Research Center – Museu de Arte de São Paulo, MASP

Carla Bonomi, graduated in Arts at UNESP and Librarianship at USP, Librarian
About MASP

The Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) is a private not-for-profit museum founded in 1947 by Assis Chateaubriand (1892–1968), becoming the first modern museum in the country. Chateaubriand invited Italian art dealer and critic Pietro Maria Bardi (1900–1999) to direct MASP, and Lina Bo Bardi (1914–1992) to conceive the architecture and the exhibition design. With the most important collection of European art in the Latin America and southern hemisphere, MASP’s holdings currently consist of more than 10 thousand artworks, including paintings, sculptures, objects, photographs, videos and pieces of clothing from various periods, from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Mission/Objectives

MASP, a diverse, inclusive and plural museum, has the mission to establish, in a critical and creative way, dialogues between past and present, cultures and territories, through the visual arts. To this end, it should enlarge, conserve, research and disseminate its collection, while also promoting the encounter between its various publics and art through transformative and welcoming experiences.

The MASP Research Center has began its activities on 1977, when Lina Bo Bardi and Pietro Maria Bardi donated their collection of books and research materials to the institution. From that moment, the documentation resulting from the museum’s final activities became sheltered by the Research Center.
Collection

Library
It has around 53,500 volumes among books, rare books, exhibitions and museum catalogues, thesis and periodicals about art, architecture, design, fashion, aesthetics and history, that dialogues with the museum’s collection and also with the exhibitions’ themes.
The collection of rare books, made up of 399 catalogued and available titles, and stands out as one of the most important sets of treatises on architecture and art in the country. The collection holds books produced between the 16th and 20th centuries. We still have an amount of more than 400 rare and/or special books in process of cataloguing.

Historic Archive Documents produced and collected during the main activities of the museum, organized as Historical-documentary archive, Photographic archive and Reference file.

Public
The MASP Research Center is accessed by researchers from Brazil and other countries with different purposes: school works, academic researchs, didactic, proof, for media, curatorial and institutional works, among others. The Research Center also carries out intense work in support of internal research to curate exhibitions at the museum.