

# AMAZONAS THEATER ARCHITECTURAL CONSTRUCTION AND RESTORATIONS HISTORY

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## ABSTRACT

Located in the middle of the Amazon forest in Manaus, capital of the Amazonas State, Brazil, the Amazonas Theater (Figure 1a) took 17 years to be built from its conception until its inauguration in December, 1896. A place that would be frequented by the elite of *belle époque*, as it was called the period in which Manaus lived the golden age of rubber, Amazonas Theater became the symbol of a period of prosperity.

For its construction, not only architects, builders, painters, decorator and sculptors were brought from Europe, but also various materials such as Carrara marbles, Murano chandeliers, pieces of worked iron from England, French tiles and European wood for the floor. In the internal structure, the steel dome (Figure 1b) was manufactured in Belgium by the "*Compagnie Centrale de Construction Haine-Saint-Pierre*". The dome roof is composed of 36 thousand pieces of enamelled ceramic pottery and glazed tiles, coming from Alsace. The original coloring in green, blue and yellow is an analogy to the Brazilian flag.

Throughout its history, the theater building underwent four major structural interventions, the last two being real restorations. The four interventions took place, respectively, between 1926 and 1929, between 1959 and 1962, between 1973 and 1974 and finally, between 1987 and 1990. In 1966, on the occasion of its 70th birthday, the building was listed by the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN) being the first monument registered in Manaus by the Historical Patrimony.

Compared to the millenary constructions of the Ancient World, Amazonas Theater can be considered a "*baby*" and therefore a source of knowledge to be explored. In this sense, this paper intends to be the first one of a series of other ones that intends to study the behavior of this structure. The paper is focused on describe the history of the construction of the Amazonas Theater highlighting the structural solution adopted to overcome the logistical challenges faced by a construction carried out in the middle of the largest tropical forest in the world and the main interventions performed during its 123 years.



Figure 1: a) Amazonas Theater in construction [1,2]; b) Amazonas Theater steel dome in 1885 [3].

## REFERENCES

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- [2] A. Caccavoni. *Album Descriptivo Amazonico*. Genova: F. Armanino, 1899.
- [3] *Compagnie Centrale de Construction Haine-Saint-Pierre (1871-1961) Collection*. Available in <http://belgianclub.com.br/pt-br/heritage/c%C3%BApula-teatro-amazonas-manaus>.