

nara roesler

milton machado



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## **milton machado**

b. 1947, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where he lives and works

In his first works, mostly drawings made during the dictatorship, Milton Machado used his training in architecture to create projects and apparently logical reports that, in reality, were fictitious and unfeasible. Over the following decades, the artist progressively increased the scale of his work and expanded the diversity of the genres used, including objects, sculptures, video, photography, and large installations. Nevertheless, he continues to explore the tension arising from the questions his artistic investigations pose to the models of scientific knowledge.

With his artistic interventions, Milton Machado creates or highlights surprising and revealing relationships, filling the gaps between theoretically separate fields: industry and art, architecture and image, family and politics, and so on. Avoiding explicit connections, Milton utilizes criticism and humor blended with a tone of deep irony and disappointment to create visual fables. The series *História do Futuro*, which has been ongoing for 40 years, stands out in his oeuvre: an urban tale combining critical theory, architecture, and urban planning, to discuss the dynamic and unpredictable movements of life and deaths in a fictional city.

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### **selected solo exhibitions**

X, Nara Roesler, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2016)  
*Cabeça*, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB-BH), Belo Horizonte (2015); Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB-RJ), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2014)  
*Mão Pesada*, Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil (2013)

### **selected group exhibitions**

*In Memoriam*, Caixa Cultural Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2017)  
*Em polvorosa*, Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
*Made in Brasil*, Casa Daros, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2015)  
*Imagine Brazil*, DHC/ART Foundation for Contemporary Art, Montreal, Canada (2015)  
*Where the streets have no name*, CSS Bard and Hessel Museum of Art, New York, United States (2014)

### **selected collections**

Daros Foundation, Zürich, Switzerland  
Essex Collection of Art from Latin America (ESCALA), University of Essex, Colchester, United Kingdom  
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro (MAM Rio), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
Museo de Arte de Lima, Lima, Peru  
Museo Civico Gibellina, Gibellina, Italy  
Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM-SP), São Paulo, Brazil

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<b>4</b>	history of the future, 1978–ongoing
<b>12</b>	drawings
<b>23</b>	photographs
<b>34</b>	mundo novo [new world], 1990
<b>39</b>	sculptures
<b>47</b>	videos

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## history of the future 1978–ongoing

*History of The Future* (HF) is a work in progress that arises from the reading of Alfredo Brandão's *A escripta pré-histórica do Brasil*. In the book, the paleontologist sets out to prove Pangea's existence, the primordial continent, by comparing rock images from Brazil and Africa. In 1978, Milton Machado made the first series with 14 drawings. In 1985, he developed the theme in his master's dissertation in urban planning at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. In the early 1990s, the work unfolded in a series of sculptures, photographic panels, and drawings exhibited at the Museo Civico Gibellina in Sicily, Italy. On that occasion, a catalogue of the show, with texts by Machado and the critic Achille Bonito Oliva, was published. Born through the encounter between practice and theory, *História do Futuro* seeks to evince the transience of urban structures. The project takes a fictional form that includes works such as *Cidades Mais-que-Perfeitas*, *Módulo de Destruição*, and *Nômades*.

*History of The Future* participated in several individual exhibitions, such as *Cabeça*, at the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil (CCBB-RJ), in Rio de Janeiro, and collective shows, such as the 29<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo (2010).

[Click here to see the video of the show Cabeça, at CCBB-BH.](#)

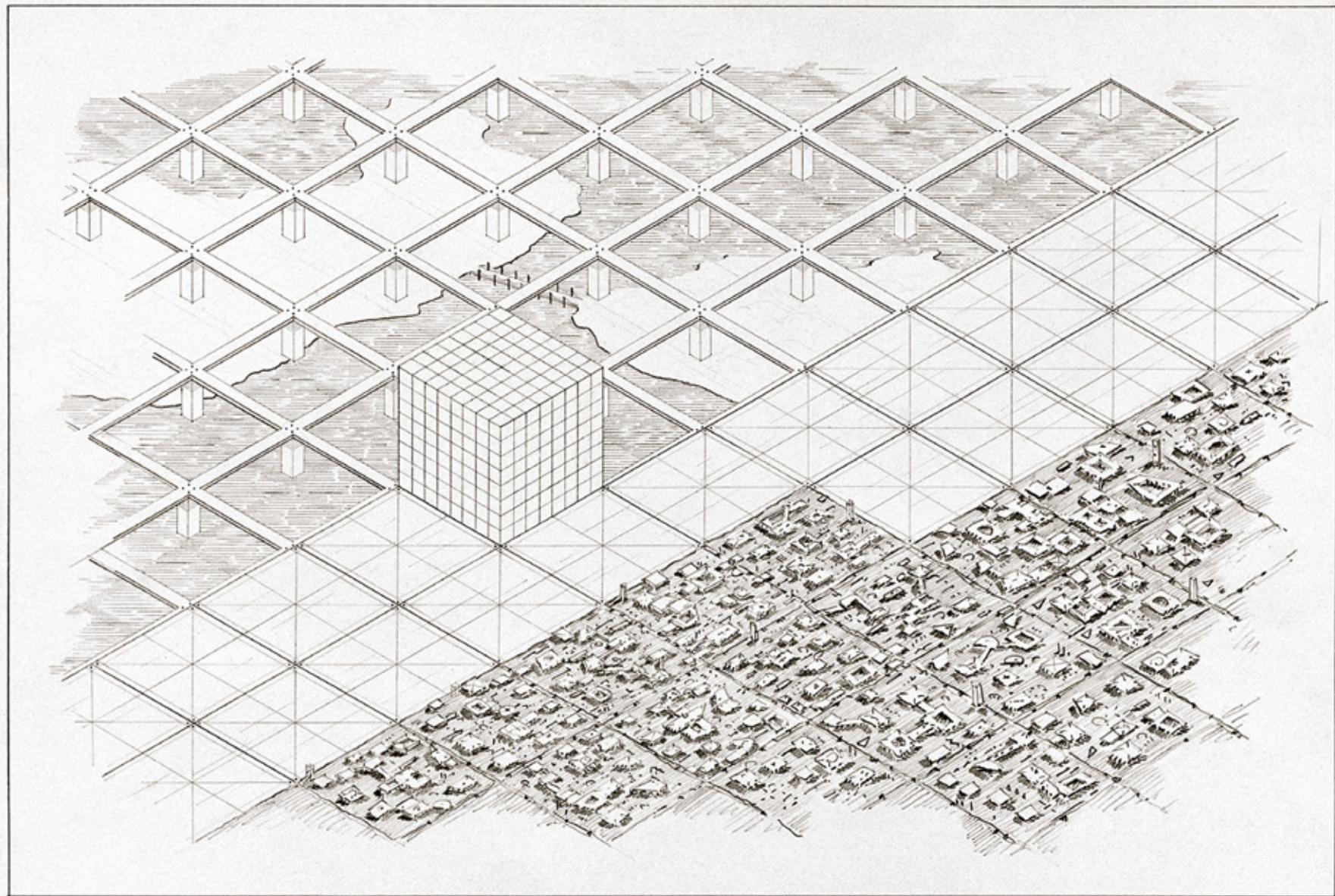


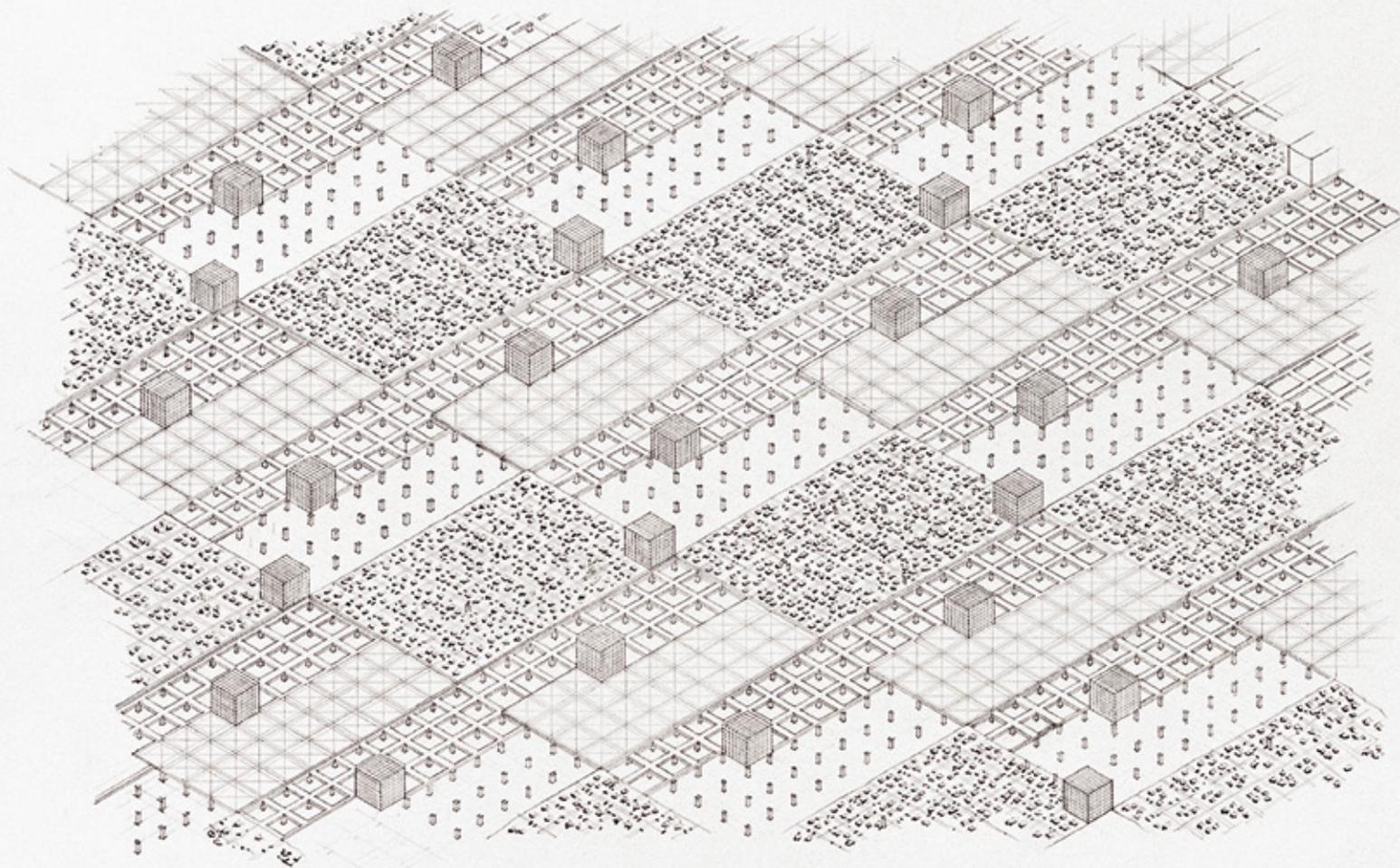
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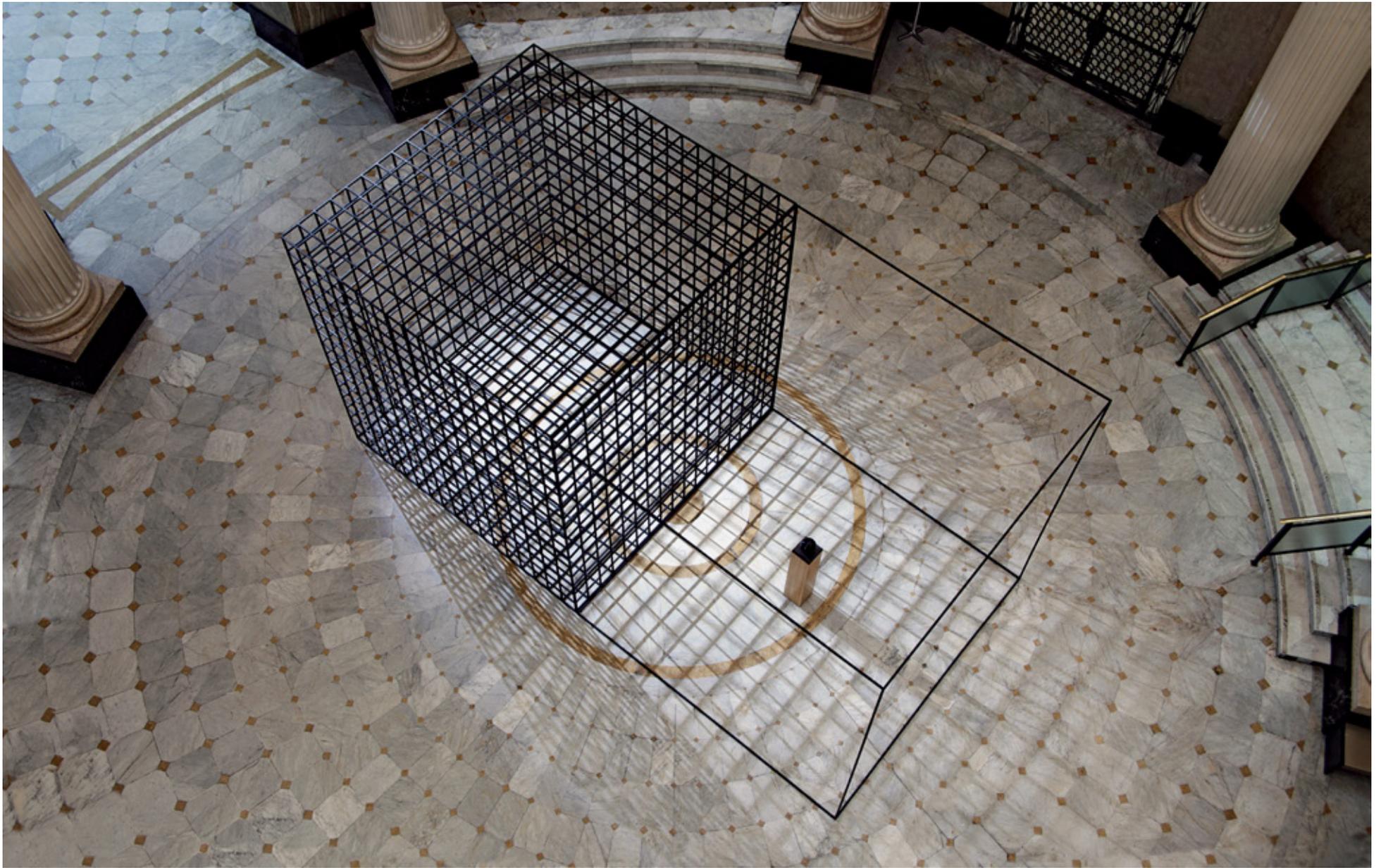
exhibition view  
*Cabeça*, 2014  
Centro Cultural Banco  
do Brasil (CCBB-RJ),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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→  
*History of The Future*, 1978 - ...  
14 drawings, 30 studies, 6  
photographs, 2 sculptures, video  
35 x 50 cm (drawings), 23.5 x 32.5  
cm (studies), Ø 16 cm / 20 x 20 x  
100 cm and 380 x 380 x 380 cm  
(sculptures), 9'23" (video)







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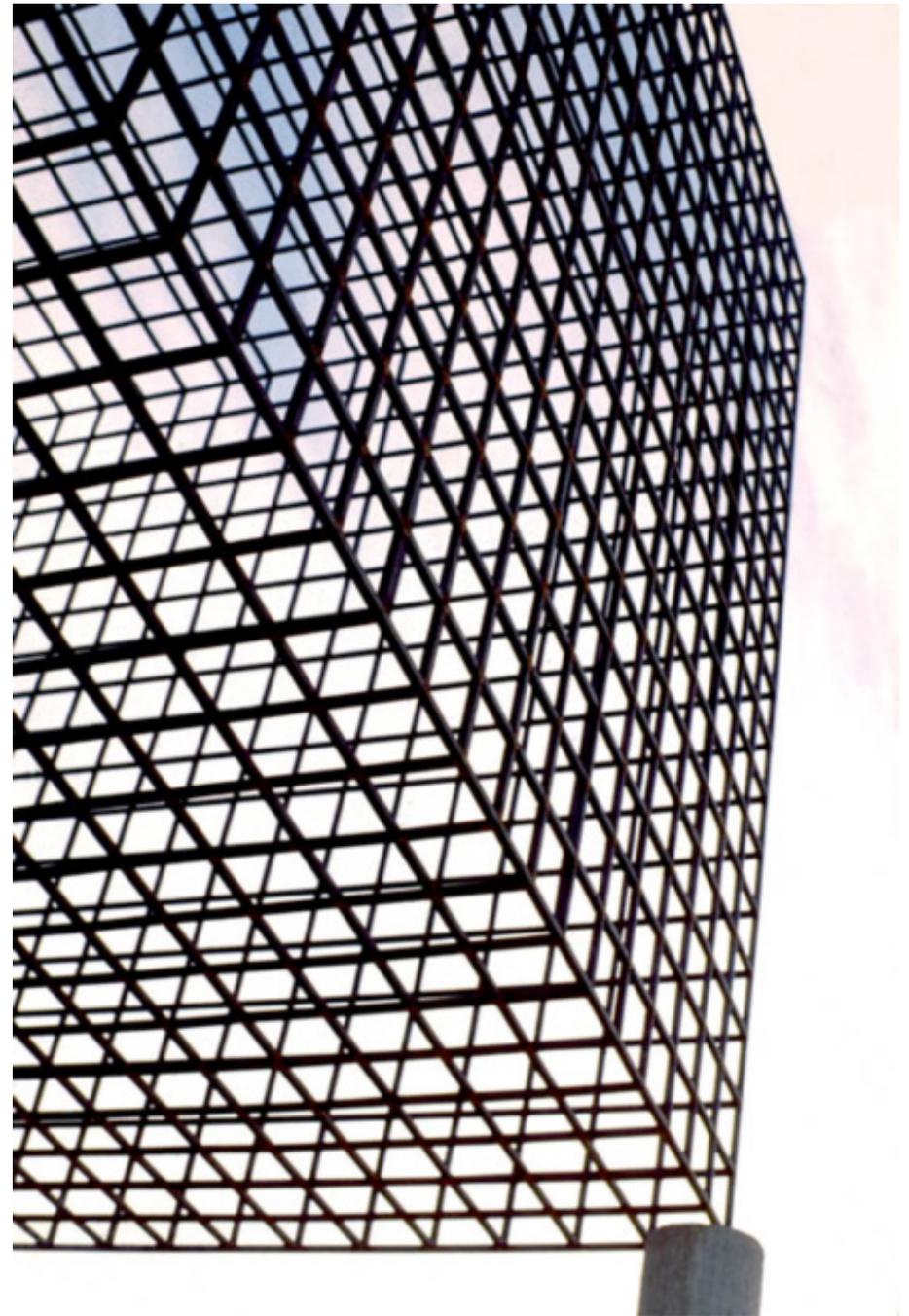
*Módulo de Destruição Atravessado*  
*Por Nômade*, from the series  
*History of The Future*, year  
technique  
dimensions

exhibition view  
*Cabeça*, 2014  
Centro Cultural Banco  
do Brasil (CCBB-RJ),  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.  
photo © Wilton Montenegro  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Galeria Nara Roesler

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*Módulo de Destruição na Posição*  
*Alfa*, from the series  
*History of The Future*, 1990-2013  
steel  
380 x 380 x 380 cm  
149.6 x 149.6 x 149.6 in

in exhibition at  
Museo Civico di Arte  
Contemporanea, Gibellina, Italy





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*Módulo de Destruição na  
Posição Alfa*, from the series *History  
of The Future*, 1990  
steel  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
380 x 380 x 380 cm  
149.6 x 149.6 x 149.6 in

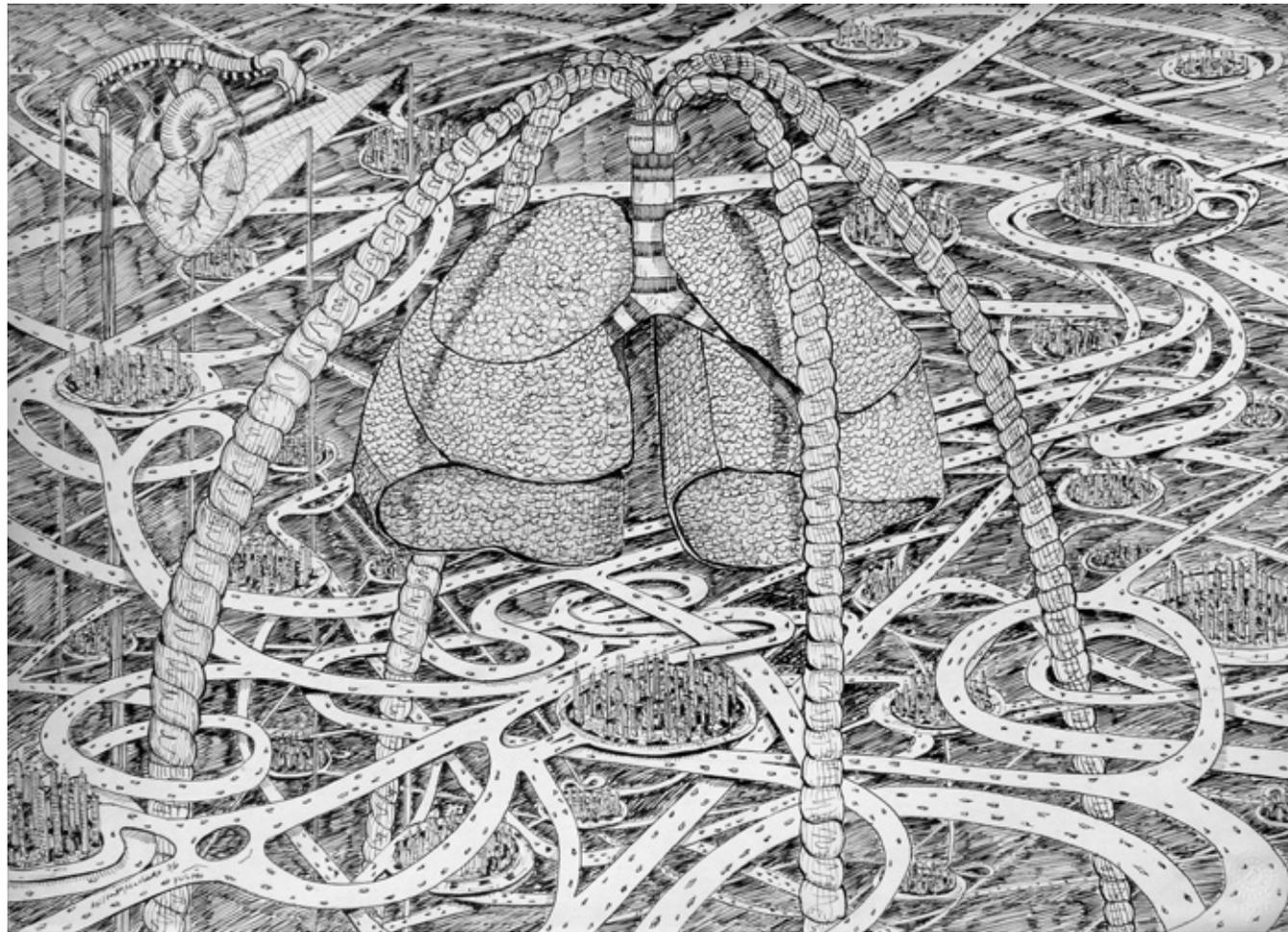
exhibition view  
29<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo, 2010  
São Paulo, Brazil

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→  
exhibition view  
28<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo, 2010  
São Paulo, Brazil



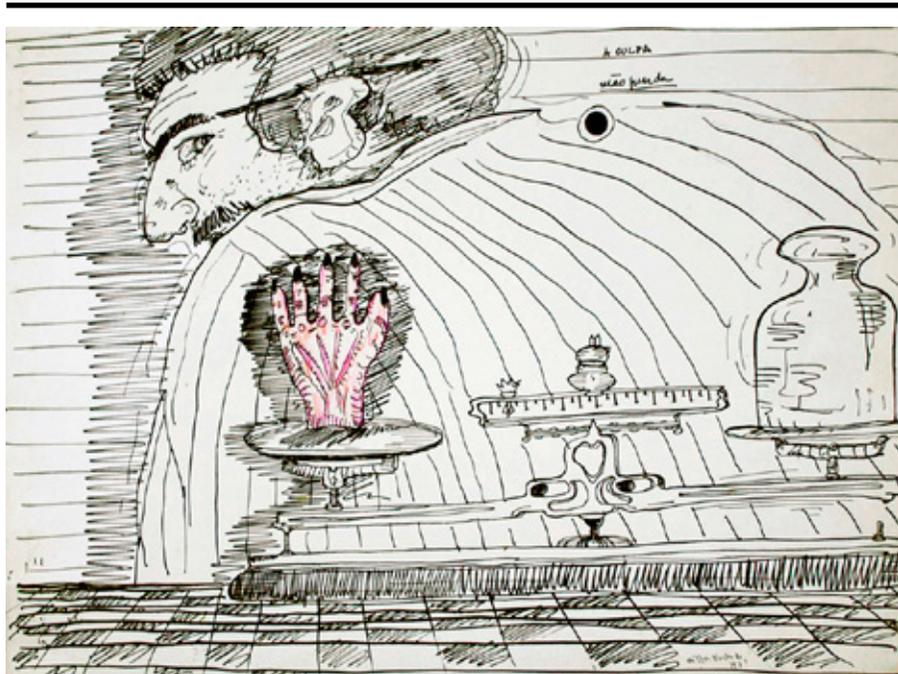




## drawings

Drawings are at the center of Milton Machado's artistic practice. The language in these works has been developed throughout the artist's trajectory, yet, with different intensities, techniques, sizes, allowing forgetfulness and resumption, abandonment, and unfolding. As the curator and critic, Luis Camillo Osório, summarized, 'what we see everywhere' in Milton's work 'is the short circuit between things, images, words, affections, and meanings, the absurd mobility of senses that conspires with our desire to attach what we already know to what appears before us. As the saying goes: appearances are deceiving, and art is always a game and an illusion.' His drawings present what is at the heart of the technique: the character of annotation and its structuring function of visual thinking. In Machado's work, drawing is commentary and project, fiction and dream, presenting with irony reveries and criticisms. *As Férias do Investigador* (1981), *Conspiração Arquitetura* (1981), *(1=n)* (1983), *Somas e Desarranjos* (1985), *Fugitivo Zero* (1987), *Mundo Novo* (1990), and *Homem Muito Abrangente* (2005) are some of the works and series produced throughout the artist's career. Machado bases his drawings on wandering, whether due to the instrument's roaming over the surface, entangling images of different origins, making the paper a kind of utopian living space.

*Pulmão*, from the series  
*Conspiração Arquitetura*, 1976  
india ink on paper  
edition unique  
36,8 x 51 cm | 14.4 x 20 in



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*A Culpa (Mão Pesada)*,  
from the series *Vira-Latas*, 1976  
indian ink and pencil on paper  
23.5 x 32.5 cm | 9.2 x 12.7 in



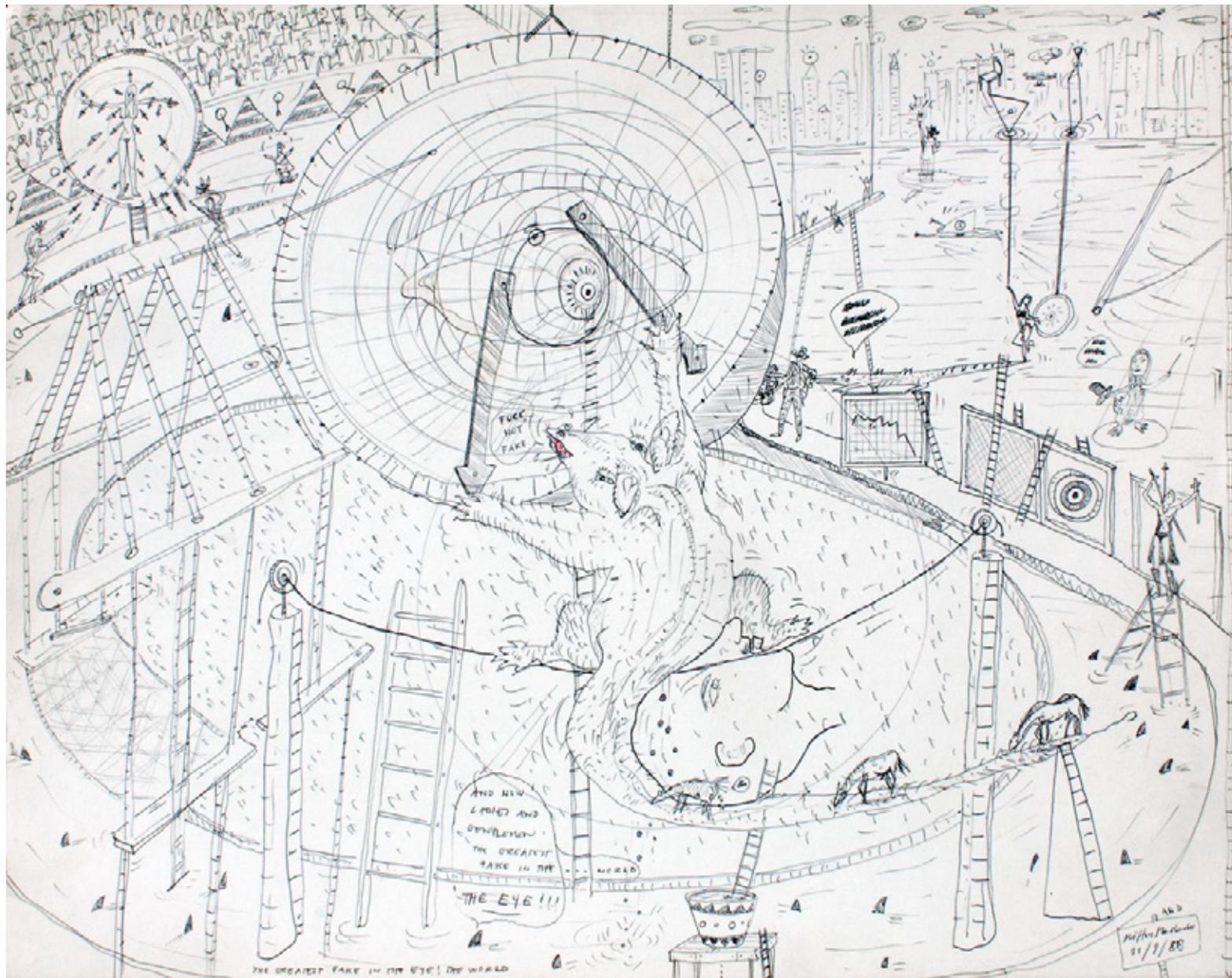
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*Não Tema Ratita, Logo Libertarei  
Você das Garras de Minha Família*,  
from the series *Vira-Latas*, 1976  
indian ink and collage on paper  
25,5 x 36,7 cm | 10 x 14.4 in

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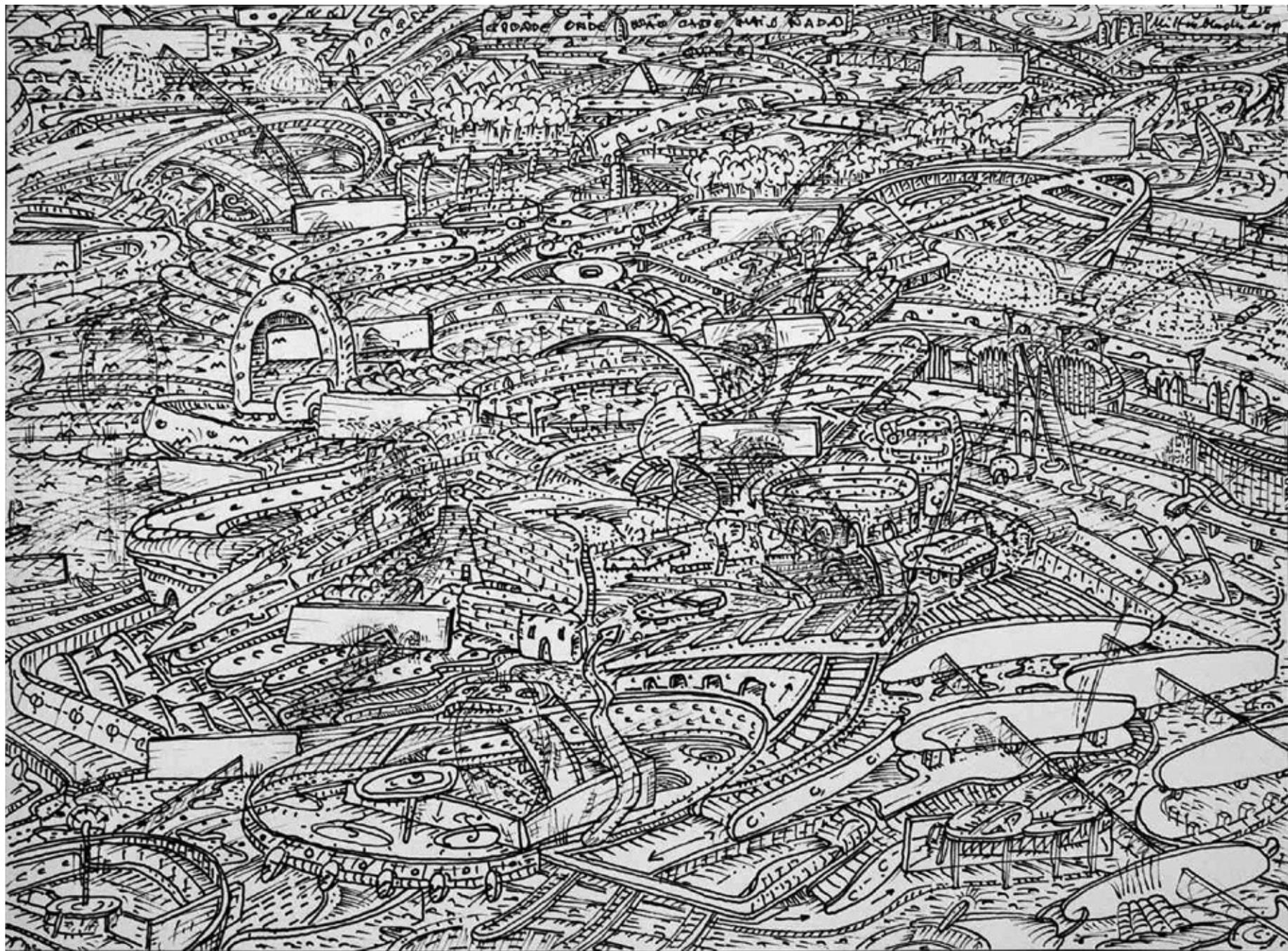
exhibition view  
*Mão Pesada [Heavy Hand]*, 2013  
Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil  
photo © Erika Mayumi  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Galeria Nara Roesler





*The Eye*, 1988  
ballpoint pen and  
color pencil on paper  
28 x 35,5 cm | 11.02 x 13.9 in

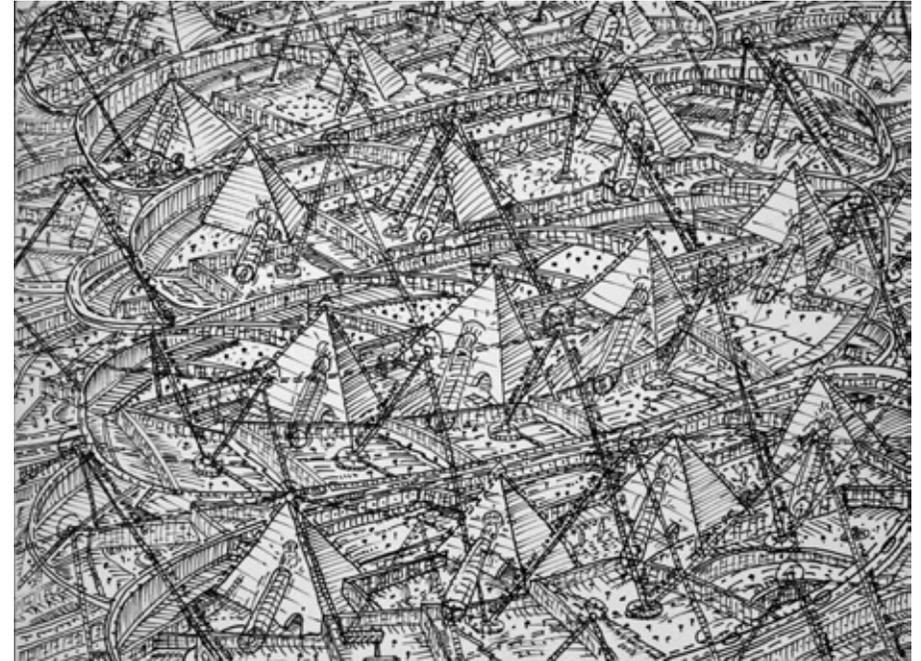
→  
*City Where Almost Anything  
Else Fits*, 2009  
indian ink on paper  
28 x 38.2 cm | 11.02 x 15.03 in





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*Elliptical Couple*, 2009  
indian ink on paper  
28 x 38 cm | 11.02 x 14.9 in

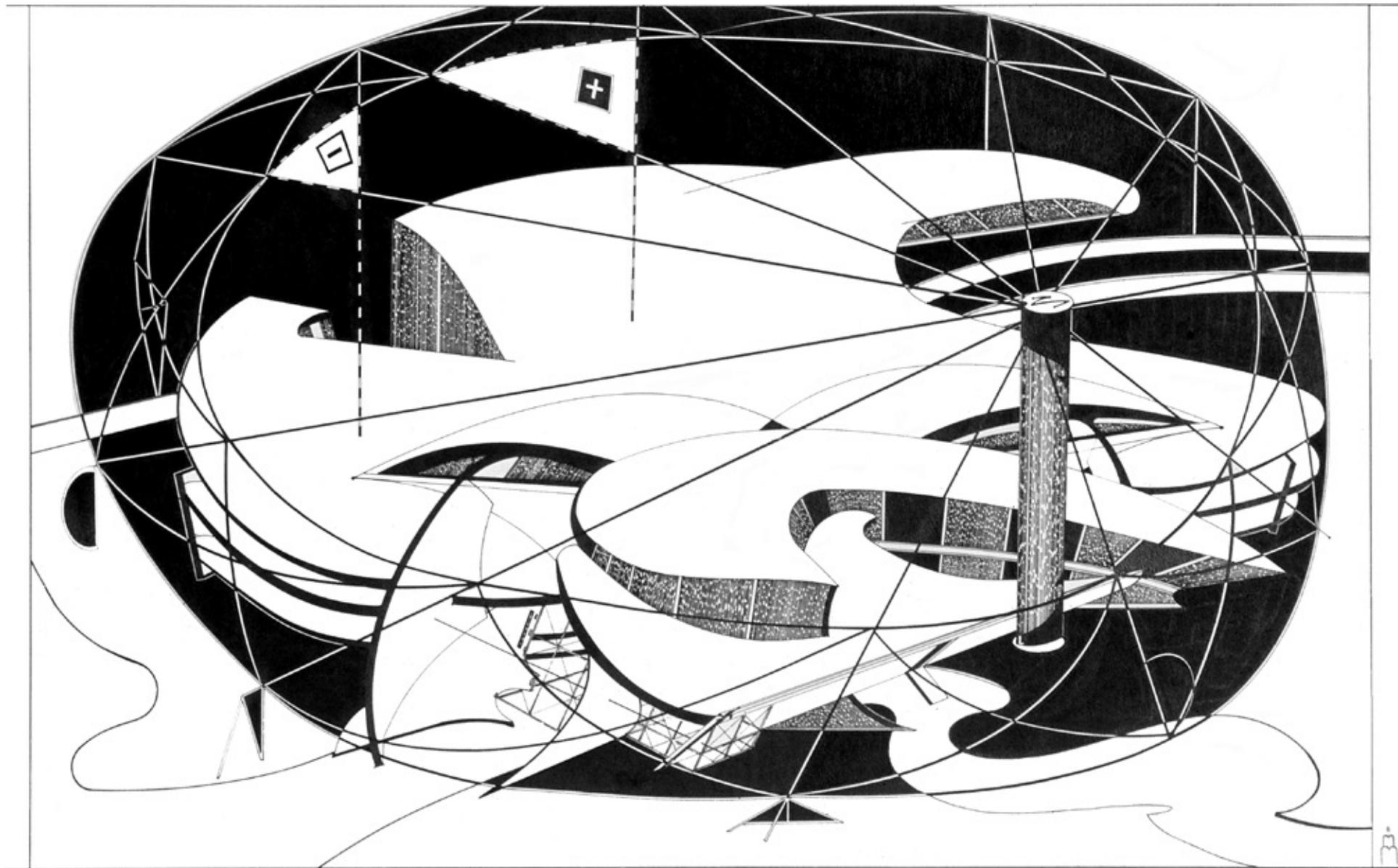


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*I Became a Contrabandist Cause*  
*I Didn't Succeed as a Pharaoh*, 2008  
indian ink on paper  
28 x 38,2 cm | 11.02 x 15.03 in

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→  
*(+) x (-)*, 1976  
indian ink and pencil on paper  
32,5 x 53 cm | 12.7 x 20.8 in







Small vertical text block, likely a credit or description, located between the two pages.





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*Desenho Manco com Alguma  
Dificuldade para Seguir Adiante  
(Observado por Peixes), 2018*  
indian ink on paper  
70 x 100 cm | 27.5 x 39.3 in



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exhibition view

*Mão Pesada [Heavy Hand]*, 2013

Galeria Nara Roesler, São Paulo, Brazil

photo © photo Erika Mayumi

Courtesy of the artist

and Galeria Nara Roesler

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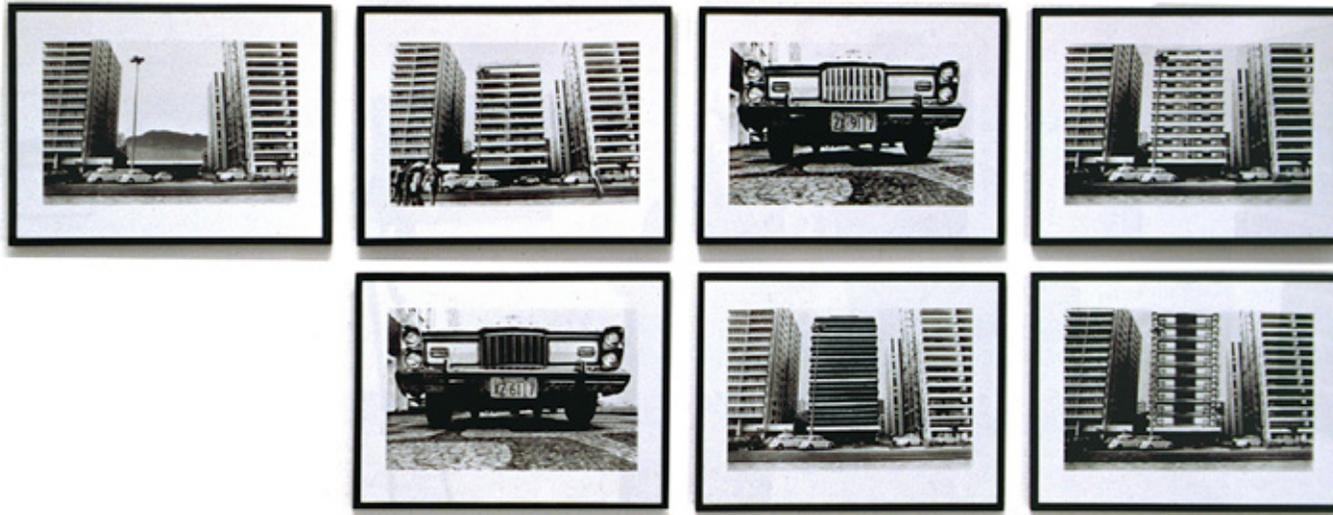
## photographs

'Armed exclusively with his camera and his willingness to carry with him some things he found, the artist travels through the cities; attention, the universe of work is far from being exhausted in London; examining, classifying, and perceiving the commonalities between the apparently most disparate things. Nothing escapes the artist's keen and obsessive eye, instructed by his mind skilled in inventing and discovering game rules,' wrote curator Agnaldo Farias about Milton Machado. Through Farias' words, we can understand Machado's photographic method, based on principles of displacement, seriality, cataloging, crystallization, and chance, referring to the conceptual photography tradition.



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*American Beauty*, 2016  
inkjet sobre papel de algodão  
edition of 3 + 1 AP  
21 x 27.5 cm | 8.2 x 10.8 in



The photos of *Edifício Galaxie* (sobre a mobilidade) (1975-2002) intertwines two luxury objects with the same name that are symbols of status and social mobility. The first, a building on Avenida Vieira Souto in Ipanema; the second, a Ford Galaxie. According to Machado, 'the two objects relate to each other—in principle—by the opposition between the mobile nature of the automobile and the immobility of the building. However, typical cases of (i)mobility apply neither to the Galaxie building nor to the Galaxie car.' In the building, we encounter a narrative of its construction, the time visible of its development. The vehicle, a means of movement, appears immobilized in the eternity of the image.

*Edifício Galaxie*  
(*Sobre a Mobilidade*), 1975 / 2002  
fotografia / videotape / texto  
edition of 5  
30 x 40 cm | 11.8 x 15.7 in cada  
(62 x 164 cm | 24.4 x 64.5 in instaladas)  
1'30'' em loop.

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The juxtaposition of images has significant relevance in the artist's poetics. *Fraulein* (2014), *One Step Backwards* (2014), *Greek Art* (2014), and *Thomas Schüte* (2014) are examples of that method. In *Gradações Extremas na Categoria dos Instantâneos* (1974-2001), we have different temporalities intertwined. For, they not only show, on the one hand, a couple, in 1974, who seems to be heading to the cinema, while, on the other, a teacher and his students, in 2001, observe Bartholomeus van der Helst's *Banquet of the Amsterdam Civic Guard in Celebration of the Peace of Münster*, a painting from 1648. Likewise, we can think of perception's instantaneity when we put ourselves in the scene and share the same time and space with the photographs when viewing them.



Nesse Wäsche Jungfrau / Roupa Molhada de Jovem Mulher, Joseph Beuys, 1965

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*Fraulein*, 2014  
inkjet on cotton paper  
edition of 3 + 1 AP  
42,5 x 32,5 cm | 16.7 x 6.57 in

Arte grega



Milton Machado - Düsseldorf 2005 - Rio 2014



Grega arte

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*Greek Art*, 2014  
photograph  
edition of 5 + 2 AP  
42.5 x 32.5 cm | 16.7 x 12.7 in

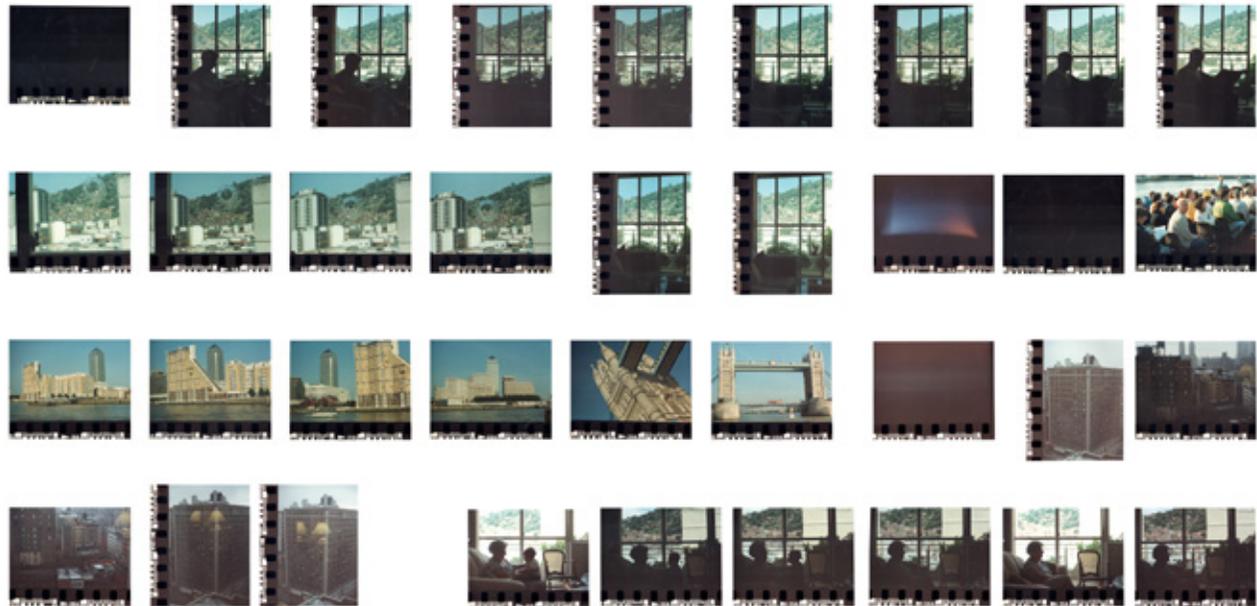
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→  
exhibition view  
*X*, 2016  
Galeria Nara Roesler,  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
photo © Pat Kilgore  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Galeria Nara Roesler



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*Balas Perdidas* (1996-1998) is a set of 36 photographs united, essentially, for sharing the same and only roll film used between March and December 1996 and establishing a relationship with the artist's affective memory. *Prize Nominations* (1996) seems to be a comment about an investigative process in which Machado documents the experiments with a solution of water and jelly made to attract wasps that often annoyed his summer barbecues. Yet, it also seems to offer a reflection on the art market, considering that Damien Hirst, a famous British artist who conserves and presents species in formaldehyde, won the Turner Prize in 1996. We can also find ironic comments like this in other works such as *Judd's Drawing Lesson* (2016), *American Beauty* (2016), *Beuys Sleeping* (2016), among others.



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*Balas Perdidas*, 1996  
inkjet on cotton paper  
edition of 3 + 1 AP  
114,8 x 241,7 cm | 45.1 x 95.1 in  
(20,3 x 25,4 cm | 7.9 x 10 in  
each photography)



*Prize Nominations*, 1996  
9 colour prints, wooden shelf,  
jam jars, electric light bulb  
edition of 5 + 2 APs  
60 x 80 cm | 23.6 x 31.4 in

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*Bits of Plastic Art* (2000) is a photographic series made of colored plastic pieces joined together. The artist found these small fragments during his walks in south London and other cities in different countries. Over three years, Milton Machado collected these objets trouvés, or found objects, creating a kind of inventory. These discarded, lost artifacts are piled up in compositions that explore chromatic relationships, sometimes through color juxtaposition or investigating the subtleties of monochrome or even, placing them side by side. With this, the artist recovers what no longer held value, reintroducing them into the universe of images.

This work has already been part of the artist's solo show at the Barbican Center, in London, as well as in collective exhibitions such as *Continental Shift*, at the Museum Ludwig in Aachen, Germany, at the Tomie Ohtake Institute, in São Paulo, Brazil, and at Paço Imperial, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



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*Bits of Plastic Art /  
Top-Sider Information*, 2000  
cibachrome  
edition of 5  
32,5 x 50,8 cm | 12.7 x 20 in

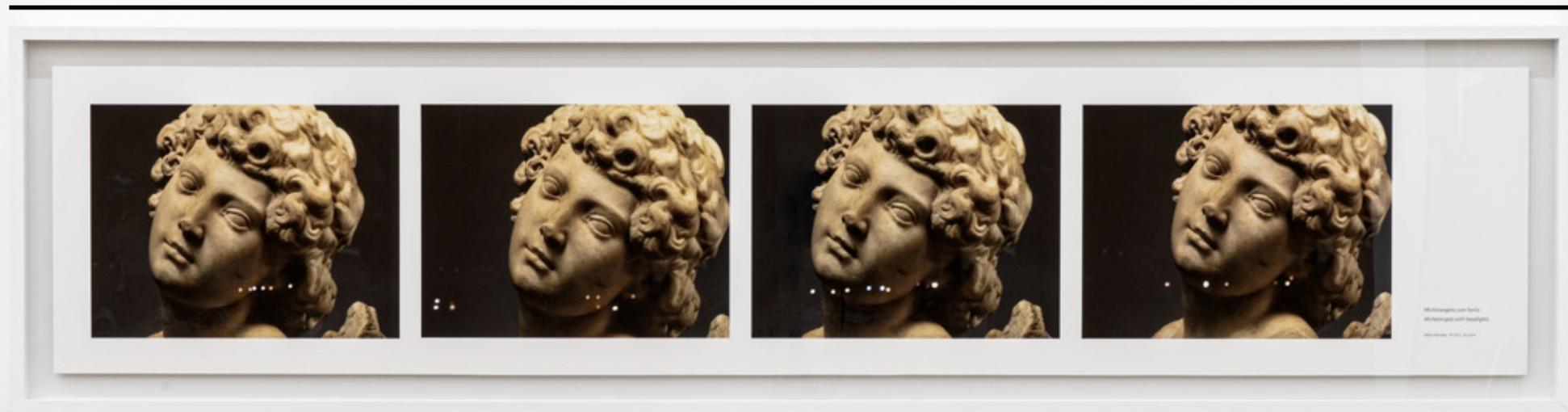
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→  
*Bits of Plastic Art / Top-Sider  
Information*, 2000  
cibachrome and box  
with plastic fragments  
edition of 3 + 2 AP  
94 photos of  
32,5 x 50,8 cm | 12.7 x 20 in each





Gradações Extremas na Categoria  
dos Instantâneos, 1974/2001  
2 photographs (Lambda print)  
edition of 5  
147 x 100 cm e 100 x 153,5 cm



*Michelangelo com Faróis*, 2014  
inkjet on cotton paper  
edition of 3 + 1 AP  
42 x 177 cm | 16.5 x 69.6 in

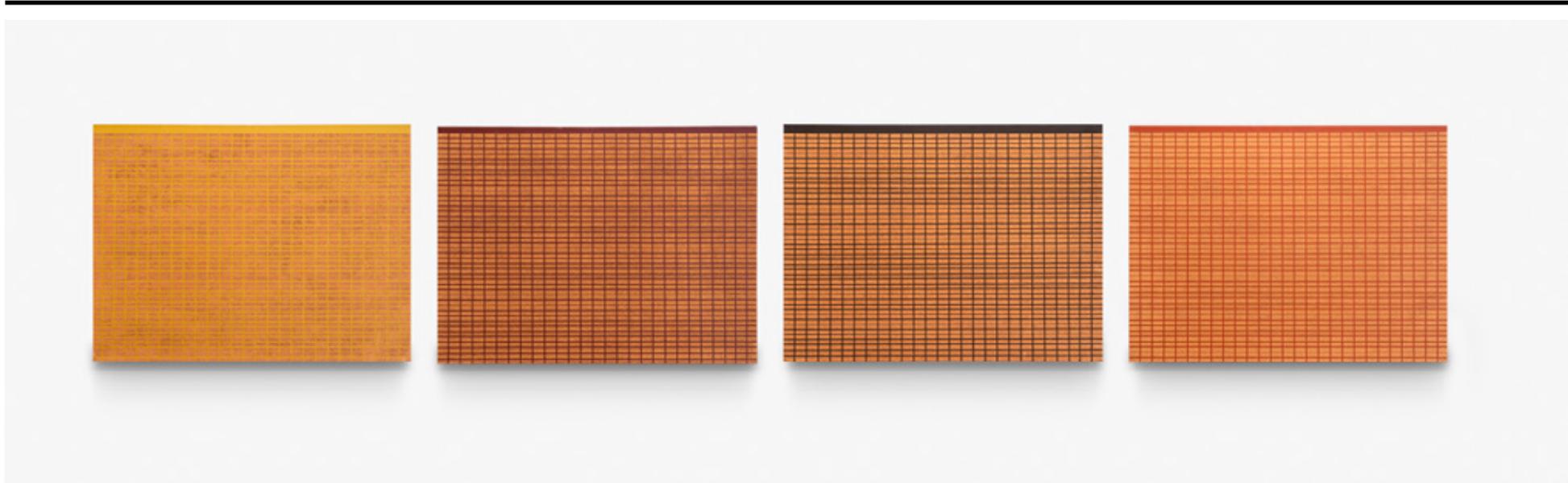
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**mondo novo [new world] 1990**

Milton Machado describes *Mundo Novo* in the following terms: 'in the center of the gallery you may think you see a brick, and in this case, you will run the risk of a stumble. The risk is, however, amenable, for it is a return artifact like the others. Therefore, return and start again, more attentively, to find out that this reddish, earthy, rectangular prism, which only seems a brick, is more than that: it is *Mundo sobre Terra*, index-sculpture, the conceptual paradigm of the exhibition.' In this series, the artist transformed the brick into powder to, then, reconstruct the original shape, creating a kind of painting-sculpture due to its materiality.

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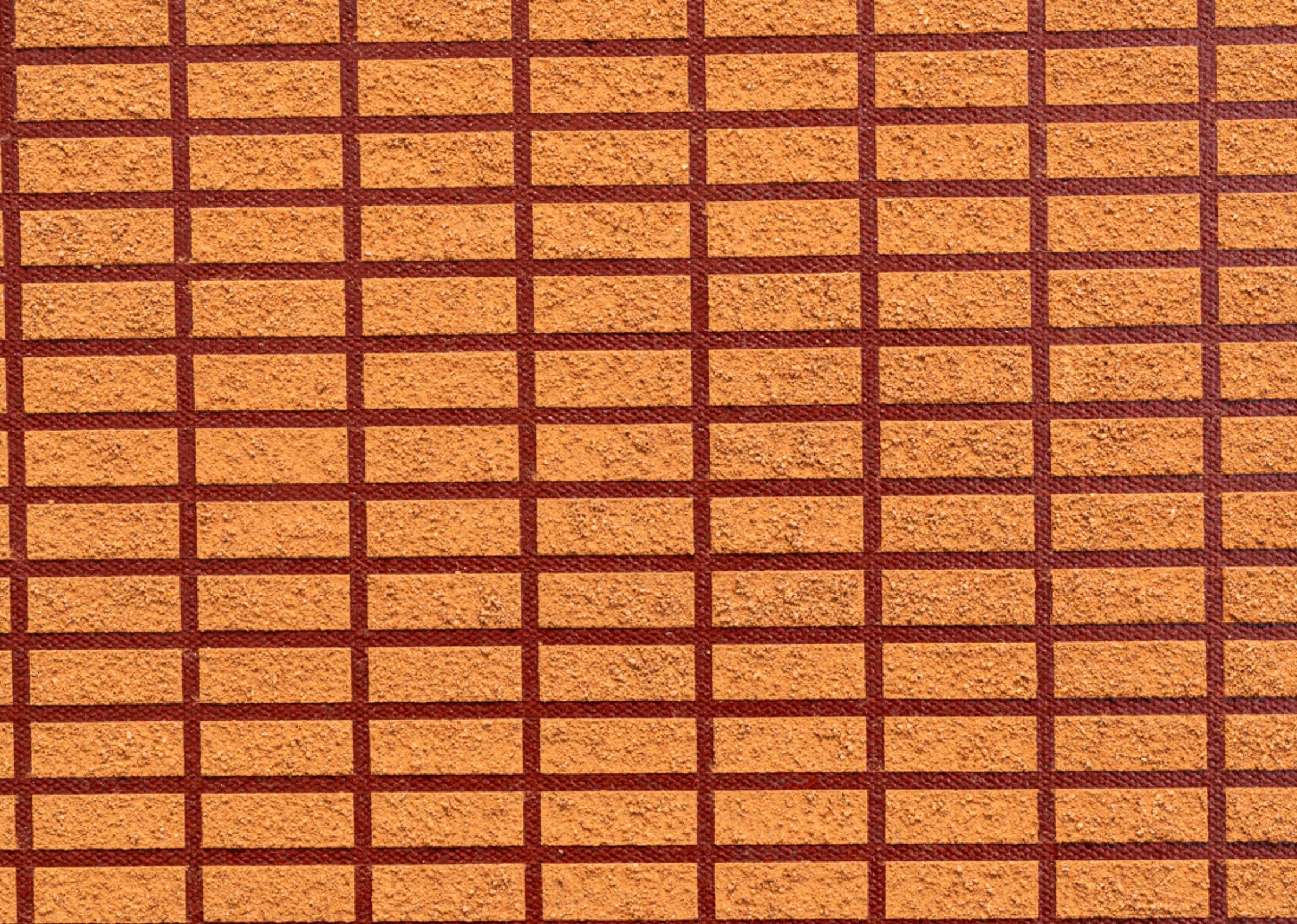
*Terras*, 1989 (detail)  
acrílica e pó de tijolo sobre lona  
56 x 319 cm | 22.04 x 125.5 in

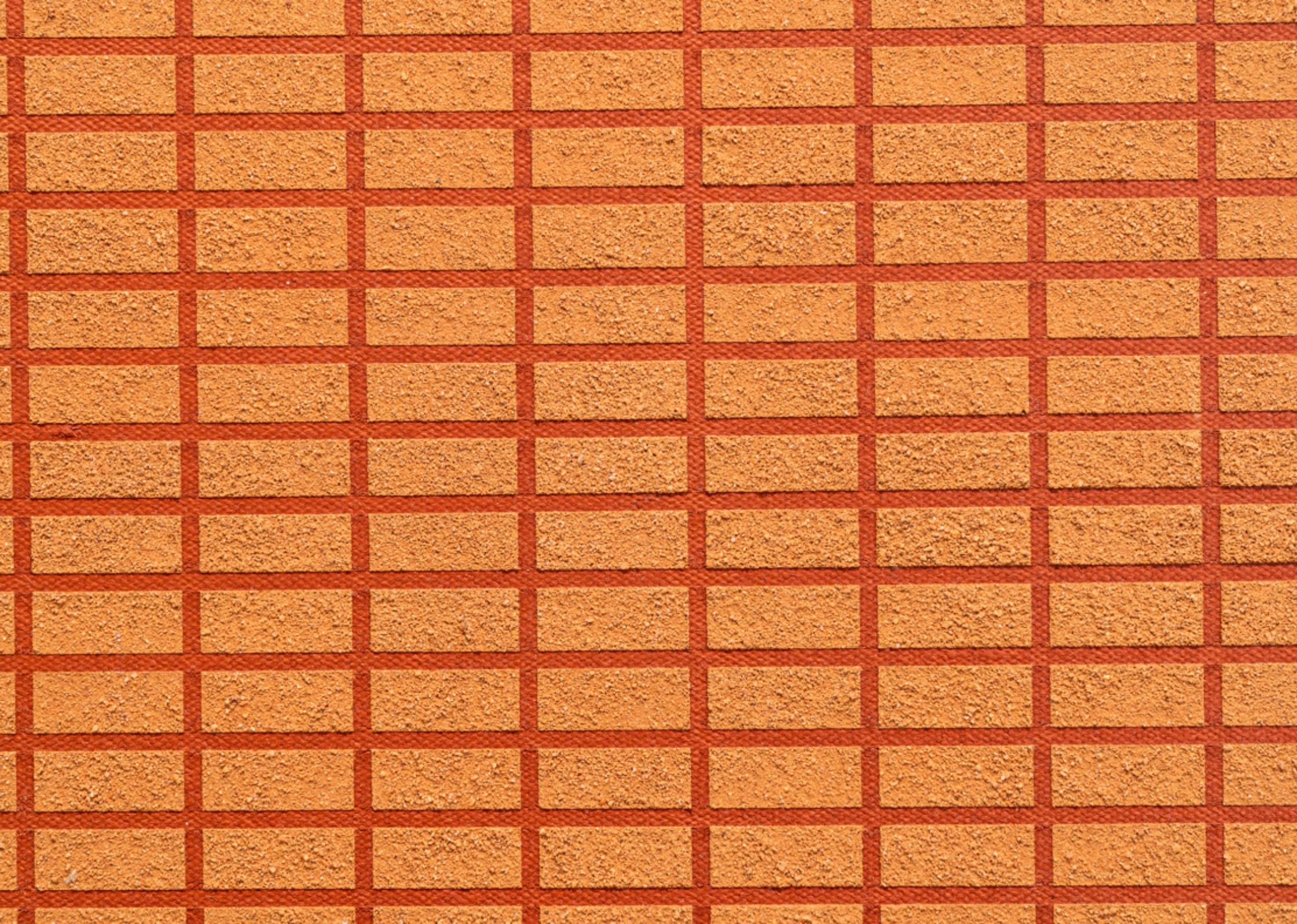


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*Terras*, 1989  
acrylic and brick dust on canvas  
56 x 319 cm | 22.04 x 125.5 in







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## sculptures

Milton Machado explores the transformation of everyday objects in his sculptures, which sometimes have an installation nature. *Semáforo* (1986-2000), exhibited at the 19<sup>th</sup> Bienal de São Paulo, in 1987, explores light, transparency, and opacity through piling up slices of glass coupled with a flashlight. *O melhor amigo do arquiteto sem medidas* (1980-2013) is a playful example in which Machado creates a schematic dog from the articulation of wooden rulers. The deceptive simplicity of the object, in reality, requires that anyone who tries to copy it has to share a certain intimacy with the instrument. To ensure authorship, the artist put, in the same playful spirit, a certificate of authenticity on the animal's neck as a collar.



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*Semáforo*, Traffic Light, 1986  
glass, enamel, light sources  
25 x 25 x 190 cm | 9.8 x 9.8 x 74.8 in

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→  
*O Melhor Amigo do Arquiteto sem Medidas*, 1980 / 2013  
wooden measuring tape  
edition of 5 + 1 AP  
46 x 29 cm | 18.1 x 11.4 in





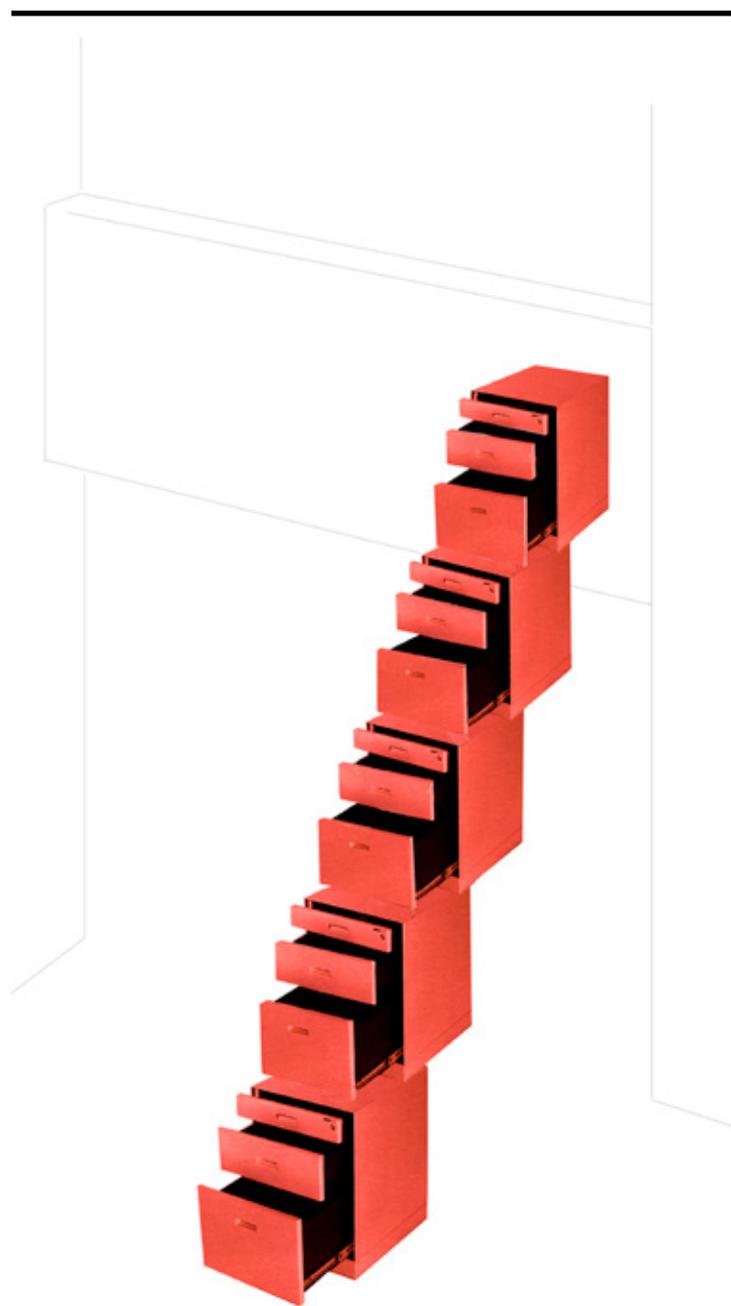
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*Pilha* and *Produção* take the investigations of pre-existing objects even further, taking on an installation character and creating specific dialogues with the art universe. In both works, Milton Machado uses artworks' storage structures and materials, making them protagonists. *Pilha*, as the name reveals, is a pile of red map cabinets. With its drawers open, the work creates a staircase that seems to lead nowhere, while its balance brings up the idea of precariousness and instability. In *Produção*, the archive takes over the gallery's central space, which evinces relations between the visible and the invisible, the arrangement and the stacking, as well as the countless temporalities involved in the production of several works deposited there.

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*Pilha*, 2009  
stacked steel drawers  
edition unique  
340 x 40 x 228 cm  
133.8 x 15.7 x 89.7 in





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*Pilha*, 2009  
engraving on cotton paper  
edition of 50 + 1 AP  
94 x 52 cm | 37 x 20.5 in

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*Produção*, 2009  
Industrial furniture, gallery storage  
variable dimensions

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→  
*Produção*, 2009  
Industrial furniture, gallery storage  
variable dimensions









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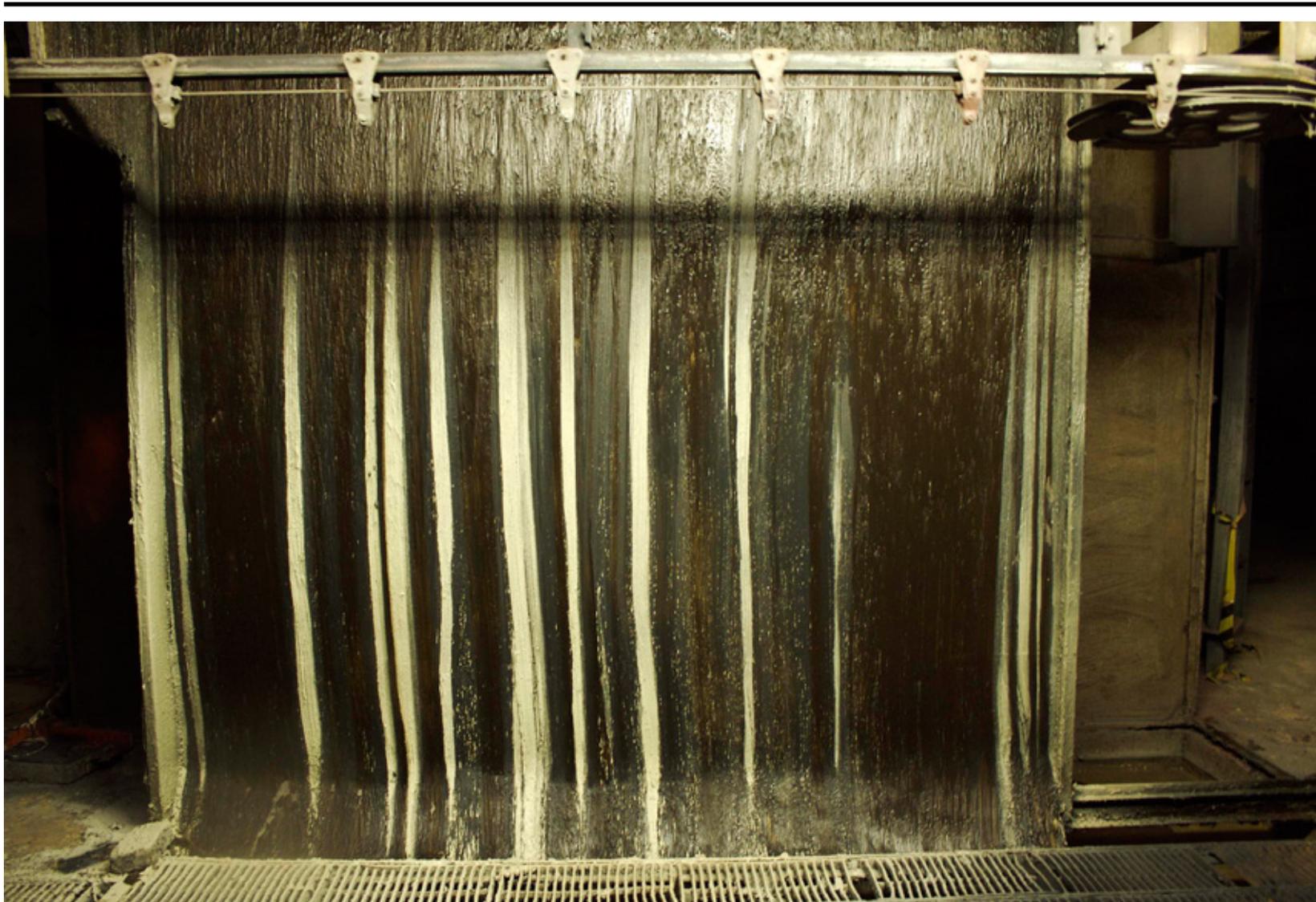
*Pintura 1, 2009*  
Ink jet print on cotton paper  
edition of 5 + 1 AP  
100 x 150 cm | 39.3 x 59 in

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## videos

In his solo exhibition *Produção*, in 2009, at Nara Roesler, in São Paulo, Milton Machado presented two videos from his investigations in steel factories. *Pintura* and *Vermelho* arise from the ‘pictorial appeal that occurs from the artist’s beautiful and fortuitous encounter with the industrial process of painting,’ according to Paulo Venâncio Filho. The critic and curator adds that ‘Milton went to the factory in the search of one of the most memorable ready-made objects in his work: the Security steel map cabinet. And there he found the trouvée situation of this exhibition: the map cabinet’s painting chamber. He found nothing more, nothing less, so to speak, than the “production of painting.” There the raw steel sheet receives its first “pictorial” treatment before the finishing, and it is there that Milton envisions and reveals the pictorial de-alienation of industrial materials... One after another, images evoking Mark Rothko, Caspar Friedrich, Anselm Kiefer, Yves Klein, Morris Louis, Iberê Camargo emerge; one after the other, they appear, dissolve, and reappear.’

[Click here to watch the video of the exhibition \*Produção\*, at Nara Roesler, in São Paulo.](#)



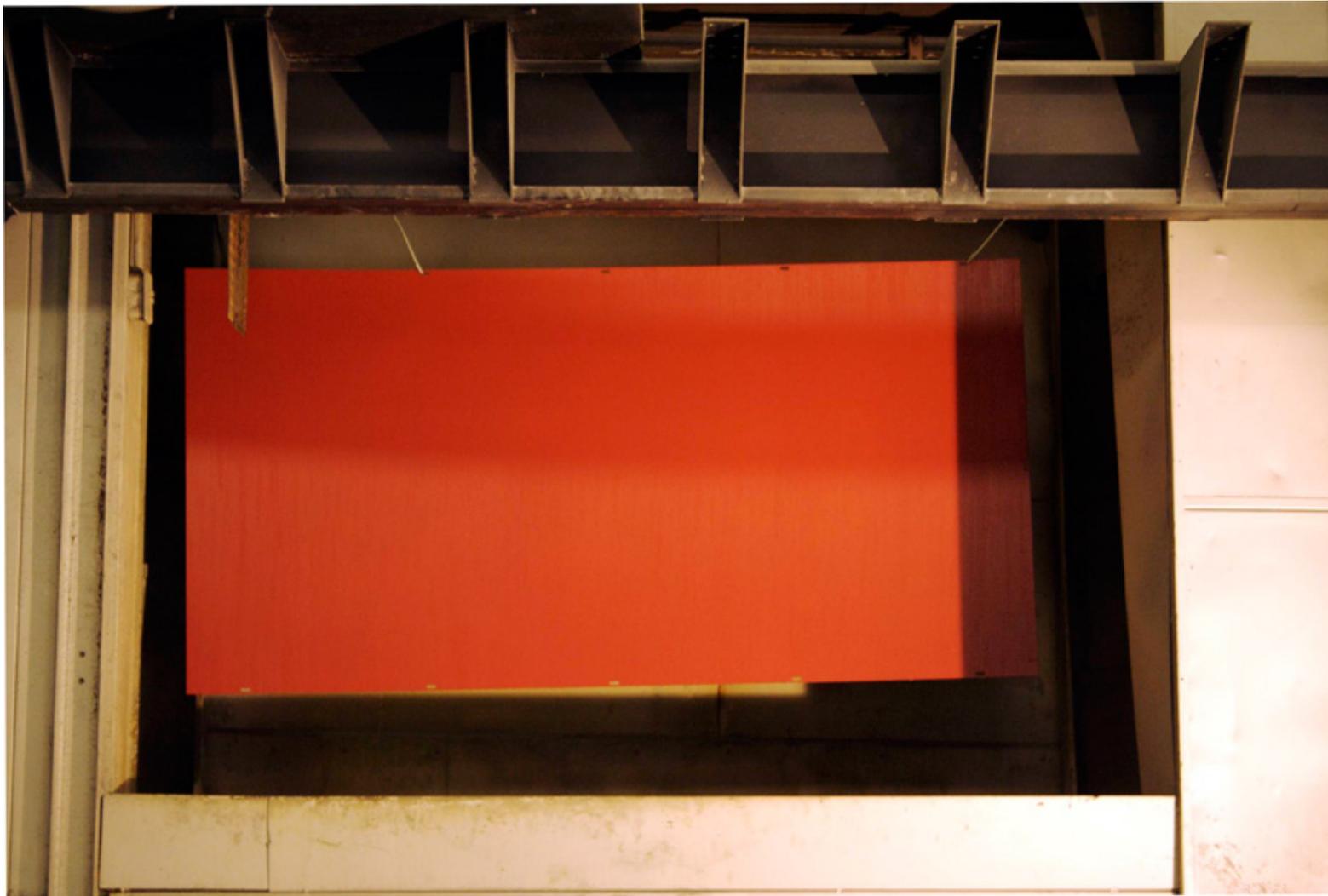
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*Pintura 2*, 2009  
Impressão jato de tinta  
sobre papel de algodão  
edition of 5 + 1 AP  
100 x 150 cm | 39.3 x 59 in



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Painting, 2009  
DV  
2'30"



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*Vermelho*, 2009  
DV  
edition of 6 + 1 AP  
6'30''



*Vermelho*, 2009  
DV  
edition of 6 + 1 AP  
6'30"

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nara roesler

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