



HALO HISTORY

2025 annual #3

DOMINO

FLORIAN RAISS

THEOPHILUS BROWN

JOHN BURTON HARTER

CHICO TABIBUIA

AND MUCH MORE!

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Editorial

With the commodification of Art, Culture, and Education, producing a completely free magazine is an act of rebellion.

Survival has become a subversive act. So, here we are! With an edition that, in addition to featuring artists who used the representation of the male body as a means of confrontation – both social and oneself – makes a historical return to a place where sex was not taboo.

In an article about architecture, we identify the strength of patriarchy that today reveals itself in imperialist dictators who confront their own neoliberal colleagues in a clash of forces that is decimating cultures, subjugating differences, invading territories, and spreading a different kind of terrorism than we were unfortunately already accustomed to.

The past wasn't better. The present is still better, but it seems we're doing everything to regress. "Who has the bigger dick" has become a matter of tax – and nuclear – competition!

For at least two years, the editorial of Falo History has cited Edmund Burke's famous phrase about looking to the past as a form of learning. Clearly, this phrase has become merely rhetoric.

Browse through it. Read it. Do whatever you can with this edition so that you can be present in this world and become a real agent of transformation.

Filipe Chagas, editor



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Domino

1929-1990

by Filipe Chagas



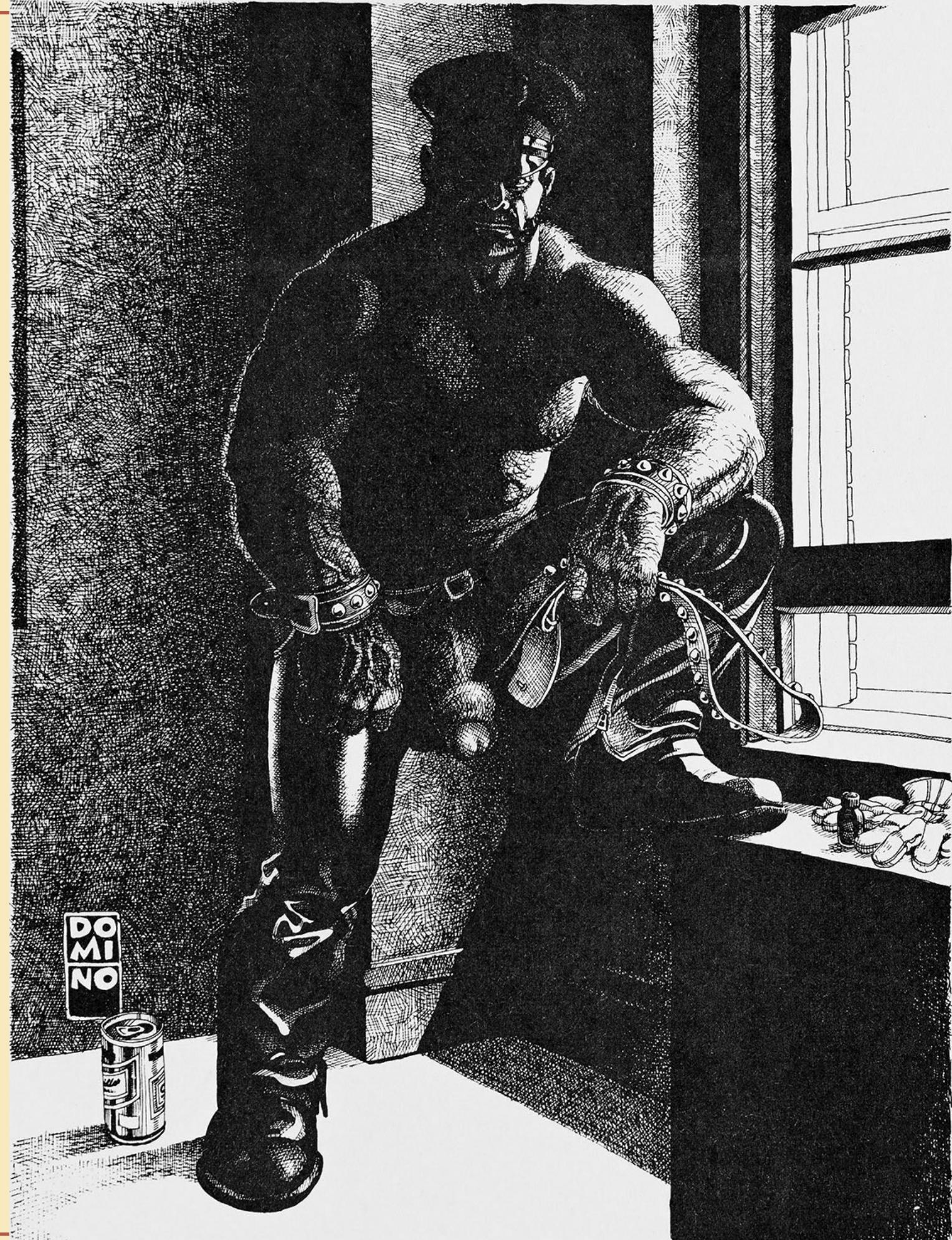
American artist **Donald Merrick** (1929-1990) needed to create the pseudonym Domino to present his illustrations of gay erotic art. Merrick was born in Crosby, Minnesota, a town known for iron mining. The leather jackets molded to the muscles of the iron miners caught young Donald's attention long before he was old enough to make any sexual connection.

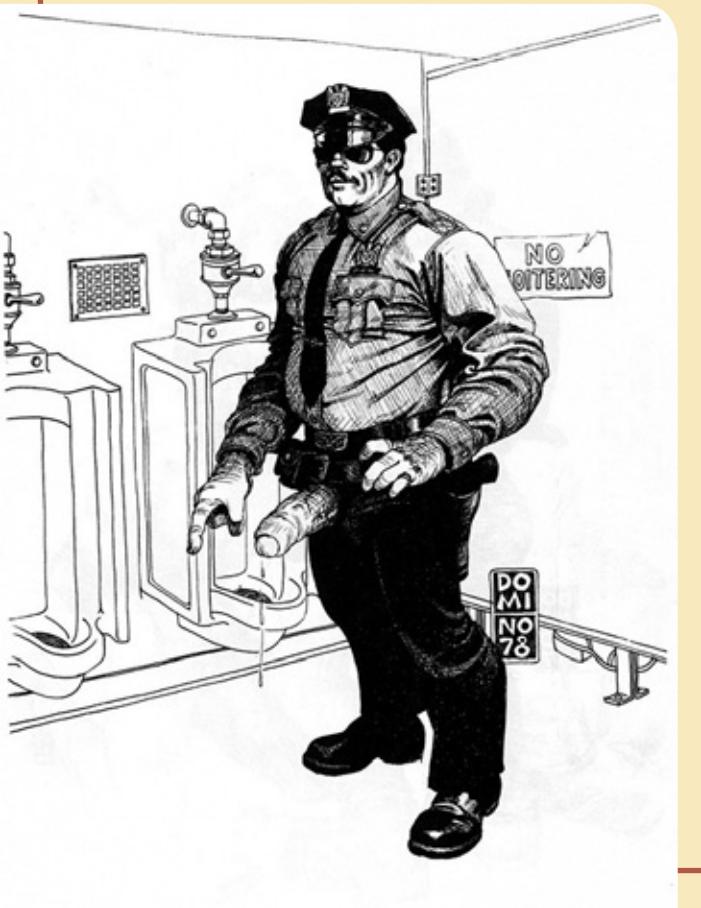
The miners' battered engineer's boots covered with red mud made my heart pound long before my dick did. I began drawings as a teen just to enhance my private erotic jerkoff fantasies.

After graduating from high school, he spent several years working across the country as a lumberjack, taxi driver, dishwasher, forest ranger, and even served in the U.S. Navy – where he acquired an inexhaustible source of inspiration from uniforms, both inside and out. He earned a bachelor's degree in art from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, followed by a master's degree from the University of New Mexico in 1955.

Professionally, Merrick described himself as "a humanist – not perfect in details, but more in terms of putting across the feeling of personality." He drew inspiration from people doing his job, such as police officers, truck drivers, gas station attendants, and restaurant workers.

I strongly believe in the importance of a person's work to their life. This was probably inspired by my uncle, an electrician for a power company, whose heavy-duty equipment became strongly associated in my mind with the hard work he did and his bravery in the face of danger. Putting this into words became one of my main goals in life.

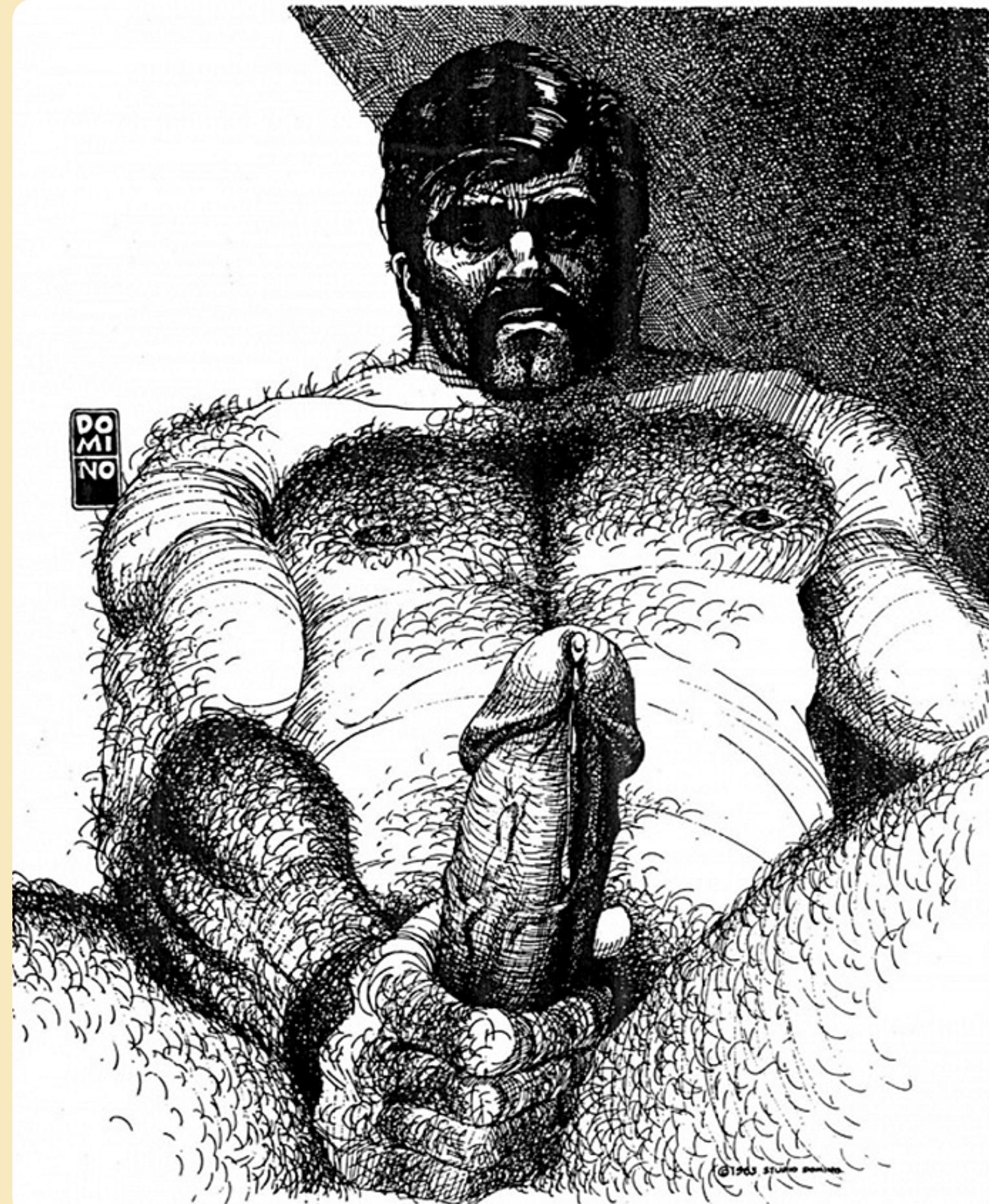




This uncle was also responsible for the young man's sexual awakening. Once, he accompanied him to work and had difficulty hiding his excitement at seeing his uncle, "a dark-skinned, rough, mixed-race man, built like a brick," in action. Merrick later attested: "He was quite a teacher."

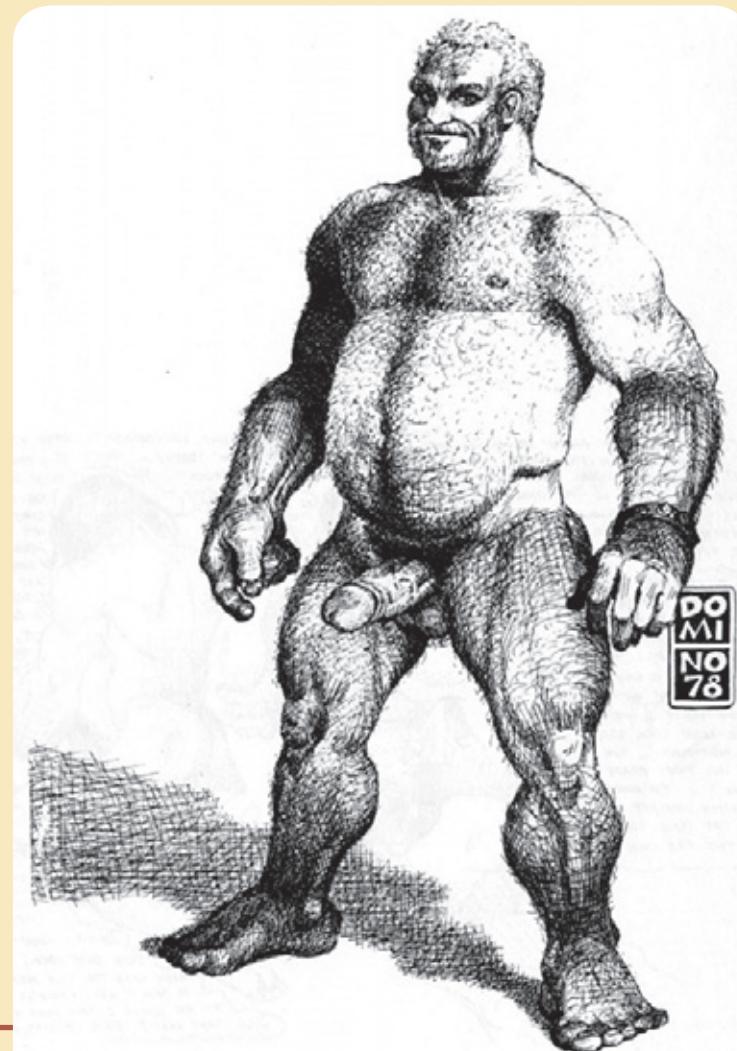
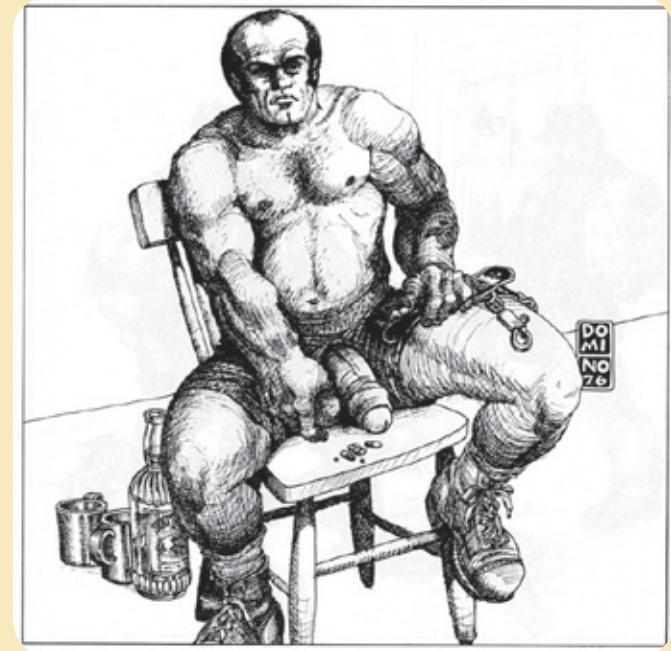
Merrick had a successful career and taught at several universities. In 1960, he moved to New York and became art director of Arts Magazine. In 1963, he was appointed head of the Fine Arts Department at Farleigh Dickerson University in New Jersey. However, his true passion – erotic art – had been kept hidden and even destroyed since adolescence. During the last years of his marriage, Merrick began collecting erotic photographs of men and, after divorcing his wife, adopted the name Domino ("I chose that name because it sounds like Don Merrick if you roll your tongue") to share his art. In a 1978 interview, Merrick stated:

Drawing the American male was really far more vital, personal, and important to me than painting the American scene, as I was doing professionally. Putting all of my creative impetus into the pornography launched me into the artistic product that I am now ready to exhibit. I kept them as my little secret for years while I traveled a lot, working at a lot of jobs, actually pursuing a career as a painter. Throwing a little form and technique into these hot scenes has simply added another turn-on or two to me. Intellectually and erotically, nothing has been compromised. I am having a good time on many levels when I do the drawings, and, if they do what they are supposed to do, they will bring a good time on any or all of those levels to those who view them with their heads and their hard-ons: I intend my drawings to cause orgasm.



Influenced by the workers of his hometown, Merrick looked to Tom of Finland as a role model, but he became disillusioned with the unattainable stereotype of beauty and sought the real ruggedness that intrigued him.

At some point, I discovered the drawings of the great Tom of Finland. It seemed remarkable that another artist was recording the same mountainous shoulders, the same tight, rough buns, the same rock-solid jaws that I was. Could this be a universal ideal? I was seeing this same “perfect man” again and again in the drawings of innumerable other (and often lesser) gay artists. Repetition of this archetype made that “ideal” to begin to lose its special appeal to me, because it existed only on paper, not in bars like a man you could actually go home with. My sexual arousal in real life was unique. So I set myself the ambitious task to capture in ink the different kinds of individual sex appeal that make even ugly, or dirty, or threatening men beautiful. If I could master making rough, raw, aggressive workingmen into sexual objects of desire, then, I figured, maybe I could someday match what Tom had accomplished: not with Tom’s man-of-our-fantasies, so much, as with the Domino men-of-our-realities. Since I firmly believed that an artist can only paint or draw that which he knows well, I pursued the kind of men I loved to gather a handful of visual data. The task proved to be as pleasurable as it has been educational



Merrick befriended other erotic artists, and had his art published in the famous Drummer magazine.

Domino opened the door. Firm grip. We checked each other. Domino: lean like a fox, black eyes, dark beard, and hairy (a definite plus!). Some small talk. Then he unzipped his portfolio and pulled out his first piece. His drawings were hot! Red-Hot! The kind of stuff that makes the tip of your cock wet. My balls sweated under that ring of brass. More drawings of hot men in hot sex scenes. My dick slipped down the leg of my jeans! In the world of Domino, armpits stink, nipples and hairy pecs are dripping sweat. The grubby jockey shorts are ripped and pulled down to the ankles. The forced blowjobs and gang-fucks reek with erotic detail. Beer-gut sex. Toilet slime, hotel sleaze, and subway piss. Leather. Boots. Guns. Top pumping bottom. All in glorious black and white!

—A. Jay, Art Director at Drummer

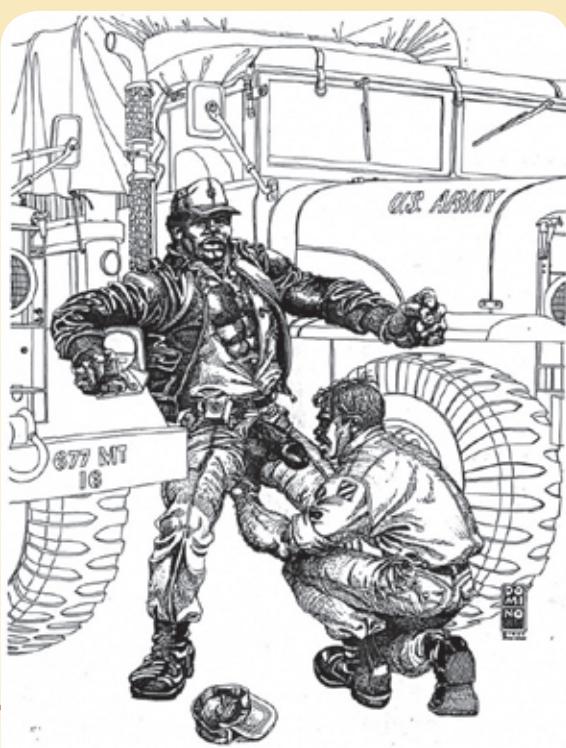
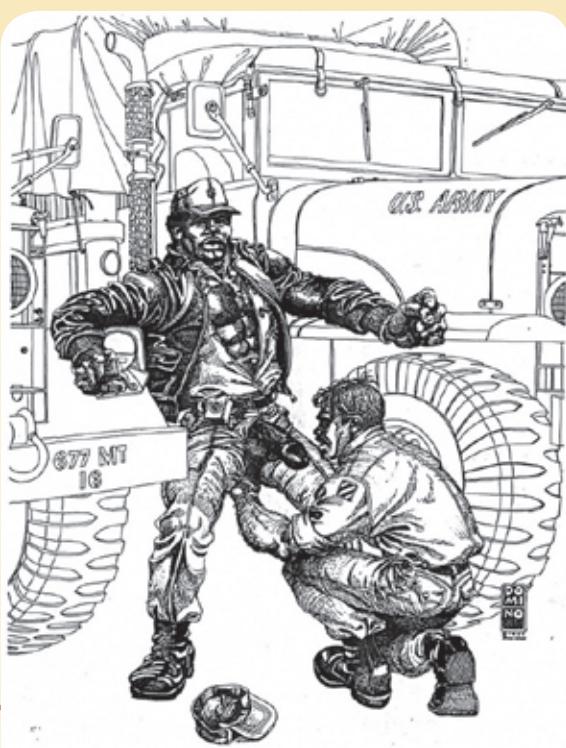
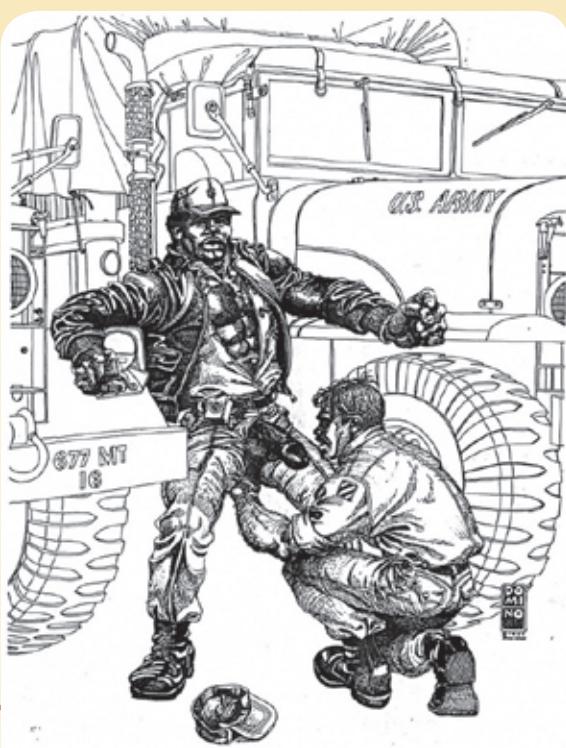
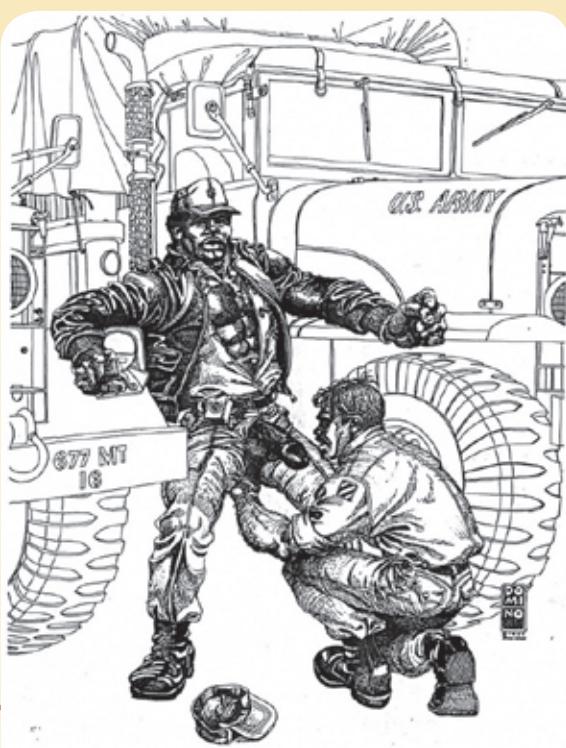
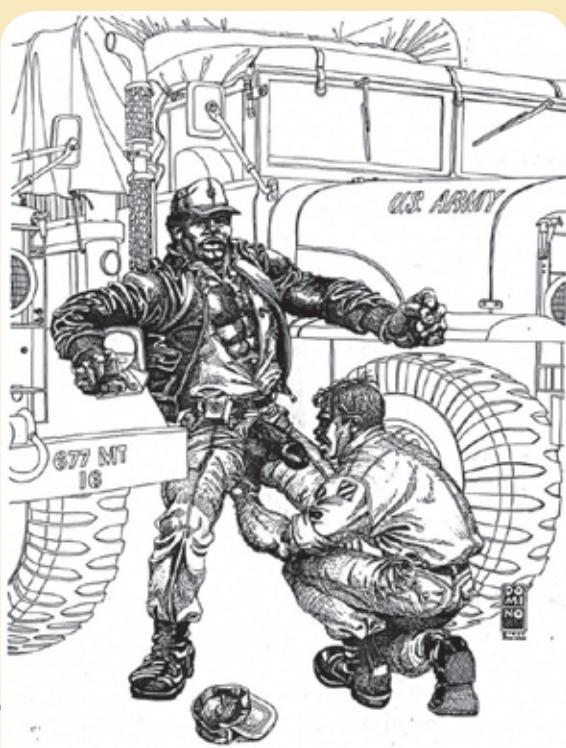
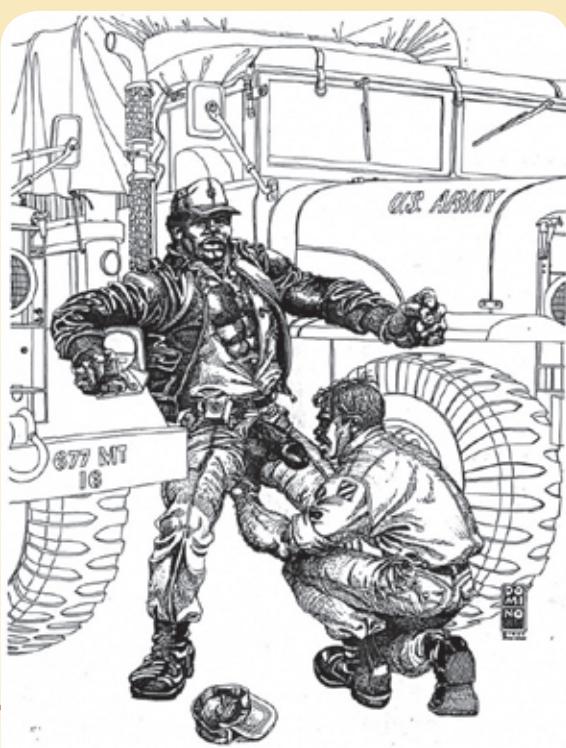
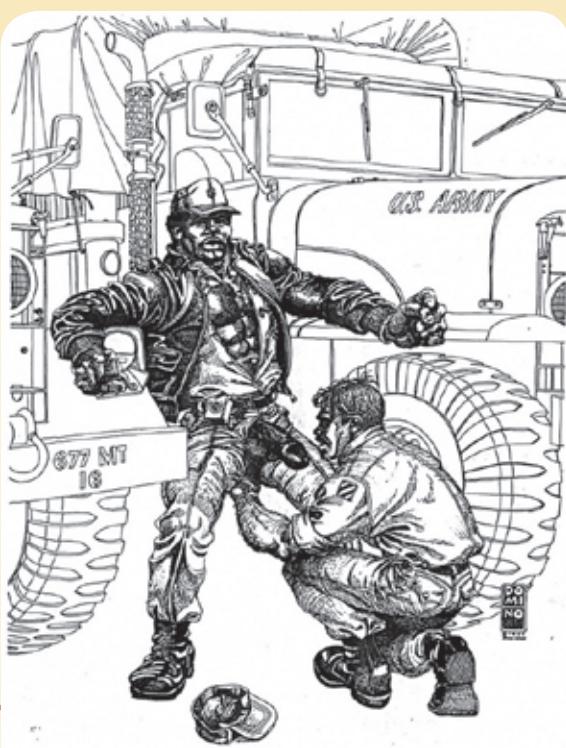
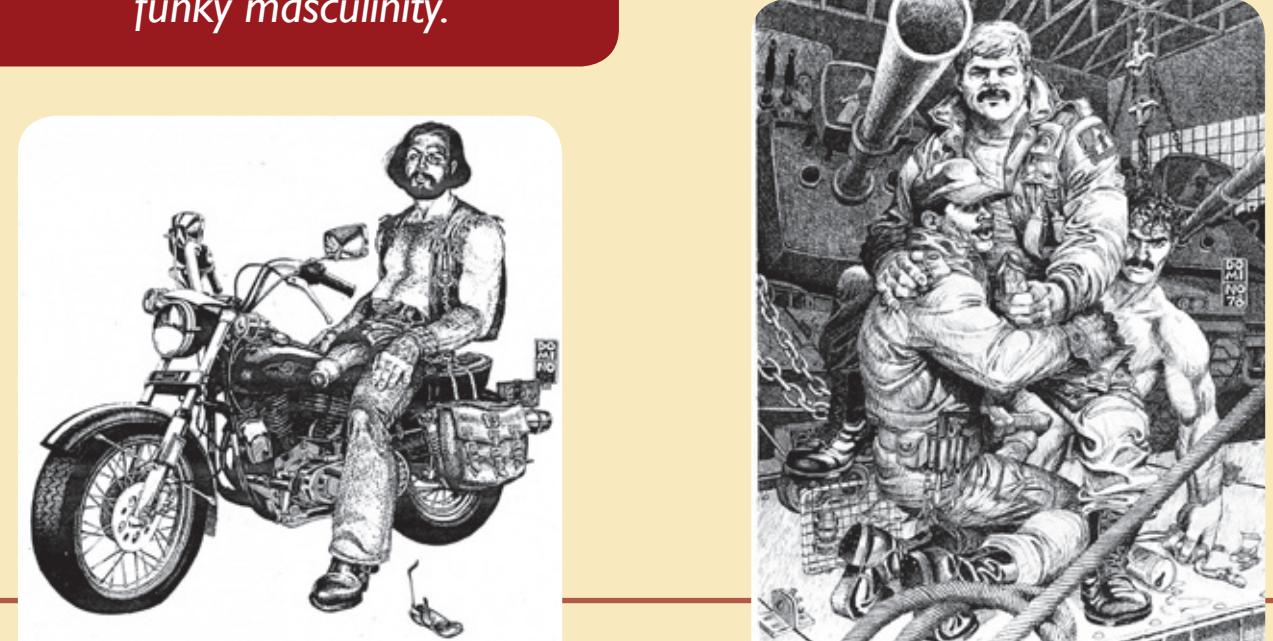
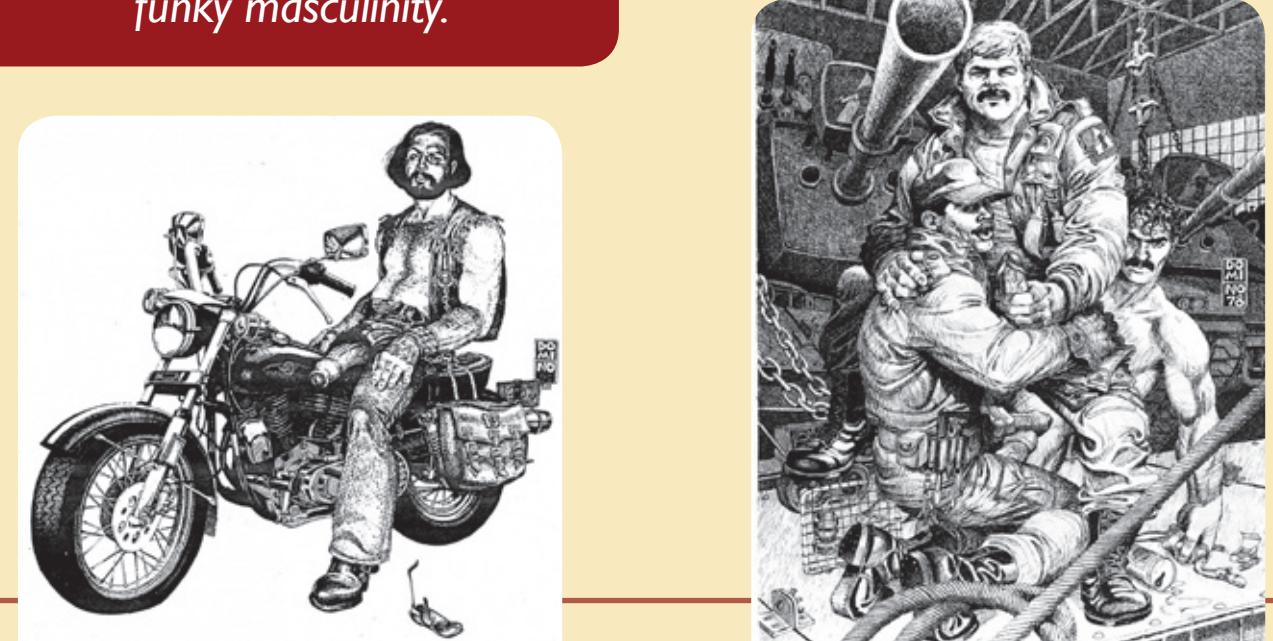
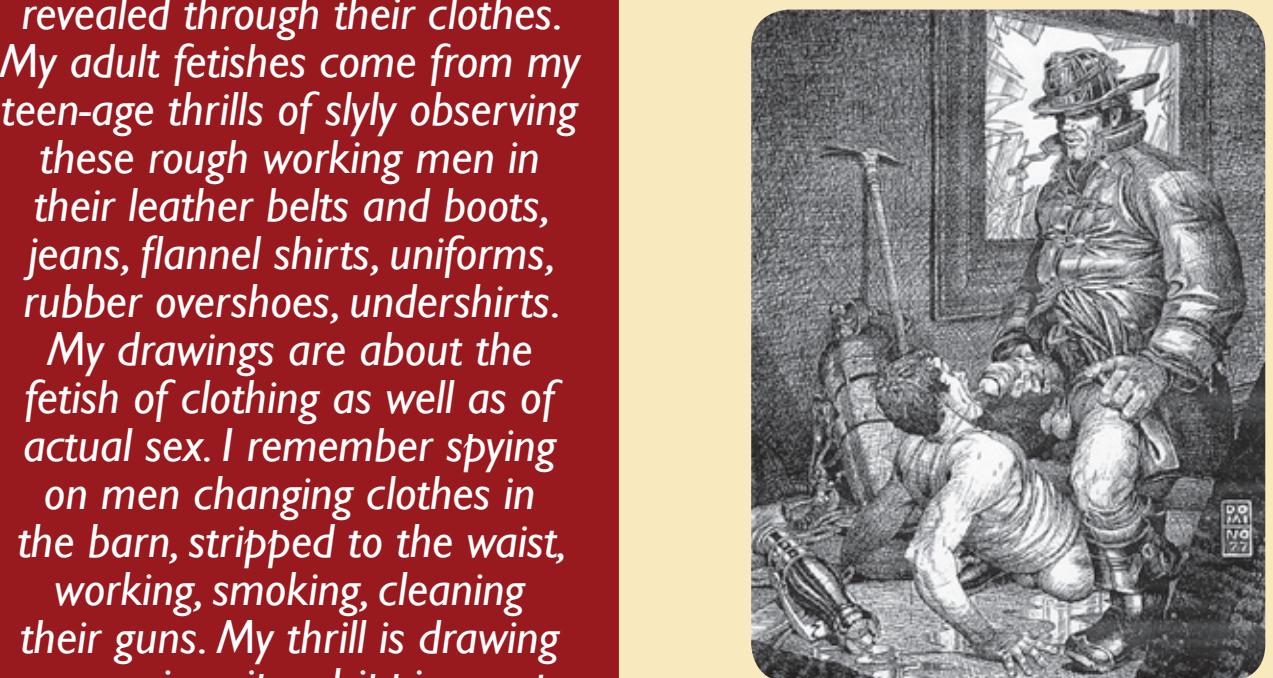
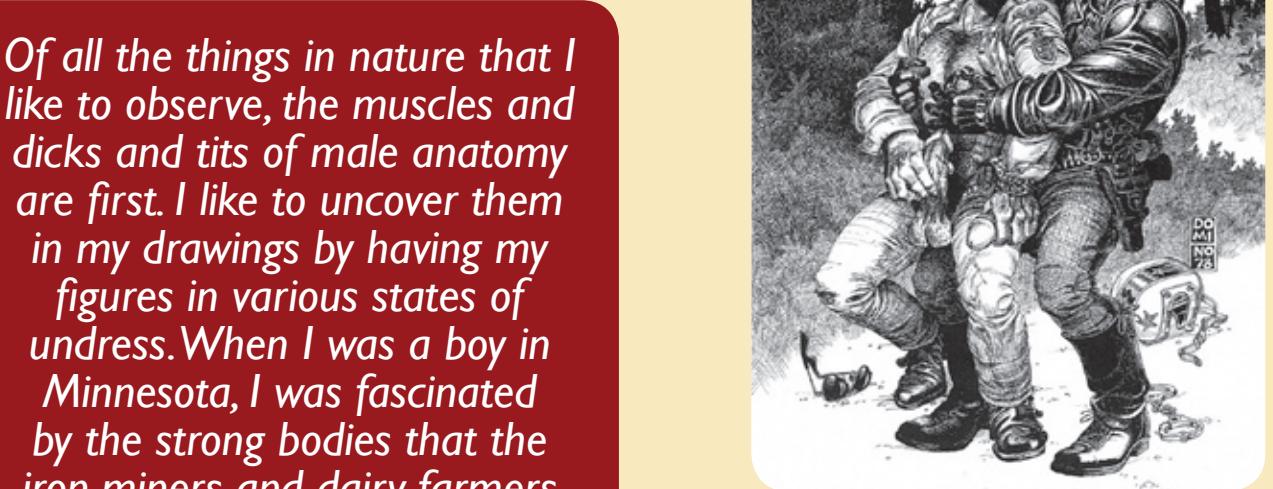
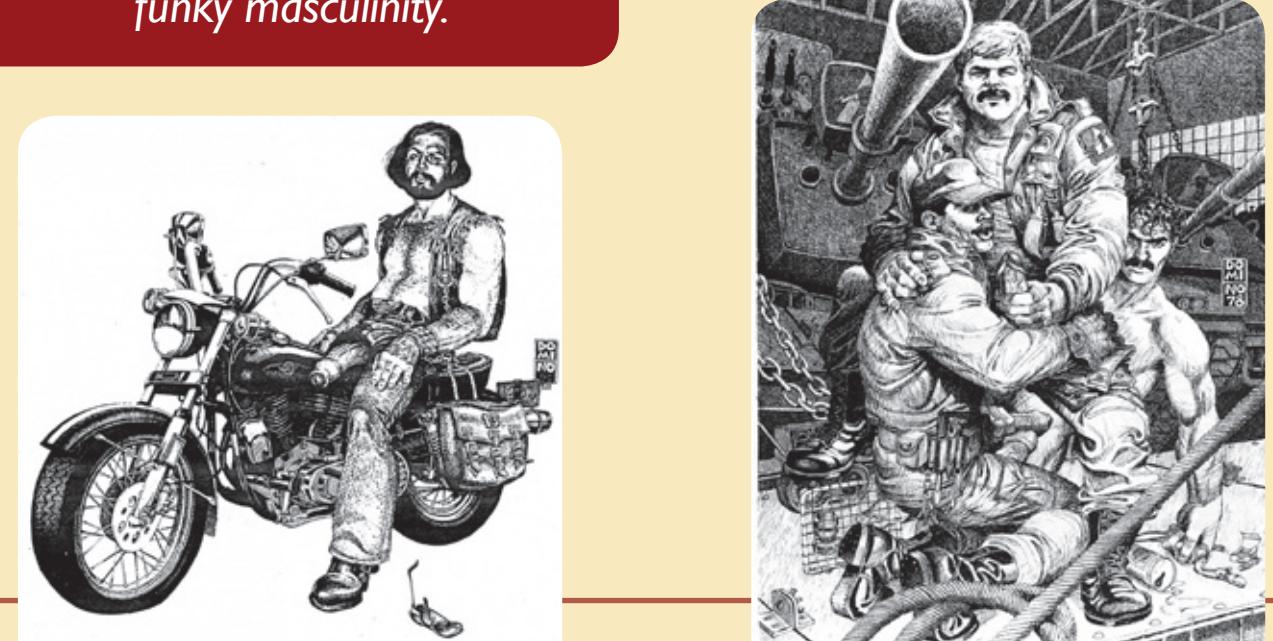
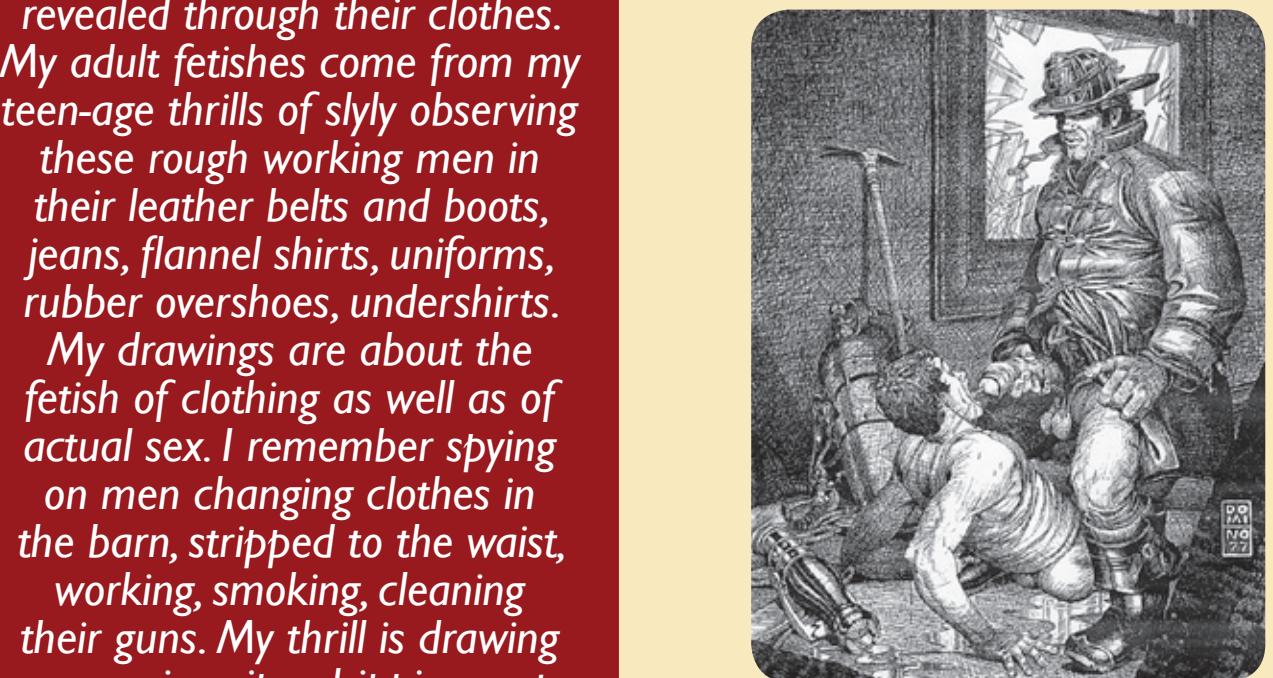
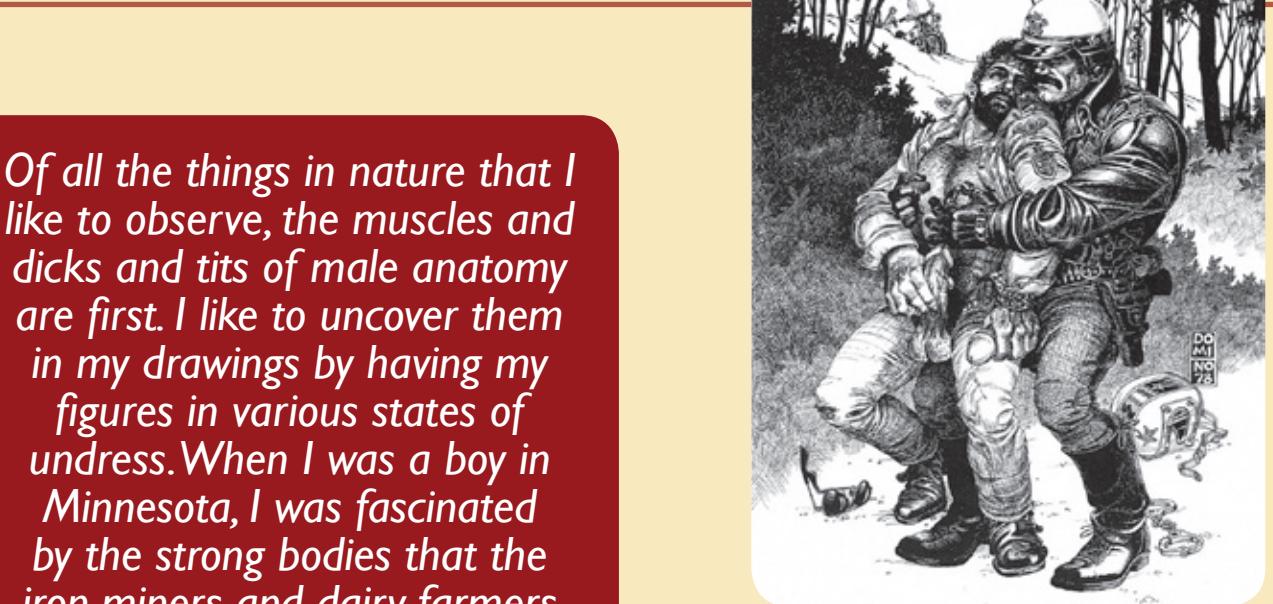
At the end of 1978, he had his first solo exhibition at Stomper's Gallery in New York, which the catalog *Domino: Original Drawings and Prints*, was transformed into a book and a collector's item. It was then that he declared:

I wish to make of hot gay porn something as solid and lasting as the art of the museums.

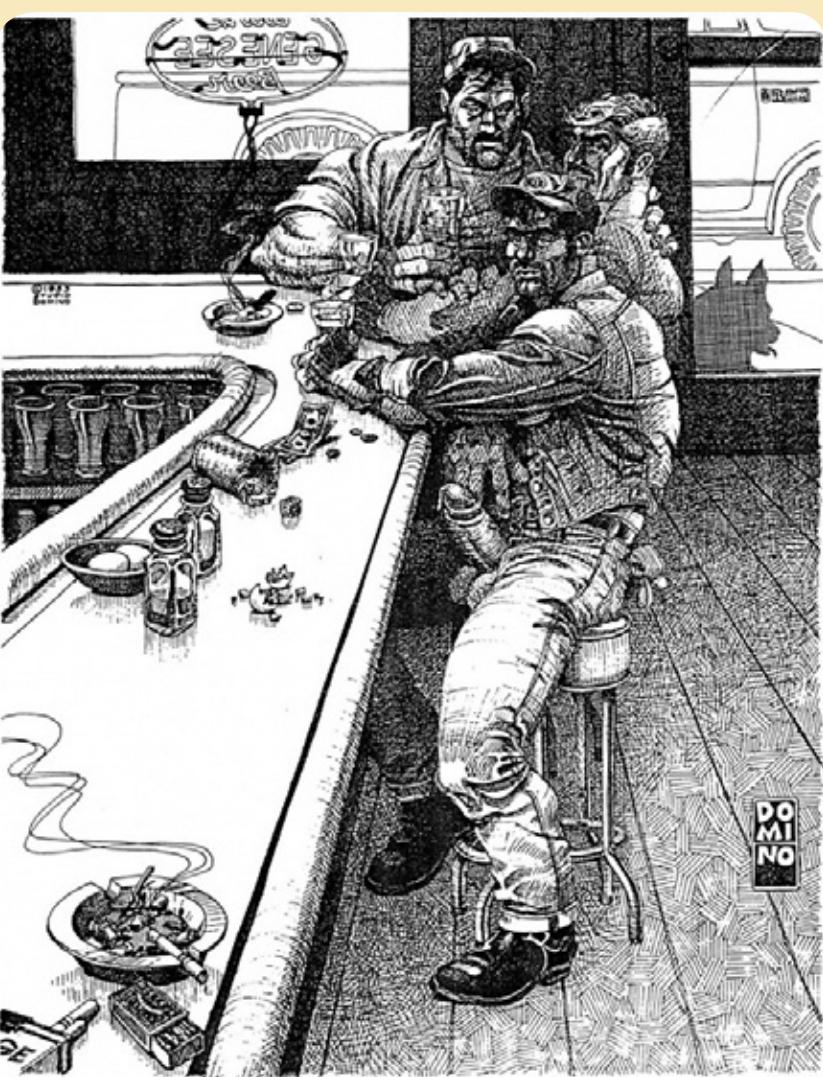
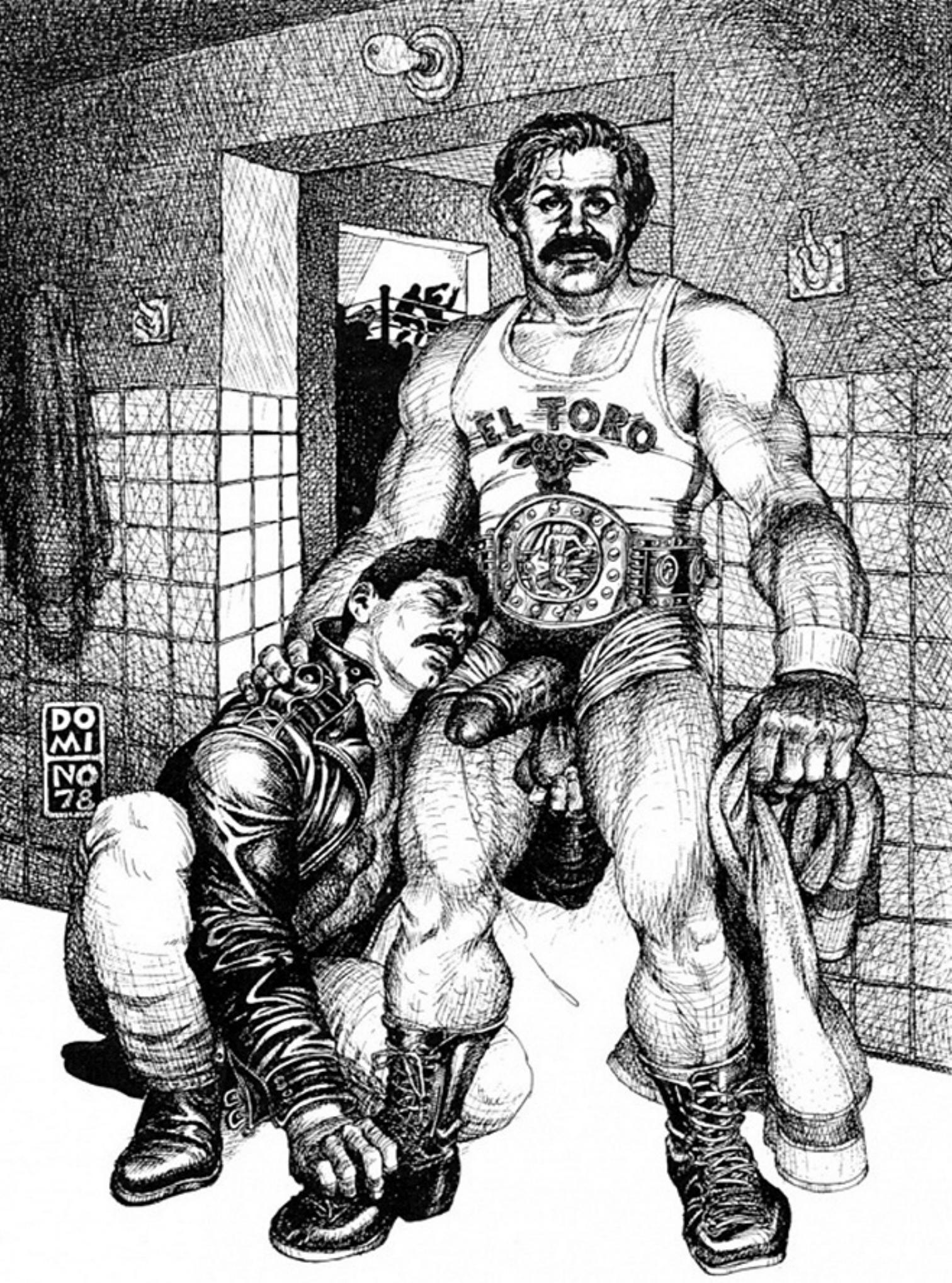


Of all the things in nature that I like to observe, the muscles and dicks and tits of male anatomy are first. I like to uncover them in my drawings by having my figures in various states of undress. When I was a boy in Minnesota, I was fascinated by the strong bodies that the iron-miners and dairy-farmers revealed through their clothes. My adult fetishes come from my teen-age thrills of slyly observing these rough working men in their leather belts and boots, jeans, flannel shirts, uniforms, rubber overshoes, undershirts.

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In March 1979, the exhibition moved to Fey-Way Studios. In 1984, *The New York Times* profiled him, and his art was exhibited at the Zim-Lerner Gallery. Two years later, he was featured in *Naked Eyes*, an exhibition of artists organized by Olaf Odegaard (1938-1997) that highlighted the visual art of gay men for the International Gay and Lesbian Archives.

Merrick died of AIDS-related complications in October 1990. The Leather Archives & Museum in Chicago holds some of his art to keep it known. In 2016, Merrick was featured in a retrospective by the GLBT Historical Society, and in 2023, the Tom of Finland Foundation held a queer art exhibition to celebrate Pride Month featuring his illustrations of farmers, miners, and recruits.

8=D



Florian Raiss

1955-2018

Quadruped without flower
(Pedro Paulo), bronze, 2017.
(Source: Galeria Lume)

by Filipe Chagas

The work of **Florian Raiss** (1955-2018) began with drawing and then expanded into art. The son of German immigrants arrived in São Paulo with his family as a young boy. Encouraged by his family's cultural life ("my maternal grandparents had an art collection, my father was a Naïf painter, my mother was a ballerina, and my brother was a visual artist"), he was already drawing at age five and painting at age twelve. He thus developed into a multi-talented artist.

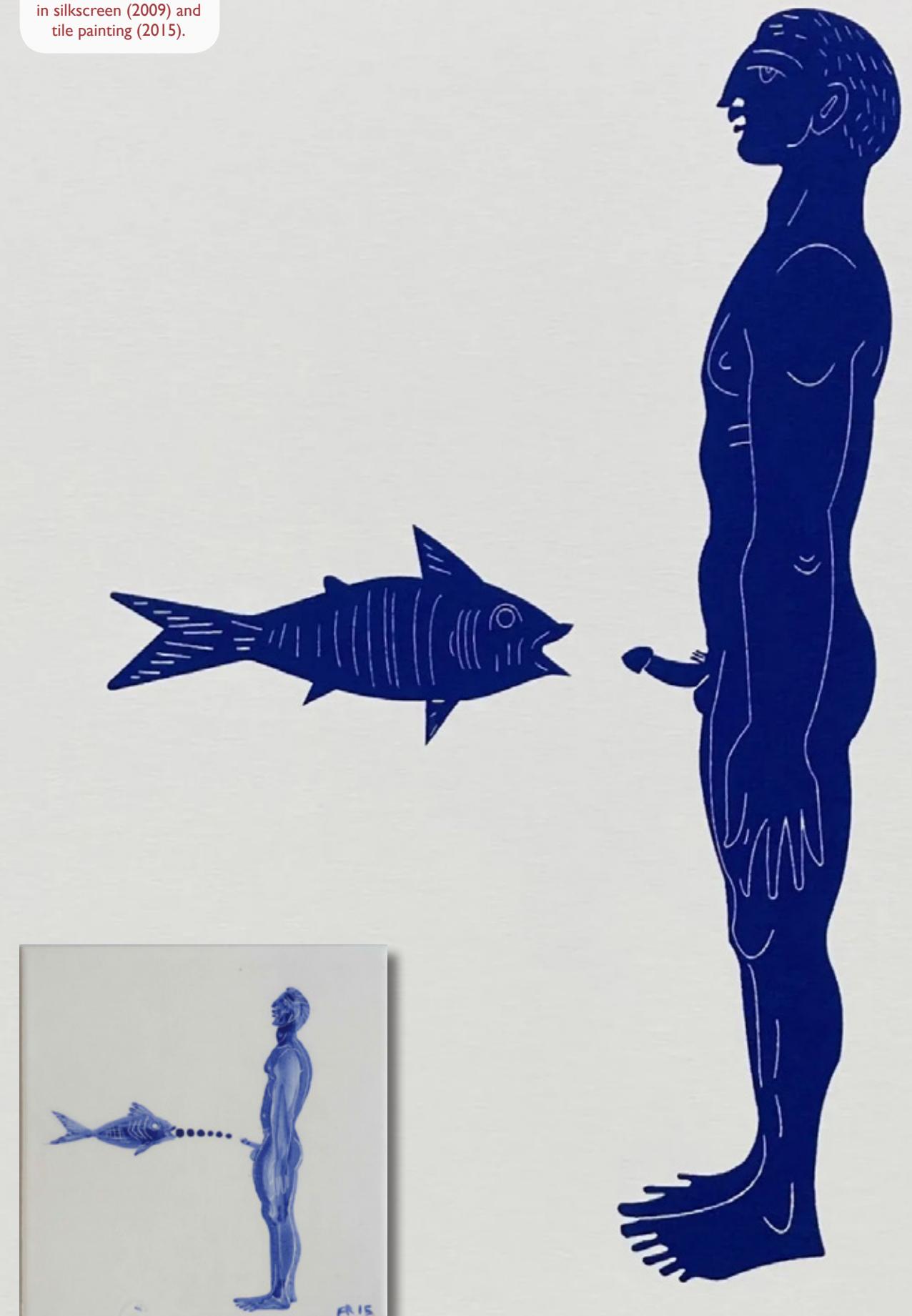
Between 1973 and 1975, he studied painting at the prestigious Academies of Fine Arts in Florence and Rome, Italy, where he refined his classical techniques and developed a deep understanding of European aesthetics. He then studied drawing for two years at the San Carlos

Academy of the University of Mexico, broadening his artistic scope in the "art of observation." He believed that art schools did not train artists, but rather individuals who teach and analyze art. Therefore, he chose to be influenced by artists rather than schools, taking Picasso as a reference, as well as classical Greco-Roman art. At the end of his "two-dimensional academic journey," he was captivated by sculpture.

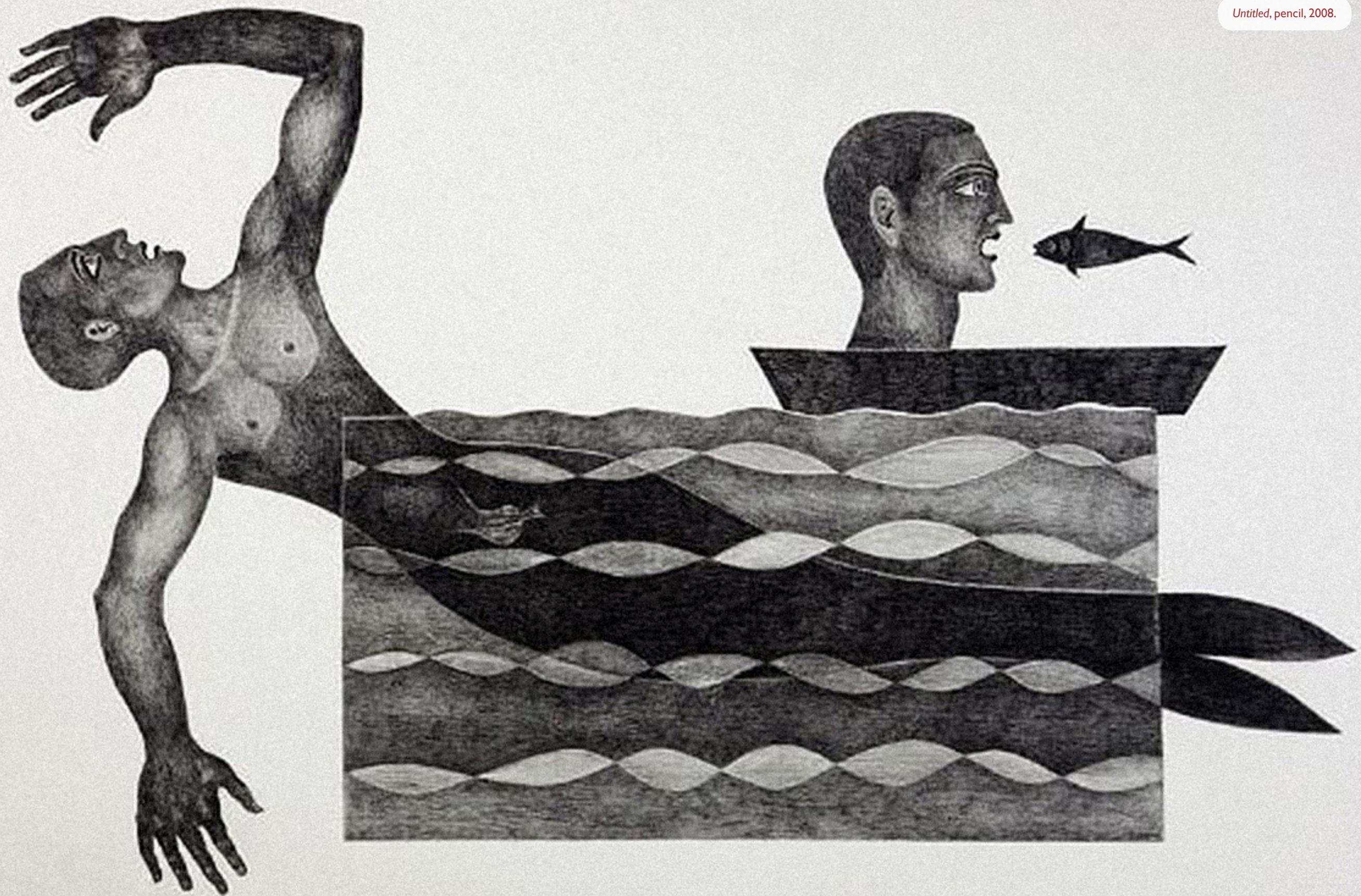
Drawing led me to sculpture, which arose as a necessity, as a desire to materialize figures I had in mind. I am self-taught in sculpture, but when people ask me what I do, I say that I draw and sculpt. Painting is present in both, although sometimes the sculpture is painted and the drawing has characteristics of painting.



The man and the fish,
in silkscreen (2009) and
tile painting (2015).



Untitled, pencil, 2008.



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His way of thinking and his way of creating forms became an emblematic aspect of his work, with his famous busts of celebrities, such as the bronze bust of the founder of the Brazilian Biennial, Cicillo Matarazzo, in Ibirapuera Park. For his three-dimensional works, Raiss used various materials, such as bronze, polychrome clay, and underglaze.

My focus is on the human figure, especially the face because, for me, it's inexhaustible. It's the most complex form that Nature created, with its eighty muscles and expressive capacity.

Anthropophagic vase, bronze, 2015. (Source: Galeria Lume)

Anthropomorphic figure, bronze, 2017. (Source: Galeria Lume)



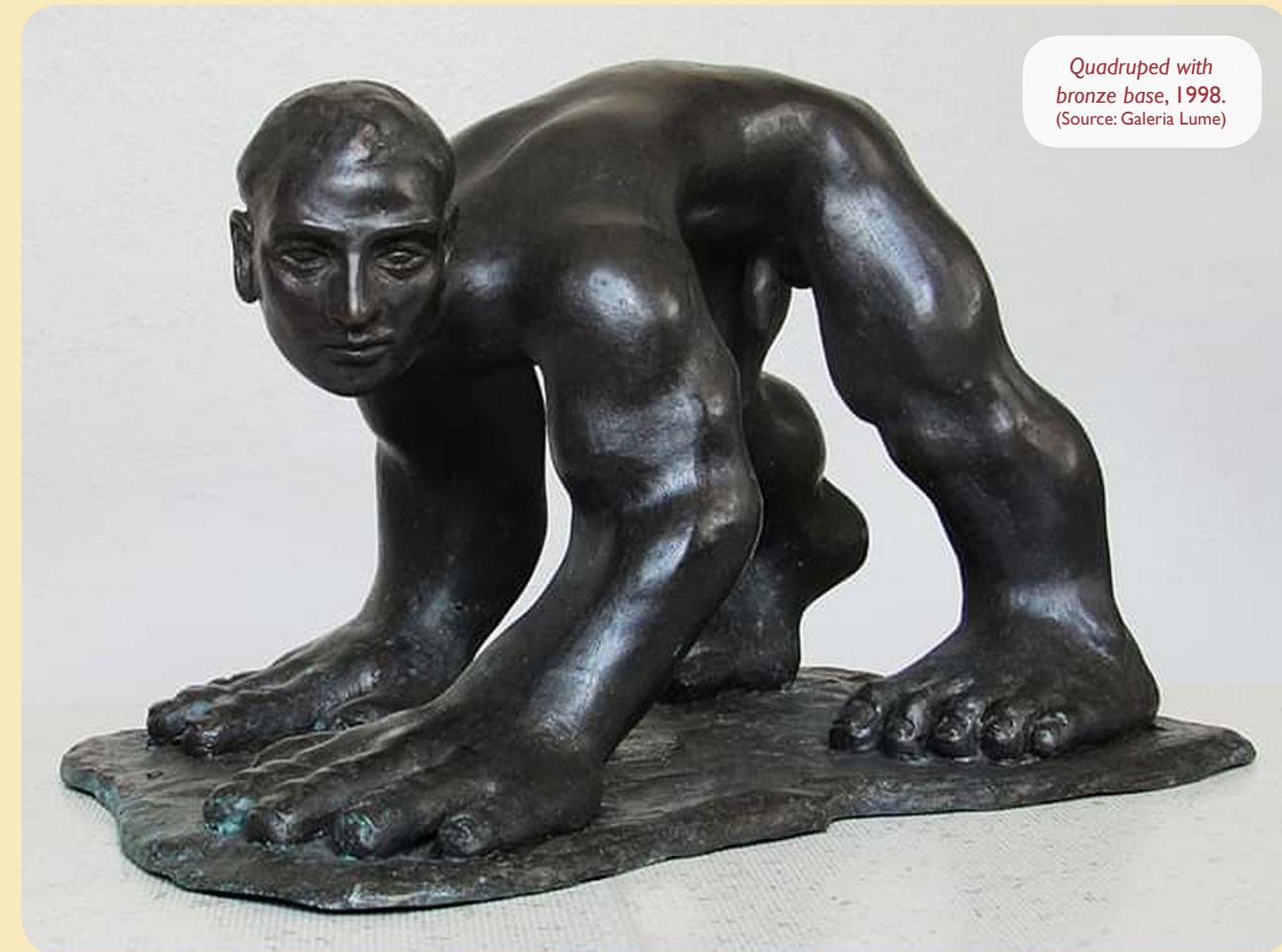


Large quadruped (without flower), bronze, 2000. (Source: Galeria Lume)

Raiss's work is marked by the possibility of the unexpected emergence of the fantastic, in which it is impossible to isolate the real from the imaginary. This results in quadrupedal men and a figuration inscribed in a certain erotic atmosphere. The curator Emanoel Araújo (1940-2022) said that Raiss's animalistic characters suggest a representation of man and his deepest and darkest desires in the dichotomy between civilization versus nature, the imposition of culture versus the resistance of the primitive, social restraint versus uncontrollable instinct. Nudity enters this unresolved conflict as the predominant human condition.



Solve me or I'll devour you., bronze, 2017. (Source: Galeria Lume)



Quadruped with bronze base, 1998. (Source: Galeria Lume)



*Quadruped with banana,
bronze, 2005. (Source: Galeria Lume)*



*Quadruped Daniel,
bronze, 2006. (Source:
Galeria Lume)*



*Quadruped Cauã, bronze,
2015. (Source: Galeria Lume)*

He held numerous solo and group exhibitions in important institutions, museums, and galleries in Brazil and abroad, and her works are part of private collections and institutional holdings (MAM-SP, Museu Afro Brasil, Museo de la Solidariedad Salvador Allende in Santiago, Chile, among others). Despite his impressive resume, he maintained his discreet, curious, investigative, and attentive demeanor until his death from cardiac arrest in 2018. **8=D**

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*Quadruped with
flower, bronze, 2009.
(Source: Galeria Lume)*

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Quadruped, glazed ceramic, s.d.

Theophilus Brown

1919-2012

by Filipe Chagas

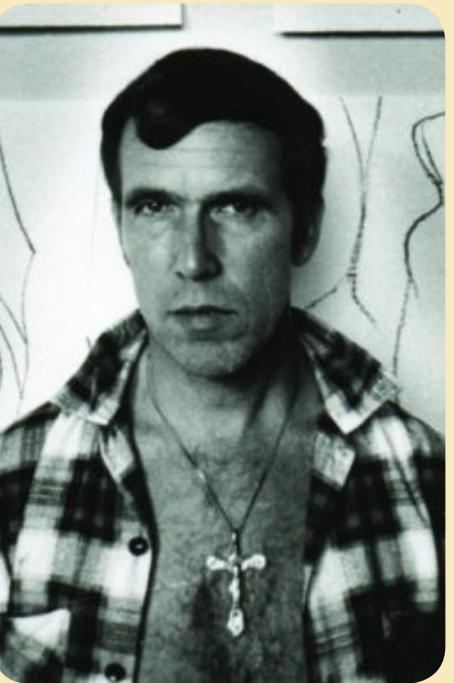
Untitled (Nude Trio), acrylic, charcoal
and graphite on paper, 1994.

Gdescendant of American intellectuals, **William Theophilus Brown*** (1919-2012) was born in Moline, Illinois, USA, into a wealthy family. Brown's father – a mechanical engineer, designer, and inventor, holder of 160 patents for Deere & Company, whose board he served on – encouraged his son's drawing and musical abilities.

At Lake Forest Academy, an all-boys college preparatory school on Chicago's north side, he was teased for his effeminate mannerisms and his inclination toward the arts. He wanted to attend the Art Students League in New York, but yielded to his parents' wishes to graduate from an Ivy League university*. He chose Yale University, where he took art and music classes. To nurture his interest in visual arts, he frequented museums in New York and acquired "modest examples" of works by Picasso, Modigliani, and others. He even traveled for two weeks with friends to Paris in 1939, shortly before being drafted into World War II.

His military service was delayed until his graduation with a degree in piano in 1941. Brown was assigned to a heavy weapons battalion after basic training, but a fateful intervention by his mother likely saved his life: unbeknownst to him, she pressured a general's wife, and he was subsequently transferred to an army intelligence unit in Charleston, South Carolina – where he not only escaped the fate of many former comrades killed in combat, but also had his first relationship with a Navy sailor for six months. Brown ended up serving in Belgium, but was discharged in 1945.

He was finally able to begin studying painting, moving between New York and Paris, where he met an impressive array of artists. The couple Elaine and Willem de Kooning, for example, "took him under their wing," and Elaine's expressionist paintings of sporting activities influenced him to venture into similar themes, particularly the football paintings he made during art school and afterwards. With Willem, he learned to employ a more energetic brushstroke. He also met Rothko while living in a one-room apartment near Central Park, paid



Brown by Basil Langton (1969).



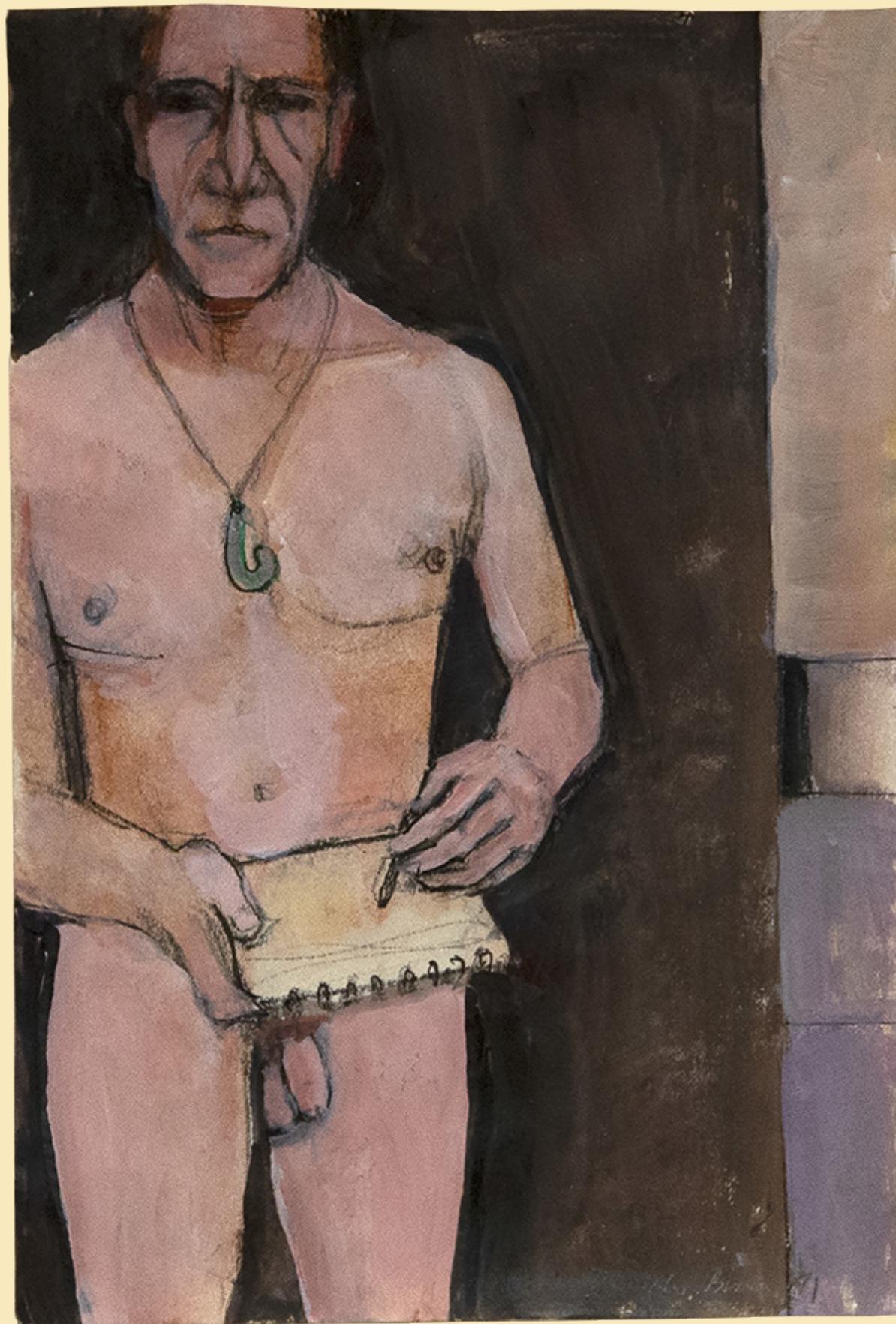
The physician,
oil on canvas,
1961.



The referee, oil on canvas, 1956.

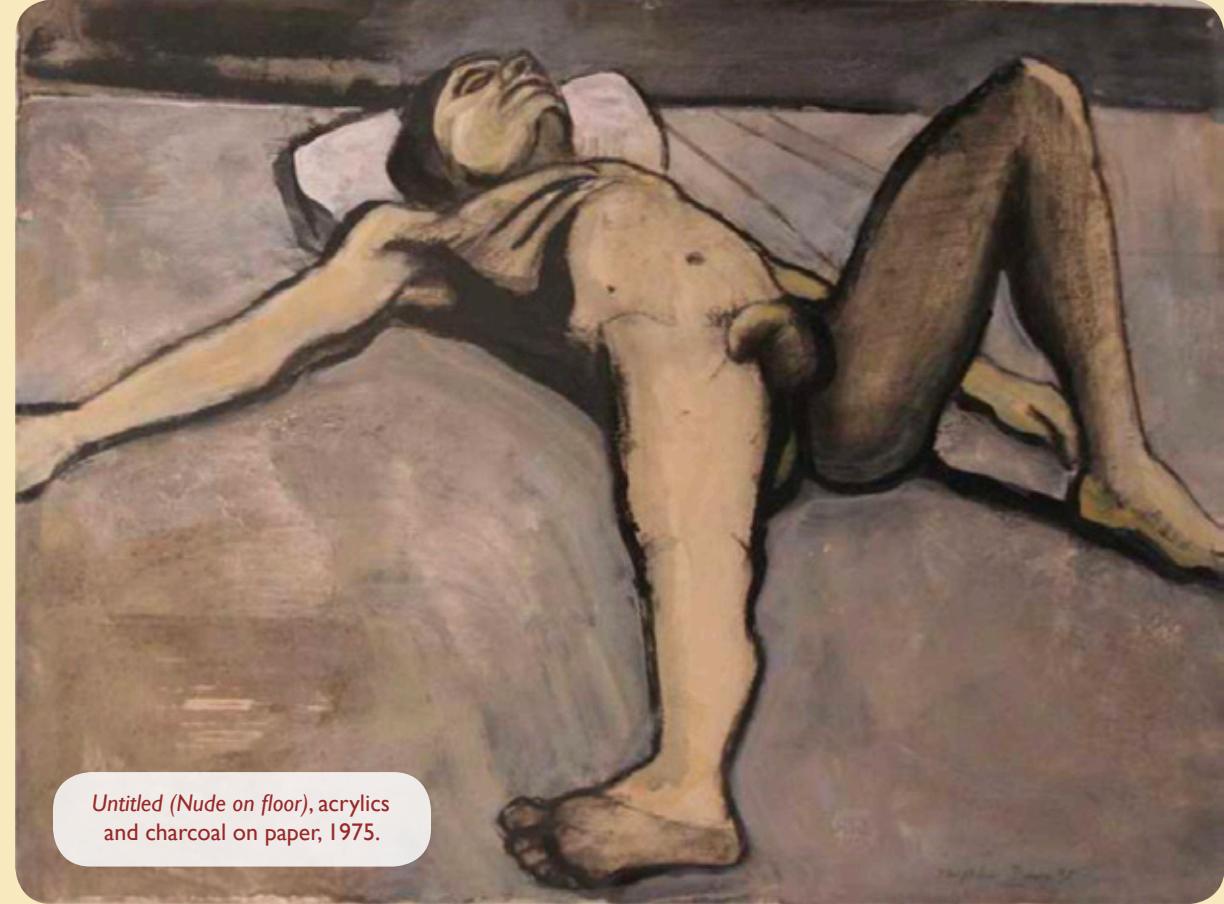


Untitled
(Jumping man
and snake),
acrylics on
canvas, 1968.



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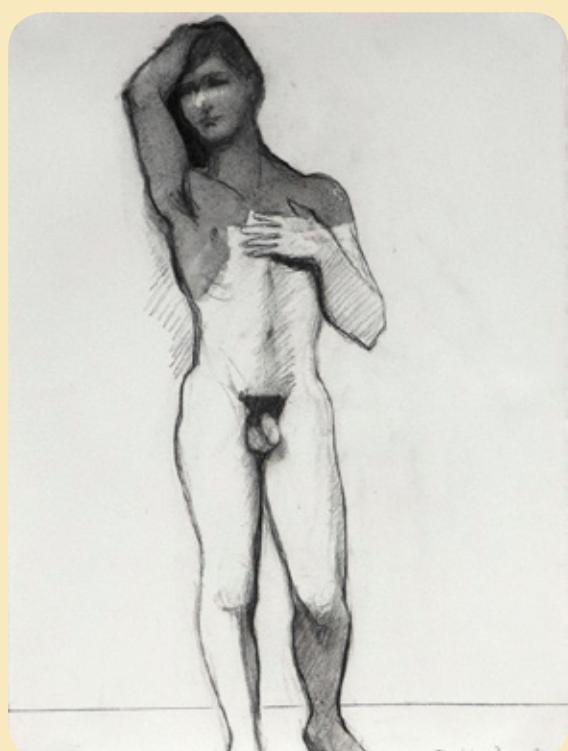
Self-portrait with sketchbook, gouache on paper, 1971.



Untitled (Nude on floor), acrylics and charcoal on paper, 1975.

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Nude on step (1988) and Standing nude, arm on head (1990), both pencil and wash on paper.

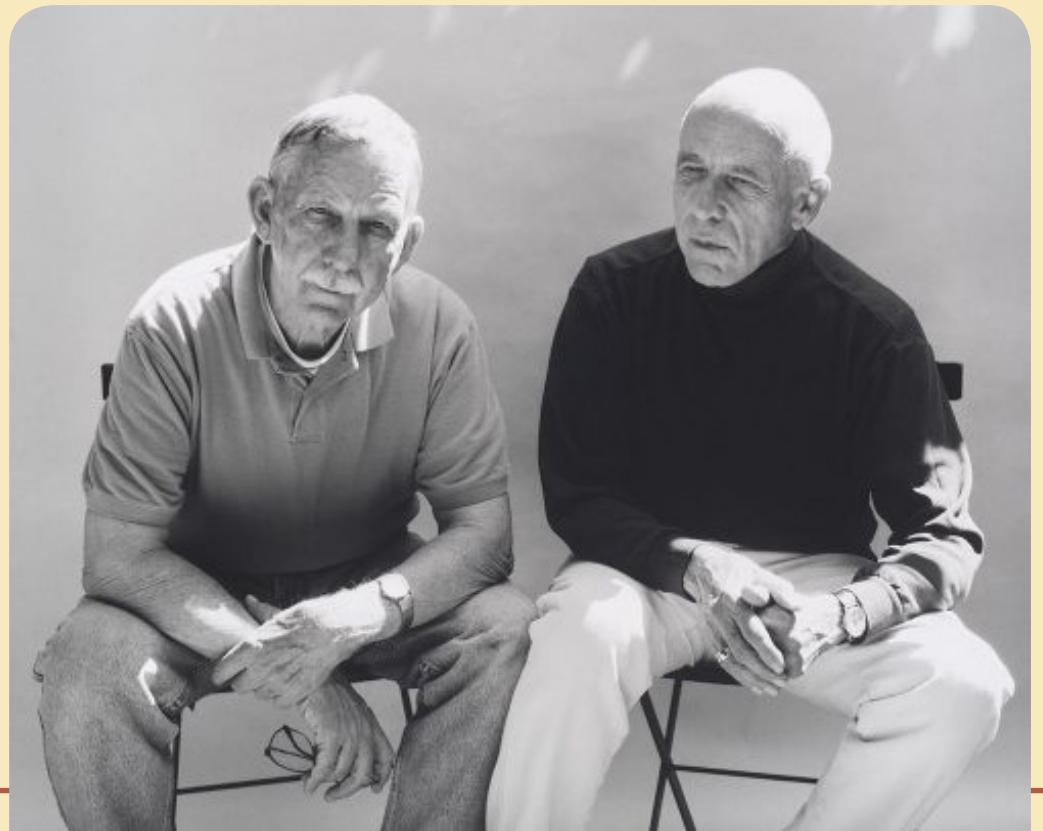


for by his father, and delved into the study of Abstract Expressionism. In Paris, he met Picasso, Balthus, Léger, Igor and Vera Stravinsky, Samuel Barber, and Gian Carlo Menotti, while maintaining a relationship with a French critic named Henri Hell (pseudonym of José Enrique Lasry).

In 1952, Brown realized he was living off his father's generosity and, at age 33, enrolled in graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley. There he joined a group of artists – including Richard Diebenkorn (1922–1993), David Park (1911–1960), Elmer Bischoff (1916–1991), James Weeks (1922–1998), and Nathan Oliveira (1928–2010) – in what would later be known as the Bay Area Figurative Movement. The group held life drawing sessions and attracted the attention of collectors. In 1957, the Oakland Museum held the group's first exhibition, blending figurative themes with the paint handling of abstract expressionism.

While studying at Berkeley, Brown also met and fell in love with his fellow painter, Paul Wonner (1920–2008), who was also part of the group and with whom he stayed for 56 years. However, since they came from different backgrounds and were a gay couple who subtly satirized masculinity in their work, Brown believed they would always be marginalized to some degree. Therefore, they focused more on their academic careers until, in the early 1960s, Brown and Wonner decided to share a studio in Santa Monica before moving to an apartment in Malibu, near a nudist beach.

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Wonner
and Brown on
Ira Schrank's
photo, 1999.



Standing
bathers, acrylics
on paper, 1993.

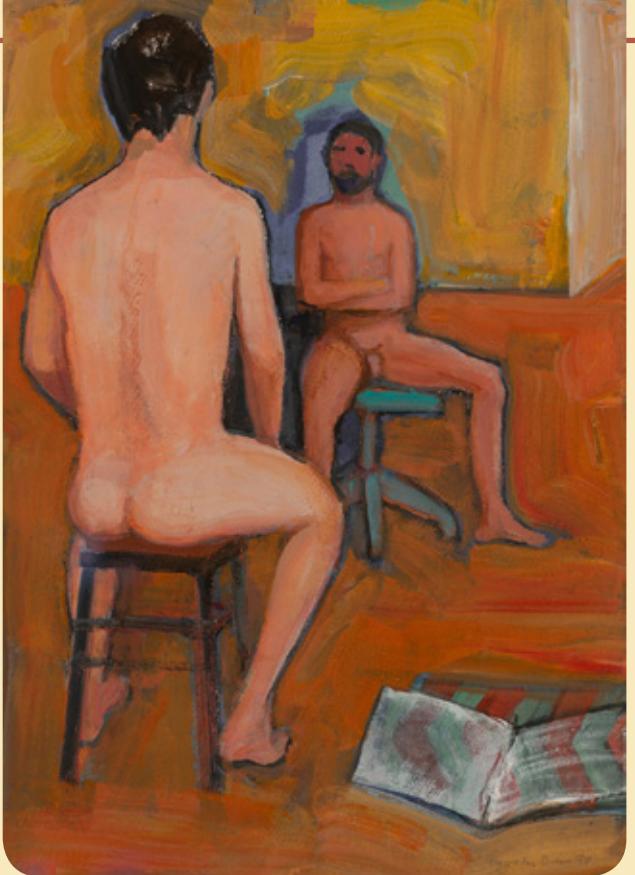
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Untitled
(Three nudes one
seated), acrylics
and pencil on
paper, 2001.



Horse with swimmers at the
beach, acrylics on canvas, 1990.



Above, *Jamie* (acrylics and charcoal on paper, 1998) and *Untitled* (acrylics, charcoal and pencil on paper, 1999). Below, *Two artists with model* (acrylics and pencil on paper, 2009).

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Up, acrylics and charcoal on paper, 2010.

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Untitled (Two nudes in studio), acrylics, gouache and pencil on paper, 1993.

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In the late 1960s, both Brown and Wonner adopted a tighter control over their art, with more defined figures and objects, such as the nudes on the beach they frequented or the poolside paintings that strongly resemble those of their friend David Hockney (1937-). Around this time, Brown traveled to Italy to study metaphysical painters like Giorgio de Chirico, and these influences subsequently infused his work with a surreal and dreamlike quality.

In 1975, Brown began teaching at the University of California, but the following year, he and Wonner bought a Victorian house in San Francisco. Brown focused on a series of large-format acrylic paintings, many of them portraits that expanded on his early dreamlike landscapes of figures, often nude, on beaches or

in landscapes. He also traveled to neighboring towns, photographing abandoned industrial buildings that would become the basis for paintings devoid of figures, except for the occasional dog, lending a nostalgic tone.

In his later years, Brown was still able to paint daily and continue producing abstract collages. He and Wonner donated 1,800 drawings and other artworks to be sold, according to their wishes, to benefit emerging LGBT artists under the auspices of the Paul Wonner and William Theophilus Brown Endowment, established by the Crocker Art Museum.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Brown painted figures in bucolic settings with broad, expressive strokes and a refined color palette



Above, Untitled (David M.), acrylics on canvas, s.d., and, below, *Untitled (Male nude with sheets)*, acrylics on panel, s.d.



Untitled (Nude male on floor), acrylics on paper, 2010.

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during the first half of the 1960s. He then shifted to a flatter, more descriptive style in portraits and landscapes, but always maintaining a melancholic or meditative atmosphere, suggesting reflection, contemplation, solitude, or even a quiet, subtle longing. Brown sought the emotional universe of the human being through an intimacy free from voyeurism.

The artist passed away at the age of 92. His papers are kept at the American Art Archive. **8=D**



PAUL WONNER (1920-2008)

It's impossible to talk about Brown without talking about Wonner, and vice versa. Not only because of their 56-year relationship, but also because of their concurrent artistic production. Paul Wonner was born in Tucson, Arizona, in an area he called a "slum." His father was a machinist for the Southern Pacific Railroad and was frequently absent. His mother, a homemaker, was described by Wonner as a "paranoid schizophrenic." Even so, Wonner did well in school, won awards for his art, and even participated in exhibitions. He went to California to attend the College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he graduated in 1941 with a bachelor's degree in art education. His father's last words were that he was good for nothing else, so he might as well be an artist.

It never occurred to me that ever in my lifetime I would make my living by being a painter...and I just always planned that I would have to do something else to make a living.

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He was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II, serving four years in administrative work. Afterwards, he decided to follow a boyfriend he met while serving in Texas and ended up in New York, but he didn't frequent the same glamorous circles as Brown. The relationship ended, and Wonner found work as a designer, which stifled his creativity and stole his time.

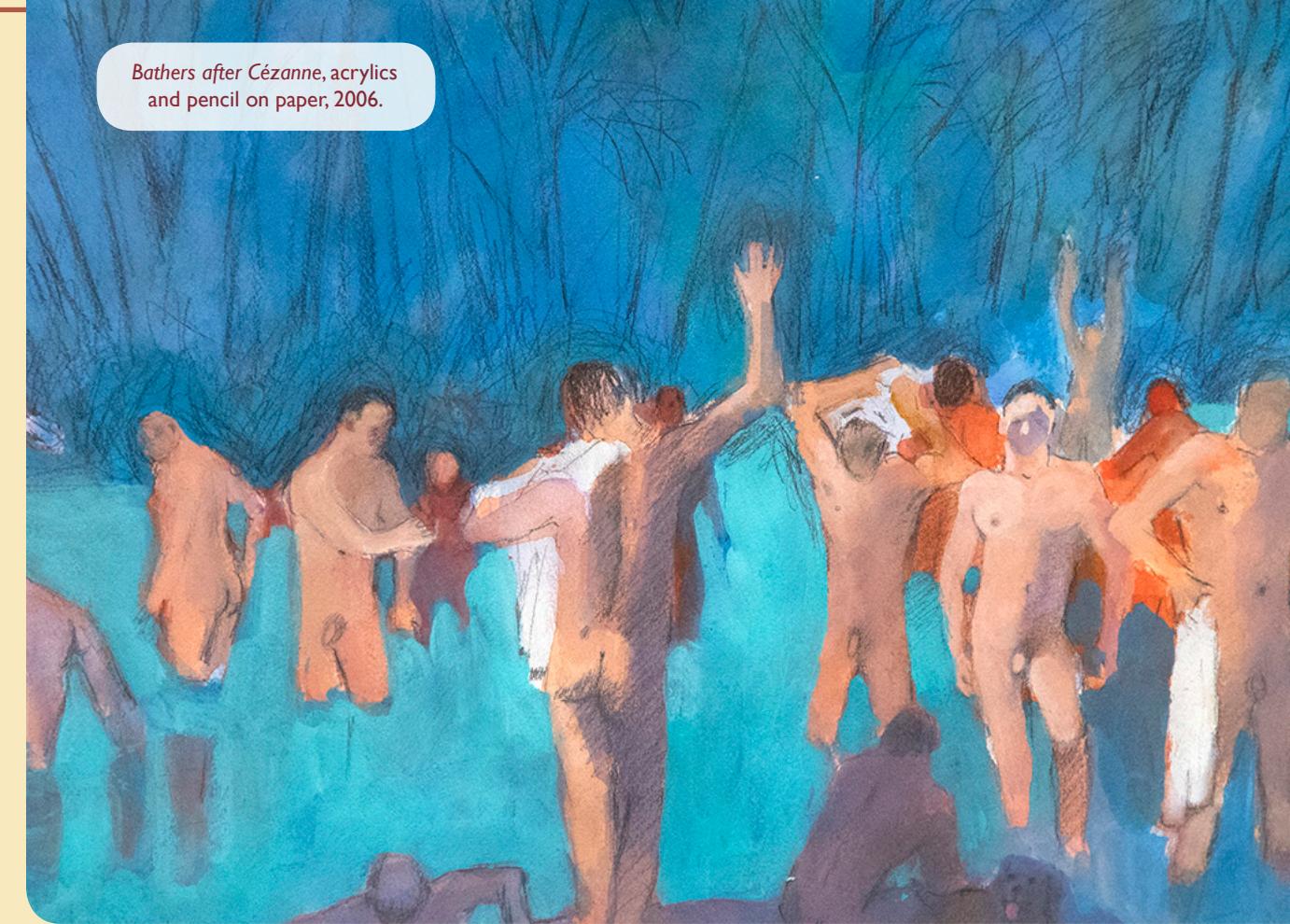
In 1949, Wonner attended the art school that would become Studio 35. Instructors such as Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell attempted to impart the principles of Abstract Expressionism, including the importance of spontaneity and the unconscious. He also had a tense four-year relationship with a violent boyfriend prone to bar fights.

Determined to return to his studies "in a city where he could see the sky," Wonner enrolled in a master's program at the University of California, Berkeley, where he met Brown and ended up becoming part of the same local art movement. Later, he also obtained a postgraduate degree in Library Science.



Wonner's paintings often reflected psychological issues, even in his still lifes. He considered "Nude with Indian Rug," from 1961, to be his best painting. The work "Glasses with Pansies," from 1968, in soft gray tones except for two vases of pansies, refers to gay love. While in San Francisco, Wonner launched a series of large still lifes, which received negative reviews.

Bathers after Cézanne, acrylics and pencil on paper, 2006.



49

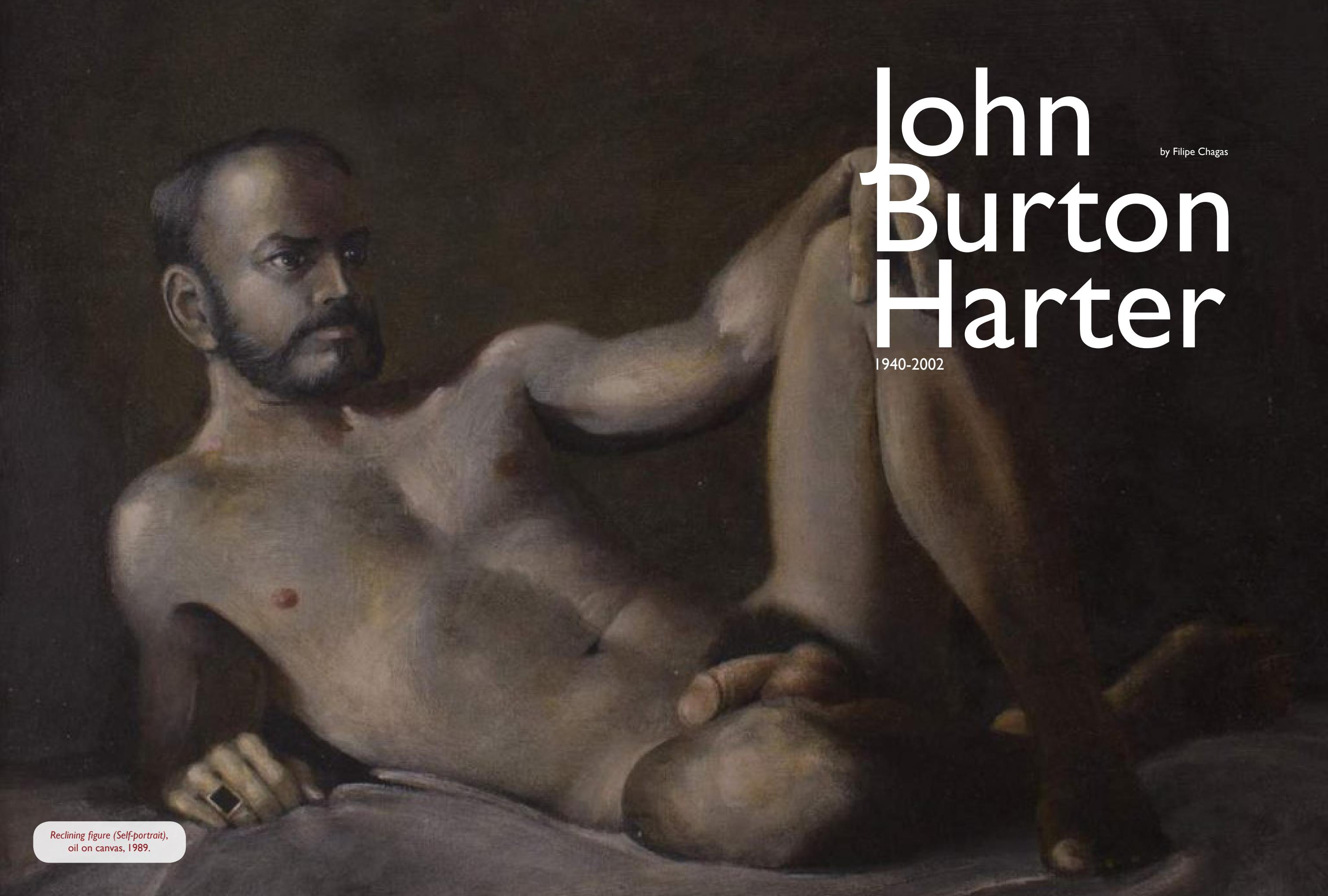
When his back gave out, he and Brown moved from their Victorian home to a luxurious retirement home in San Francisco. There he painted small gouaches depicting an older painter (himself) with young, robust, nude male models, which he described as portraits of youth and old age. Wonner passed away in 2008. 8=D



Artist and model, hands on hips, acrylics and pencil on paper, 2002.



Youth and Old Age: Artist, model and red carpet, acrylics and pencil on paper, 2003.



John Burton Harter

1940-2002

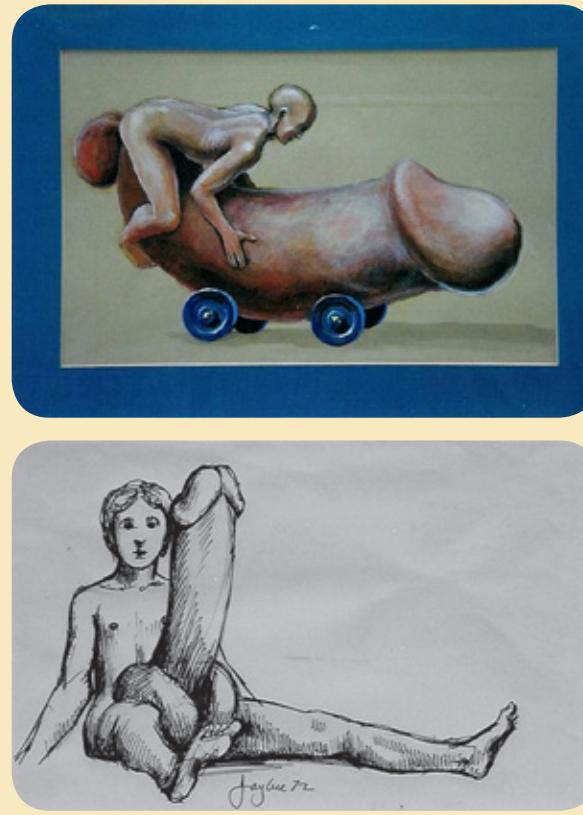
by Filipe Chagas

*Reclining figure (Self-portrait),
oil on canvas, 1989.*

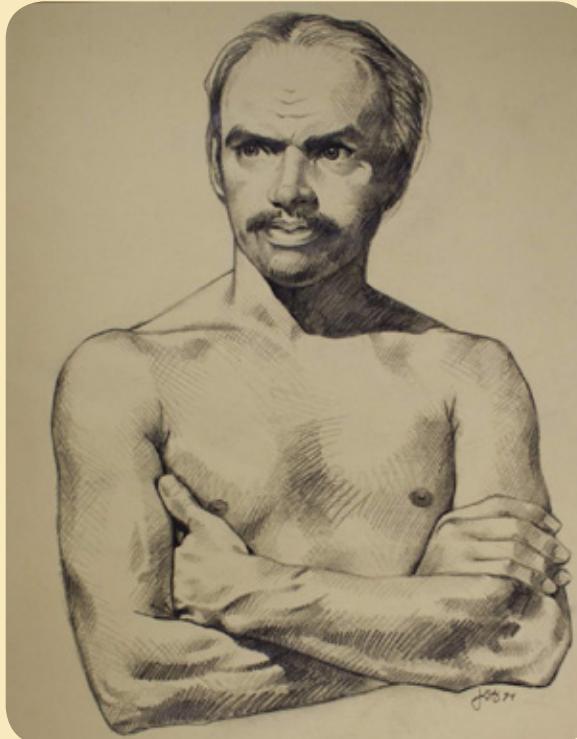
Born in Jackson, Mississippi, **John Burton Harter** (1940-2002) – known as Burt to his friends – grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, where his father, Dr. John Harter, established a thoracic surgery practice. Interested in anthropology, archaeology, and the arts, he graduated with a degree in Art History (1963) and earned a master's degree in painting (1970). Although he had already been recognized as a painter of abstract works, still lifes, and landscapes reflecting the vibrant colors of the American Southwest, it was only after his mother's death in 1996 that he began exhibiting his erotic works.

Harter worked as an assistant curator at the Louisiana State Museum in 1967 and gained a reputation for his meticulous attention to detail in the care of fine art. The museum promoted him to curator and, in 1986, to director of collections, overseeing the entire collection until his retirement in 1991. During this time, Harter began his studio art practice. Drawing on classicism, he focused on the male body and produced paintings and drawings that often reflected his explorations as a gay man.

The development of my art has paralleled my homoerotic exploration and as I discovered aspects of the gay world, I incorporated them into my paintings and drawings. My translation of the gay world to imagery, to art, defined what I was learning to myself, and each – art and lifestyle – became a part of the other.

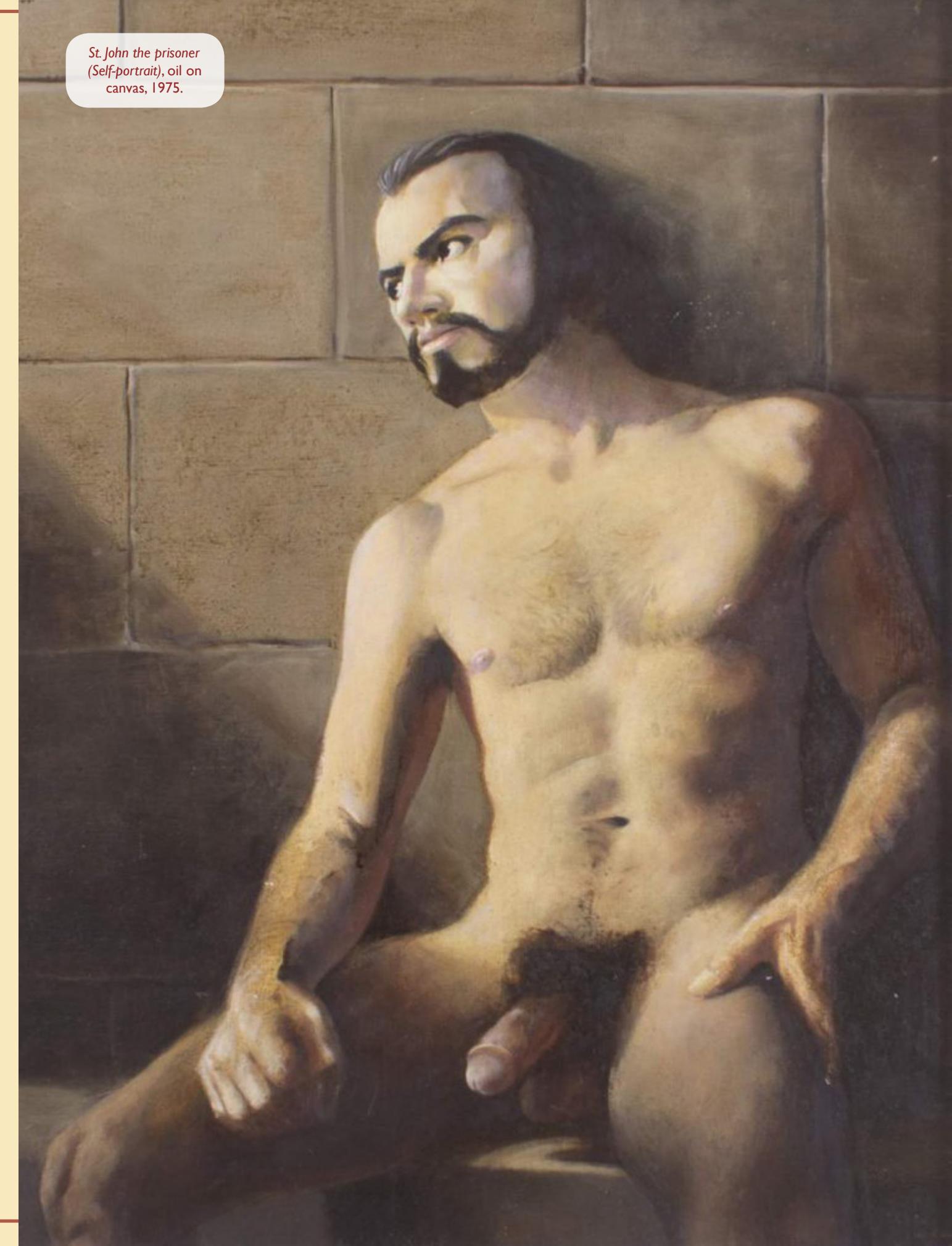


Cock on wheels (acrylics on board, 1970) and *Surprise* (ink, 1972).



Self-portrait in pencil, 1974.

St. John the prisoner (Self-portrait), oil on canvas, 1975.



He credited Paul Cadmus (1904-1999) with establishing an artistic climate that motivated him to explore the male nude and relationships between men in art. His work ranged from the fraternal to the affectionate and erotic, while his landscape paintings conveyed a frequently powerful and solitary atmosphere. He also painted still lifes in rigorous studies of texture, color, and form, and created engravings, lithographs, and woodcuts in his early years. Harter frequently took photographs to use as inspiration for paintings and borrowed elements to create compositions.



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Sexed hippie, mixed media on board, 1971.



Sherman nude (1979) and *Celebration* (1994), both oil on canvas.



Trompe l'oeil (Self-portrait), oil on canvas, 1976.

55

Standing figura
(Self-portrait), oil
on board, 1979.



Anguish (Self-
portrait), oil on
canvas, 1981.



JPH
1997



His own image remained a recurring theme throughout his life. Soon after finishing his master's degree, at the age of 30, he began exploring youth and the idealized classical proportions of the male figure through self-

portraits. He ended up creating more than 60 self-portraits that attest not only to his skill in representing the male physique, but also to his ability to channel expressions and incorporate symbolic nuances, reflecting the dichotomy

between being open about his sexuality and remaining reclusive. He represented himself as archetypes of masculinity and sexuality to reveal the many individuals that make up a cultural identity. As he consolidated himself as an artist, he began to grapple with the loss of his own youth and the passage of time.

In *En Garde* (oil on canvas, 1997), Harter paints himself nude, delicately holding a dandelion. Instead of the floating spores, he depicts the flower in full bloom, as if suggesting a complete acceptance of its aged appearance.

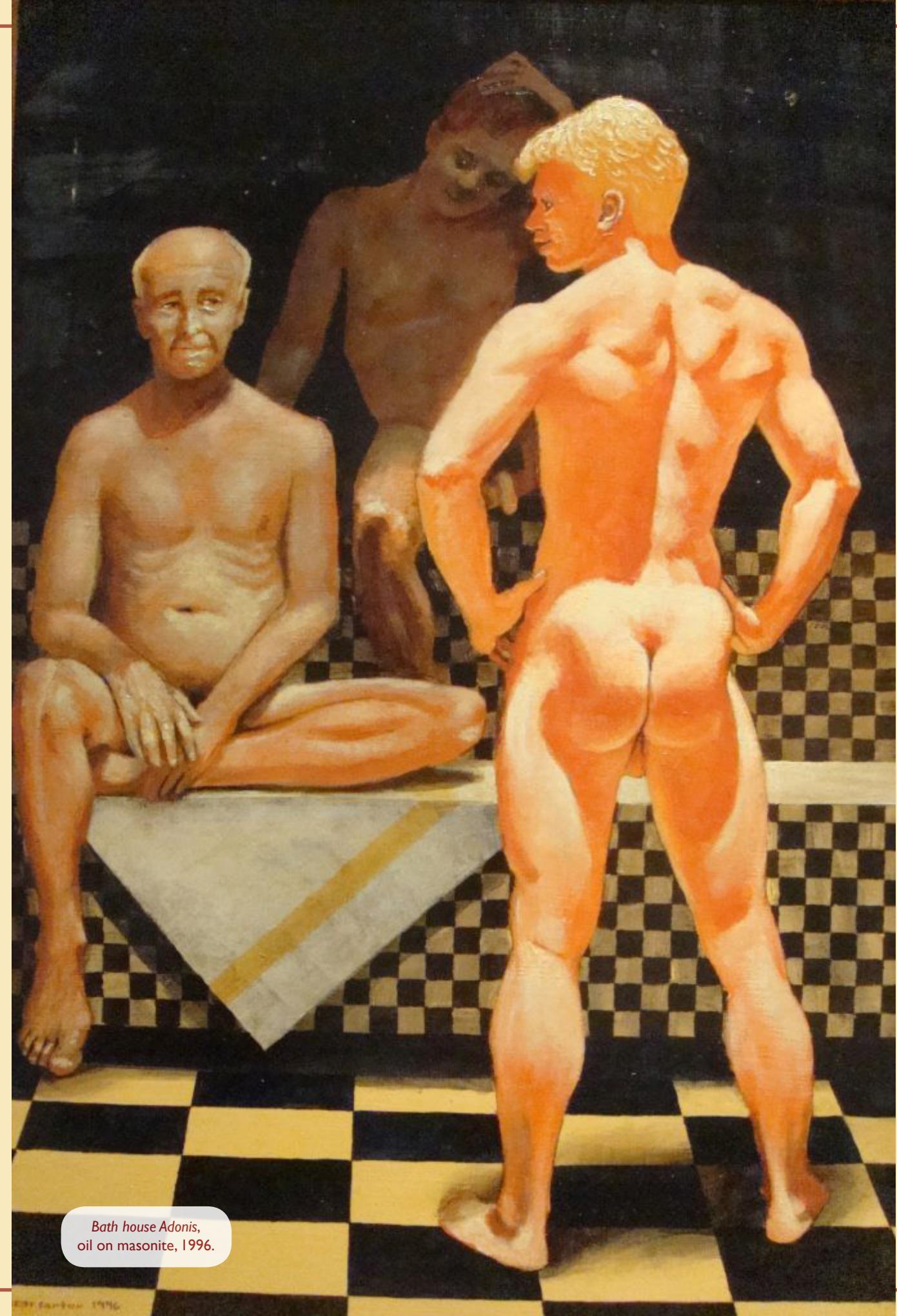
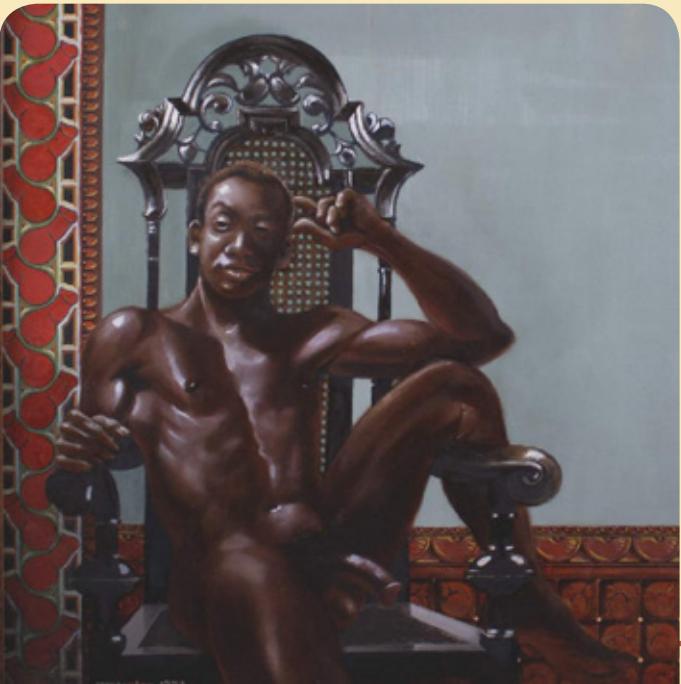
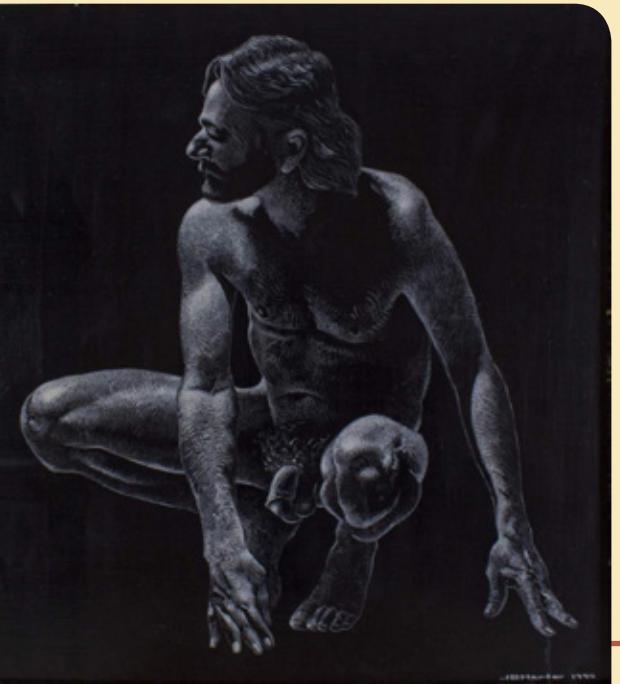
After retiring, Harter devoted himself to art full-time and traveled the world in search of interesting subjects to photograph and paint. Following the publication of a collection of paintings and drawings entitled "Encounters with the Nude Male" in 1997, he wrote:

I have been turning out works of gay-oriented art for nearly thirty years, most of which almost no one has seen.

Penis paisley (oil and acrylics on board, 1995),
Aborigine (acrylics on canvas, 1994) and *Study in Mahogany* (oil on canvas, 1994).



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Bath house Adonis,
oil on masonite, 1996.

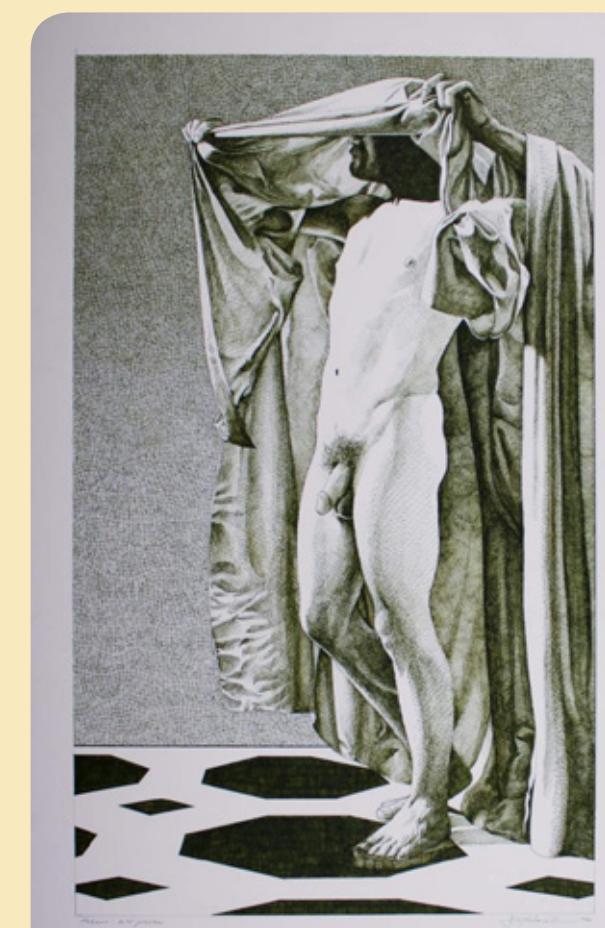
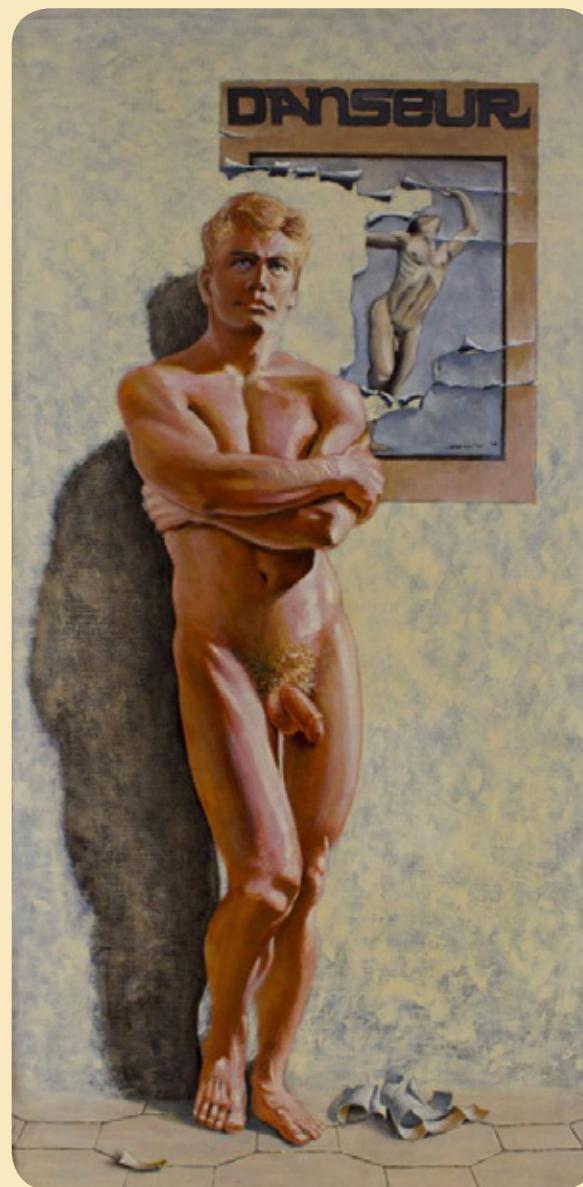
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Monument, oil
on canvas, 2001.



Through Harter's work, it is possible to see a rich documentation of the gay experience. From 1992 to 2001, Harter created the AIDS Wall, a tribute with portraits of friends and people he admired who died from AIDS-related complications or who were living with HIV.

I am an artist first and a gay artist incidentally, but a large part of my work reflects a gay orientation. It isn't an agenda especially, but it is representative of imagery I feel is important both to me and to viewers of my work.



On the side: *Homage to Flandrin* (oil on canvas, 1994), *Darby detail* (oil on canvas, 1995) and *Helenus 2ª position* (pen and ink, 1996).

Below: *The watchers* (oil on canvas, 2000).



Harter's life ended tragically when he was murdered on March 13, 2002, at his home in New Orleans. The crime was never solved, and many believe it was motivated by homophobia.

The artist had left in his will the creation of a foundation bearing his name through a charitable fund to ensure the visibility of his art and realize his creative vision. Today, the John Burton Harter Foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes Harter's art and the causes he cared about. **8=D**

Images retrieved from the *John Burton Harter Foundation* website.





Chico Tabibuia

1936-2007

by Filipe Chagas

Gself-taught sculptor, Francisco Moraes da Silva (1936-2007) pursued various occupations throughout his life, but at the age of 22, he began working primarily as a lumberjack, collecting tabebuia (ipê), a type of wood from the Atlantic Forest that became his nickname and, later, his artistic name. Born in Aldeia Velha, in the municipality of Silva Jardim, Rio de Janeiro, **Chico Tabibuia** was only registered in Casimiro de Abreu (RJ) when he was 36 years old, along with his mother.

Tabibuia recounted that his father, Manuel Moraes da Silva, was one of more than 40 mixed-race children of a Portuguese farmer and his enslaved women, and that he became a coffee farmer and chicken breeder. His mother, Francisca Neta, a woman of mixed Indigenous and European descent, was the daughter and granddaughter of enslaved carpenters ('my great-grandfather was captured by kings and was a slave of kings, only freed when slavery ended') and had 16 more children from other marriages, but she planted cassava and made straw baskets to support the family ("she didn't give us to anyone. The father I knew was her"). Very strict, Francisca was not an affectionate mother, according to Tabibuia, and with frequent changes of partners and addresses, she ended up being a victim of domestic violence. As the eldest son, Tabibuia played the role of his mother's defender in situations related to violence and providing for the family.

At age 11, he was a guide for the blind, and at 12, he went to work in the woods, gathering firewood. From ages 13 to 17, he frequented an Umbanda temple, assisting mediums in trance and appropriating the archetypes of Afro-Brazilian religions – especially the figure of Exu, even when he adopted the Pentecostal beliefs of the Assembly of God Church.

There comes a day when Exu is on your mind and God is in your heart.



Chico and one of his Exus, 1996.

Exu, wood, s.d.



Tabibuia carved his first wooden doll with a prominent penis at the age of 10 using a penknife. Reprimanded by his mother, he only returned to sculpting regularly in the late 1970s, around the age of 40. Later, he revealed that the images of an erotic-sacred nature, marked by phallic patterns and fusions between the masculine and feminine, resulted from revelations that appeared in dreams. According to him, the Exus were a means of “removing them from the woods, imprisoning them in the sculptures and preventing them from harming people” – remembering that Exu was syncretized with the devil by Christian religions. Some critics believe that both the religiosity and eroticism in Tabibuia’s work are a way of processing the complex relationship he established with his mother and with his own sexuality*.

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*The artist's relationship with sexuality develops in an intense and complex way, involving precocious eroticism, recurrent partner changes emulating maternal behavior, episodes of betrayal and violence accompanied by a desire for discipline that led the artist to adopt periods of celibacy for the production of sculptures.



On the side, Untitled (wood, c. 1985).
Above, Family of Exus (wood, 1996).
Next page, Exu Three Heads (wood, s.d.)
and Exu (wood, s.d.).





Exu-clock, Saci and Saci, wood, s.d.

The artist did not seek to reproduce an anatomical truth or ideal of beauty, but rather aimed to materialize his imagination in sculptures that function as shelters for religious entities. This results in hybrid structures such as phallic-vaginal and breast-scrotal forms, generating displacement and autonomization of body parts in a playful process of deconstruction and reconstruction. However, this is not a pornographic perspective, but an archetypal one, operating with signs of ancestral memory, archaic fertility rites, and the dualistic aspect of creative power. Through a synthetic and symbolically based plastic expression, Tabibuia developed his language without referencing the work of other artists.

Made from whole pieces of wood, without joints, with rare additions or color, the sculptures respect the original forms of the roots and trunks collected by the artist. His production, carried out over 20 years of work, does not exceed 300 sculptures that rarely repeat themselves, bearing few similarities to each other. In addition to sculptures, Tabibuia also made rustic furniture, clogs, pencils, and other everyday items to earn some income.



Above, *Clock-Woman* and *Clock-Man*, and, below, *Untitled (Chair)*, both on wood, s.d.



Autofellatio, wood, c.1980.

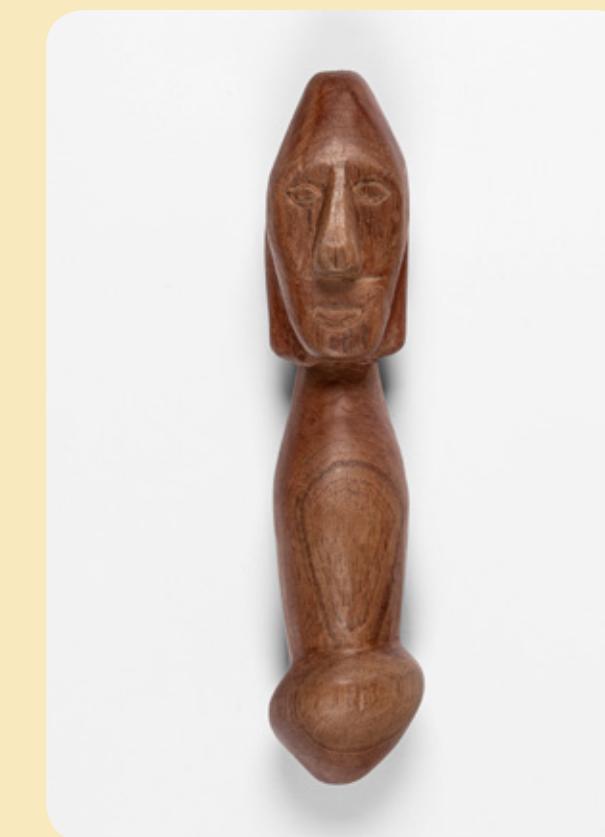


Phallus (Winged Exu), wood, 1990.



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Phalluses, wood, s.d.



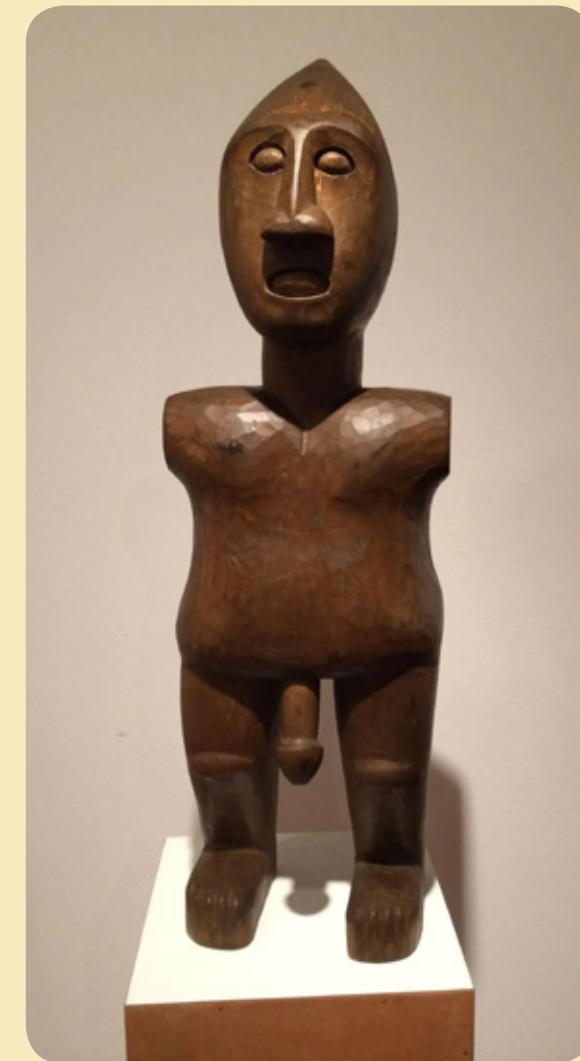
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Sculptures on wood without title or date.

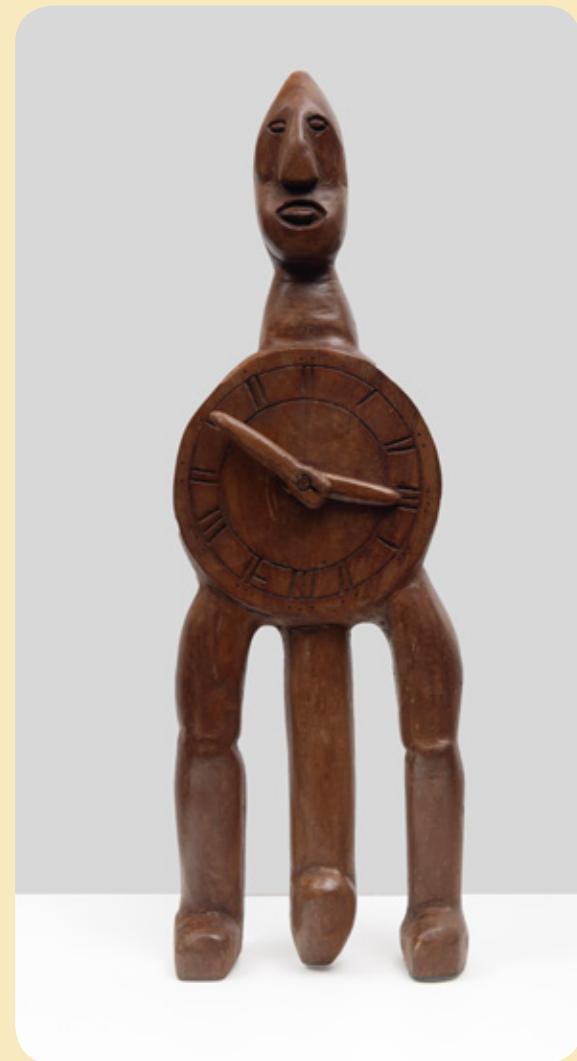


Paulo Pardal – currently the director of the Casimiro de Abreu House-Museum – was the great patron who encouraged Chico Tabibuia's artistic work when he was already considering giving up sculpting. Pardal promoted exhibitions and immortalized his works by publishing them in an art book, in addition to forming a vast art collection with some of Tabibuia's works. Exhibited in institutions such as the Grand Palais in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art of São Paulo (MAM/SP), and the National Museum of Fine Arts (MNBA) in Rio de Janeiro, Tabibuia's sculptures were the subject of analysis by authors such as Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1902-1987), Emanoel Araújo

(1940-2022), and Frederico Moraes (1936). In the book written by Pardal – *The Magical-Erotic Sculpture of Chico Tabibuia* (1989) –, Nise da Silveira (1905-1999) understands Tabibuia's sculptures as the “configuration of archetypal images reactivated in the depths of the unconscious that take shape as crude phallic images”. The psychiatrist also connects the exaggerated representations of phalluses with the myth of Priapus and the Dionysian processions (phalophobia) in classical antiquity.

Chico Tabibuia thus established himself as one of the great names in Brazilian folk art, admired for his original storytelling. **8=D**

Sculptures on wood without title or date.



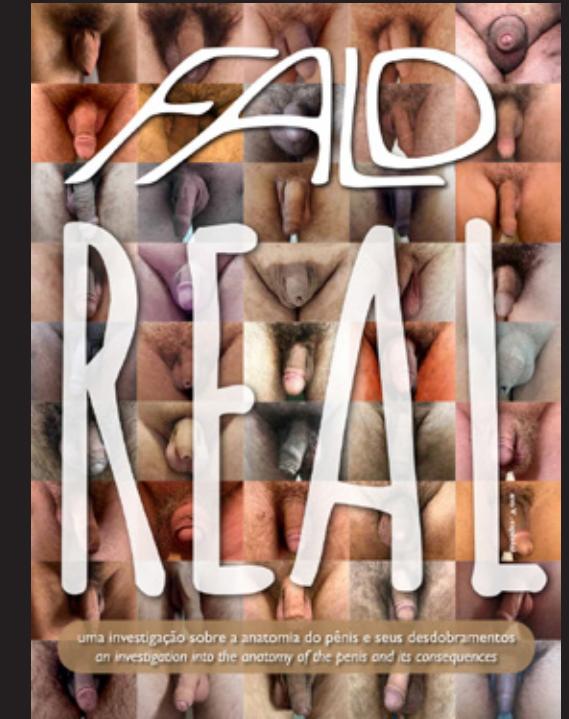
Clock, wood, s.d.



77



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PHALLORRHAGIA

Pompeii: a sexual volcano

by Filipe Chagas



When we hear “Pompeii,” we immediately think of a ruined Roman city destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. But the volcano didn’t just bury people and buildings: it was an entire culture that saw sexuality as power, as symbolic language, and as a social practice.

When excavations began in the 18th century, the European world was already immersed in centuries of Christian repression. The images shocked archaeologists and nobles, leading the city to be seen as degenerate, improper, pagan, and its fate as proof of divine action against sex. Many pieces were kept in the so-called Secret Cabinet (*Gabinetto Segreto*, or *Gabinetto degli Oggetti Osceni*, the Cabinet of Obscene Objects) of the Naples Museum, a locked room accessible only to “cultured” adult men with the authorization of the institution’s director. Only in the 20th century was part of this collection freely exhibited again, revealing the distance between ancient Rome and Christian morality.

Roman phallocentrism

Roman sexuality was more linked to social and symbolic order than to morality. In Pompeii, eroticism was neither hidden nor marginal: it was part of the everyday landscape, art, and thought. More than 10,000 inscriptions have been found on the city walls, many of them related to sex. One man wrote: “I had Lucius and he moaned like a woman.” There were declarations of love, insults, improvised verses, lists of conquests, fragments that reveal that eroticism belonged not only to the elite or to mythology, but to everyone. In other words, desire was a common language, raw or refined.

Furthermore, Roman religion did not oppose nudity and sex – on the contrary, it often incorporated them. Cults of Bacchus, Venus, Priapus, and Isis involved sexual elements, fertility rituals, and phallic symbols. Indeed, while exploring the city’s ruins, one encounters the constant presence of phallic symbols carved into pavements, painted on walls, molded into oil lamps, wind chimes, statues, and amulets. The phallus was not obscene. It was a symbol of fertility, protection, and prosperity. It was an object of worship, offerings, and amulets against the “evil eye.” It represented not only desire but the very vital force, the impulse that moved nature and



The last day in Pompeii, oil on canvas by Karl Bryullov, 1833.



Fascinus

In the religion of Ancient Rome, the *fascinus* was the personification of the divine phallus, a masculine generative power located within the home, considered sacred. It referred to effigies, amulets, and spells used to invoke its divine protection. It was called *medicus invidiae*, a “doctor against envy,” that is, protection against the evil eye. The verb “to fascinate” ultimately derives from the Latin *fascinum*, meaning “to use the power of the *fascinus*,” “to practice magic,” “to enchant,” “to bewitch.”



Phalluses – often winged – were ubiquitous in Roman culture, appearing as jewelry objects such as pendants and rings, relief sculptures, lamps, wind chimes (*tintinnabula*), and amulets that warded off evil from children, especially boys, and generals. The phallus's victory over the power of the evil eye can be represented by ejaculation towards a disembodied eye.



Relief of a phallus with legs ejaculating in an evil eye on which a scorpion is seated, in Leptis Magna (Libya).

Hic Habitat Felicitas (“here dwells happiness”) is a common phrase found in Pompeii and other Roman cities, associated with phallic representations. It was frequently seen in homes and commercial establishments, such as a Pompeian bakery.

humankind. At the crossroads between eroticism and faith, Pompeii showed that the body was a channel between the human and the divine, an instrument for transcendence and fortune.

However, this phallocentrism imposed a patriarchal, male-dominated system since it regulated not the sexual act itself, but the roles assumed within it: the free man and citizen should be active and dominant, while submissive passivity was reserved for women and, in homosexual relationships, for enslaved people, foreigners, or young people in the initiation phase. Therefore, virility was a matter of prestige, public posture, and power.

Eroticism as ostentation

The erotic images of Pompeii encompass an impressive range of practices: heterosexual penetrations in various positions, oral sex (both male and female), anal sex, scenes with two men, with groups, with deities. Relationships between women are less frequent, but appear on vases, inscriptions, and references.

In private homes – such as the famous House of the Vettii, where the *Priapus* fresco that opens this article was found, as a symbol of abundance – erotic scenes were proudly displayed, integrated into the luxurious decor. These images were not pornographic in the modern sense, as they did not seek private arousal, but rather the public ostentation of knowledge, humor, and virility. Just imagine: displaying the erotic was an affirmation of culture, wealth, and power!



Mosaic with an erotic scene from the House of the Faun in Pompeii.



One of the illustrated scenes depicting sexual acts advertises the specialties of the resident prostitutes.



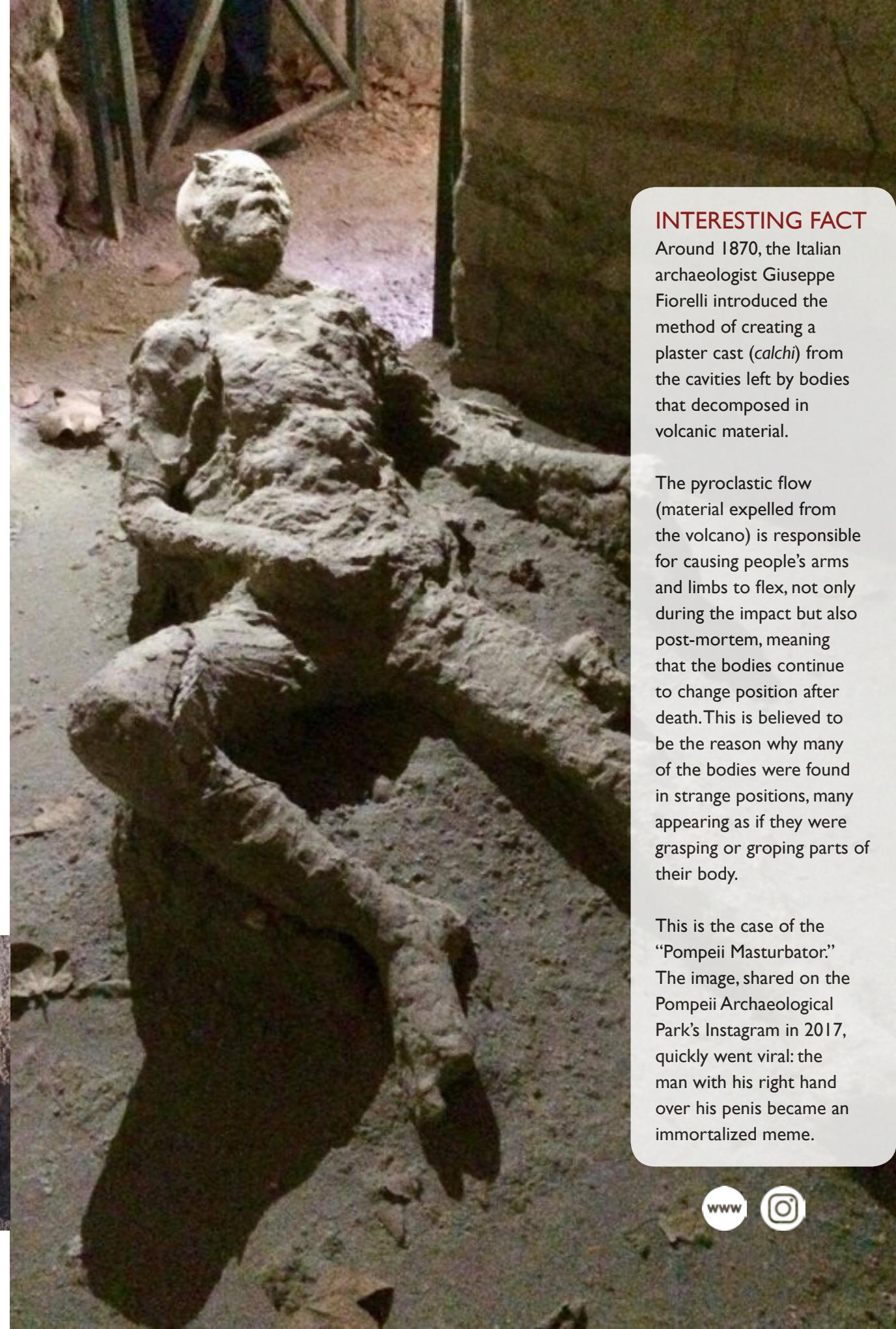
The city's largest known brothel – the Lupanar Grande – had small cells with stone beds (probably covered with fabrics) where, above the doors, frescoes illustrating various sexual positions could be seen, serving both as a “visual menu” and as an eroticization of the environment. There, sex was commerce, but also a language. It was not uncommon for patrons to leave poetic or obscene inscriptions. “Here I made love to the girl for two asses,”* one writes. Another replies: “She’s worth more than that.” The wall became a dialogue between bodies, desires, and vanities. The prostitutes – generally enslaved or freed, often foreigners – adopted fictitious or artistic names and also left inscriptions on the walls as a form of presence, of affirmation within the margins.

And to get to the brothel, phalluses carved into the basalt surface of the road or into stones embedded in the facades of the houses gave visitors the direction.

Pompeii allows us to imagine a less guilt-ridden, less invisible sexuality. A sexuality marked by social inequalities, yes – especially in the relationships between masters and enslaved people – but also by a continuous erotic presence in urban life, in art, in spirituality. It also reveals what we silence, what we censor, and what we still seek. Beneath the ashes, we see sexuality as language, memory, and culture. **8=D**



*The As was a Roman coin, made of bronze and later copper, that circulated during the Republic and the Empire.



INTERESTING FACT

Around 1870, the Italian archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli introduced the method of creating a plaster cast (*calchi*) from the cavities left by bodies that decomposed in volcanic material.

The pyroclastic flow (material expelled from the volcano) is responsible for causing people's arms and limbs to flex, not only during the impact but also post-mortem, meaning that the bodies continue to change position after death. This is believed to be the reason why many of the bodies were found in strange positions, many appearing as if they were grasping or groping parts of their body.

This is the case of the “Pompeii Masturbator.” The image, shared on the Pompeii Archaeological Park’s Instagram in 2017, quickly went viral: the man with his right hand over his penis became an immortalized meme.



Phallic architecture

by Filipe Chagas



The Gherkin (2003) in London is more like *The Dildo...*

You probably know someone who has taken perspective photos of themselves playfully performing oral sex on the Eiffel Tower. You might even have taken photos yourself (see me here on the side)! Architectural designs with extreme verticality instinctively lead us to this. In universal symbolism, what points upwards is associated with the masculine, active, and penetrative. And this comes from an Egyptian tradition! But let's learn the whole story...

It is widely suggested by archaeologists that upright stone blocks, dating from 5000 to 2500 BC and found in various parts of Europe – especially the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Iberian Peninsula – may be associated with fertility cults, the sacralization of the land, and a connection with the heavens. Although their function is still debated, these menhirs – as the blocks are called – could indicate phallic symbolism. Some Sumerian and Akkadian cities erected ritual columns in temples (ziggurats), which may have carried phallic meaning as “axes of the world” connecting heaven and earth. However, Egyptian obelisks were the first to directly embody this symbolism.



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One of the fifteen menhirs of the Padrão, located in Algarve, Portugal.

Could it have been an inspiration for the building in London on the previous page?



Created in Ancient Egypt (around 2500 BC), the obelisk is a monolithic stone pillar with a square base that tapers slightly to a four-sided pyramid at the tip (*pyramion*). From the Greek *obeliskos*, a diminutive for “needle,” it symbolized a petrified ray of sunlight, a bridge between the human and divine worlds, as this architectural monument was dedicated to the god Ra*. They were usually placed alone at the entrance of temples, without other structures nearby, making them stand out as an architectural landmark. This isolation reinforces the idea of divine power (of the pharaoh), protection, and dominance. However, there were no sexual connotations associated with obelisks.



Above, the Temple of Luxor in Egypt with a single obelisk at the entrance, as the other was taken to Paris and has been in the Place de la Concorde since 1836.



* Egyptian symbolism is very rich and multidimensional, and therefore there are more contemporary symbolic interpretations – without scientific proof – that see the obelisk as the lost phallus of Osiris (fertility and regeneration) or the erect phallus of Geb (divine and creative power).



The obelisk in St. Peter's Square in the Vatican was taken to Alexandria after the conquest of Egypt. In 37 AD, Caligula moved it to his circus in Rome and arriving in their current locations in the 19th century.



Cleopatra's Needle in Central Park in New York, a pair with another that is in London, both taken from Egypt by Rome and arriving in their current locations in the 19th century.



The well-known Washington Monument is the tallest predominantly stone structure in the world and the tallest obelisk in the world.

The Roman Empire (1st century BC to 5th century AD) took Egyptian obelisks as trophies of conquest, maintaining their association with political power and domination. Without being explicitly sexual, it already approached the idea of male power. In the Baroque period (15th to 17th centuries), there was an architectural fusion of other cultures, and the obelisk returned to configure a new conception of space – as in St. Peter's Square in Rome, now in the Vatican – where the monolith gained the interpretation of “triumphant Christian faith,” and some received crosses on the *pyramion*. Artists and humanists were already beginning to play with the phallic analogy in private circles.

In the 19th century, Egyptomania exploded in Europe and the USA, a veritable cultural fever following archaeological discoveries that appropriated Egyptian aesthetics and transported obelisks to the Western urban landscape, associated with the “civilizing power” of colonial nations. In the European imagination, Egypt was also associated with luxury, eroticism, and mysticism, which led to the emergence of academic and literary writings in the repressed and repressive Victorian England that, mixed with emerging psychoanalytic theories on the continent, fostered the interpretation of the obelisk as a phallus erected towards the sky. Therefore, even if the original intention is purely religious or aesthetic, popular perception can end up sexualizing the form. Clearly, a monument that is robust at the base and narrower at the top resembles penile anatomy, even more so when the *pyramion* was made of gold and ended up looking like a stylized glans.

From then on, any vertical building immediately receives a phallic interpretation to call its own, even ancient ones that obviously weren't built for sexual purposes, such as church towers, bell towers, Islamic minarets, or even industrial chimneys. It would be no different with American skyscrapers, which pierced the city skies as signs of power, ambition, and dominance that the patriarchal, white, heteronormative, colonial, and capitalist society needed to display.

Phallic symbolism in architecture is a broad topic. Supporting columns have already been given phallic interpretations – such as Trajan's Column – but what is important is to understand the cultural interpretation given from a specific moment in human history. In other words, it is a socially constructed representation. **8=D**

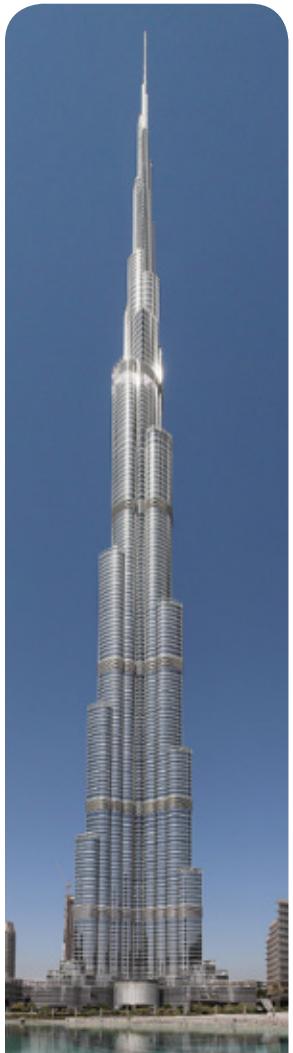
Skyscrapers around the world:

- [1] Woolworth Building (USA, 1913), considered the first skyscraper;
- [2] Chrysler Building (USA, 1930);
- [3] Empire States Building (USA, 1931);
- [4] One World Trade Center (USA, 2014);
- [5] Gazprom Tower / Lakhta Center (Russia, 2019);
- [6] Burj Khalifa (United Arab Emirates, 2010);
- [7] Taipei 101 (Taiwan, 2004);
- [8] Shanghai Tower (China, 2015); e
- [9] Petronas Twin Towers (Malaysia, 1998).



INTERESTING FACT

The “onion” shaped domes of Russian Orthodox churches are not phallic either. Their bulbous shape is entirely functional – to prevent snow accumulation and excessive weight on the structure – and symbolic – it looks both like a “candle” (the Church as a beacon of the world, the light of Christ) and a local helmet (the Church as a spiritual warrior and protector of the faith).





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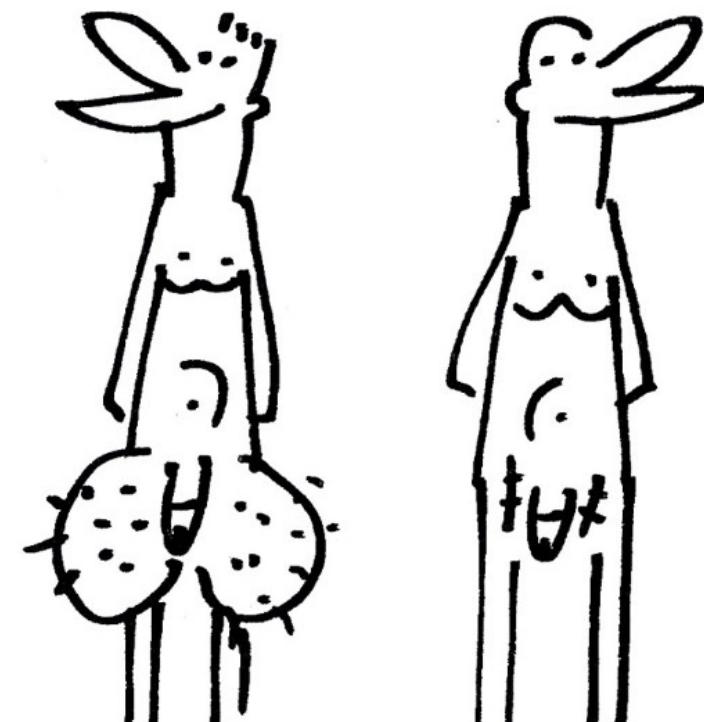
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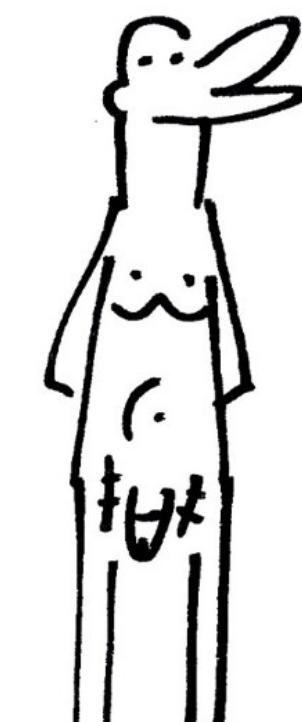


Model: Crank. Photo: self-portrait.

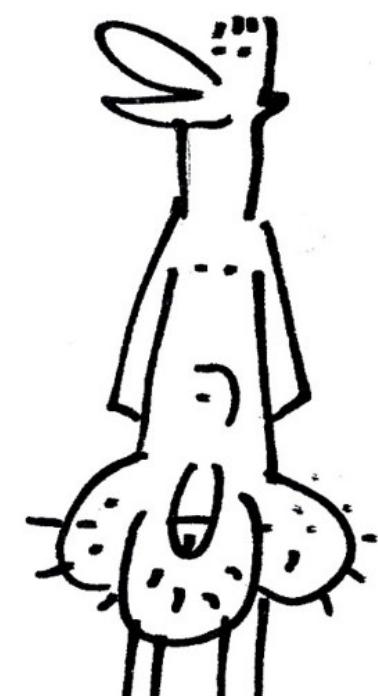
MAN. WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?



NUTS



EUNUCH



FREAK

ADÃO

95



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Falo Magazine has as its main principle the knowledge for free. It was always thought that way through online platforms, where the reach could be maximum and timeless.

The work is hard. A single person is the editor, the reporter, the researcher, the writer, the translator, the proofreader, the designer, the marketing advisor, the social media manager, the janitor etc etc ... without any financial gain. The advantage is that the cultural, social and personal gains are immeasurable. However, it is necessary that the magazine become self-sustainable and can invest in itself.

You are already our collaborator just because you access the magazine, the social networks and have made it this far. If you want to collaborate a little more to leave quality material as a cultural and social legacy, click the logo to donate!

Thanks to you who believe in the magazine and the transformative power of Art!

Alcemar Maia, Daniel Caye, Estevão Sena, Marcos Rossetton, Maria da Graça, Paulo Cibella, Paulo Mendes, Silvano Albertoni, Valfredo Portella, Christopher Norbury, Daniel Tamayo, Eduardo Filiciano, Fabio Ibiapina, Felipe Migueis, Marcos Resende and anonymous benefactors.



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