

# ERASED

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## ABSTRACT

In *Erased* (2021) Paulo Simão evokes *Erased De Kooning Drawing* by Robert Rauschenberg. By manipulating a set of images from the US Library of Congress, the author reframes the archive and develops a series that invites us to a myriad of questions and reflections. With his intervention, Simão creates a kind of anti-evocative monument and, by isolating the plinth, opens a new perspective and approach to the artistic work. This series of images emphasizes the importance and role that the artist, the artistic work and, in this particular project, the evocative public art piece assumes by validating certain values, knowledge, historical events or collective memories.

Keywords: Photography; History; Memory; Power; Politics; Monuments.

According to the artist statement: “Erased is not a gaze to the past but to the future! In *Erased*, I evoke *Erased De Kooning Drawing* (1953) by Robert Rauschenberg and, by manipulating a set of images from the US Library of Congress, I reframe the archive and develop a series that invites us to a myriad of questions and reflections.

Like Rauschenberg, when adding a subtitle to the photographic image, I assume that he erased to reveal, he took out to add and what has apparently been censored never ceased to be there. With my intervention I create a kind of anti-evocative monument and, by isolating the plinth, I open a new perspective and approach to the artistic work, moreover, emphasizing the importance and role that the artist, the artistic work and, in this project, the evocative public art piece validates certain values, knowledge, historical events or collective memories.

Finally, this sort of catalogue, that takes us to the photographic universe of Bernd and Hilla Becher, begins to reveal us the red lines, hidden by pixels that are no longer there or have been added because of today’s technological possibilities. One year after the invasion of the US Capitol we start seeing the questions I want to address. Do we need new monuments and forms of celebration? What to do with monuments that already exist in public space, which evoke and celebrate historical events that are anachronistic and collide with a contemporary and humanist vision of society? How do democracies deal with their colonial or imperial past and history? What is the role of schools, educators, cultural agents, and the media in today’s society? And finally, this series invites us to reflect upon the difficulty that political actors face to get closer to citizens, in a world with less and less mediation and how misinformation is the perfect environment for the growth of populism.



ERASED MARQUETTE STATUE



ERASED GREENE STATUE



ERASED THOMAS CASS STATUE



ERASED CAPTAIN PARKER STATUE



ERASED COL. PRESCOTT STATUE



ERASED MAJOR GENERAL JOHN FULTON REYNOLDS STATUE





ERASED GARFIELD STATUE



LIBERTY BELL MONUMENT  
LIBERTY ISLAND  
NEW YORK



ERASED FRANKLIN STATUE



ERASED HOOKER STATUE



ERASED STEPHEN DILL LEE STATUE



ERASED LEIF ERIKSSON STATUE



ERASED GEORGE CLINTON STATUE



ERASED LINCOLN STATUE





ERASED SCOTT STATUE



ERASED DANIEL WEBSTER STATUE



ERASED ASBURY STATUE

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