



nara roesler

EXPO CHICAGO 2025

booth #225

thiago barbalho
sérgio sister

april 24—27
navy pier
chicago, usa

Sérgio Sister, *Untitled*, 1966 [detail]

EXPO CHICAGO 2025

Nara Roesler is pleased to present, at Expo Chicago 2025, a dialogue between the works of artists Sergio Sister (b. 1948, São Paulo, Brazil) and Thiago Barbalho (b. 1984, Natal, Brazil). This presentation embraces two generations in a conversation across diverse temporalities.

Although Sergio Sister is widely recognized as one of the key figures in Brazilian abstraction—known for his persistent use of monochromatic, modulated surfaces and three-dimensional paintings—his early artistic trajectory was deeply rooted in political activism. At the start of his career, Sister produced politically charged works informed by Pop Art, using colorful, organic, and comic-like figuration as a means to convey resistance. Some of these seminal pieces were created under duress, during his imprisonment and torture under Brazil’s military dictatorship in the early 1970s.

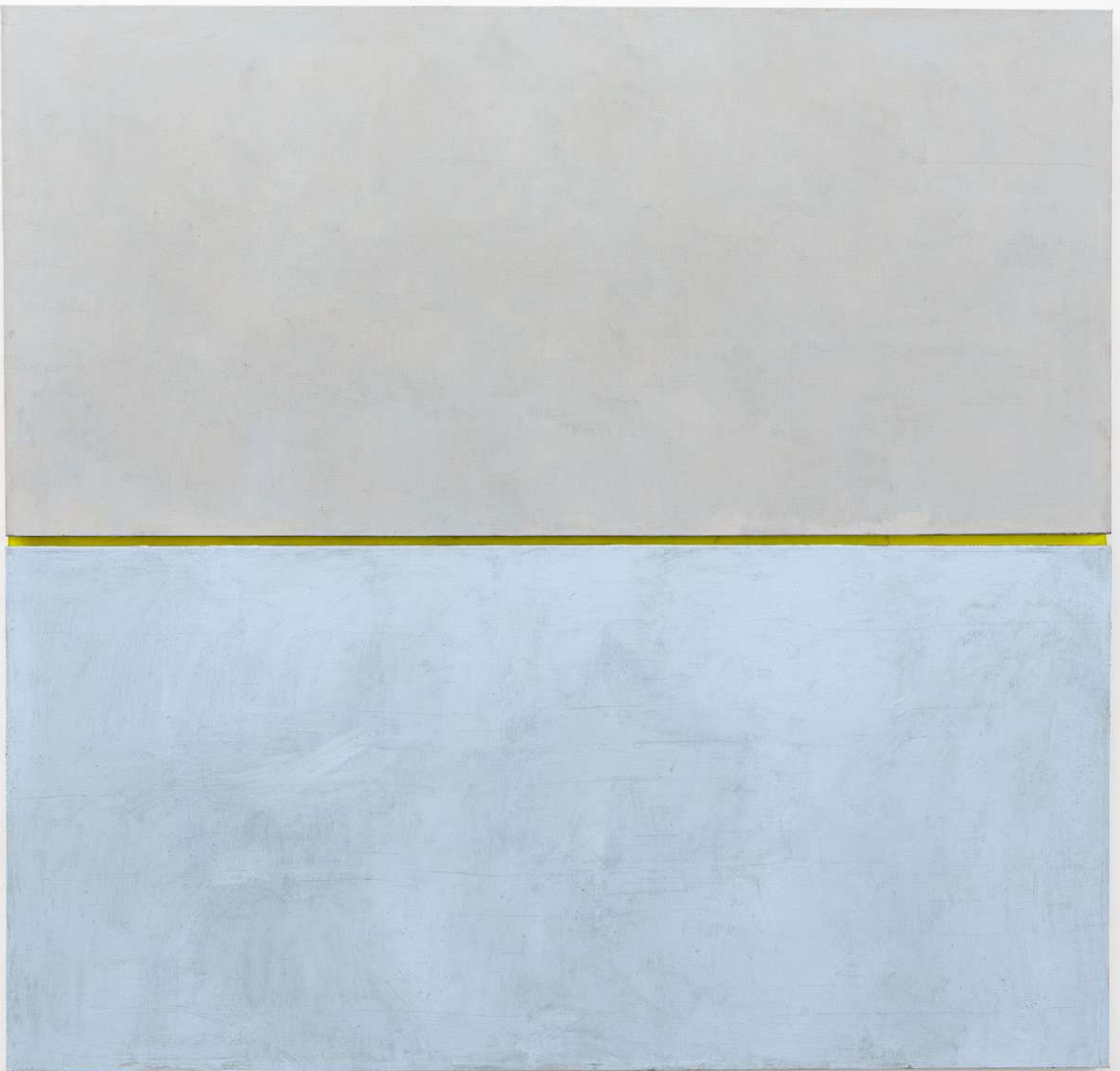
Thiago Barbalho stands out among the younger generation of Brazilian artists for his intricate, psychedelic compositions. While his work is informed by all-over and abstract-organic visual languages, and does not follow strict narrative structures, his vividly colored compositions and intertwined, iconic forms resonate strongly with Sister’s early production.

The presentation also includes a selection of Sister’s more recent works, underscoring how—beyond the binary of figuration and abstraction, and moving past overtly message-driven art—he continues to explore a system of chromatic surfaces that was already present, albeit mediated by narrative, in his early practice.



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Sérgio Sister
Untitled, 2020
oil paint on canvas
190 x 180 cm
74.8 x 70.9 in



Sérgio Sister
Vertical little brick, 2014
oil paint on canvas on
wood and steel cable
99,5 x 6,5 cm
39.2 x 2.6 in



Thiago Barbalho
Caboclos of the woods, 2025
colored pencil, graphite pencil,
ballpoint pen, oil paint and
permanent marker on canvas
150 x 80 cm
59.1 x 31.5 in





Thiago Barbalho

Cure n.2, 2025

colored pencil, graphite pencil,
ballpoint pen, oil paint, acrylic paint
and permanent marker on canvas

140 x 80 cm

55.1 x 31.5 in





Thiago Barbalho

Little notebook III (Courage), 2024

colored pencil, graphite pencil,
ballpoint pen, oil paint, acrylic
paint and permanent marker on paper

15 x 21 cm

5.9 x 8.3 in



Working across various dimensions and materials—including colored pencils, graphite, spray paint, oil, oil pastel, and marker on paper—Thiago Barbalho creates intricate visual universes where forms, references, and colors intertwine in layered, psychedelic compositions. He approaches drawing as an ancestral technology that transcends time and culture. His visual research explores it as both a trace of presence and a bridge between mind and body—between imagination and gesture, consciousness and reality.



Like Barbalho, Sister's early works were notably influenced by Pop Art. However, in his case, the use of imagery drawn from popular culture served a politically engaged discourse, reflective of the broader context of Brazilian art at the time. As Sister explains: "We embraced Pop Art because it seemed like a modern version of art, aligned with our revolutionary ideals. It was aggressive, ironic, good-humored, and it offered an arsenal of icons that could fuel our discourse."

Sérgio Sister
Untitled, 1971
ecoline ink on paper
30 x 36 cm
11.8 x 14.2 in





exhibition view

The Pencil is the Key, 2019

The Drawing Center, New York, USA

Chadwick Sticks to the Gun

In 1971, Chadwick's return to the drawing studio marked the beginning of his most productive period. During this time, he produced a series of drawings that were both politically and personally significant. One of the most notable works is "Chadwick Sticks to the Gun," which is a drawing of a man in a suit, holding a gun, and looking at a woman in a dress. The drawing is signed "Chadwick" and dated "1971".

The drawing is a pencil sketch on a piece of paper. It depicts a man in a suit, holding a gun, and looking at a woman in a dress. The drawing is signed "Chadwick" and dated "1971".



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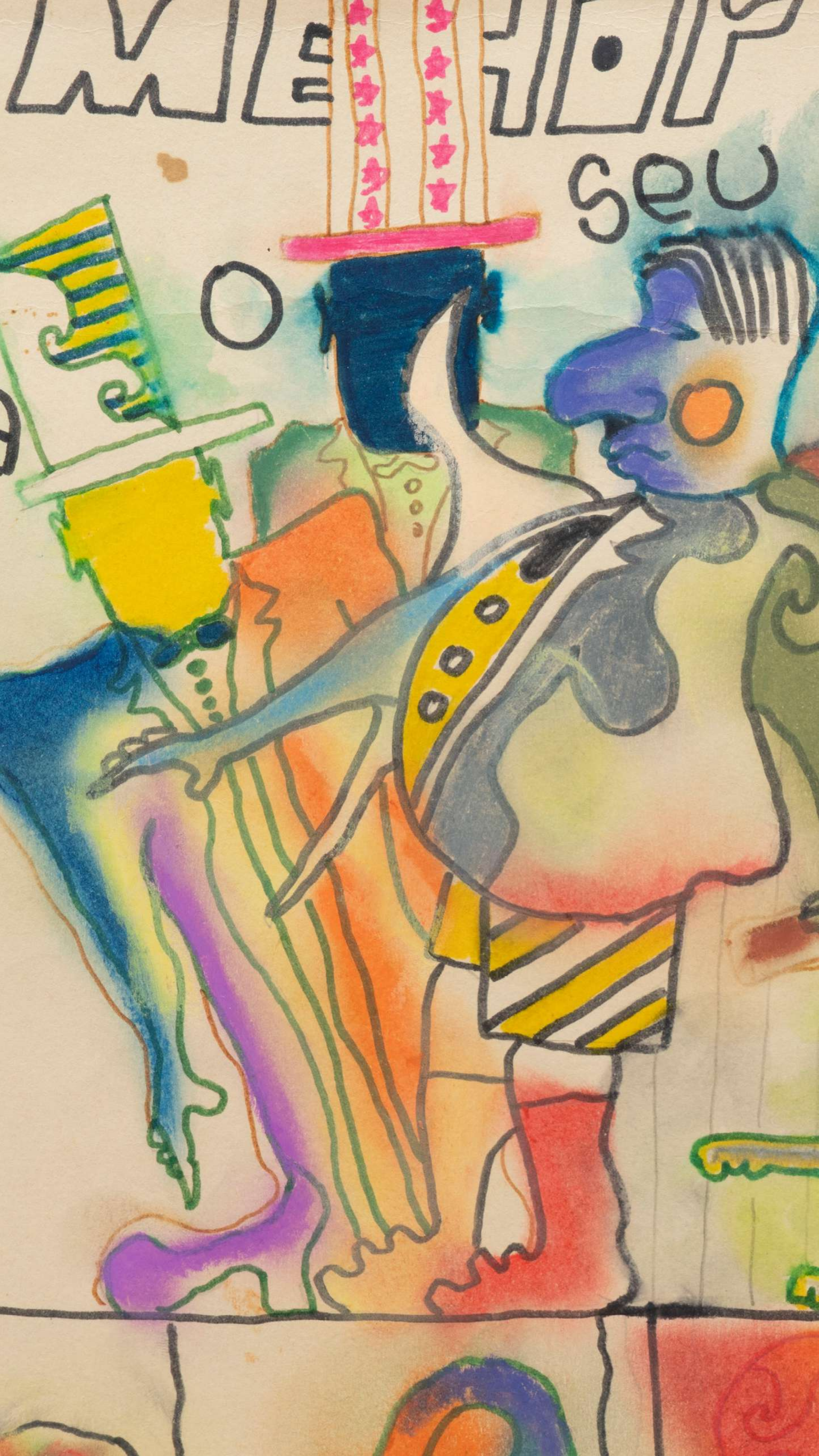


Chadwick Sticks to the Gun

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Sérgio Sister
Untitled, 1970
oil pastel and felt
tip pen on paper
44,5 x 31,8 cm
17.5 x 12.5 in





Sérgio Sister
Untitled, 2015
oil paint on canvas
30 x 20 cm
11.8 x 7.9 in



Sérgio Sister
Untitled, 1966
acrylic paint on canvas
89 x 116 cm
35 x 45.7 in





click to watch and learn more
about the artist's series →



**I began painting with oil paint,
that's how I learnt it.**

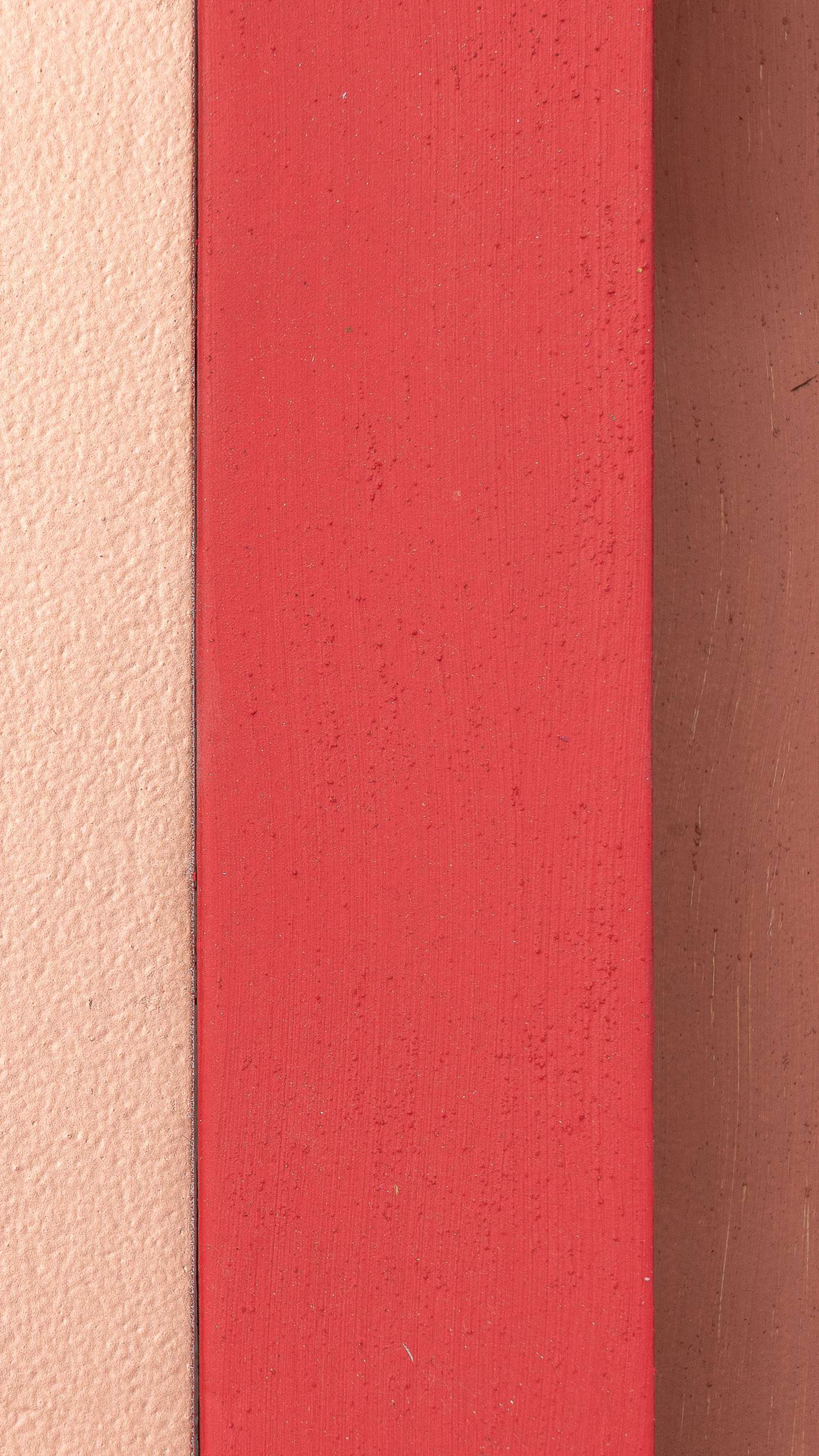
exhibition view
Pintura entre frestas e cavidades, 2023
Nara Roesler São Paulo, Brazil



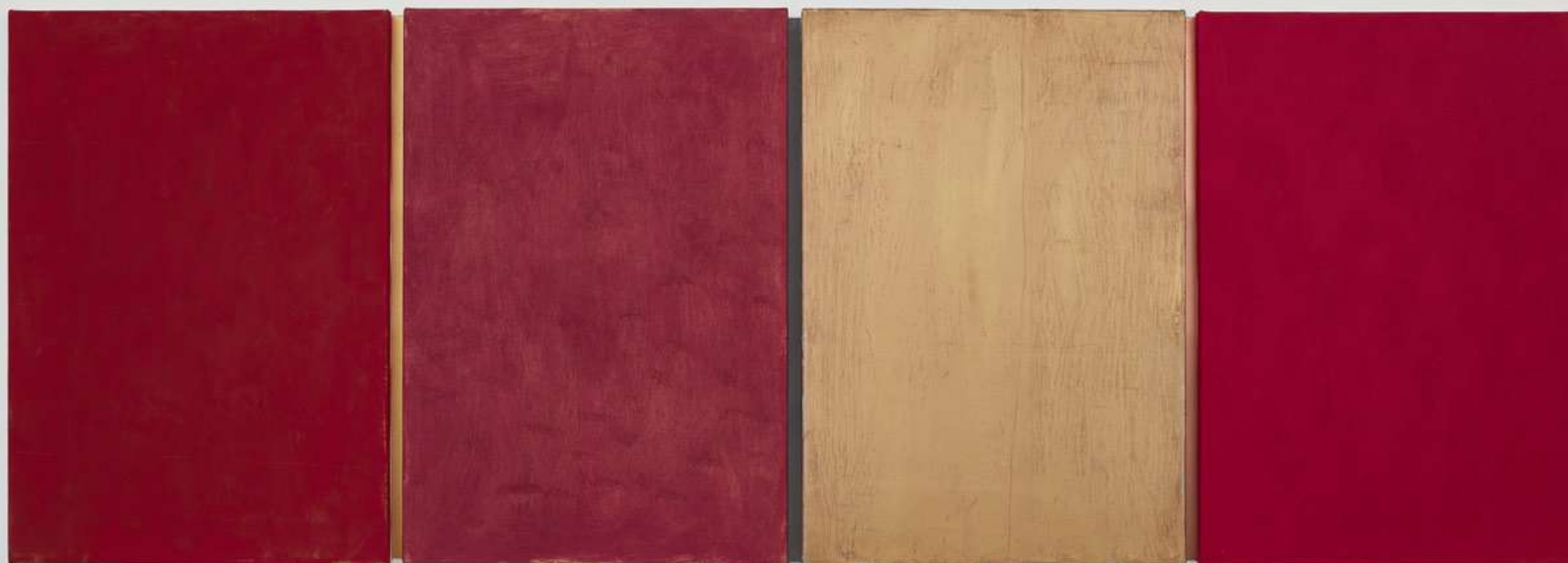
Today, Sérgio Suster's work bridges painting and sculpture, as exemplified by his *Ripas* series, ongoing since the late 1990s, and the *Caixas* series, initiated in 2009. In these sculptural works, Sérgio elevates color field painting into three-dimensional space, recontextualizing the classical notion of the canvas as a window.



Sérgio Sister
*Box with red and copper
for a victory, 2022*
oil paint and metallic
spray on wood
37 x 25 x 7 cm
14.6 x 9.8 x 2.8 in



Sérgio Sister
Reds, golden and
metallic links, 2023
oil paint on canvas
65,2 x 185,5 cm
25.7 x 73 in



[click to watch and learn more about
sergio sister's recent works →](#)





Thiago Barbalho
Eudaimonia, 2025
 colored pencil, graphite pencil,
 ballpoint pen, oil paint and
 permanent marker on canvas
 40 x 30 cm
 15.7 x 11.8 in



Thiago Barbalho
Araucária, 2025
 colored pencil, graphite
 pencil, ballpoint pen and
 permanent marker on canvas
 40 x 30 cm
 15.7 x 11.8 in



Thiago Barbalho
Waning moon, 2025
colored pencil, graphite
pencil, ballpoint pen, oil paint and
permanent marker on canvas
40 x 30 cm
15.7 x 11.8 in

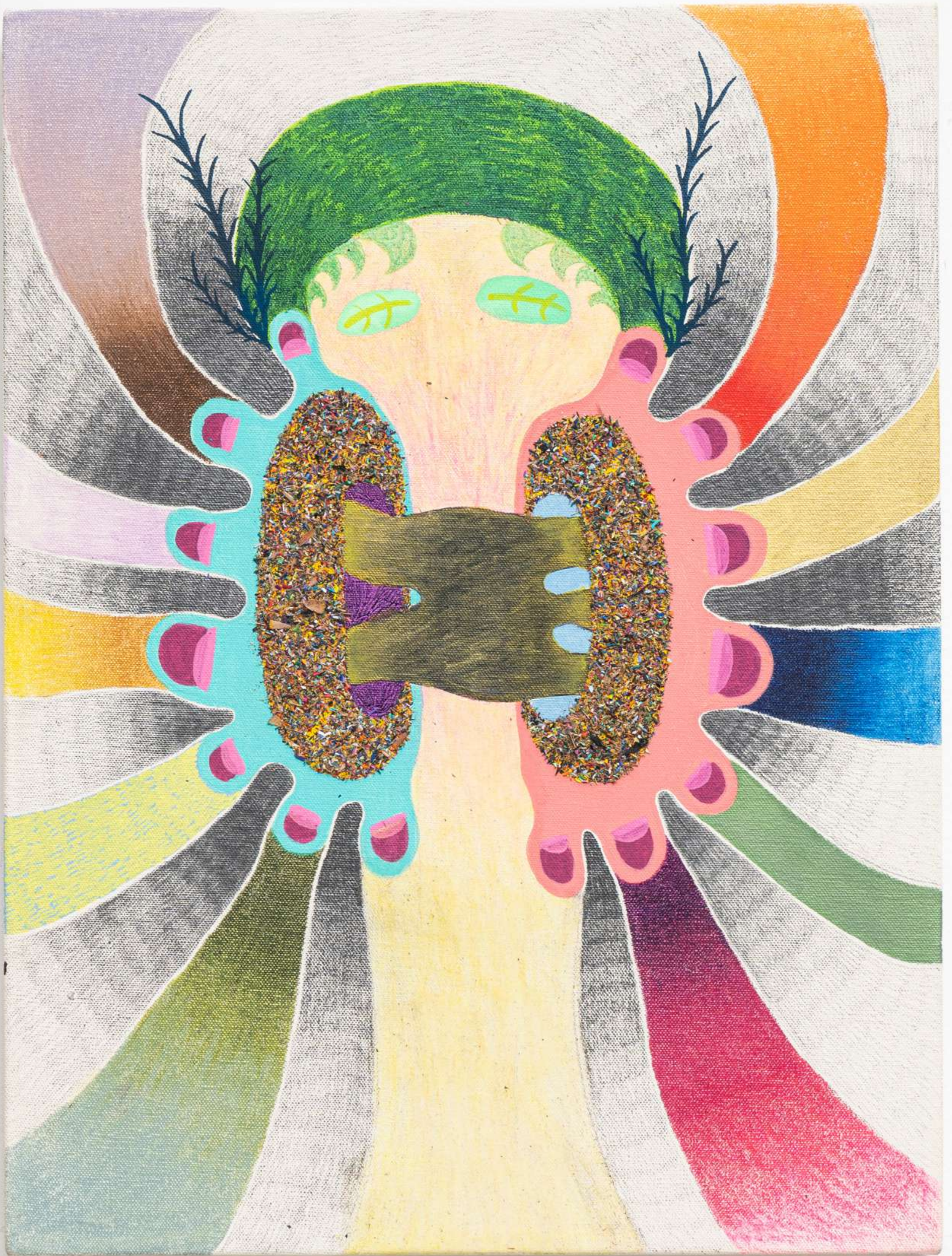






[click to watch and learn more about
thiago barbalhos's recent works →](#)

they are invited to discuss their
relationship with art history.



Thiago Barbalho
Forest Bess, 2025
colored pencil, graphite pencil,
ballpoint pen, oil paint,
permanent marker and colored
pencil powder on canvas
40 x 30 cm
15.7 x 11.8 in





Thiago Barbalho
Horizon with bones, 2024
 colored pencil, graphite pencil,
 ballpoint pen, oil paint, acrylic paint
 and permanent marker on canvas
 40 x 30 cm
 15.7 x 11.8 in



Thiago Barbalho
Banana tree in the mud, 2024
 colored pencil, graphite pencil,
 ballpoint pen, oil paint, acrylic paint
 and permanent marker on canvas
 40 x 30 cm
 15.7 x 11.8 in



Thiago Barbalho

Cure, 2025

colored pencil, graphite pencil,
ballpoint pen, oil paint, acrylic paint,
acrylic resin and permanent marker on canvas

40 x 30 cm

15.7 x 11.8 in







exhibition view
Once in never out, 2022
Nara Roesler Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Sérgio Sister
Blue folds, 2024
oil paint on paper
200 x 100 cm
78.7 x 39.4 in





[click here to go back to the beginning of the preview](#) ↑

more about the artists

thiago barbalho
b. 1984, Natal, Brazil
lives and works in São Roque, Brazil

As a writer and visual artist, Thiago Barbalho found in drawing a means of expression that allowed him to overcome a writer’s block. Working in different dimensions and with different materials (colored pencils, graphite, spray, oil, oil pastel, and marker on paper), his compositions bring intricate universes to the public’s eye, in which shapes and colors intertwine and shuffle in narratives that seem to radicalize and endow the Hieronymus Bosch fantastic universe with a contemporary and lysergic air.

According to the critic and curator Kiki Mazzucchelli, ‘when working essentially in drawing, Barbalho produces extremely intricate, but unplanned compositions, in which a multiplicity of images, symbols and color fields merge to create uninterrupted vibrant surfaces.’ The apparent chaos of his images arises from the gestures he traces, refusing to submit to a formal logic dictated by rationality. In fact, we encounter in his work a variety of fragments, a profusion of references from different spheres, from pop culture to art history tradition, disarranging categories, and the relationship between figure and background.

With a background in Philosophy, Barbalho relies on philosophical concepts to guide his practice. In this sense, he understands drawing as an ancestral technology, which spans ages and cultures as a specific human species’ invention. The artist’s visual research leads him to see in the drawing the trace of a presence and the relationship between the mind—the imagination—and the body—the gesture— between consciousness and reality.

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selected solo exhibitions

- *Segredos e Feitiços*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2024)
- *Cacimba Nova*, Casa de Cultura Jardim do Seridó, Jardim do Seridó, Brazil (2024)
- *Depois que entra ninguém sai*, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2022)
- *Correspondência*, Galeria Marília Razuk, São Paulo, Brazil (2019)
- *Thiago Barbalho*, Kupfer Project Space, London, UK (2018)

selected group exhibitions

- *Phantom Dance: Thiago Barbalho and Theodore Ereira Guyer*, Elizabeth XI Bauer, London, UK (2023)

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- *Mapa da estrada: Novas obras no acervo da Pinacoteca de São Paulo*, Pinacoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2022)
 - *Electric Dreams*, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2021)
 - *AVAF*, Casa Triângulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
 - *Rocamboles*, Pivô, São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
 - *Rocamboles*, Kunsthalle Lissabon, Lisbon, Portugal (2019)
 - *Voyage*, Galeria Bergamin & Gomide, São Paulo, Brazil (2017)
 - *Shadows & Monsters*, Gasworks, London, UK (2017)

selected collections

- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

sérgio sister

b. 1948, São Paulo, Brazil, where he lives and works

Sérgio Sister started painting in the late 1960’s, at the same time when he was working as a journalist and became engaged with political action. In 1970, Sister was arrested for his militancy. While detained for 19 months at the Tiradentes Prison, in São Paulo, Sister attended painting workshops held at the institution. As a part of Geração 80, Sister revisits an ancient theme in painting: the interplay between surface and three-dimensionality, in an attempt to liberate painting in space. What marked his production at that time was the superimposition of autonomous chromatic layers coexisting harmoniously side by side.

Today, his work combines painting and sculpture. He uses supports derived from found structures and from systems designed to serve our everyday needs, as we can see in the *Ripas* series, produced since the late 1990s (strips), and in *Caixas* series, produced since 2009, whose names are appropriate of the manufactured products from which they derive. These are sculptural paintings made from found wooden beams that resemble crates, porticos, or window frames. Sister paints the beams different colors and assembles them into configurations that allow various depths, shadows, and experiences of color to emerge.

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selected solo exhibitions

- *Pintura entre frestas e cavidades*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2023)
- *Pintura e vínculo*, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2021)
- *Then and Now*, Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2019)
- *Sérgio Sister: o sorriso da cor e outros engenhos*, Instituto Ling, Porto Alegre, Brazil (2019)
- *Sérgio Sister*, Kupfer Gallery, London, United Kingdom (2017)
- *Sergio Sister: Malen Mit Raum, Schatten und Luft*, Galerie Lange + Pult, Zurich, Switzerland (2016)
- *Expanded Fields*, Nympe Projekte, Berlin, Germany (2016)
- *Ordem Desunida*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2015)

selected group exhibitions

- *Co/respondences: Brazil and abroad*, Nara Roesler, New York, USA (2023)
- *Entre tanto*, Casa de Cultura do Parque, São Paulo, Brazil (2020)
- *A linha como direção*, Pina Estação, São Paulo, Brazil (2019)

selected collections

- *The Pencil is a Key: Art by Incarcerated Artists*, Drawing Center, New York, USA (2019)
- *Géométries Américaines*, du Mexique à la Terre de Feu, Fondation Cartier pour l’Art Contemporain, Paris, France (2018)
- *AI-5 50 anos – Ainda não terminou de acabar*, Instituto Tomie Ohtake (ITO), São Paulo, Brazil (2018)
- *MAC USP no século XXI – A era dos artistas*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo (MAC USP), São Paulo, Brazil
- 25th São Paulo Biennial, Brazil (2002)
- François Pinault Collection, Venice, Italy
- Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico
- Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil

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