

SAMBA *in the* GARDEN

Inspired by Brazilian landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx, Chicago Botanic Garden designs a multisensory exploration of Brazilian culture.

By Brian Justice

This summer, the Chicago Botanic Garden celebrates food, flowers and music from south of the equator. Brazil in the Garden is inspired by the work of artist and landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx, perhaps most famous for his 1971 design of the Copacabana Beach promenade in Rio de Janeiro. Monumental, amoeba-shaped areas, sharply defined by dense plantings of eye-popping color, characterize the designer's landscapes. Magenta, burgundy, blue and orange blooms contrast with greenery chosen for shape, color and texture, accentuated by large areas of white and colored gravel.

Visiting the Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami, Fla., Director of Plant Collections Andrew Bunting had an idea for transporting the topics to the gardens. Brazil *throughout* the Garden may be a more apt name for the result, as Brazil and Burle Marx's influence moves from garden to plate to music to programming.

Seventeen display gardens now contain plants used by Burle Marx. "His designs were at the vanguard in the '60s and '70s, and they still stand out for his use of lush, swooping curves and geometric patterns," Bunting says. "He treated flowers and greenery as design elements far beyond the extent of what had been done before."

The music of Brazil will waft throughout the garden with six nights of Latin jazz, samba and bossa nova. Over at Garden View Café, the Brazilian Consulate verified the authenticity of a special menu, and the Garden Chef Series will host demos by the chefs of Sinhá, Taste of Brasil, La Sirena Clandestina and Longitud315.

"Visitors will be exposed to an inherently creative individual," says Gabe Hutchison, exhibitions and programs manager, about Burle Marx's art exhibition



From top: The Circle Garden goes to Brazil for the summer with plants and design inspired by legendary artist and landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx; this untitled painting by Burle Marx is one of his works now hanging in the Jourtras Gallery at the Chicago Botanic Garden; a coconut tree and other tropical plants greet guests at CBG's Visitor Center.

in the garden's Jourtras Gallery. "He brought the shapes and colors of his 2-D art to his gardens and public spaces, making bold 3-D statements." Happily, most of those spaces still exist.

And for children, "we really focused on Burle Marx's signature use of color, pattern and texture," says Jessica Prescott-Smith, coordinator of family programs. Among other activities, they will be able to design their own art project using Burle Marx's gardens and paintings as inspiration. *Through Oct. 15, chicagobotanic.org/brazil*

