

**RODOLPHO RAMINA
LOEB FELLOW 2003
PROJECT COORDINATOR
CURITIBA METROPOLITAN AREA
WATER PLAN
PARANA STATE, BRAZIL**

Rodolpho Ramina's current work is on the forefront of the effects of global warming. He is looking at the possible need to move millions of Brazilians in the next 50 years and how this will impact huge watersheds. It is complex, challenging and rewarding work. But only a few years ago he found himself at professional and personal crossroads. "When I decided to apply for the Loeb Fellowship, I wasn't satisfied with what I was doing," he said, "my work was too limiting and my life goals were not clear. I needed some other paths to explore."

If chosen, the fellowship would mean big changes for him. He'd be confronted with a different language and climate and he'd be leaving his wife and daughter and elderly parents behind in Brazil. In this challenging environment he found connecting with new people during the fellowship one of the most rewarding aspects of his Loeb year. "Living in a flat with my classmate Mike Houck was incredibly important...he taught me a lot about myself and how to accept myself more fully." He was also energized by associations with the young students in classes at Harvard and MIT.

The rich international and multi-disciplinary give and take of fellowship experiences helped Rodolpho gain what he calls "an eternal confidence" in his own ability to confront, learn from and put into effect

new approaches and perspectives. He was able to test his own ideas against an array of brilliant and dedicated people, both inside and outside the fellowship

He took courses in filmmaking, animation, and painting and discovered how important artistic expression is to him. "I paint every day and it contributes to my work," he said, "I acquired a new language there, a visual language, one that is very fulfilling"

Rodolpho advises people entering the fellowship from other countries to immerse themselves in the academic and New England cultures of Cambridge. He found people of all kinds very approachable and having to cope more effectively in a second language was a great confidence builder.

Rodolpho believes the fellowship changed him. He was able to exercise aspects of his personality he'd never exercised before. And the experience made him more objective about his personal life. He's more at home with himself now. "On a scale of 1-10 the Loeb fellowship is a 10 with regard to my attitude about myself. And professionally, this has meant a lot of change for me."



"Americans are very strange but I found being from another country was easier than I thought it would be."