

Ministério da Cultura  
Instituto de Arte Contemporânea  
present

 IAC instituto de arte  
contemporânea



**Ivan Serpa**  
documental

1923-2023

# Ivan Serpa

documental  
1923-2023

Hélio Márcio  
Dias Ferreira  
curator

Celebrate the centennial of one of the most important national artists, mark with regret its early passing, 50 years ago, and secure our country's culture memory. IAC – Instituto de Arte Contemporânea fulfills these important tasks by preserving the documental memory of masters such as Ivan Serpa (1923-1973) and presenting small exhibitions of selected parts of their trajectories.

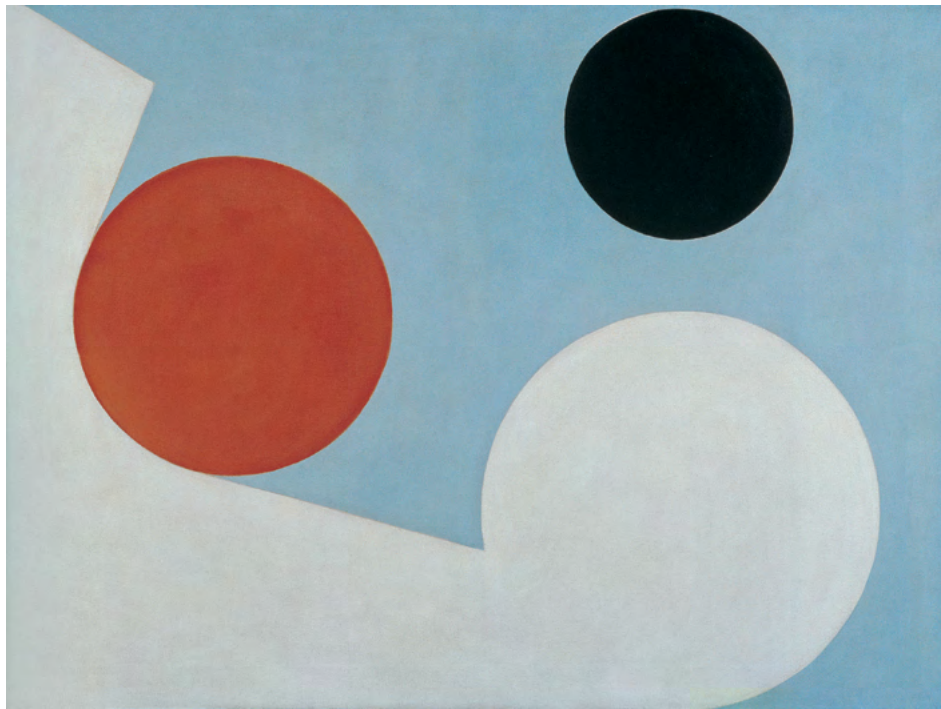
In this exhibition, almost all the documents presented constitute the legacy of a devoted wife, Lygia Cardoso Ferreira Serpa, now deceased, who with a librarian passion kept for decades photos, newspaper articles, records of all kinds, posters, catalogues, books, personal objects of her husband, among other memories. Currently, part of the family resides in the artist's former house and studio, in a quiet street in the Méier area, in Rio de Janeiro North Zone. In this place are still kept works of the painter and substantial traces of his old creative studio.

In addition to documents (now taken care by the authority of this São Paulo institution), the works selected for this event are part of the collections of Serpa Family, Museu de Arte Contemporânea – MAC-USP, Gustavo Rebello Art and the curator's own collection. We chose some moments of the artist's trajectory, which was versatile in its making, especially between the 1960s and 1970s.

The award-winning Rio master was the founder of Grupo Frente [Front Group], a Brazilian concrete art movement, a contemporary correspondent of São Paulo's renowned Grupo Ruptura [Rupture Group]. Each core kept its particularities and both placed Brazil in the line of important abstract creators of the world scene.

Ivan won the Jovem Pintor Nacional [Young National Painter] award at the 1951 São Paulo Biennial. He pursued a brilliant career and, at the end of the 1950s, won the Travel award at Salão Nacional, an important event in the visual arts that took place in Rio de Janeiro. He stayed in Europe from 1958 to 1959. He came back multiple and master of several mediums, ranging from the smartest expressionism to the figurative world strongest vigor, sometimes loaded with explicit eroticism. He also created abstract works and returned to geometric shapes as many times as he wished.

Thus, we hope, with the initiative of IAC towards the continuity of this noble memory, to praise and thank both remarkable Ivan and his widow, Lygia, for the shared rich portion while living among us. Unfortunately, in the case of the painter, it was almost meteoric, but still renovating and upbringing for the progress of Brazilian art history.



Many critics and journalists wrote about the work of Ivan Serpa. We once lived in times of a much greater diversity of newspapers, in which we found articles that dealt with cultural production. Names such as Ferreira Gullar, Jayme Maurício, Mario Pedrosa, Aracy Amaral, Roberto Pontual and Frederico Moraes, among others, had the opportunity to publish opinions about the Rio artist.



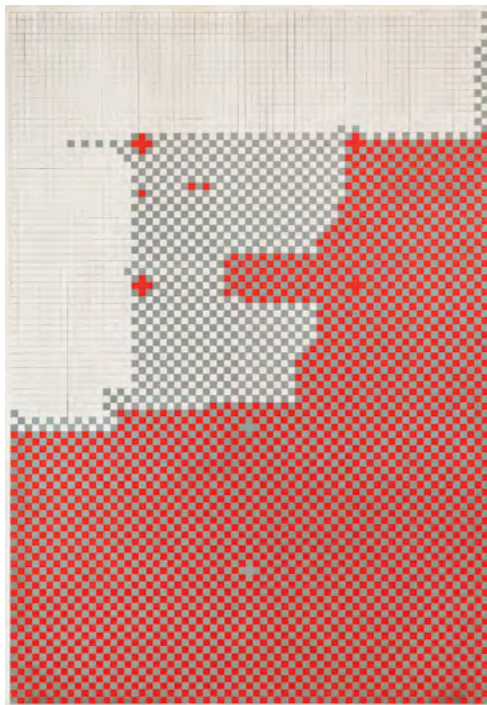
1 *Formas [Shapes]*, 1951  
Oil on canvas, 97 x 130,2 cm  
Coll. Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo

Acquisition Prize (Arno S/A)  
I Bienal de São Paulo, 1951.  
Donation Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo.  
Photo Romulo Fialdini

2 Vera Pedrosa, Margareth Spencer, Amílcar de Castro, Murilo Mendes, Ivan Serpa, Mario Pedrosa, Lygia Serpa and Mário Barata, 1951.  
Coll. Ivan Serpa Family

3 Untitled, n/d  
Fountain pen and India ink  
on paper, 110 x 81 cm  
Coll. Ivan Serpa Family  
Photo Romulo Fialdini

4 Untitled (Geomântica Series), 1973  
Oil on canvas, 200 x 138 cm  
Coll. Gustavo Rebello Arte  
Photo Jaime Acioli

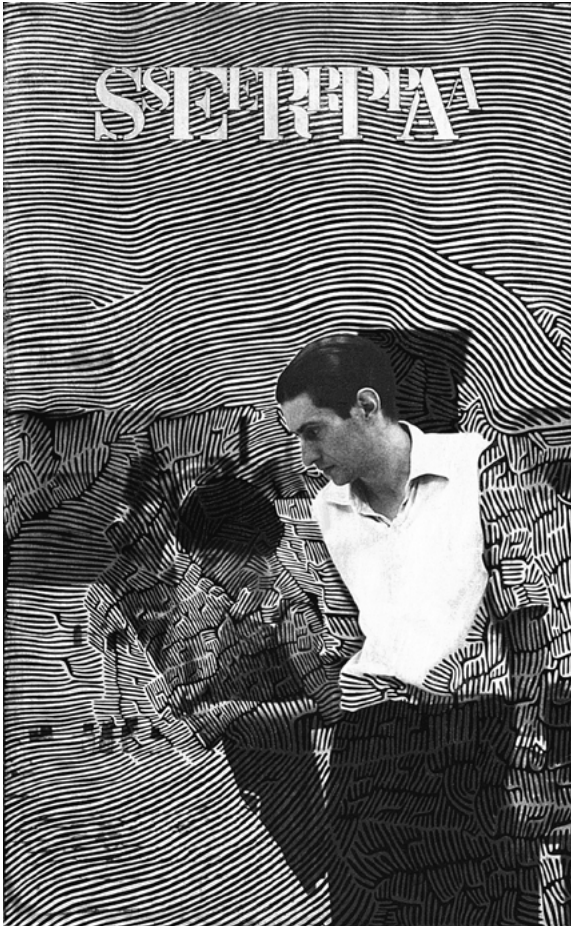


In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Ivan Serpa created the Op-Erotica series. It was formed by detailed drawings made by fountain pen, inspired by erogenous parts of the human body, as well as the labyrinthine forms of the harmful “spellings” caused by silverfish when devouring papers



5 Untitled, 1962  
Oil on canvas, 97 x 130 cm  
Coll. Gustavo Rebello Arte  
Photo Jaime Acioli





Creator of the School of Arts of the Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM) of Rio de Janeiro, Ivan Serpa was a teacher of arts for children and adults. Some of his students became important artists and many who to this day figure among renowned personalities of the Brazilian arts scene still have deep respect and admiration for the master, as well as enormous gratitude. Names such as Hélio Oiticica, Lygia Clark, Aluísio Carvão and Waltércio Caldas, among others, were in the great cast of his students.

Always being a voracious reader, Ivan Serpa was fascinated by the world of writing. Thus, in 1970, he created the *Anti-Livro* [Anti-Book] and the *Anti-Letter* series works. In these works, he intervened with a fountain pen and ink on printed texts, creating a language that was not intelligible to our eyes.

6 Poster with intervention on photograph, 1970  
96 x 60 cm  
Ivan Serpa Family Collection  
Photo Romulo Fialdini

7 Untitled (Anti-Letra Series), 1971  
India ink on printed material  
14 x 23 cm  
Coll. Gustavo Rebello Arte  
Photo Jaime Acioli





#### 8 and cover

Barcelona Book, 1959  
Printed by Enric Tormo  
Silkscreen on paper, 20 x 20 cm  
Coll. Gustavo Rebello Arte  
Photo Jaime Acioli

### About Instituto de Arte Contemporânea

Instituto de Arte Contemporânea – IAC is a center for documentation and research. Established in 1997 by Raquel Arnaud, aiming to preserve and make available for research a wide collection of documents related to the trajectory and work of Brazilian visual artists and architects.

Currently, IAC holds more than 80,000 items, including the collections of artists Amilcar de Castro, Antonio Dias, Carmela Gross, Hermelindo Fiaminghi, Iole de Freitas, Ivan Serpa, Lothar Charoux, Luiz Sacilotto, Rubem Ludolf, Sérvulo Esmeraldo, Sergio Camargo, Willys de Castro, architect Jorge Wilhelm and the Petite Galerie.

IAC also invests in various forms of knowledge production, conducting exhibitions, publications, guided visits, seminars, courses, open classes and workshops for diverse audiences, in addition to offering research grants. To date, there were 35 exhibitions and 27 publications, including books and catalogues.

#### Exhibition

**Ivan Serpa** documental  
1923-2023

#### Curator

Hélio Márcio Dias Ferreira

#### Expography

Deyson Gilbert

#### Visitation

August 31 > December 16, 2023  
Tuesday – Friday > 11–17h  
Saturdays and holidays > 11–16h

#### Documentation and and Research Center – NDP

Tuesday – Friday > 11–17h  
by appointment  
[contato@iacbrasil.org.br](mailto:contato@iacbrasil.org.br)

#### IAC

#### Instituto de Arte Contemporânea

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[www.iacbrasil.org.br](http://www.iacbrasil.org.br)

Free admission  
Wheelchair accessibility

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