

Travelling around the world with Sarro

Coincidence or destiny? This question has become central to my life, which I documented in a book published in German, full of touching moments and questions. My encounter with Adelio Sarro and all our joint activities over almost thirty years were no coincidence either.

Sarro's artistic career now spans fifty years, and his biography and art reviews have often been published in books and newspapers, so here I will focus on documenting, in a compact version, little-known events that we experienced during our travels.

Sarro was born an artist and was already well known in the São Paulo region, with enormous talent and extraordinary potential, creative and hard-working, with his own self-developed style, when I sought him out after purchasing two of his paintings. The galleries kept quiet; none of them wanted to tell me where he could be found, because they wanted to sell me more. At that time, I was not interested in art, working in IT and was a partner in a tax audit firm, focusing on sales to the management of large corporations, but I was fascinated by Sarro's paintings. I found the master in 1992 when he published his first book about his twenty-year artistic career in São Bernardo do Campo, where he lived. Sarro later told me that a year earlier, a fortune teller had prophesied that someone would come to accompany him and his art into the wider world.

Soon afterwards, Sarro invited me to his residence, a house decorated on the outside with a powerful concrete relief. At that time, no one knew what significance concrete works and monuments would have in the future of Sarro's artistic life. I got to know his family, his wife and two children, as well as his collection of paintings on the walls. Our friendship grew and took up more and more of my time. Residents and tourists from Europe were very taken with his paintings because of their Brazilian themes, colours, creativity and style, as well as their technical quality, so I organised an exhibition in my home country, Switzerland.

The following year, I managed to rent a space in the middle of Switzerland's largest shopping centre in Zurich, where twenty thousand people passed by on Saturdays. In collaboration with the Swiss airline Swissair, Sarro's works were framed and transported from São Paulo to Zurich. The exhibition was mounted on display walls and visible from all the floors of the shopping centre. Thanks to Sarro's knowledge of Italian and French, he was able to communicate with admirers and buyers of his paintings. He got to know my family and also my lifestyle, always combining the useful with the pleasant. That's why we always visit the tourist attractions of the cities and countries we travel to, and of course art galleries and museums. Sarro noticed my difficulty in walking past a beautiful sweet shop without going in and enjoying some sweets, and I had to visit many bookshops with him, where he would browse through art books for a long time and sometimes buy them.

We then took part in the annual Europ'Art art fair in Geneva, where important contacts were made for Sarro's career, including with the founder and president of the World Economic Forum and later with the UN.

The fair took place alongside the book fair and attracted many visitors. Among others, we met the former Brazilian president José Sarney and the famous writer

Paulo Coelho. Sarro tried to learn English there with the help of a hearing aid, but he has not yet had time to achieve this goal.

Geneva is considered one of the most international cities in the world, and this border region between Switzerland and France has a very high standard of living and is one of the places with the greatest interest in Sarro's art.

Air France sponsored an exhibition at the Grand Hotel Concorde in Lyon, the financial centre of France, and we flew with all the comforts of the airline and with already framed pictures.

Another exhibition in France took place in one of the most beautiful galleries in Annecy, a gorgeous city decorated with flowers and very touristy, an hour's drive from Geneva, on the edge of a lake with grassy areas where scantily clad women sunbathe in the summer.

Evian-Les-Bains, located on the French side of Lake Geneva, is famous for its mineral water, which is drunk worldwide, its casino and international congresses. The mayor of the city, who told us about his child in Brazil, offered us the congress centre for a two-week Sarro exhibition. A five-metre-long banner hung on the tall glass wall of the building when the magnificent exhibition was ceremoniously opened by the mayor in the presence of many visitors, interested parties and the press. At that time, the city administration purchased a very beautiful painting by Sarro with a musical motif for its music conservatory.

On the way to Nice, we visited old friends of Sarro's and retrieved some paintings that he had put on commission years ago. Saint-Paul-de-Vence is a small medieval tourist town with narrow and sometimes steep streets, just a short drive from Nice. It is known as the town of the arts, with many high-end galleries. The small cemetery contains the grave of Marc Chagall, one of the most famous artists who lived in this town for a long time. Sarro also had paintings in one of these galleries and in another gallery in Grasse. This town is world-famous for the production of perfume essences.

Sarro's works have also been exhibited twice in Paris. The Brazilian Embassy rented a gallery near the famous Avenue Champs-Élysées, and according to the ambassador Azambuja and the embassy staff, Sarro's exhibition was one of the most beautiful and most visited ever.

After Princess Diana's accident near the embassy and her death, Sarro developed a fantastic project in her memory, a monument depicting the princess sitting on a globe carried by children. This monument was to be made of bronze and installed in a square near the tunnel where the accident happened. However, it was not possible to obtain political support for the project. Princess Diana often visited her friend Lucia Flecha de Lima, the wife of the Brazilian ambassador in Washington, stayed there overnight and also had close ties to Brazil in other ways.

Ten years later, Sarro exhibited his then new collection of paintings, which he had created using a special technique he had developed for the visually impaired and blind, in an unprecedented project in a famous medieval monastery in the centre of Paris. This exhibition was sponsored by the City of Paris.

Sarro and I walked around the city several times, on foot but also by car, always taking the necessary precautions to avoid parking damage, which often occurs there. We visited many monuments, museums and galleries in Paris, as well as other tourist attractions, both during the day and at night.

Sarro had a friend in Belgium who was married to a Brazilian woman, who invited us to stay with them at their residence near Brussels. We took the opportunity to get to

know the city and were looking for a gallery where we could exhibit. We found one of Belgium's most traditional galleries, which has been in existence for more than half a century and is located in a privileged location, just a few blocks from the Grand-Place, the city's tourist centre. The gallery owner, an elderly lady who is knowledgeable about art and mainly exhibits expressionism, liked Sarro's work at our first meeting, and since then Sarro has been part of the gallery's circle of selected artists.

Sarro always helped to hang his pictures on the walls in the best possible way and never missed a vernissage, but at the end of the exhibitions I worked there until the early hours of the morning to dismantle the pictures so that I could transport them in my car. After many visits, Sarro and I already know the entire city centre well, with its beautiful buildings on the Grand-Place and also a street passage called 'Agora', where we bought leather coats imported from Pakistan and haggled, as is customary in Brazil. We travelled throughout Europe in spacious cars, and Sarro was always very skilled at loading them. This made it possible to transport an entire exhibition of partly assembled and partly disassembled pictures in the car. He often used the driving time to draw and warned me to take this into account when braking in traffic. We also talked a lot, or he slept.

Later, he published a book with seventy drawings, all of which were created while travelling in Europe and to which he added texts at night in hotels.

Incidentally, he also often drew on beer mats, for example in a restaurant in Frankfurt, where a group was celebrating at a large table next to us. When one of them discovered Sarro and asked for a painted beer mat, Sarro hardly had a moment's rest, as one after the other appeared with the same request. We travelled a lot to Germany, where Sarro's paintings are constantly on display in various galleries.

In the town of Kevelaer, a place of pilgrimage near the Dutch border, Sarro is known for his exhibitions, which are always very well attended and appreciated in the art gallery in the town centre, as well as for his monument to the cycle of life in front of the hospital. He also gave a lecture at the city theatre in the presence of Catholic bishops about his fantastic monumental reliefs in the Basilica of Aparecida and the Way of the Cross he created there. On the day Sarro visited the Chapel of Grace in Kevelaer, he told me about the strong attraction he felt inside.

Sarro's second book, marking the thirtieth anniversary of his career, was printed at a friend's printing shop in Kevelaer, another sign of his attachment to this city.

The Catholic Church invited Sarro to an exhibition at its bank in Essen and organised a wonderful banquet to which managing directors of large corporations from all over Germany were invited to receive donations for their charitable projects in South America. The bank acquired Sarro's large five-metre-wide, three-part painting 'Freedoms of Life' for its reception hall.

We were invited to exhibitions in large seminar centres of the church in Wolfsburg and Hamburg, both of which were very well organised by them. After the exhibition in a renowned gallery in Braunschweig, whose owner accommodated us in his house, the EXPO 2000 world exhibition took place in Hanover. At the same time, there was an art exhibition on the theme of 'Technology, Man, Nature', at which one of Sarro's paintings was awarded a prize as the best work in northern Germany.

A visitor to my gallery in São Paulo invited me to visit him in Klingenmünster, a small village near Landau. This led to a friendship with Marianne and her family, who own a vineyard and hosted us on several occasions. Marianne organised exhibitions for

Sarro in her wine shop and used her connections to help us to organise exhibitions in other galleries in the region. Since then, her wine bottles have been delivered to various Sarro exhibitions throughout Germany, and he imaginatively paints drawings and dedications on sold or gifted wine bottles with a gold pen. Thanks to Marianne, Sarro received the permission to create a wonderful stained glass window for the listed 11th-century monastery church in Klingenmünster. We visited two of the world's most famous stained glass production facilities, where Sarro acquired the expertise required for this technique and painted and produced this window as well as a second one that was sent to an exhibition in Japan.

A friend of Sarro's, who is married to a Brazilian woman, bought a castle in East Germany where 43 families had lived in inhumane conditions during the DDR era. He received state aid for the restoration and was surprised to find microphones hidden in the walls. They opened a restaurant serving Brazilian cuisine and set up a room for Sarro's paintings. There were also exhibitions, and the press and television appeared when Sarro was there. For years, vernissages were always wonderful events with live music, until one night, for reasons still unknown, the castle caught fire and burned to the ground. Sarro and I lost many works, books and catalogues that were stored there.

In the garden of a nearby youth centre run by their friends, Sarro built a themed fountain and also taught painting classes for young people of various ages.

The well-known Samba Festival in the city of Coburg, which takes place annually with the participation of thousands of Brazilians from all over Europe, opened in 2012 on the eve of the festival with an exhibition by Sarro in a bank. In my opening speech, I said that normally the prices of famous artists' works skyrocket after their death, and that I was glad that Sarro did not understand this, which led the entire audience to look at Sarro and laugh at him. He, without understanding anything, was perplexed, but it was then translated for him.

From Germany, we travelled with pictures for an exhibition to Bergen, Norway's second largest city, where the famous composer Edvard Grieg was born and lived. The exhibition space was located above a shop selling fine items for tourists in the famous, listed Hanseatic houses, where it was not permitted to hammer a nail into the walls. The Brazilian ambassador came from faraway Oslo for the opening and, as a diplomatic authority, was entitled to purchase tax-free alcoholic beverages for events. The taxes are very high in the Nordic countries of Europe. The gallery owner took advantage of the opportunity and bought wine for the whole year, never letting his car out of his sight while he unloaded his valuable purchase. The exhibition was a success, and the city's largest newspaper called Sarro the Picasso of Brazil for the first time. On the way to Norway, we stayed overnight in Copenhagen, where we found a very nice gallery and where Sarro's paintings were exhibited for several years.

Through a family connection of mine, exhibitions have been and continue to be held in Slovakia. A relative of mine lives there and helped to compile a quadrilingual catalogue for the exhibition at the Pálffy Palace in Bratislava, a wonderful venue. She is very interested in Sarro's paintings for the visually impaired and blind and regularly exhibits them alongside other paintings. She acted as co-curator for exhibitions in a theatre in Bratislava, a gallery in Tvrdošin, in the High Tatras and a well-known five-star hotel near the Hungarian border. From there, we crossed the Danube and visited

the historic Hungarian city of Esztergom, where we also enjoyed the authentic, original goulash dish.

Sarros' exhibition in Lisbon came about in collaboration with an acquaintance of Sarros who worked with books and owned the Fernando Pessoa Gallery, as well as the Brazilian Embassy in Portugal. It took a lot of effort, but the exhibition was very beautiful, featuring some new and interesting paintings by Sarros, who felt very comfortable at the well-attended vernissage because Portuguese was spoken there. Afterwards, we drove to Santarém, the famous pilgrimage town of Fátima and Porto. As in Lisbon, we visited tourist attractions.

On a trip around the world, I met an Australian family from Melbourne who invited me to visit them, and when I did, I made contact with art galleries. Sarro liked the idea of exhibiting on the distant fifth continent, so we planned the first exhibition in a gallery in Sydney.

The preparations and logistics of the transport were not easy. Sarro had to varnish the inside of the wooden frames to ensure that no pests had nested inside. We were also concerned because missing stretcher bars or frames are difficult to find and manufacture in Australia due to the non-metric dimensions.

After a long journey, we arrived in Sydney. No one at Australian customs paid any attention to the paintings, but the frames remained in quarantine for a week. We stayed in a hotel in Kings Cross in rooms with a view of the whole city, and the gallery was nearby. The vernissage and exhibition were a success. One of Sydney's most famous galleries, the Wentworth Gallery, subsequently took an interest in Sarro's works and exhibited and traded them for years in its beautiful premises in the tourist centre of the city, near the famous opera house. To make the most of the time until the next exhibition in Melbourne, we also got to know the outskirts of Sydney and travelled along the east coast of Australia to the Gold Coast, leaving some paintings on commission at a well-known gallery in a large shopping centre. We rented an apartment there right by the sea. Sarro missed his wife and painted a wonderful large painting of her there. He liked the Gold Coast so much that he expressed a desire to live there forever. We then drove to Brisbane, where Sarro also left three paintings in a gallery. On the way back, we stopped in Canberra, the capital of Australia, which is very reminiscent of Brasilia, and arrived in Melbourne at the desired time to set up the exhibition scheduled at the Chapel Off Chapel Events Centre near the famous Chapel Street. Posters were hung far and wide, and many people from all over visited the exhibition. A second exhibition was later held in a gallery, which was opened in the presence of the Brazilian ambassador and was open to a wide audience. We stayed at friends' houses, and they showed us the city's beautiful tourist attractions, including the wonderful casino with an open water channel at the side of the stairs and large flames on the roof at certain times in the evening.

Perth is a large, remote city in Western Australia, and as I have always liked it, the day and night life, the Pinnacles region with its strange rocks on the desert surface and a small beautiful church in the Swan Valley where you can insert coins to make the organ play automatically. I looked around and found a nice gallery to exhibit in. I also know a collector living in Perth who has acquired nine works by Sarro so far. So we flew from Sydney to Perth. After a four-and-a-half-hour flight, we arrived at Perth Airport. When I stood at the counter to rent a car, an official with a dog entered the hall and asked passengers to place all their hand luggage on the floor.

The dog sniffed everywhere and barked at Sarro's bag. Sarro was startled, had to open the bag, and the official took out two apples with a grim face and ran away shouting 'no apple, no apple'. The panic was like a bomb alert. I had to be told that it is forbidden to bring fruit from one side of Australia to the other because neither side wants the other's flies. The gallery was small but located in the middle of wealthy people's houses, and the gallery owner was very nice, also internationally active and well connected. Sarro and I also travelled to the Pinnacles, just when the annoying bush flies were buzzing around. Their favourite places to sit were on people's faces, and without nets we could hardly stand it.

After many years, I brought the pictures from Australia back to Europe because the logistics were difficult and the costs were high.

On the way to Australia, we made stopovers and stayed overnight in Singapore, where there are very exclusive galleries visited by collectors from all over the world. Pictures by Sarro were exhibited in a gallery in the traditional Raffles Hotel, as well as in the Opera Gallery, which is headquartered in Paris and has subsidiaries in the world's major cities. In Australia, we prepared a lecture by Sarro on Latin American art, which was included in the Singapore Art Museum's programme in collaboration with the Brazilian Embassy in Singapore. This is how Sarro became known in Singapore, and we got to know the city and its sights well.

Since we brought most of the pictures from Brazil to Switzerland, we had several exhibitions in Switzerland, for example in galleries in Basel, Delémont, Moutier, Solothurn, in the then famous New York Gallery in Brugg, in Davos, Bellinzona and in Überlingen, Germany, near the Swiss border.

Sarro was invited twice to the World Economic Forum in Davos, and I accompanied him. The Forum organised the transport of the framed pictures in wooden crates and our accommodation. It was interesting to watch the crates arrive at Zurich Airport and see how carefully they were loaded onto the truck for transport to Davos. The WEF also printed cultural catalogues presenting Sarro and his art and distributed them to all participants. The press and television were always present.

For the first forum in 1999, Sarro painted twelve large works about children and created a small number of bronze sculptures entitled 'The Future Belongs to Us'. We met politicians and personalities from the worlds of business and culture from all over the world, such as Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, writer Paulo Coelho and the elderly Swiss artist Hans Erni. At the gala reception, Australia treated participants to an exciting Aboriginal dance show and a dinner featuring crocodile meat.

For the second forum in 2003, Sarro painted an eight-metre-wide triptych on the theme of globalisation, depicting the G8 and G20 countries with their characteristics and many other details. President Clinton talked to us at length, admired the work and promised to help Sarro with an exhibition in the United States, but unfortunately, as it turned out later, it remained just a promise. President Lula also visited us, without giving Sarro the respect he certainly deserved. The work was shown and commented on television. The WEF intended to purchase this painting for a wall in the reception area of its headquarters near Geneva. As it was too wide, they purchased a second work on the same theme, which is five and a half metres wide and still hangs in a beautiful area, in full view of the rulers, politicians and economic experts from all over the world who visit them.

In order to be allowed to exhibit in the United Nations building in Geneva, a request from the Brazilian government was required. The letter only arrived after the UN had made the request, as its diplomats were interested in Sarro's work and, in particular, in the work on globalisation. Sarro's exhibition at the United Nations Palace took place in a large, modern and well-lit room. The painting, which Sarro had painted to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of Brazil, was shown for the last time in Europe at this exhibition, as it was acquired by the Ralli Museum in Punta Del Este, Uruguay, which already has twenty of Sarro's works in its collection. The opening was attended by the number two at the United Nations and the Brazilian ambassador, Luiz Felipe de Seixas Correia, who thanked the artist Sarro for the wonderful exhibition and the buffet offered. The exhibition was visited by groups organised by the UN and by diplomats. The Russians congratulated Sarro and suggested that he paint a museum collection to be exhibited in Russia. No sooner said than done – Sarro painted the collection 'Force, Magic and Colours of Brazil', which consists of 34 paintings. In it, he shows his vision of contemporary Brazil. He denounces problems such as violence, poverty, deforestation and corruption, but also highlights positive aspects such as music, natural beauty and national sports. On a trip to Moscow, I came into contact with Zurab Tsereteli, a famous artist known throughout Russia for his paintings and worldwide for his monuments. He is president of the Russian Academy of Arts and a friend of the country's rulers. He immediately took a liking to Sarro's art, wrote an article about it and helped us organise extraordinary exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in Moscow and the Museum of the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg. For both exhibitions, we produced complete trilingual catalogues in Russian, English and Portuguese. We published Zurab Tsereteli's special handwritten dedication at the very beginning of the catalogues, in the original Russian.

We arrived at Moscow Airport at two o'clock in the morning with Swiss Airline, bringing with us the entire exhibition, the rolled canvases and dismantled stretcher frames and frames. The chief inspector was called to check the document we had received from the Brazilian Embassy. After reading the dedication signed by Zurab, he immediately gave the enormous shipment the green light and gave us a fitting welcome.

We stayed at the Hotel Izmailovo, a hotel complex with all the facilities for tourists. We will certainly remember the security measures in the hotel and the enormous breakfast buffet. The buffet contained so many hot dishes that lunch was unnecessary. Tourists also had access to a casino on the ground floor and a nightclub with beautiful women on the fourth floor. The arts and crafts and antiques market right next to the hotels caught our attention.

We took the metro to the museum. Sarro wanted to see the works of art in the stations of the most beautiful metro in the world, so we visited almost all of the stations during our stay in Moscow. We mounted the pictures and hung them on the walls of the museum's beautiful rooms. A large banner was hung at the entrance, and the opening was attended by the embassy's Minister of Culture and Vasili Tsereteli, Zurab's grandson, who now manages all of his grandfather's projects. Four television stations reported on the event, which attracted great interest from visitors and received good press coverage. Although it was forbidden to photograph in one of the holiest churches on Red Square, I was observed by a security guard as I

quickly took a photo of Sarro and was politely escorted out. We also attended a ballet performance at the famous Bolshoi Theatre and a Russian folklore show. To make the most of our stay in Russia, we flew with Aeroflot on a six-hour flight to Irkutsk in Siberia. Sarro took his painting materials with him. In order to be able to paint with enough space, good light and air, the very pretty and friendly director of the largest state-owned hotel offered him a room on the ground floor. Sarro's presence and his work attracted a lot of attention. Artists from all over the region came, as well as reporters from two television stations, and art collectors invited us to their homes. Some bought Sarro's paintings even before they were finished. The Traditional Art Museum of Irkutsk invited Sarro to hold an exhibition, but this did never happen due to logistical and financial difficulties. We experienced thirty degrees in summer, saw young women enjoying this short season in miniskirts and people circulating through the streets in the late afternoons with bottles in their hands, emptying them in the evenings in the meadows in a great atmosphere. We made friends, got to know part of Lake Baikal, the largest lake in the world, and took a short trip on the Trans-Siberian Railway; it was a perfect and unforgettable stay. After returning to Moscow, we arranged a ride in a large Mercedes van with a Russian driver who took us and the assembled paintings to the museum in St. Petersburg. During the trip, it was not possible to talk to the driver, but he understood that Sarro needed to use the toilet and stopped at the edge of a forest. Since we waved him off, he stopped at another place with a hole in the ground. It was so dirty that the only other places left were in the forest. The police stopped us on the road and looked at the load suspiciously, but Zurab's commitment was always like a free pass. We reached the Museum of the Academy of Fine Arts, a large and beautiful 250-year-old building on the banks of the Neva River. A seven-metre-long Sarro poster hung in front of the building.

Sarro's works complemented the spacious hall with colourful murals very well. On the opening day, a long queue formed to attend an introduction to Sarro's work in an auditorium, then the ribbon was cut and the audience poured into the hall. Four other television stations interviewed Sarro. The painting in the collection on the theme of corruption was a hit – one of the reporters filmed Sarro in front of the painting and asked him what he thought of corruption in Russia, and Sarro was prepared and generalised the topic.

In this tourist city, we visited many museums and most famous churches and had the opportunity to see the Rolling Stones' only performance in Russia, an unprecedented spectacle. At the end of the exhibition, we dismantled the paintings and drove back to the airport in Moscow in a large car, from where we flew back to Switzerland.

The Sarros museum collection was then exhibited again in 2010 at the Palace of Arts in Krakow. Krakow is Poland's cultural capital and one of the most popular tourist destinations in Europe. We travelled there with a fully loaded car and part of the collection on the roof, and with the necessary papers to cross the border. This traditional museum is modern and has daylight rooms, so the collection and the large picture about globalisation looked beautiful in their colours. In addition to the exhibition opening, the opening of the Brazilian Honorary Consulate in Krakow also took place there.

In 2013, I travelled to Beijing, the capital of China, after establishing contacts with the largest museums. The director of the Today Art Museum, a complex of three museums, liked Sarro's art, but we needed a lot of time to sort out the financial and logistical aspects of the exhibition, so it could only be planned for 2016.

It was much cheaper to have the frames for the paintings made in China and then dispose of them than to transport them. Since it was not possible to mount the paintings in the museum, we rented a house just outside the city to live and work in. We also produced a trilingual catalogue for China, replacing Russian with Chinese, and adding 27 large and special paintings. The catalogue is of the highest quality and was printed in China at an incredible price. Sarro's career has been updated in it and it also contains an art review by Chinese curator Gu Zhenqing. Due to Chinese customs regulations, Sarro's paintings had to be precisely documented and each painting was checked and counted upon entry and exit.

After our arrival in Beijing, the landlady of the house picked us up at the airport, and we developed a good friendship with her and some of her acquaintances. She helped us with information and drove us around in her car. Sandra cooked, and we went out shopping. There was a very large Carrefour hypermarket, but even there we could hardly find any milk or dairy products, as these are not part of the Chinese food.

The museum building was large and tall, and Sarro's nine-metre-long banner, which was attached to the ceiling of the museum building, attracted a lot of attention. The exhibition was housed on two floors in modern and bright rooms, and the numerous visitors and reporters from Hong Kong television who had come to the official opening were enthusiastic about Sarro's exhibition. Sarro, Sandra and I visited most of Beijing's tourist attractions, and we marvelled at the many flowers planted in public places and the groups of people doing gymnastics to the rhythm of music in public places. As we had difficulty with Chinese food, we became customers of a street vendor who offered freshly prepared omelettes to eat on the go, and we found a unique sweet shop that thrives on selling to foreigners. We visited the famous 798 Art District several times, a large, fenced-in neighbourhood with national and international galleries, antique and souvenir shops, restaurants and lots of art and events. Sarro painted pictures during the exhibition period, which are now on display in one of the most famous galleries in this district.

Thanks to curator Gu's contact and friendship with the director of the Changjiang Museum in Chongqing, we were able to arrange for Sarro's museum collection to be transported to this museum, where it was on display for another two months in a magnificent exhibition. Chongqing is the most populous city in the world, located in the centre of China and the starting point for trains to Germany. From there, you can also travel to Tibet. The city centre is very beautiful, even at night, when the riverbanks are illuminated and colourful. The museum is large, well located and privately owned. The owner also has a building with a teahouse nearby, where we were invited for lunch. Large posters announcing the Sarro exhibition were put up in front of the museum and on the street, as well as in the hall where the exhibition opening took place with hundreds of people in attendance. State television reported on the event. Even small children had their own space and materials to paint on canvases, and Sarro watched them and found some very talented children among them. After the vernissage, Sarro returned to Beijing to paint, and I returned to Switzerland, coming back when the exhibition was being dismantled. I transported the five heavy rolls of canvas from Chongqing to Beijing, and together we returned to Switzerland.

After China, we had two more exhibitions in Germany, at the town hall and the museum in Saarburg, a town near France and Luxembourg, and in 2019 at the Brazilian Embassy in Berlin, before the world was hit by the coronavirus, which paralysed our activities.

The well-known Parisian writer and art critic André Parinaud was certainly right when he described Sarro as the Global Brazilian in 2001.

Sarro is working on new projects in his wonderful museum and memorial near São Paulo, and I keep coming up with new ideas and contacts, but we don't yet know if and how we will continue on this global path.

Marcel Markus