

# FAMILY GUIDE

## Madalena Santos Reinbolt: A Head Full of Planets

**Welcome to the American Folk Art Museum!** Take a pencil from the welcome desk and use this guide together as a family as you explore the galleries.

**Madalena Santos Reinbolt** was a Black Brazilian artist who lived between the years 1912 and 1976. She painted in the traditional way—with paint—but also in her own special way, embroidering with thread on a rough fabric called burlap. She called these artworks *quadros de lã* (wool paintings) and *tapetes* (rugs). When she was getting ready to “paint with wool,” she would thread 150 needles with different colors to have them ready when she needed them.



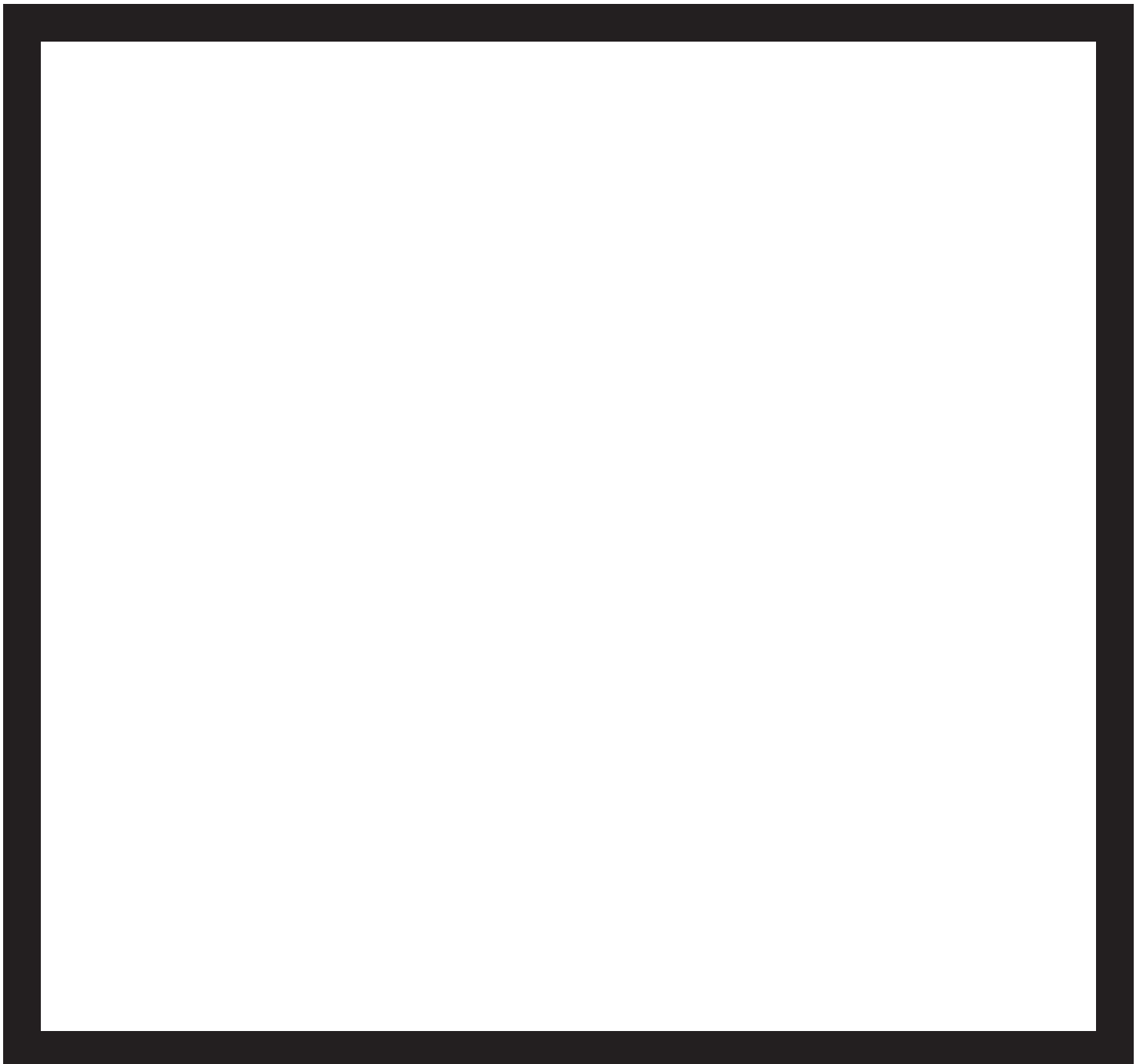
MADALENA SANTOS REINBOLT (1912, Vitória da Conquista, BA-1976, Petrópolis, RJ, Brazil). *O sol, a lua e as estrelas* (The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars), 1974. Acrylic wool on burlap, 32 5/8 x 36 in. Collection Edmar Pinto Costa, São Paulo, Brazil

## Gallery Kits!

Please ask for your free activity kit available at the front desk. Inside, you will find: a needle, embroidery floss, and a piece of burlap. These materials are similar to those Madalena Santos Reinbolt used to create the artworks you'll explore in this exhibition. Take them out and examine them.

What does the burlap feel like between your fingers? Can you thread the end of the embroidery floss through the eye, or small hole, of the needle? You can take these materials home and try your hand at embroidering with them.

**Your gallery kit contains a viewfinder**—it looks like a rectangular frame. Find an artwork that interests you. Hold up the viewfinder and look at the artwork through it, framing just a small part of the whole picture. What do you see? Then, move the viewfinder to frame a different section. What new details do you notice? Pick your favorite view and sketch it here.





**Read the words below** and circle the ones that you feel describe the artwork. Discuss them with a friend or family member—do you agree or disagree? Then, add your own words.

Colorful	Chilly	Lonely	Vibrant	Realistic	_____
Exciting	Loud	Rough	Chaotic	Joyful	_____
Dull	Musical	Soft	Calm		_____
Hot	Quiet	Peaceful	Dreamy		_____

**If you could enter the world** you see in this artwork, what would it sound like? Together with the family and/or friends you are visiting the museum with today, make some of the sounds you imagine.



MADALENA SANTOS REINBOLT (1912, Vitória da Conquista, BA-1976, Petrópolis, RJ, Brazil). Untitled, 1969-1976. Wool on burlap, 32 7/8 x 40 1/2 in. Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, São Paulo, Brazil, gift of Edmar Pinto Costa, 2021, MASP.11309





MADALENA SANTOS REINBOLT (1912, Vitória da Conquista, BA-1976, Petrópolis, RJ, Brazil). Untitled, 1958. Oil and sand on canvas, 21 1/4 x 25 5/8 in. Collection Rafael Moraes, São Paulo, Brazil

Madalena Santos Reinbolt lived in both the country and the city at different points in her life. Growing up on a farm in rural Bahia, Brazil, Madalena Santos Reinbolt watched and learned as her mother made pottery, blankets, linens, and lace. As an adult, she moved to the city of Petrópolis to work as a cook. Which kind of place does this painting show—country or city? What makes you think that?

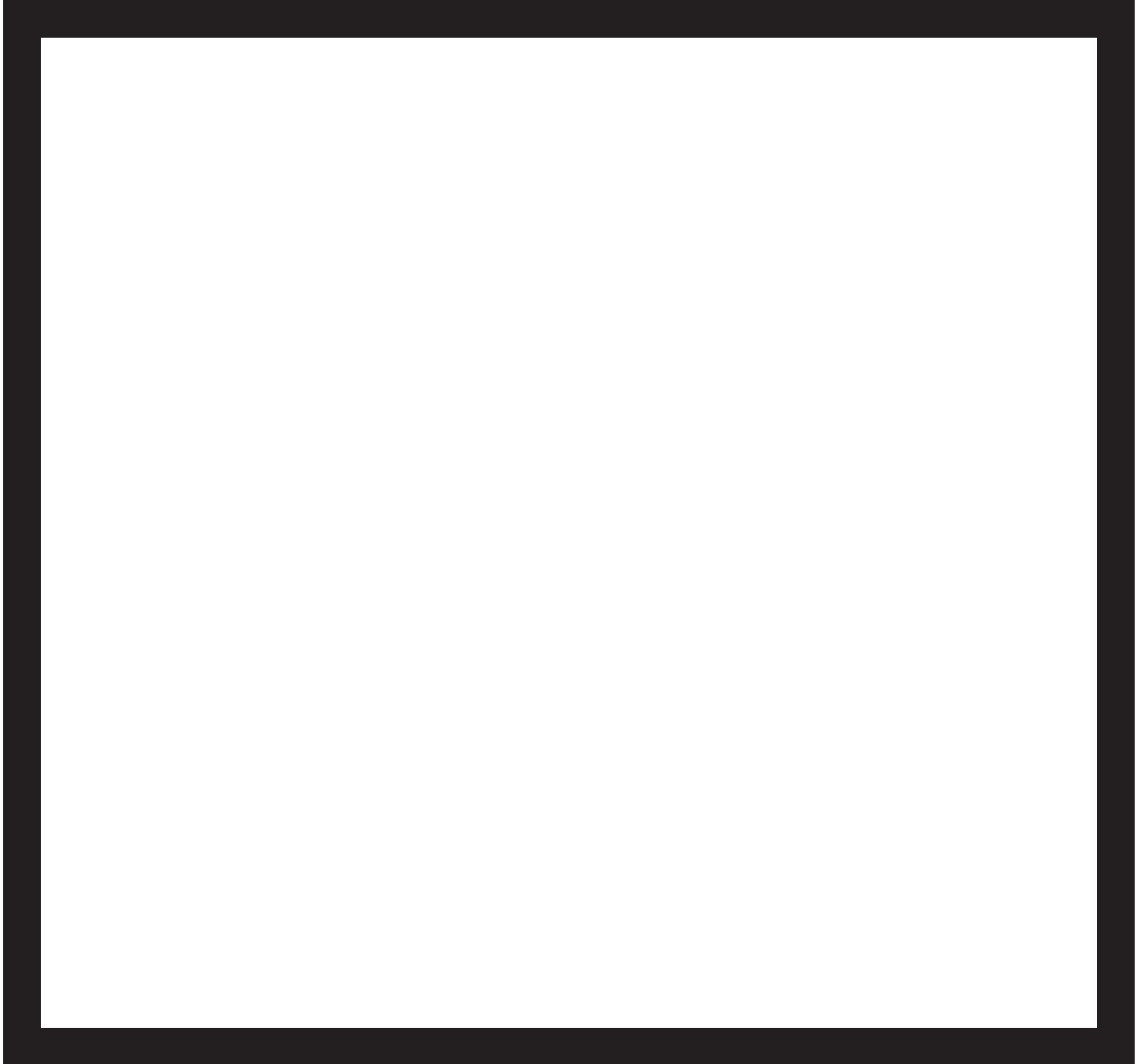
Madalena Santos Reinbolt often painted from memory rather than direct observation. Following her example, **draw a memory map** of your own neighborhood below. Include the buildings, streets, nature, and special details that are important to you!



## Read this story by Madalena Santos Reinbolt:

“The animals were hungry, so very hungry, and travelling all over the island looking for food. The island was very dry, yet they came across this tree with ripe fruit. They didn’t know if they could eat it or not, but the monkey knew it was okay, so he climbed the tree, grabbed up all the ripe fruit, and ate them himself. And then he turned to the other animals and said: ‘Silly animals! You can eat all these fruits, they won’t kill you, this is Father Bié’s Tree.’”

Make your own drawing to show what happens in the story!



Once you’re finished, find Madalena Santos Reinbolt’s artwork *Árvore do Pai Bié* (Pai Bié’s Tree). What similarities do you see between yours and hers? What differences?



When Madalena Santos Reinbolt talked about her ideas, she said she had “uma cabeça cheia de planetas”—“a head full of planets.” What could she have meant by that? What is your head full of? Draw it here!

