

New York

Regina Silveira

ALEXANDER GRAY ASSOCIATES
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"All issues are political issues," George Orwell famously wrote—a maxim that makes for an especially apt entry into Regina Silveira's latest exhibition. The Brazilian artist has long probed the disparity between what things are and how they present themselves. Her surreal, trademark cutouts with their distorted shadows—which she began producing in the 1990s—entertain the idea that the shadow, and not the object, reflects inward truth. But it is in this show, which unites these later wall installations with her early prints (made in the 1970s), that Silveira has struck her loudest political note.

The fifteen black-and-red silk screens in "Middle Class & Co.," 1971, depict faceless masses in tight geometric groupings, echoing the labyrinth-themed prints Silveira was creating around the same time. Originally a commentary on Brazil's minute bourgeoisie, the work's meaning expands within the gallery space to absorb the zeitgeist of twenty-first-century New York City, where class disparity mimics that of developing countries (the city's income inequality equals that of Swaziland). The series "Traps for Executives," 1974, based on newspaper images of leaders in military regimes, also acquires new relevance. These figures—garbed in dark suits, doughy at the waist, and their heads an anonymous outline—may now be read as financiers, an association heightened by the snare of lines that immobilize them, evoking a gridlocked global economy. Another suited male delivers a speech at a podium in *Discourse*, 1981/2003, a vinyl cutout based on an earlier photocopy. The figure casts a sinister shadow that does not accurately mirror it, implying an Orwellian doublespeak that feels all too fresh.



Regina Silveira, *5 fa Uxj\ UdUFU9I YW Hj c*, 1974, silk screen, 22 x 27 3/4. From the series "Armadilha para Executivos" 1974.

— Laura Mallonee