

tropical savanna. If the typical story of Brasília features politics and palaces, Behr's version of the capital highlights ordinary people and weeds.

Behr's work has been the subject of nonfiction books and of a documentary, and it is often referenced in the songs and literature of other Brasília artists (such as the bands Liga Tripa and Legião Urbana; poets Chico Alvim and Augusto Rodrigues; and prose writer Daniel Carriello). This compilation serves as an excellent introduction to Behr's Brasília poetry. Behr has authored seven books in which Brasília plays a central role. Moreover, the capital's population sees him as their unofficial poet laureate, and he enjoys a local celebrity few other Brazilian poets possess. In Brasília, Behr is a household name; dolls in his likeness can be purchased at newsstands; and a mosaic (by artist Gougon) on an outdoor wall of the library Biblioteca Demonstrativa de Brasília reproduces one of his most beloved poems: "Naquela noite" ("That Night"). The collective image of any city involves a mixture of fact and fiction, statistics and smells, memories and stories. There is no doubt that Behr's poetry is an integral part of the collective image of Brasília.

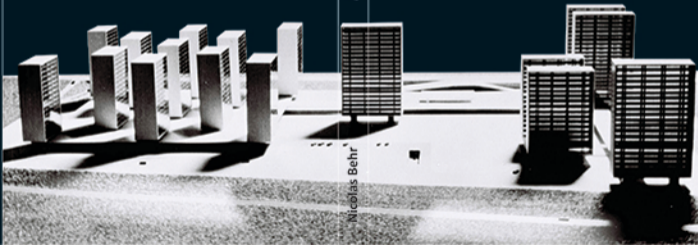
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better than living  
is living in Brasília

beloved city  
suckling city  
nursed city  
killed city

the deified architect  
the banned poet  
jk decapitated

the enchantment forever lost



IT WILL NEVER RAIN AGAIN

Nicolas Behr

## IT WILL NEVER RAIN AGAIN

Nicolas Behr is the writer who has been most successful at capturing the strangeness of Brazil's planned capital. Since 1977, when he began distributing mimeographed chapbooks in Brasília's public spaces and buses, Behr has been writing joke poems, satires, a creative guidebook, riddles, and miniature poems with Brazil's Federal District as his muse. He is a master of wordplay and of returning the outlandishness to terms and customs that locals take for granted and that visitors find inscrutable. Behr was arrested in 1978 when his chapbooks *Grande circular*, *Carogo de galoba*, and *Chô com porrada* were deemed pornographic. The accusation spoke less to the content of the poems than to Brazil's military regime's distrust of how the so-called "marginal poets" or "mimeograph generation" protested conservative values and lauded do-it-yourself solutions that circumvented consumer capitalism.

Behr continues a trend, begun by Clarice Lispector in her creative essay "Brasília: Five Days" (1964), of envisioning Brasília as belonging both to the realms both of myth and reality, a topic particularly central to his 2010 collection *Brasillodo*, which combines the words *Brasília* and *Ilíad*, emphasizing the epic and literary identity of the city. If Brasília's modernist architecture were meant to make viewers see space afresh, Behr's poetry achieves the same effect of de-familiarizing how people perceive the capital. Moreover, as his poetry elucidates, Behr has immense knowledge of the often-ignored flora of the cerrado or