

"Exercícios de me ver" or: Exercises of seeing oneself — Hudinilson Jr.'s (1957–2013) Xerox assemblages, collages, artist books, performances, and sculptures open up an intimate dialogue that leaves the singular body behind. Instead, he stages bodies as a multiple: multilayered sites where the self observes itself and others, where intimacy becomes spectacle, where public and private intermingle to the point of collapse.

In recent years, as debates over visibility, self-representation, and the politics of the gaze have gained urgency, Hudinilson Jr.'s oeuvre feels contemporary — not only within its capturing, pure aesthetic. His art offers no simple narratives of liberation. Instead, it insists on the ambiguities of desire and the vulnerabilities of exposure — even more so in an era of omnipresent visibility. To see — and to be seen — remains, in his work, an act of both risk and possibility.

With this first solo exhibition, KOW is pleased to offer multifaceted insights into Hudinilson Jr.'s work — an oeuvre that speaks with undiminished force to our present: intimate, fragile, defiant bodies at the intersection of the private and the public.

Active in São Paulo's underground art scene since the late 1970s, Hudinilson Jr. created his work in the shadow of a repressive political climate. During Brazil's military dictatorship (1964–1985), freedom of expression was curtailed, surveillance was omnipresent, and deviations from normative identities — whether political, sexual, or social — were often criminalized or driven underground. In this context, Hudinilson Jr., together with Mario Ramiro and Rafael França, co-founded the collective 3Nós3, whose ephemeral urban interventions in late-1970s São Paulo subtly unsettled the routines of public life, expanding his exploration of visibility, autonomy, and resistance beyond the private sphere. Their urban interventions — taping plastic sheets across public monuments, covering city structures with symbolic markers — fleetingly disrupted the dominant visual order of São Paulo's streets, bringing private aesthetic strategies into public space, tracing the same questions of visibility, autonomy, and resistance across the city's visual order.

In parallel, Hudinilson Jr. developed a unique artistic language of visibility that is at once intimate and defiant. Within his collages, artist books and xerox assemblages he repeats, fragments and reproduces his own body next to others and creates a space where the private becomes public, where the intimate act of looking at oneself turns into a sexually charged gesture of resistance. Fragments, distortions, and repetitions of his own skin create a shifting, unstable self-image, avoiding any fixed identity. His performances and textile sculptures emerge as quiet rituals of exposure and self-observation, where visibility is rehearsed as an act of both assertion and vulnerability.

Across various media, Hudinilson Jr. explored bodies in ongoing negotiation — between material and image, desire and absence, autonomy and social constraint. His tactile and restless aesthetic collapses the boundaries between surface and depth, private reverie and public gesture, singular identity and collective experience. His exercises can be read as sketches of a self that refuses to be fixed by external gazes, dogmas, or laws. In his Xerox collages and assemblages, often produced through acts of bodily proximity to the copy machine, the body is not merely depicted but physically inscribed into the work.

At the core of his practice lies a radical yet poetic proposition: that visibility itself is a contested terrain — a precondition to be seen, loved, desired. In an era when marginalized bodies were rendered invisible or exposed to punitive scrutiny, Hudinilson Jr. deployed the copy machine — a device of mechanical reproduction — to multiply and fragment his own body. These acts of self-replication were neither simple affirmations nor straightforward confessions. They were exercises: provisional, tentative, sometimes erotic, sometimes anxious rehearsals of presence.

Rather than retreating into invisibility, Hudinilson Jr. confronted forces of control and erasure head-on. His Billboard works, which transpose bodily intimacy into the urban sphere, point to structures of multiplication, circulation, and censorship — where desire and control compete within public space. They invite the public into a choreography of gazes. Looking at the artist, who looks at himself, who invites the world to look — but also to feel the fractures that every act of looking entails. Bodies are rendered unstable, desirous, estranged. And it is precisely in this factual ambiguity where Hudinilson Jr. finds a form of agency that might bring us closer to each other.