

JORGE ROMERO BREST

Following a long illness, the distinguished art critic Jorge Romero Brest died on February 13th of this year in the city of Buenos Aires. The entire art world has deeply felt the loss of this great intellectual who practiced his profession with such fervor, passion, and enthusiasm. Totally committed to his epoch, he was always acutely aware of the role he played in transforming the aesthetic tastes of contemporary Argentine society.

Romero Brest began his professional activity as professor of art history at the University of La Plata in Argentina in 1939 and as professor of aesthetics at the University of Buenos Aires. From that time on, his writings appeared in various Argentine and international publications and he produced numerous books. Founder of the magazine Ver y Estimar in 1948 which was to become the fundamental intellectual and theoretical basis for change in the cultural environment of Argentina in particular and Latin America in general, he directed that magazine until 1955. From 1955 to 1964, he was director of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires and from there went on to create and direct the Center of Visual Arts "Torcuato di Tella." From its creation, the Center paved the way for acceptance of the plastic propositions of the artistic vanguard and maintained a position of experimentation and innovation throughout the years. Due to its influence, the traditional artistic norms for creating and viewing art in Argentina were rejected. The young avant-garde artists found in the Center and in Romero Brest the support which was to be decisive in their artistic development. From 1952 on, he served on many international juries, including those of the I, II, and VI Sao Paulo Biennials and of the Competition for

the Monument to the Unknown Political Prisoner organized by the Contemporary Art Institute of London in 1953. He was also a member of the Jury for the XXXI Venice Biennial in 1962, for the Paris Biennial of Young Artists in 1965, and for the Prizes Awarded by the Torcuato di Tella Institute. Among his numerous books are El problema del arte y del artista contemporaneo, Prilidiano Pueyrredon, La pintura brasilena contemporanea, La pintura europea contemporanea, Ensayo sobre la contemplacion artistica, Politica artisticovisual en Latinoamerica, Rescate del arte, Ultimos cien anos de pintura y escultura en occidente, and his last book published in November 1988, La estetica o lo estetico. At the time of his death he was preparing a book-memoir on the Torcuato Di Tella Institute.

With relation to AICA, Romero Brest founded the Argentine National Section of AICA and served as its president from 1955 to 1960. He was vice-president of AICA for various periods and in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the field of art criticism was elected Honorary President of the Association. With this obituary we pay tribute to our Argentine colleague, Jorge Romero Brest

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