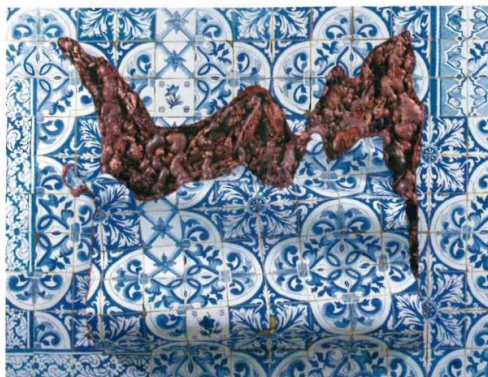


ARTNEWS

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Adriana Varejão, *Carpet-Style Tilework in Live Flesh*, 1999, oil on canvas and polyurethane on aluminum and wood support, 59" x 79" x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ ".

ADRIANA VAREJÃO

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART, BOSTON
NOVEMBER 19 - APRIL 5

Adriana Varejão's first solo museum show in the United States presented a full range of her works from 1992 to 2014, many referring to Brazil's colonial history. In her relief painting *Carpet-Style Tilework in Live Flesh* (1999) sculpted purplish-red viscera seem to spill from a torn-open wall of delicate blue-and-white Portuguese tiles. A commentary on the brutality of colonization, the piece puts into action Brazilian critic Oswald de Andrade's exhortation to artists to "cannibalize" the culture of their colonizers.

Equally jarring was *Votive Offering and Skins* (1993), a collection of what appear to be scraps of differently colored flesh, numbered and tacked to a canvas. It was inspired by 17th- and 18th-century Spanish and Portuguese *casta* paintings, which ranked mixed-race people according to parentage and relative lightness of skin.

In the same vein, Varejão turned the 1976 Brazilian census, which allowed citizens to describe their skin tone in their own words, into 33 colors of oil paint, packaged in tubes labeled with names like "Coffee with Milk" and "Sun Kissed." The artist then used the paint to create a 2014 series of self-portraits, each in a different shade. In works such as these, Varejão highlights the destructive effects of European colonists' caste system—the consequences of which are still felt in modern Brazil.

MAXIMILIANO DURÓN