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Green Design and the City
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Parque Ibirapuera São Paulo's "Central Park"

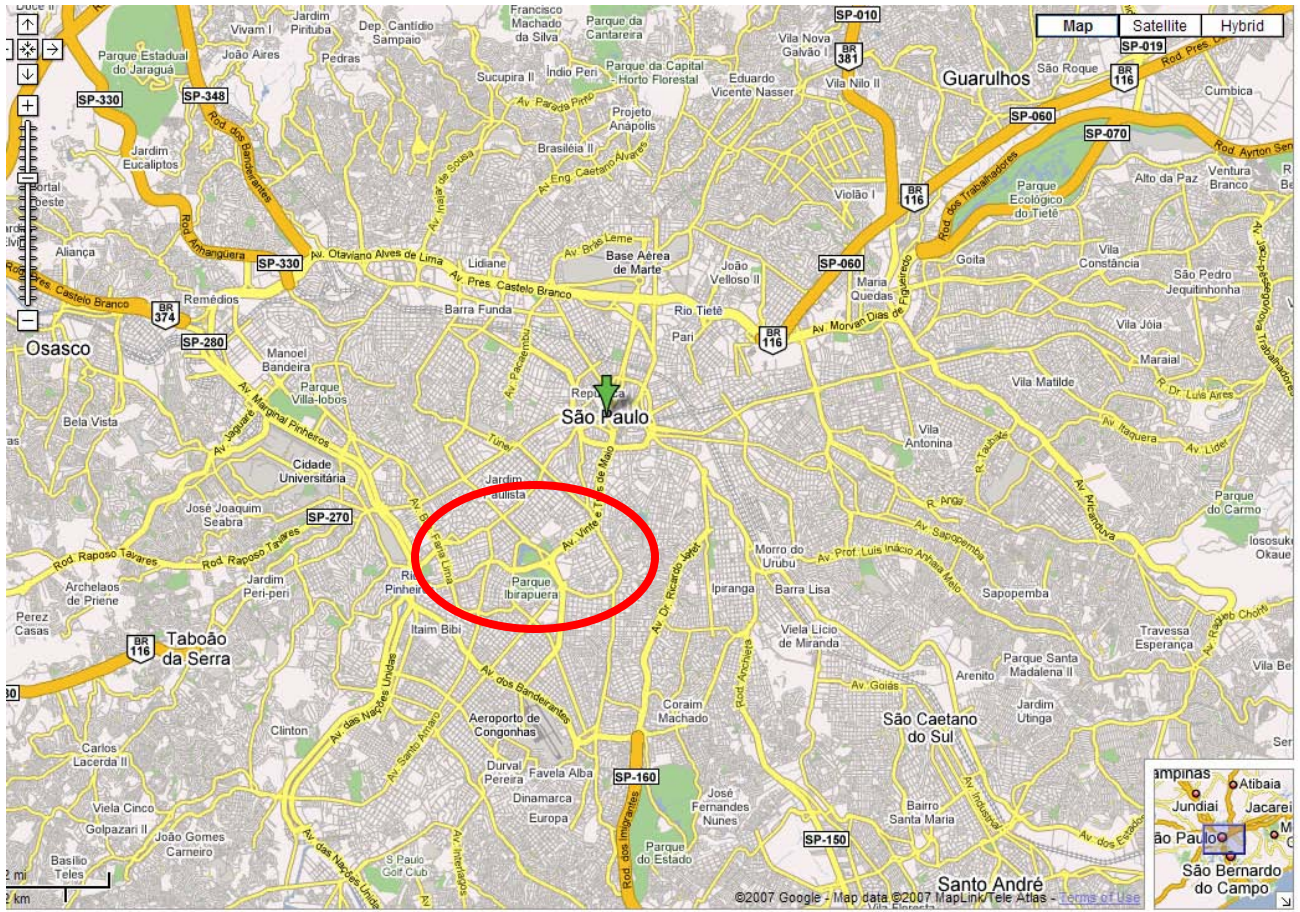
Ibirapueras' Conception:

São Paulo, Brazil's industrial epicenter, decided to give its citizens a place for relaxation and recreation when the city's administration created Parque Ibirapuera in 1954. The park was opened as a part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the founding of the city and was intended to be of cultural and historical significance¹. It pays homage to the "Bandeiras" who were the first westerners to venture into the deep and dense rainforest on their way to expanding the land claim of the Portuguese government. Ibirapuera was conceived of as unifying concept that would bring standing buildings and new open greenery into one cohesive space.

Design and Location:

Ibirapuera was chosen to be the most central of São Paulo's several urban parks and, while not being the largest park in the city, was given extraordinary attention by the government of the time. Two of Brazil's most prominent professionals were called upon to create the space and structure. Oscar Niemeyer, one of Brazil's most famous architects, designed most of the buildings in the park. He partnered with Roberto Burle Marx, a renowned landscape designer, who created the cohesive green space with monuments, walkways, lakes and fountains. Other artists were brought in to create the several monuments erected for various reasons within the park. The inauguration was presided over by Brazilian poet, Guilherme de Almeida. Many Brazilian musicians have since played in the indoor and outdoor venues in the park.

¹ <http://www.cidadedesao paulo.com/eventos/acontece.asp?idnot=435>. *PARQUE DO IBIRAPUERA*. Ana Luiza Galvão.



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Sustainability:

As São Paulo grew, the government understood the need for open space within the densest part of the city and realized that such a park would provide a quality of life and a bit of sustainability to an already increasingly polluted city. The park is nearly 2 million meters squared³ and is home to more than 120 types of different birds, many of which are only found in Brazil in its unique rainforests⁴. The birds travel through, reside and procreate in the many different types of

² Googlemaps. São Paulo.

³ http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/portal/a_cidade/historia/fatos_historicos/index.php?p=5604. Parque do Ibirapuera. A mais famosa área de lazer de São Paulo conta com inúmeras atividades dos mais diversos segmentos. 7 de Novembro de 2005

⁴ http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/portal/a_cidade/noticias/index.php?p=5190. Parque do Ibirapuera abriga mais de 120 espécies de aves. 20 de Outubro de 2005

trees and it is for this reason that the park is named Ibirapuera which means “Rotten Tree” in Portuguese.

Since 1993 Ibirapuera has been part of a larger effort to recover and rehabilitate injured animals and birds around the city. The project is due in large part to a study performed by biologists and veterinarians from the Hospital Veterinário de Animais Silvestres de Vida Livre da Divisão de Fauna da SVMA. During the study, they discovered several endangered species within the park such as the “Tucano de Bico Verde” or the Green Beak Toucan and the Araçá, a symbolic species only found in the Atlantic Rain Forest⁵. The study became a city-wide project that has helped wildlife in São Paulo.

As the most popular park in the city, it is estimated that Ibirapuera receives 20,000 visitors from Monday to Friday, nearly 200,000 people during Saturday and Sunday. The record attendance to the park has been estimated at 130,000 people in a day⁶.

Cultural and Social Attractions of Ibirapuera:

- *Pavilhão Cicillo Matarazzo Sobrinho*: This pavilion is used for expositions and conferences from a variety of topics including the “Bienal de Arte de São Paulo”, the biennial art fair which features mostly plastic art and design of furniture. This is known as the park’s biggest art exhibition and the show attracts international attention. The pavilion also hosts the São Paulo Fashion Week which is highly attended by the city’s socialites and elite.

- *Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM)*: The museum was the focal point of the park’s design for Oscar Niemeyer and is in the center of all movement of the park. The museum was actually built before being integrated into the park in 1948 by Francisco Matarazzo. It is one of the first modern/contemporary art museums in the western hemisphere and its goal is to

⁵ http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/portal/a_cidade/noticias/index.php?p=5190

⁶ <http://www.cidadedesaopaulo.com/eventos/acontece.asp?idnot=435>

showcase Brazilian artists. The end goal was to allow all citizens access to the works of art. Two galleries are housed within its walls and it has a vast collection within its reserves, estimated at 4,000 pieces⁷. It is the largest modern art museum in the continent.

- *Planetário*: The planetarium was conceived of by the supporters of the park in 1954 but was not built until 1957. Unfortunately, the building fell into disrepair and was closed to the public in 1999 even though more than 4 million visitors had passed through the structure. With the help of private donors and corporate sponsorship, the building was rehabilitated and re-opened in 2001. Additional sophisticated displays were added to the planetarium to enhance the experience and attract more visitors.

- *Pavilhão Manoel da Nóbrega*: The building was designed and constructed by Niemeyer in the 1950's and houses the Museu Afro Brasil among other permanent exhibits. It is one of the most recognizable structures in the park.

- *Museu Afro Brasil*: This museum was inaugurated in 2004 and its purpose is to shed new light on the importance of the African experience to the social fabric of Brazil. Blacks in Brazil have often found themselves in a subjugated role, even today, and this museum is an attempt to emphasize and value the role of the race in the development of the country. The museum addresses the African influence on Brazilian music, dance, art and culture⁸.

- *Auditório Ibirapuera*: Arguably the most important addition to the park, the auditorium was only opened in 2005, although it was designed by Oscar Niemeyer in 1954. The total cost of the project over these 51 years was \$29 million reais. The auditorium can hold 800 spectators inside and 15,000 people who can watch the show from an outdoor venue⁹.

⁷ <http://www.cidadedesao paulo.com/eventos/acontece.asp?idnot=435>

⁸ http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/portal/a_cidade/historia/fatos_historicos/index.php?p=5604

⁹ http://www.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/portal/a_cidade/noticias/index.php?p=4890. *Auditório Ibirapuera: show marca a abertura do espaço*. 7 de Outubro de 2005