1,000 artwork objects from Colônia Juliano Moreira, a psychiatric institution in Rio de Janeiro where he lived most of his life. The exhibition runs from January 25, 2023, through May 20, 2023.

“His commitment to his craft was the result of a mandate, an offering, and a mission to replicate, catalogue, and organize the world around him,” said the exhibition curatorial team. “His endless activity helped him to survive the hardships of many years of psychiatric institutionalization.”

Co-curated by Aimé Iglesias Lukin, Ricardo Resende, and Javier Téllez, with Tie Jojima, the exhibition is organized in collaboration with the Museu Bispo do Rosario Arte Contemporânea in Rio de Janeiro. *Bispo do Rosario: All Existing Materials on Earth* compiles Bispo do Rosario’s iconic artworks, which include hand-embroidered textiles with attached elements, mixed-media sculptures, and his “Annunciation Garment,” his best-known artwork, which he intended to wear on Judgment Day.

Bispo do Rosario was born in Japarutuba, Brazil in 1909. A descendant of slaves, he spent his youth working as a servant and a housekeeper and later served in the Brazilian navy, which discharged him for insubordination. In 1938, Bispo had a series of hallucinations that made him believe he had been sent by God on a mission to recreate the universe. After he was diagnosed with schizophrenic paranoia, he was arrested and sent to the Colônia Juliano Moreira psychiatric institution in Rio de Janeiro, where he spent the rest of his life. Much of his work reflects the African folk arts of his native region and his Christian faith.

“Bispo do Rosario’s life and work lead us to examine histories of institutionalization and involuntary confinement for those deemed mentally ill,” curators said.

Bispo’s work was discovered and exhibited for the first time in 1982—seven years before his death—by Federico Morais, who also curated Bispo’s first solo exhibition at Rio de Janeiro’s Museum of Modern Art. In 1995, Bispo’s work was posthumously featured in the Venice Biennale, where his art was widely recognized by art critics and acclaimed as avant-garde. His work has also been featured in “The Encyclopedic Palace,” the main group/thematic exhibition of the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, and Frankfurt’s MKK Museum’s *A Tale of Two Worlds: Experimental Latin American Art in Dialogue with the MKK Collection 1940–1980s*, in 2018.

Bispo do Rosario: All Existing Materials on Earth will be accompanied by the publication of a pocketbook. Americas Society will also present a series of public programs in conjunction with the show.

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Funders and Sponsors

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