



FEATURED TEXTS OR PROJECTS

**A continuous, diversified and sustained  
photographic practice**

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## A continuous, diversified and sustained photographic practice

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### Abstract

This essay examines three photographic projects that reflect diverse approaches to territory, identity, and memory. In *Da Pedra ao Osso*, João Ramilo explores the ontological meaning of place through his home village of Louriceira, addressing themes of disappearance, change, and nostalgia in the rural world. José Miguel Ribeiro's *Na Cratera do Vulcão*, grounded in Paulo Valverde's ethnographic notes on São Tomé and Príncipe, engages with the coexistence of the living and the dead, using photography to probe the spectral boundaries between visibility and invisibility, material and immaterial. Finally, Luísa Fernandes' *Para Além da Forma* challenges stereotypical and sexualised representations of the LGBTIQ+ community, creating a space for self-expression and recognition. Together, these projects highlight the vitality of contemporary photographic practice as reflection and critique of society's turbulence.

Keywords: Teaching, Contemporary Photography Discourses, Photographic practice, Research and reflection, Visual criticism

### Biography

Photographer, musician, researcher and programmer in the field of photography. Professor at the School of Arts of the Portuguese Catholic University, he is a researcher at CITAR – Center for Research in Science and Technology of the Arts. PhD in Science and Technology of Arts from the Catholic University of Porto. Since 2018, he has been the coordinator of the Photography Masters at Escola das Artes. He is also an independent programmer at CAAA (Centro Subjects Art and Architecture) and editor of LEBOP, a publisher specializing in photography books. He has already published several monographs and his photographic work is represented in several prestigious private and public collections.

### Essay

In his project, *Da Pedra ao Osso*, student João Ramilo works on the question of territory and its relationship with place, more specifically, his home village of Louriceira. According to the student: 'This desire was born out of the restlessness of seeing the place where I grew up disappear and the inability to fight the circumstances without necessarily wanting to change its nature, becoming a village on the verge of extinction'. Thus, this body of work shows an ontological understanding of place, in which the relationship between the self and places is established, which raises an essential reflection on the existence and death of spaces, places and territories. The manifestation of this problem realises the essential processes of permanent changes in the rural world. This project emerges from the notions of space, place, territory, personal or shared memories, remembrance, and nostalgia without necessarily wanting to touch on a political sphere. According to João Ramilo: 'I approach Louriceira from a perspective of farewell and absence'.

The visual exploration of the territory is also one of the central themes in the work of José Miguel Ribeiro and his series *Na Cratera do Vulcão*. Based on the texts and ethnographic notes written by anthropologist Paulo Valverde during his fieldwork in São Tomé and Príncipe between 1995 and 1999 and posthumously compiled by João de Pina Cabral in the book *Máscara, Mato e Morte: Textos para uma etnografia de São Tomé*, Celta Editora (2000), this photographic project seeks to capture and understand how, on these islands, the world of the dead coexists side by side with the world of the living.

In the words of José Miguel Ribeiro: 'Working from a territory that is familiar to me, I propose to reflect on the theme of spirits, spectres, apparitions, belief, fiction and performance on the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe, assuming photography as a means of representation of a spectral nature, which is positioned on a privileged plane of connection between the notions of life and death, of past and present, of the material and the intangible, belonging simultaneously to the realms of the invisible and of vision.'

The difference of approaches and themes developed by the students during their master's degree in photography is visible in the work of Luísa Fernandes and her series *Para Além da Forma*. This project arose from observing the stereotypical and sexualised representation of the LGBTIQ+ community to create a space for members of this community to express themselves freely. To create this body of work, concepts of misogyny and its sexualisation, and how it is directly related to the stereotypes formed about the LGBTIQ+ community, influenced this entire photographic project in order to explore the archetypes of recognition and representation of the LGBTIQ+ community. These three projects, as well as attesting to the diversity of approaches and themes of the projects developed by the students, ensure and reinforce the vitality and constant reinvention of photographic practice as a mode of observation but also an essential reflection on contemporary society and the 'turbulence' that plagues our existence.

## *João Ramilo*



## Da Pedra ao Osso

