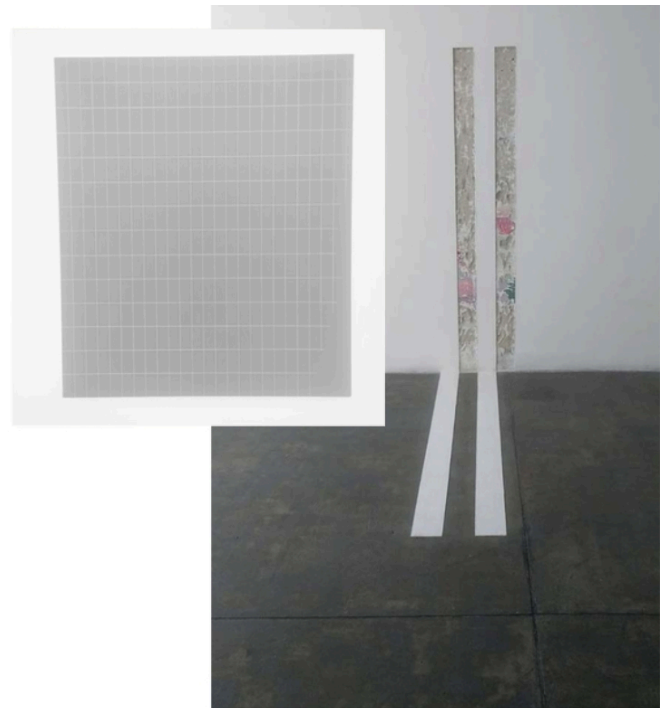


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A diagonal groove and the prospect of jail

The walk to Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, high on the hill of R. Fradique Coutinho, is always a bit of an effort. The road is steep and, because each property owner in São Paulo is responsible for the patch of pavement outside their building, in changeable states of repair. And though the gallery's architecture is a pristine white cube – walls freshly painted, features attentively designed – it houses a series of ruins. *Declive*, one of four works from 2017 making up **Manoela Medeiros's** show *Swept Dust*, mimics one's walk to its venue. Five concrete steps protrude from the wall, a partial floating staircase that leads nowhere. There are a further five chiselled rectangular gaps in the walls, as if more steps are to be added, or perhaps evidence of steps that were there, but have since disappeared or been removed. Six concrete pillars, each with diagonal grooves carved into them, stand in the middle of the gallery: impotent and useless, holding up nothing. This exhibition-in-a-state-of-disrepair is completed by the artist's removal of the plaster in two sections of the gallery's wall, appending it to the wall alongside the respective excavations. The allusion



above left Valdirlei Dias Nunes at Casa Triângulo
 above right Manoela Medeiros at Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, 2014

to ruins, the slow, melancholic disappearance of something – and this, admittedly, is me projecting onto the artwork as opposed to being led by it – chimes with Brazil's political situation right now. The slogan of the Worker's Party during the 2000 elections was *São Paulo Dá a Volta por Cima* ('São Paulo rises from the ashes'). During the run of this show, Lula, the former Worker's Party president, wildly popular during his time in office (2003–11), was convicted for accepting bribes and now faces jail. The hope of that period feels absent now, as increasingly assiduous policing reveals more and more corruption every day.