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Antonio Tarsis, *untitled*, 2023, matchboxes and coal, 180 x 210 cm. Photo: Eduardo Ortega.
Courtesy the artist and Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo / Rio de Janeiro, Brasil

Antonio Tarsis: *recipe for disaster*

Fortes D'Aloia & Gabriel, São Paulo, 4 March – 15 April

When Tarsis was fourteen he was faced with a problem: living in Arraial do Retiro, a favela in Salvador with just his brothers, he realised that he needed a plan to make some money, 'something I could become good at in five years' that didn't rely on the underfunded school he attended. He decided that something would be art. Which of course gave him another problem, as he didn't have any cash for art supplies. But he devoured books about painting and history in the local arts centre and realised he was surrounded by stuff that could provide *painterly* material: mainly the fruit and veg boxes that littered the streets after market days and the pale blue match boxes favoured by the neighbouring drug users. These he could collage together in what would become rich Matisse-adjacent studies of colour and form. While he has shown with galleries in Europe after a move to London, this is his first major solo exhibition in Brazil. *Oliver Basciano*