

GLOBAL SOUTH UNITES FOR NEW BIENNIAL

FORTHCOMING BIENNIAL GAINS MOMENTUM WITH NEW SURGE OF CONFIDENCE IN LATIN AMERICA'S DIVERSE CULTURE AND ARTISTIC CAPACITY

BY PATRICIA ROUSSEAU

AN EXCITING NEW BIENNALE is on the Latin American horizon: *Bienal Sur Global*. The event was first conceived by UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) and a group linked to contemporary art and education. The Argentine group is headed by Anibal Jozami, dean of the Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero (UNTREF) in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

It seems fitting that a new biennale that is unique to the interests and art of South America would be conceived at this point in the history of the region: on March 11, 2011, the *Tratado Constitutivo del UNASUR* went into effect in Latin America. This is a constitutive treaty signed by the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela with the aim of developing greater integration in the regional processes of Mercosur and in the Andean Community.

In 2015, Anibal Jozami - an educator, art collector, and a patron of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid -, promoted a series of international conferences with curators, artists, communication experts, critics and collectors to discuss the creation of the First International Contemporary Art Biennial of South America, also known as *Bienal Sur Global*, expected to take place in November 2017.

The first three of these conferences were attended by an array of distinguished guests including Andrés Duprat, director of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Gustavo Buntix,

curator of Micromuseo, Peru; Thaddeus Chiarelli, director of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil; Luis González Palma, a Guatemalan artist; Céleste Boursier-Mougenot, an artist representing France at the Biennale di Venezia; Gilles Lipovetsky, French sociologist and philosopher; Tício Escobar, a Paraguayan art critic; Voluspa Jarpa, a Chilean artist; Claudia Casarino, a Paraguayan artist, Stéphane Aquin, historian and chief curator of



THE FOURTH ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS ON THE FIRST SOUTH AMERICA CONTEMPORARY ART BIENNIAL - *SUR GLOBAL* TOOK PLACE IN THE AUDITORIUM OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF TRES DE FEBRERO (UNTREF) IN BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

the Hirshorn Museum in Washington. Furthermore, one of the discussion groups was coordinated by Agustín Perez Rubio, the art director of MALBA (Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires). The last conference took place on April 5th and 6th in the auditorium of the MUNTREF (Museo de la Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero) located in Puerto Madero in Buenos Aires. Around 800 people attended the auditorium. The event

was broadcasted via live stream to more than 2000 spectators.

ARTE!Brasileiros Magazine was invited to take part in the debate, *Art, Critic and Media*, mediated by the journalist and art collector Marlise Jozami. In addition, Celia Birbragher, editor of the Colombian magazine Nexus, discussed several of her experiences with projects in Latin America, all of which were followed closely by the magazine

PHOTO PATRICIA ROUSSEAU



ATTENDEES PARTICIPATE IN ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS ON THE NEW SOUTH AMERICA BIENNIAL *SUR GLOBAL*, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DIANA WECHSLER, VICE-DIRECTOR OF THE MUNTREF (BSAS), ARTIST GRACIELA SACCO, CURATOR MARTA GILI, DIRECTOR OF THE JEU DE PAUME IN PARIS AND ARTIST OSCAR MUÑOZ

for almost 40 years. The art critic Blake Gopnik was also present. He is not only the editor of *Ñ Magazine*, which is a publication of the Argentine newspaper *El Clarín*, but is also a collaborator with *The New York Times*. Valérie Duponchelle, from the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, attended as well. In one of the discussion groups coordinated by Agustín Perez Rubio, art director of the MALBA, the artists Guillermo Kuitca, Matias Duville, and Graziela Sacco from Argentina, Marco Maggi from Uruguay, Catalina Swindburn from Chile, Oscar Muñoz from Colombia, and Ana Bella Geiger, Cildo Meireles, and Ivan Grilo from Brazil also presented their work, highlighting the importance of creating new alternatives for cultural exchanges.

Unlike the models followed by *Biennale di Venezia* and other traditional Biennales, where some artists are invited directly by the chief curator and others selected directly by their countries of origin, the *Bienal Sur Global* announced an open invitation to any artist in Latin America. The idea is to not have a main subject or specific curatorial project for the exhibition. According to the director of the event, Aníbal Jozami, "Since

the beginning, the project was named 'Bienal'... (because) the word is a reference that the public can easily relate to". Besides the fact that the project is easily relatable to the public, Jozami also pointed out another positive aspect of the name chosen. It evokes the concept of "joining together global knowledge, global exchanges, experiences and cultures".

South America today is very different from what it was in the 1980's and 1990's. It has strengthened a certain kind of regionalism that takes pride in the ability to distance itself from predominant countries, particularly the United States of America. However, it is still evident that the continent continues to carry the burden of underdevelopment, as well as economic and cultural dependency. Thus, any initiative with an aim to eradicate poverty and achieve further social, human, and cultural development should be welcome by all. The *Bienal Sur Global* is clearly one of these initiatives, as it hopes to become a showcase of the artistic diversity of the region, an experience of positive discourse for all attendees, and a thought-provoking encounter with art.