

THIS presents....

Brazilian painter Marília Bulhões

Our Diplomat of the Month for December, amazing Brazilian painter Marília Bulhões, was born the sixth of seven children. She describes herself as an optimistic, very religious, restless person (in pursuit of creation), as well as a very happy and proud mother of a beautiful and wonderful daughter, Juliana."



Her father, an agricultural engineer and her mother, a homemaker, were devoted to their family and supplied their children with "plenty of love and affection." Although demanding in regards to their education, they "always encouraged us to have our own opinion as well as expressing it in a firm and honest way." Marília grew up in Natal, the capital of the Rio Grande do Norte state, in Northeast Brazil. There she attended a catholic school and later studied at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte.

She started painting early in life. After she left Brazil she also took every opportunity to improve her skills and artistic abilities. She attended the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC, and studied at the Art Students League of New York between 2003 and 2006. Marília participated in many solo and group exhibitions in many countries and has been widely lauded for her work. She says that "Art for me is a deep sense of freedom of expression."

Using acrylic on canvas, she uses an abstract and minimalist approach, and in a recent exhibition at the Art Museum of the Americas Brasil, Meu Brasil: Contrastes da Modernidade (Brazil, My Brazil: Contrasts of Modernity) showed 15 paintings, promoting a constructive vision of South America's future through local and hemispheric cultural exchange. In an accompanying description it states that she "assembles a distinct mosaic of present-day Brazil, subtly revealing intricate contrasts while weaving a sense of cultural unity."

During his opening speech of the exhibition, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, detailed that "the abstraction of Marília's paintings guarantee a discovery of the richness and diversity of her country, offering an intimate perception of its people, the natural beauty of its surroundings and its modernity." Curator Roxana Martin stated that "Bulhões has created a landscape-in-progress that pulsates with the energy of contemporary Brazil. There is luminosity in her work that radiates even in its darkest hues. She applies paint in layers, with swift textural brushstrokes that highlight the grain of the canvas. Color is transparent, the forms assertive and elusive. While some of the paintings speak readily of tradition, others are edgier, with the restlessness of the unknown."

On her website (<http://www.mariliabulhoes.com>) Marília herself says that "in order to create my works of art, I always bring, along with my brushes, a great deal of uneasiness, images rescued from many locations, feelings, passions, reflections... I build abstract works that come to life interactively under my brush strokes, resulting in canvasses and personal art projects. My inspiration arises from the experiences and customs of the various places I have lived from time to time, and even from special trips I have taken. Based on these stories, my works are created and revealed in colors and in shapes."

Apart from her art, when in Brazil, Marília works with people with disabilities, whom she really cares for. Living one day at a time is also most important to her and "to have faith and trust in God: nothing happens by chance."

Asked how THIS for Diplomats has impacted her life she says that "THIS was fundamental for my assimilation to the city, meeting new people and making friends; it also provides me the opportunity to visit interesting places in a safe and organized manner along with wonderful people." Marília also exhibited at the 2013 Festival des Artistes, exercising diplomacy through art. We hope that Marília will continue to enjoy our programs and services and we wish her all the best for the future.