

Preface and Acknowledgments

Growing up in Rio de Janeiro under the military regime, I experienced two parallel realities that left strong impressions on me: on the one hand, the arrest of my friends from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro during the street demonstrations against the dictatorship; on the other, our gatherings on the sands of Ipanema Beach, where we witnessed the era's evolving counterculture. During my years as a journalist, my inquisitive nature led me to learn more about this period in Brazilian history. My involvement with the visual arts as an art historian, which did not come until much later, gave me the opportunity to bring together these two disparate realities: the reaction against the military regime and the artistic production of that time. At its core, this book is the result of my interest in both worlds and of my need to reconcile them.

Many people helped me along the way, and I am grateful to have the opportunity to acknowledge them. First of all, I owe a debt of gratitude to Frederico Morais, who granted me long and patient interviews and shared personal materials from his private archives, confirming that there was a fascinating story to be told about the intersection of art and politics under the Brazilian dictatorship. Morais was a pivotal player during the period as a curator and art critic, and during our many interviews at his home in

the bohemian neighborhood of Santa Tereza his cooperation and generosity were invaluable.

Central to this project were the indispensable oral testimonies given by the artists Artur Barrio, Antonio Manuel, and Cildo Meireles, whose works I discuss in depth in this book. I thank them for sharing their life stories during our many interviews as well as for making available visual and written materials from their private archives. Their assistance was essential, and this book would not have been possible without it.

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I dedicate this book to Joe Friedman, who patiently kept waiting for so long. Joe: I do!!!