



For my final paper I chose to paint the famous musician, Angenor de Oliveira also known as Cartola. Cartola was a major influence in the rise of Samba. He is the founder of 'Escola de Samba Estacio Primeira de Mangueira' it is "one of the most famed samba schools of Carioca carnival"<sup>1</sup>. His music is extremely important to the history of Rio de Janeiro and without him, samba may have been very different. The reason why I decided to paint Cartola was because of his extreme significance in the music industry.

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<sup>1</sup> AllMusic. 'Cartola Biography, Songs, & Albums', 5 December 2021.

This specific image of Cartola was photographed by Henrique Sodr  in the late 1900's. Henrique Sodr  captured a variety of remarkable photographs in Brazil, they ranged from photos of the lively scene at the carnival to rural street scenes and everyday life. My favourite collection is the array of Cartola on the streets of Rio de Janeiro. His body language is very relaxed and captivating as he is just comfortably sitting on the street enjoying a drink completely unaware of the legacy he would hold. A pattern with many images of Cartola are his big black sunglasses. These sunglasses are almost a mask hiding his emotions. In this painting I believe that the focal point is his masked eyes as it makes the viewer ponder upon whether he is content or despondent. Maybe this was the reason why Cartola was always seen with these sunglasses, to keep a part of himself private and separated in a way that he has complete control over.

The medium of this painting is a mix of oil and acrylic paint. Cartola was painted with oil paint, and I strictly used only black and white paint, I chose to paint him in oil as it blends extremely smoothly and adds a sense of realism, almost as if Cartola is back in the room. Henrique Sodr 's image was in black and white, usually I am not keen on painting with just black and white as I don't like the restrictions of just using two colours, however, the way the image was captured and the lighting on that day allowed for Cartola to stand out from the background and it emphasised the shadows on him. To create this painting, I used many different shades of the black and white oil paint allowing for more creative freedom for the colour scale.

The background of this image is the Brazilian flag, I chose to add this not only because it obviously represents Rio de Janeiro as it is the capital of the country, but also because the

vibrancy of the colours represented in the flag are captivating and mesmerising. I thought it would be a perfect contrast between the solemn black and white image of Cartola and the vivacious flag. The contrast is also continued through the blocked colours of the flag and the intricate detail for Cartola.

Angenor de Oliveira is such an interesting figure as he lived the majority of his life as a normal Brazilian citizen. He experienced all sorts of things, and his music career was not his only employment. He experienced many different occupations, such as a bricklayer, fishmonger and cheese-seller. I believe that his popularity was so extensive as he and the listener were living the same lives, allowing for his fans to almost know him on a personal level. Even the fact that Henrique Sodré was able to capture these images of Cartola just sitting on the street highlights his unpretentiousness. “Up until 1974... one of the greatest poets of Brazilian music lived in anonymity”<sup>2</sup>, Cartola died in 1980 at the age of 72. He lived the majority of his life in silence from the outside world.

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<sup>2</sup> ‘Cartola and the Rebirth of Samba | O PALMA’. Accessed 5 December 2021.

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