

ANTONIO TARSIS SYMBOLIC GENOCIDE

29 May — 3 July 2021

Private View: Saturday 29 May, noon–6pm

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Antonio Tarsis: On Penetrating the Conscious

The human imagination can formulate questions, develop facts, acts, objects and moments that record in our trajectories contours of what is right, wrong, good and evil. And with that same command, undo everything.

Symbolic Genocide is a series of embroideries proposing a narrative of erasure through the disappearance of images that form institutional symbols of the military police in Brazil – institutions that denounce a society structured by the conception of ‘epistemicides’, the disappearance of a mass of bodies that form an episteme. A way of thinking that forms a nation; an ethical, aesthetic, symbolic perimeter that leaves a void to be filled.

These works are embroideries; the act of embroidery consists of a perforating movement onto a soft surface with an object, usually metal. The objective of the act of perforation – introducing a material in a repetitive and exhaustive manner, with figurative or non-figurative results – is to adorn a surface. Through a deconstructed heraldry, these insignias embroidered in black, white and grey denote the warlike aspect of these military coats of arms and reflect the contradiction between the meaning of public safety and their identification with symbols of extermination, proposing the disappearance of these images as analogous to the genocide of a Black and peripheral population of which the artist is part.

Translated from original text by Keyna Eleison, Curator & Artistic Director, Museu de Arte Moderna (MAM) do Rio de Janeiro, 2018

Antonio Tarsis
MP-RJ (OP) (Symbolic Genocide Series), 2021
Follmann Borados Factory embroidered denim
160 × 100 cm, each of six panels