

# 516 Fotoclubismo: Brazilian Modernist Photography, 1946–1964

The members of São Paulo's Foto-Cine Clube Bandeirante (FCCB), established in 1939, were doctors and lawyers, civil servants and businessmen, accountants and students. Though they pursued photography as a hobby, their work attests to the seriousness and skill with which they approached the medium. Their innovations were advanced by camaraderie as well as a competitive spirit: submissions to monthly internal contests were judged publicly, with points awarded accordingly. This installation is structured in constellations based on the themes of these contests, punctuated by focused presentations of the work of three key figures.

*Bandeirante* alludes to a colonial-era group of explorers and fortune hunters based in the São Paulo region, whom the FCCB celebrated for their pioneering spirit, overlooking their role in the enslavement of Indigenous people and the expansion of territory under Portuguese control. Though its identity was thus firmly anchored in the local, the club was an integral part of a dynamic international network of amateurs: the FCCB was widely heralded and its members' work awarded prizes in salons on six continents. The club's position in the Global South, and a bias against the amateur and its association with pictorial clichés, begin to explain its absence from international histories of the medium.

The dates that bracket this exhibition correspond to artistic and political realities in Brazil: the FCCB first published its monthly magazine (the *Boletim foto-cine*) in 1946, the year a new constitution restored democracy following a repressive regime. On the other end, 1964 marked the beginning of a brutal dictatorship, which contributed to the closing of an extraordinarily fertile chapter for photography in Brazil—one that has been, until now, largely overlooked beyond the country's borders.

Organized by Sarah Hermanson Meister, Curator, with Dana Ostrander, Curatorial Assistant, Robert B. Menschel Department of Photography.

Major funding for the exhibition is provided by Monique M. Schoen Warsaw in honor of Sarah Hermanson Meister.

Generous support is provided by David Dechman and Michel Mercure and by the Consulate General of Brazil in New York.

Additional funding is provided by Rose and Alfredo Setubal.