

## **Langlands & Bell**

[Ben Langlands b. 1955 and Nikki Bell b. 1959)

### **The Ministry (Health and Education)**

2002

Wool

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The dramatic black and white geometric pattern in this work is based on a photograph of the façade of the Gustavo Capanema Palace in Rio de Janeiro (1937 – 43) and its innovative system of moveable sun-shade louvers. Known also as the Ministry of Health and Education, it is considered one of the first examples of Brazilian modernist architecture.

Langlands & Bell are interested in the complex web of relationships linking people, architecture and the ways buildings become iconic through the medium of photography. Here they present a rug, handwoven in Halifax, displayed horizontally on the floor, whose structure and pattern is based on a photograph of the façade of a Brazilian modernist building.

### **Gustavo Capanema Palace**

The building was designed by a team that included Lúcio Costa, Affonso Eduardo Reidy, Ernani Vasconcellos, Carlos Leão, Jorge Machado Moreira and Roberto Burle Marx. Oscar Niemeyer, who later became Brazil's most famous architect, was an intern in Costa's office and Le Corbusier was a consultant. The influence of European modernist architecture was seen to mark a shift from a traditional and conservative Brazil to a modern urban country.

The building was commissioned by a government of the 'Vargas Era' – a period in the history of Brazil between 1930 and 1945, when the country was under the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas.