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## Preface to *Matta: Surrealism and Beyond*

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# P r e f a c e

The exhibition *Matta: Surrealism and Beyond* honors the artist's contributions to art in the twentieth century and makes available a substantial body of his work to students and viewers from the general public. Represented in the exhibition is a cross section of works including Matta's early psychological paintings, his social morphologies, and the later paintings reflecting his interest in science and the travails of modern society. With approximately ninety-two pieces, including thirty-four paintings, sixteen drawings, eight sculptures, and thirty-three prints, this exhibition may well be the largest solo exhibition of Matta's works to be assembled in the United States. It is the most comprehensive American museum exhibition since William Rubin's 1957 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The works in the exhibition have been assembled from private collectors across the nation, in large part through the efforts of Thomas Monahan, exhibition co-curator, and from museums in the region. This undertaking would not have been possible without the generous cooperation of the lenders and the support from benefactors noted in the acknowledgments.

Matta was the youngest of the Surrealists working in Paris. His works are represented in major museum and private collections across the world. He is credited with original contributions to Surrealism. In addition, his influence as an emigré in New York during the war years extended to the American Abstract Expressionist movement. He, along with the Cuban artist Wifredo Lam and the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, introduced the younger artists of Latin America to Surrealism, and is credited as a major influence among them. The present exhibition celebrates Matta's achievements and is a beginning toward generating a greater appreciation of his work among American audiences.

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Director