

# Oscar Niemeyer

## 1907-2012

By Danilo Matoso Macedo

**M**odern master Oscar Niemeyer (1907-2012) was the most important Brazilian architect. Graduated in the *Escola Nacional de Belas-Artes* in 1934, he soon became world-known for his role, together with Lúcio Costa (1902-1998), with the design of the Brazilian Ministry of Education (1937) in Rio de Janeiro; or for their Brazilian Pavillion in New York World Fair in 1939. His solo work in the Pampulha buildings was immediately published in the catalogue of the "Brazil Builds" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1943.

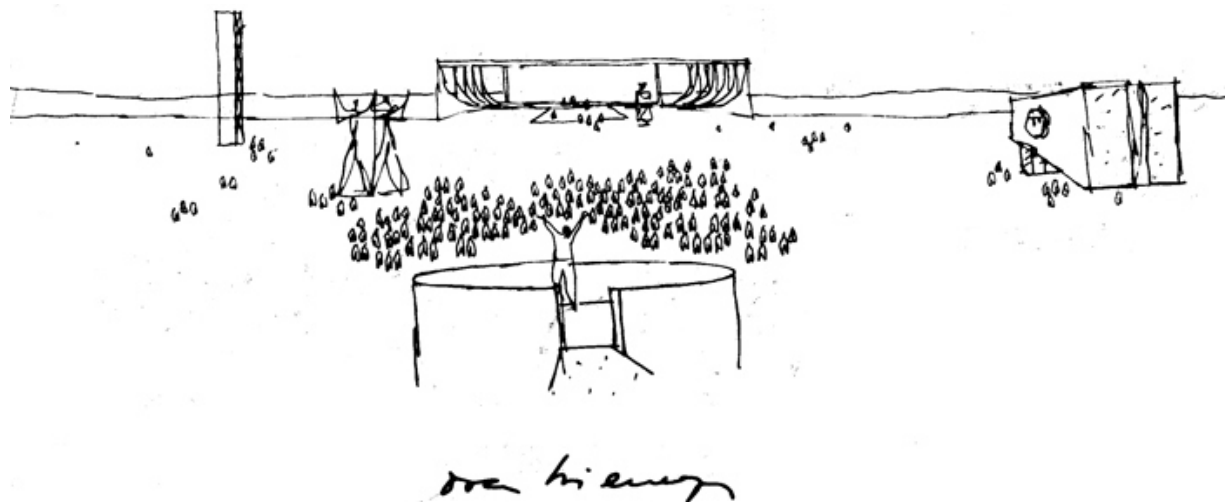


Definitive international recognition came in 1946, when he was part of the team in charge of the design the United Nations Headquarters also in New York, when Niemeyer's design was the one chosen to be followed in further developments. Pampulha was also the beginning of his partnership with the politician Juscelino Kubitschek, then a young mayor and the President of Brazil from 1955 to 1960, when he decided to accomplish the long-cherished national dream of building a new federal capital: Brasília. Lúcio Costa won a competition for the urban "Pilot-Plan" and Niemeyer designed the main administrative buildings. He never ceased to produce new and sometimes controversial designs for the Capital. However, as Brazil immersed into a twenty-five-years dictatorship from 1964 on, he intensified his work abroad, in places as different as Haifa, Tripoli, Algiers, Milan, Paris or Havre.

Niemeyer performed a rare combination of true avant-garde innovation with professional success. His longevity, along with the large number of important commissions, makes him one of the most influential architects of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in western culture. Works derived from his initial colorful and sensual phase, from his new monumentality in Brasília, and from his late minimalist work, can be found in the architecture from every corner of the Modern world.

Danilo Matoso Macedo, August, 2013

Architect and Urban Designer, specialist in Public Policies and Government Management. He is the author of *Da Matéria à Invenção. As Obras De Oscar Niemeyer Em Minas Gerais 1938-1955* published in 2008 and he founded the docomomo Brasília within **docomomo** Brazil.



1907-2012  
Obrigado, Oscar