

ARTISSIMA XYZ – BACK TO THE FUTURE

Ivens Machado

05.11 - 07.12.2020

Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel is pleased to participate in **Artissima XYZ - Back to the Future** with a selection of works by late Brazilian artist **Ivens Machado**. The presentation focuses on early pieces, spanning from 1973 to 1992, all revolving around the representation of the body.

In the 1970s, at the height of the military dictatorship that ruled Brazil from 1964 to 1985, Ivens Machado was among the pioneers of video art. His works articulate social and sexual tensions as they approach subjects like violence and repression.

In *Escravidor/Escravidado [Slavemaster/Slave]* (1974) the relation of power between the two subjects is heightened by the infliction of pain in small gestures such as pinches, bites and slaps. The artist walks the narrow line between pain and pleasure, physicality and fantasy. Driven by the same interest in the body and relations of power, *Versus* (1974) touches on topics of race and homosexuality. In the video the artist himself is portrayed naked next to a black man; the camera goes back and forth between the two at the increasingly fast pace of their breaths until they can finally face and touch each other.

These videos bare a strong connection with his performance works. In *Performance com Bandagem Cirurgica [Performance with Surgical Bandages]* —executed in 1973 and documented in a series of black and white photographs— the artist wraps himself in surgical bandages, starting from his legs and arms all the way up to his chest and face. Machado gradually gives way to complete constraint, by severing and segmenting his body into fragments, and finally muting himself. In *Painel de Azulejos [Tile panel]* (1973) the surgical bandages take the form of two worms moving towards a drain placed on white tiles. The organic shapes of the worms challenge the aseptic grid typical of hospital environments.

Understanding the political character of space is a fundamental prerequisite to read Ivens Machado's sculptures and drawings. Throughout his career the artist produced a body of works on ruled paper where he continuously intervenes on the lines. Machado's interest is in revealing the political character of the normative distribution of space. Ruling lines, graph paper, notebooks are surfaces linked to the learning process, therefore the perfect physical representation of an imposed education and method. The lines disrupted by Machado's hand break the logic that regulates them; his intervention corrects the fundamental layout of a space designed for writing.