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FRIEZE MASTERS

Modern Women: Curated by AWARE



Tarsila do Amaral



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Capivari (SP), São Paulo (SP)

Tarsila do Amaral (1886-1973) was one of the founders of Brazilian modernism and is widely recognized in her country for her exuberant and colourful work. Mixing influences from the European avant-garde of the early 20th century and native Brazilian traditions, Tarsila - as she is affectionately known in her country - portrayed the dualities of a national identity crafted amid the constant transit between the local and the foreign. The mature phase of her work - between the 1920s and 1930s - coincides with a period of profound changes in Brazilian society, which began to embrace modernity while remaining rooted in a rural and patriarchal culture.

The offspring of São Paulo's rural aristocracy, Tarsila lived between her family's farms, the city of São Paulo and sojourns in Europe, especially Paris. Her cosmopolitan upbringing and family encouragement allowed Tarsila to experiment with poetry and sculp-

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ture, then drawing and finally, as an adult, painting, a practice she further developed in the French capital. She attended the Académie Julian - an art school which attracted many women and foreign artists at the time -, then studied with André Lhote and Fernand Léger, and became closely acquainted with the work of the Dadaists and Futurists. Exposure to European culture, however, was no greater than Tarsila's devotion to the landscapes of her childhood. Returning to Brazil, she made several trips to the interior of the country, portraying landscapes and aspects of popular culture, an experience that gave rise to a rich oeuvre marked by distinct creative periods, such as the *Pau-Brasil* and *Anthropophagic* phases.

Highlights of this selection of works include the painting *A Feira II* (1925) - made after a trip to the interior of Minas Gerais - which demonstrates how Tarsila explored local themes and adopted a vibrant color palette that relates to a typically popular taste. Among her works on paper, the drawings from her Anthropophagic phase stand out, revealing her search for a magical Brazil, linked to folklore and to the artist's childhood reminiscences. This phase saw the appearance of animals with stylized shapes and an undefined nature, as well as dreamlike sceneries, as in the

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drawing *Paisagem* (1929), very much alike the landscape in the painting *A Lua* (1928), which belongs to the MoMA collection. The charm of her graphic work, usually of small dimensions, also reveals itself in works such as *Perto de Luxor* (1927), made in Egypt during a cruise on the Mediterranean Sea. The selection also includes the rarely seen drawing *Batismo de Macunaíma* (c. 1956), made as a sketch for her last painting.

While at the beginning of her career Tarsila considered drawing to be a stage of her work that was subordinate to painting, in her mature phase drawing gained increasing autonomy. In the last decades of her life, the artist produced many illustrations, as well as some prints. This selection includes works such as *Gente no povoado* (1950), a study for an engraving; *Família* (n.d.), a possible study for an illustration; and an untitled drawing made in the 1970s, a version of a similar work titled *Batismo* [Baptism] - which belongs to a major public collection in São Paulo. This group of works focuses on a recurring theme in Tarsila's late phase: compositions featuring groups of people involved in leisure activities, religious ceremonies such as processions and baptisms, weddings and other collective activities that reveal her renewed interest in Brazilian countryside culture.

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A century later, Tarsila's work remains highly relevant and current. Present in all the major public and private collections in Brazil, as well as in the collections of MoMA, MALBA, Reina Sofia, Musée de Grenoble and Hermitage, among others, her work has achieved greater international visibility in the last decade. This exhibition organized by Almeida & Dale for Frieze Masters 2023 - presented in the context of the Modern Women project, curated by AWARE - seeks to shed light on aspects of her rich career and insert her into the urgent debate on the role of women artists in the history of modern art.

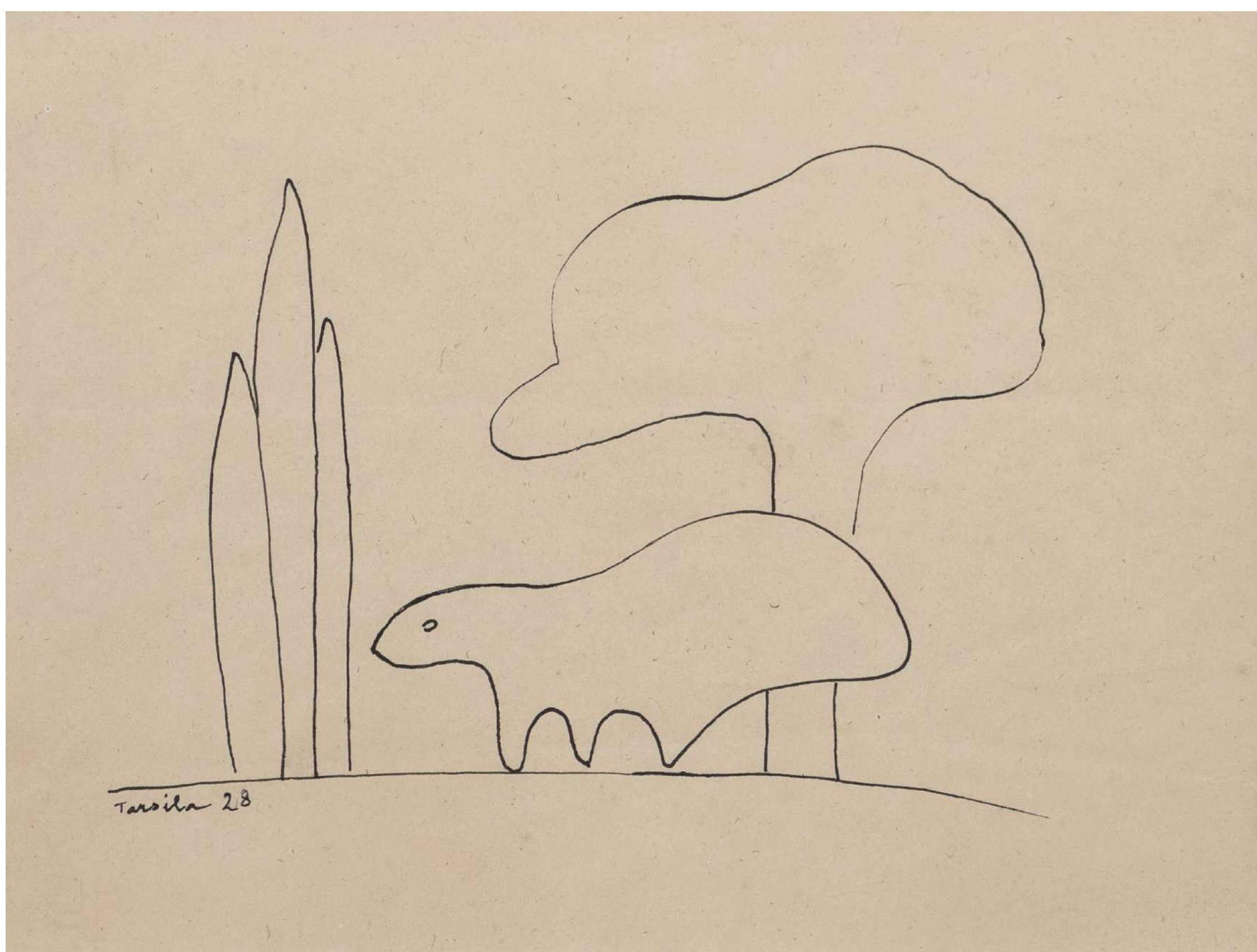
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Paisagem com ponte, 1931
Oil on canvas
15 1/2 x 18 1/8 in [39,5 x 46 cm]
(4595)



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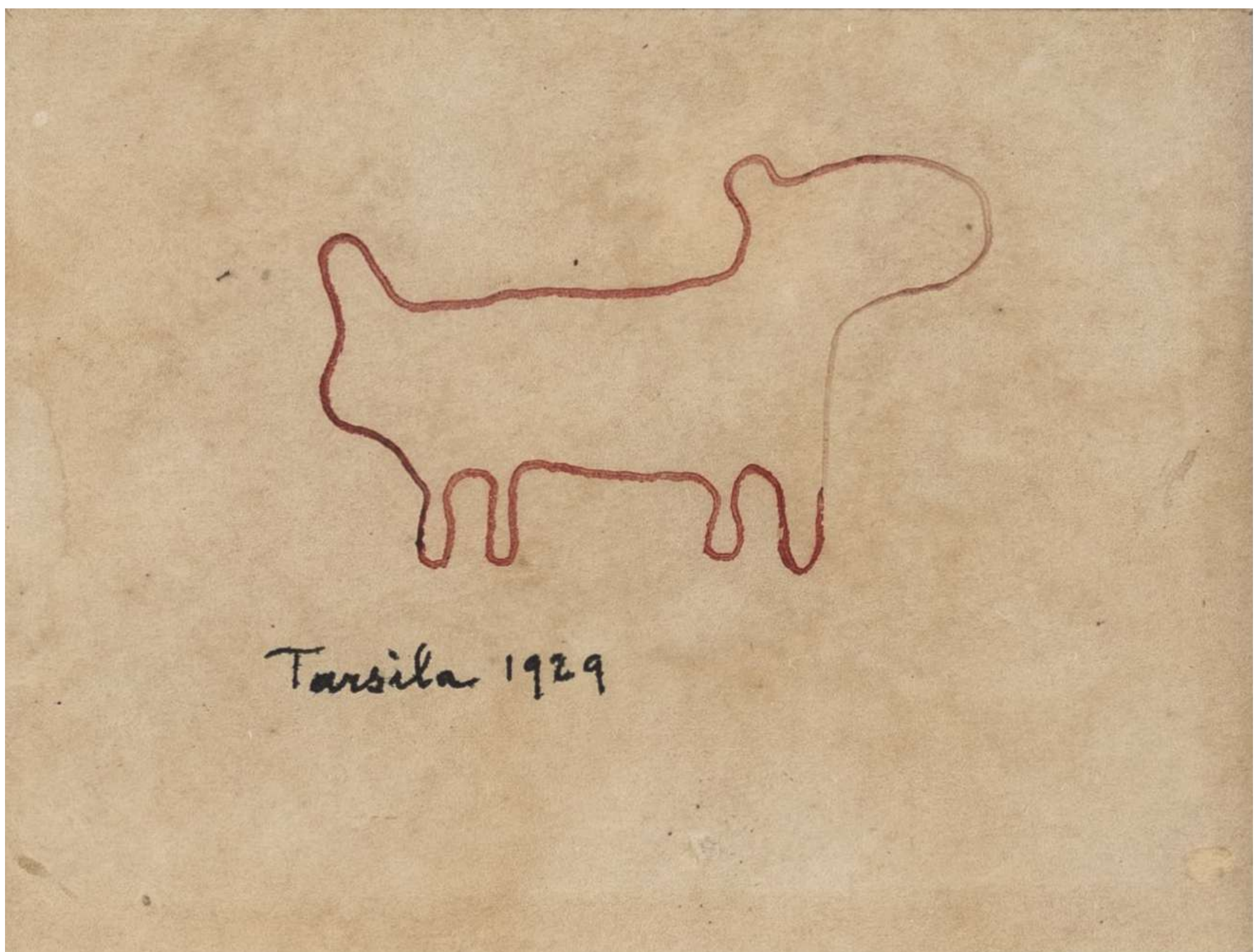
Paisagem com bicho antropofágico I, 1928

China ink on paper

5 7/8 x 7 7/8 in [15 x 20,5 cm]

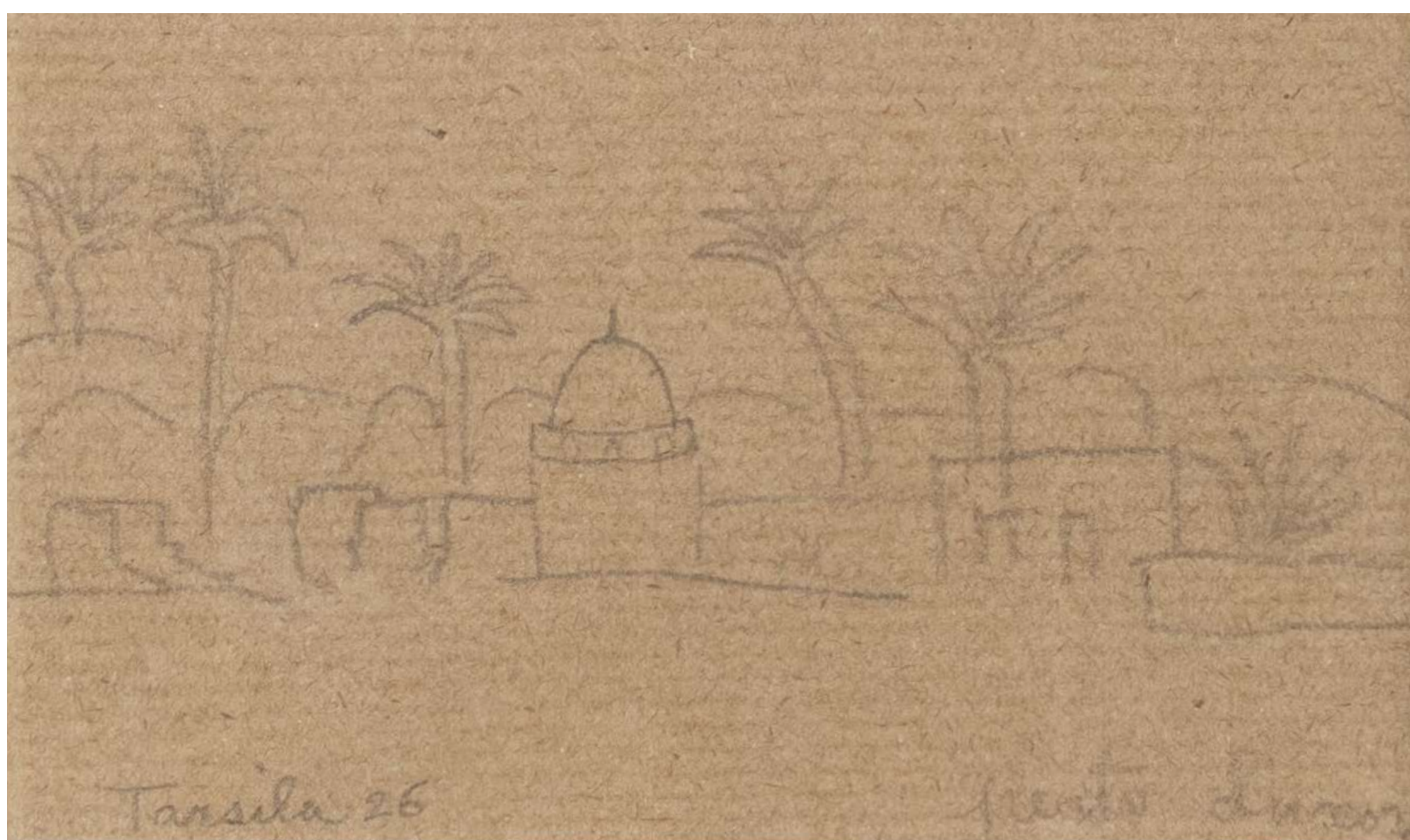
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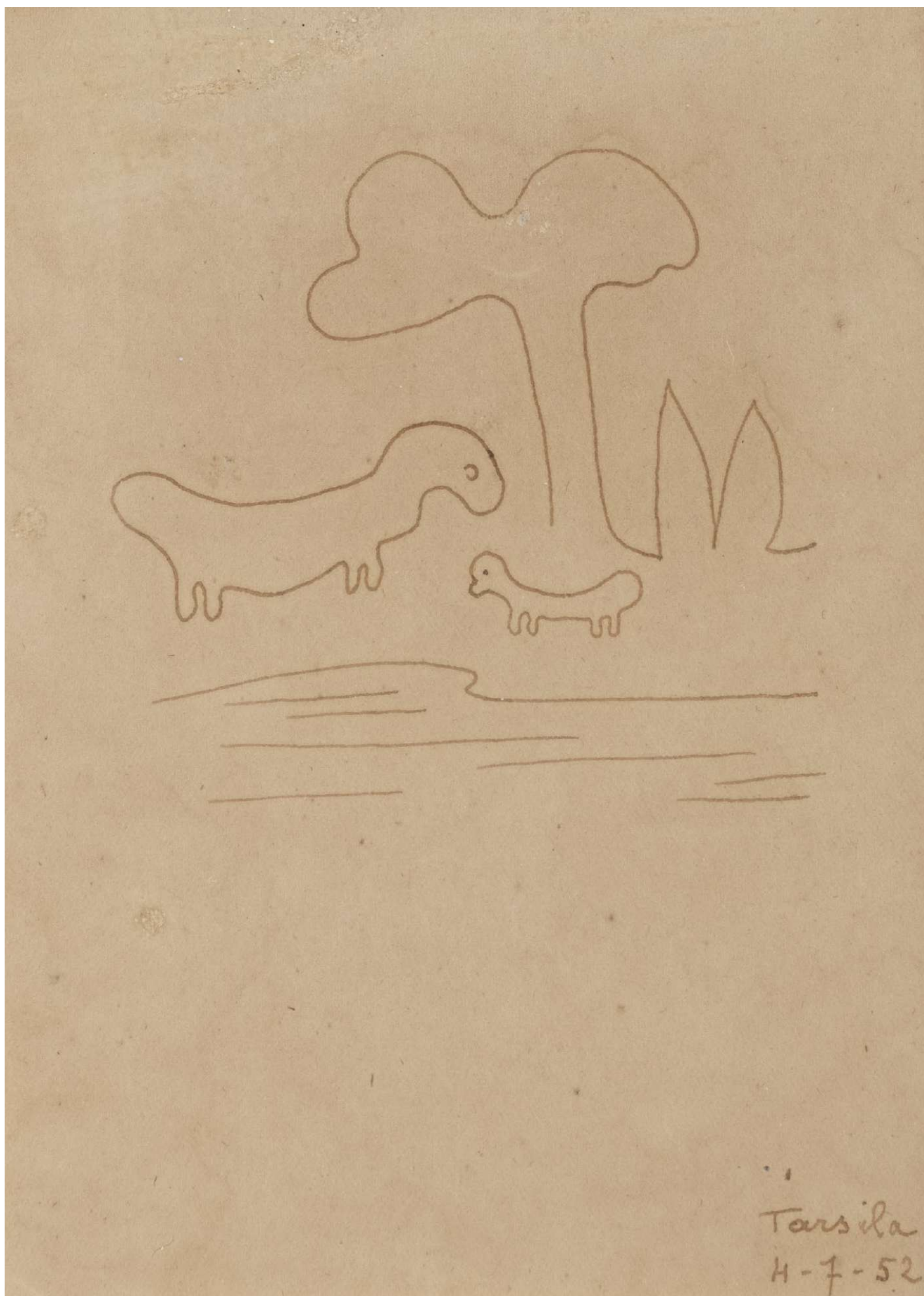
Bicho antropofágico I, 1929
Ink on paper
2 3/8 x 3 1/8 in [6 x 8 cm]
(5641)

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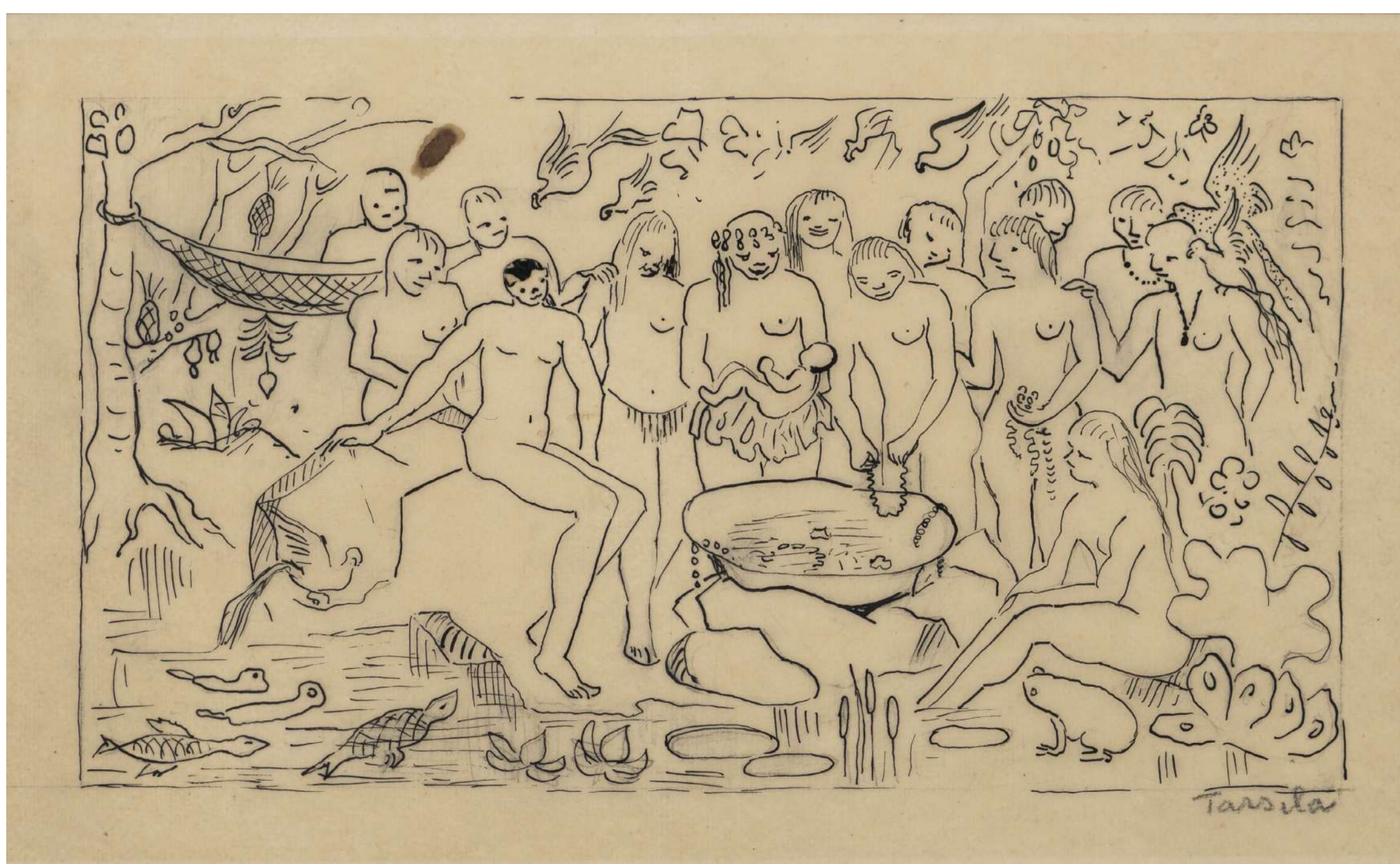
Perto de Luxor, from the Viagem ao Oriente Médio Series, 1926
Graphite on paper
2 3/8 x 3 1/2 in [6 x 9 cm]
(5642)

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Dois bichos antropofágicos à beira d'água, 1952
China Ink on paper
7 x 4 1/2 in [17,7 x 11,4 cm]
(5643)

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Batismo de Macunaíma, c. 1956
China ink and graphite on paper
6 3/4 x 11 in [17,2 x 27,9 cm]
(10526)

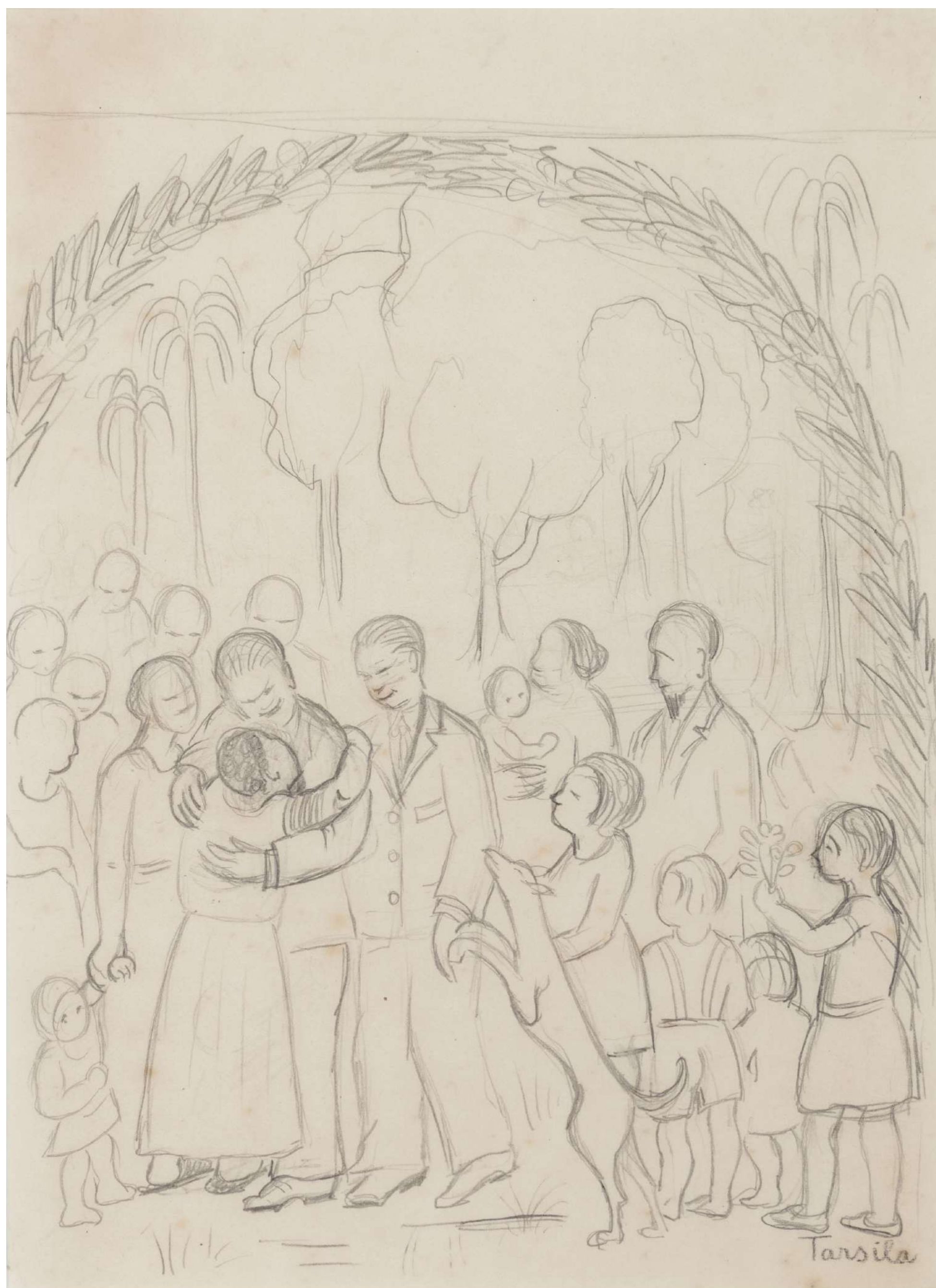


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Estudo de Primavera (Duas figuras), 1946
Graphite on paper
9 1/2 x 11 3/8 in [24 x 29 cm]
(14570)

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Família (possible illustration study), n.d.

Graphite on paper

11 3/4 x 8 1/2 in [30 x 21,5 cm]

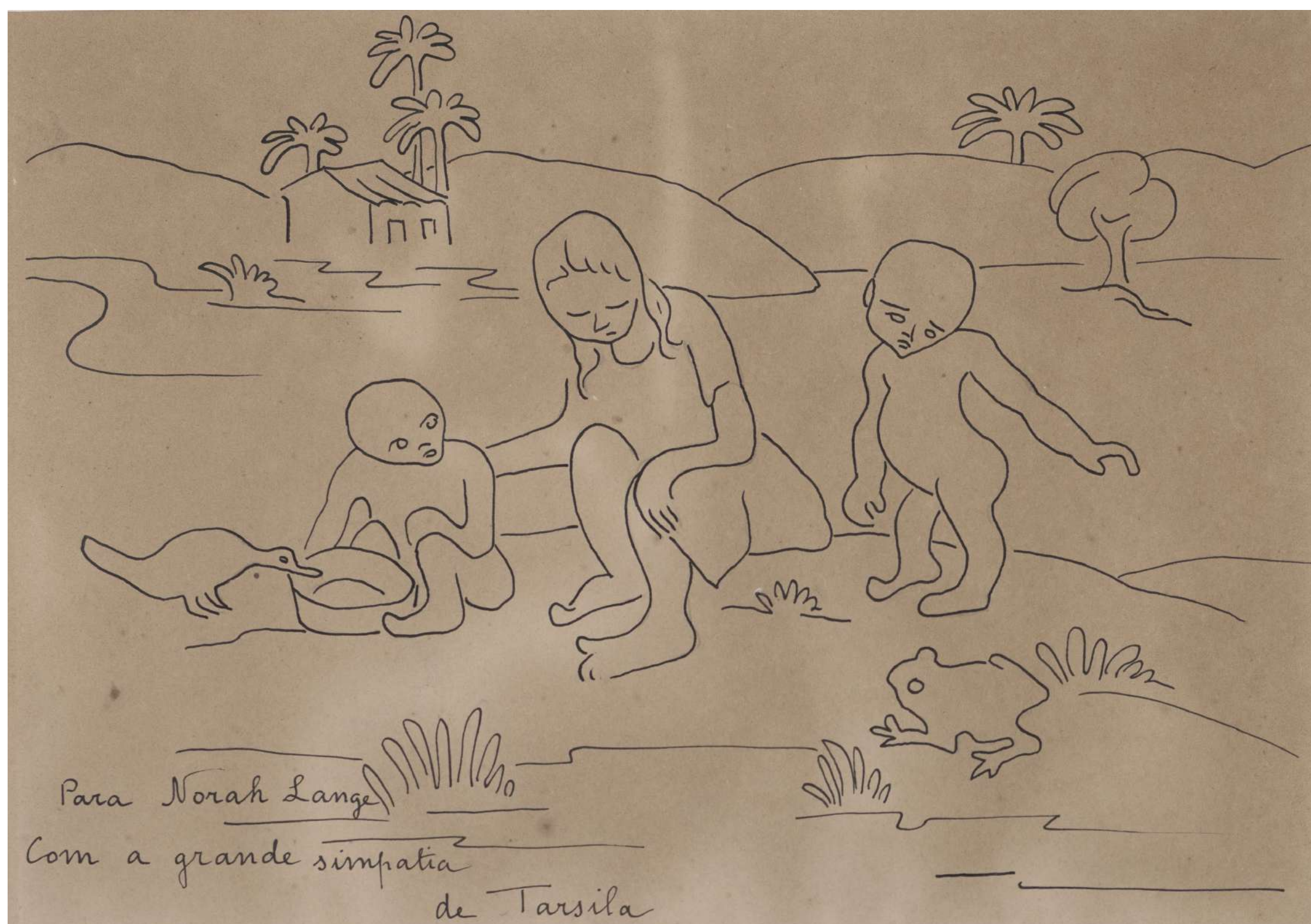
(14859)

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Gente no Povoado, c. 1950
Graphite on paper
9 x 12 1/4 in [23 x 31 cm]
(1210)

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Crianças à beira do lago com animais, c. 1941

China ink on paper

8 1/4 x 10 1/4 in [21 x 26 cm]

(1209)

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Untitled, 1970

China ink on paper

110 7/8 x 8 1/8 in [27,5 x 20,5 cm]

(14860)

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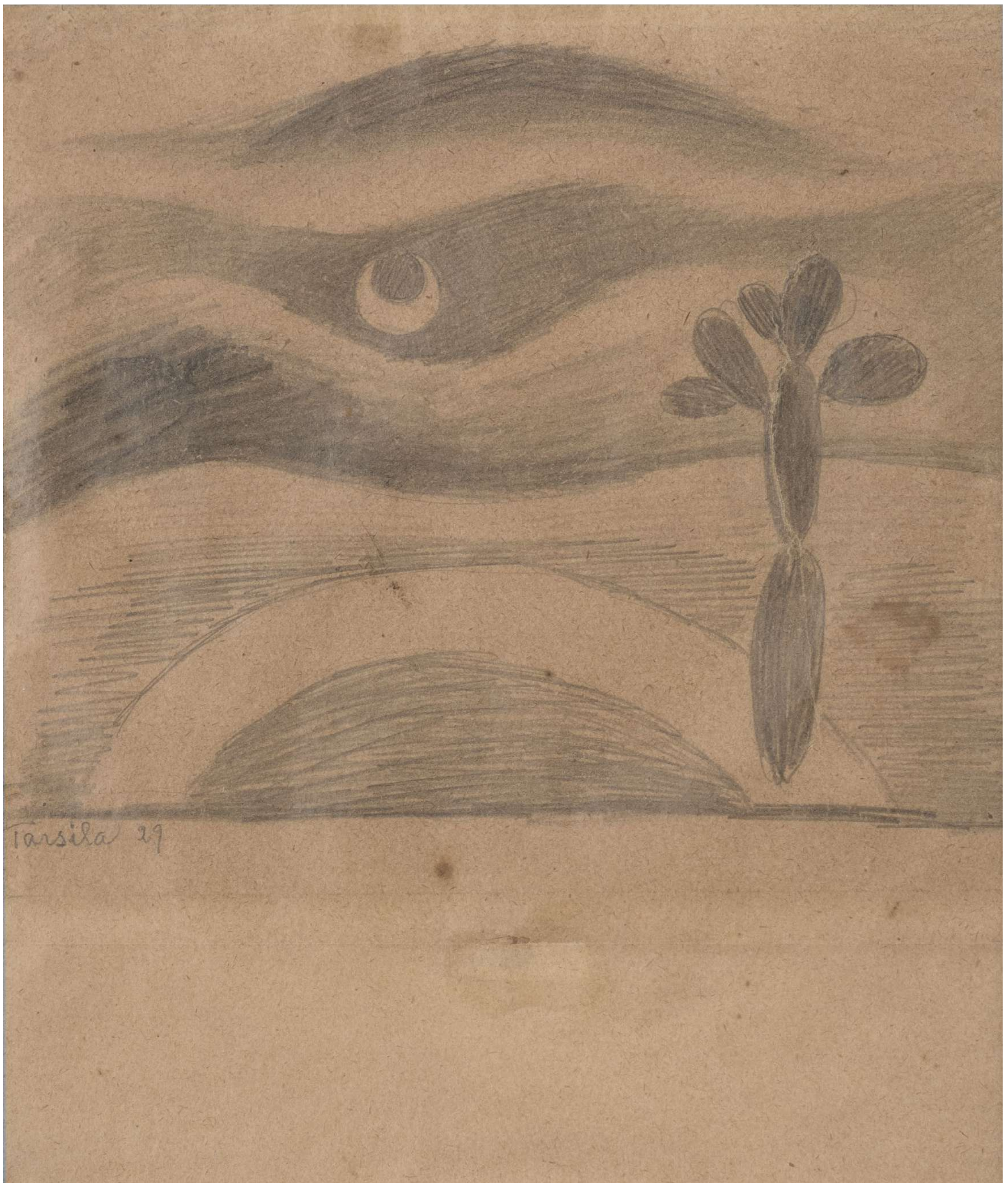
A feira II, 1925

Oil on canvas

17 7/8 x 21 1/2 in [45,3 x 54,5 cm]

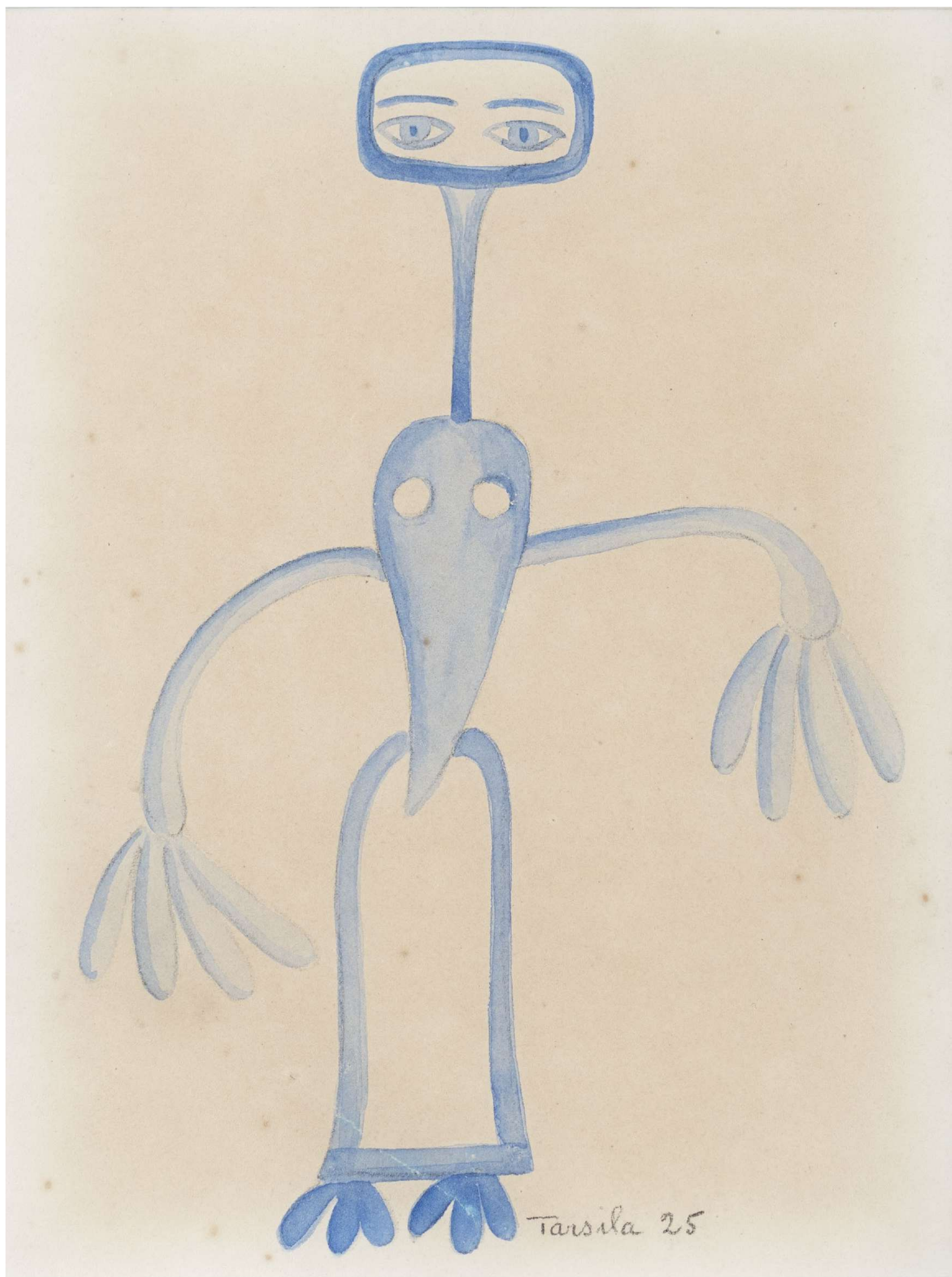
(14760)

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Paisagem, 1929
Graphite on paper
8 5/8 x 7 1/2 in [22 x 19 cm]
(12652)

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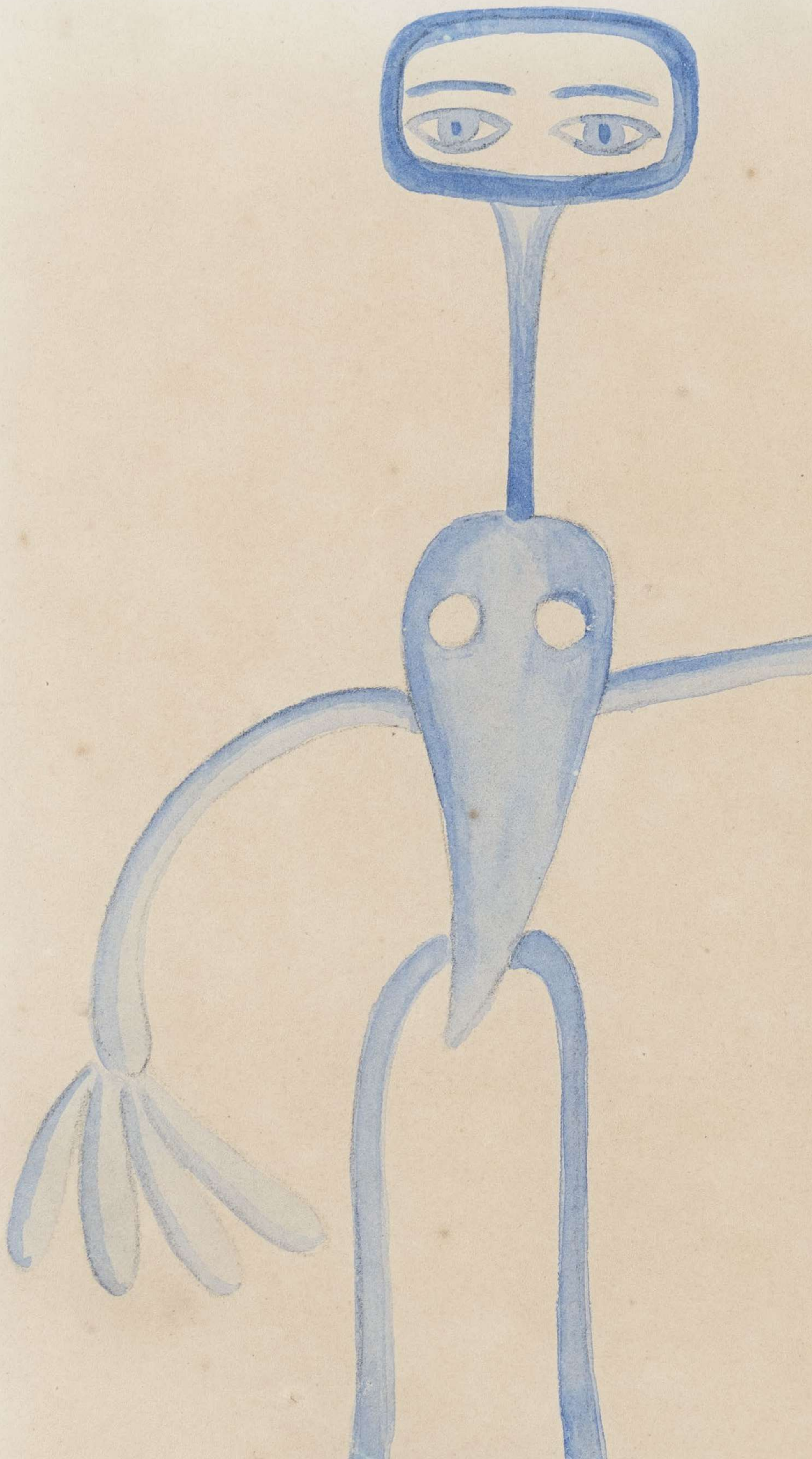


Estudo de mulher azul (Mãe-d'água), from the Projeto de Figurino Series, 1925

Graphite and watercolor on paper

8 5/8 x 6 3/4 in [22 x 17 cm]

(14814)



Booth MW8
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