



FEATURED TEXTS OR PROJECTS

**The Photographic Image: Memory,  
History, and Identity in Artistic  
Expression**

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## The Photographic Image: Memory, History, and Identity in Artistic Expression

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### Abstract

The Photographic Image: Memory, History, and Identity in Artistic Expression presents four projects exploring photography's role in shaping narratives of self and community. Gonçalo Estevão reflects on queer visibility through cinematic references to Xavier Dolan, while Inês Leal reconfigures archival images of the Pejão Mines to address memory and sociopolitical identity. João Bernardo documents Serra da Estrela's ageing communities in *A Dança dos Mosquitos*, blending ethnography and film. Raul Macedo's *Hummin'* that old distant melody captures fleeting urban moments as introspective reflections. Together, these works highlight photography's power to mediate between history, identity, and artistic expression.

Keywords: The Photographic Image, Memory, History, Identity, Artistic Expression

### Biography

**José Carneiro** is professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto (FBAUP) since 1999. Member of FBAUP's Executive Board. Director of the MA in Image Design (MDI). Director of the Centre for Studies in Design and Art (CEDA) from 2015 to 2024. PhD in Art & Design from the FBAUP, 2014. Researcher at ID+ Research Institute for Design, Media and Culture and collaborates with i2ADS – Research Institute in Art, Design and Society. He develops artistic and communication design work. He is the author of the [www.recordsansphotographs.com](http://www.recordsansphotographs.com) project.

**Susana Lourenço Marques** is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Porto, with a Ph.D. in Communication and Art from Universidade Nova de Lisboa. She is a researcher at i2ADS and author of *Ether / um laboratório de Fotografia e História* (2018) and *Pó, cinza, nevoeiro* (2018). She co-edited *Livros de Fotografia em Portugal da Revolução ao Presente* (2023), *Lágrimas de Crocodilo* (2022), and *Pedagogy of the Streets, Porto 1977* (2018). As a curator, she has organized exhibitions such as *Quem te ensinou? Ninguém* (2016), *Imagem/ Técnica* (2020), *Opacity of Water* (2021), *Loss of Aura* (2022), and *Eternal Youth* (Porto Photography Biennale, 2023). She co-founded the publishing house *Pierrot le Fou* in 2014.

### Essay

*The Photographic Image: Memory, History, and Identity in Artistic Expression In What Would You Do If I Died Today?*, produced within the scope of the Master's in Graphic Design and Editorial Projects, Gonçalo Estevão explores the intersection between cinema, artistic identity, and queer representation. The project focuses on the importance of LGBTIQ+ visibility in cinema, examining how this influences narratives and character development. His images reveal the construction of small narratives that, through the work of Xavier Dolan, explore the fluctuations in the lives of queer individuals. By combining Dolan's fictional stories with real-life experiences, the project seeks to give visibility to underrepresented LGBTIQ+ voices, celebrating the complexity of their identities while challenging stereotypes and promoting a deeper understanding of their lives. The title, inspired by a quote from Dolan's film *I Killed My Mother* (2009), is suggested as a metaphor for these characters' vulnerable and marginalised condition.

Inês Leal presents the project *Periódica*, produced following her undergraduate degree in Communication Design, where she uses the archive as a tool for visual research. Focusing on the mining activity of the Pejão Mines, located in the Douro Coal Basin, she uses editing and montage of photographs from *O Pejão*, a publication produced by the Douro Coal Company. In this context, the archive is reconfigured to show the sociopolitical and identity-re-lated impacts of mining on a community marked by tradition and abandonment. The recombination of archival images challenges the usual imagery associated with this activity, creating analogies and visual relationships that encourage critical reflection on the historical and cultural heritage of the region. The project transcends mere documentation, establishing a dialogue between the past and the present.

João Bernardo presents the project *A Dança dos Mosquitos* [The Dance of the Mosquitoes], developed as a student in the Master's in Image Design, linking ethnographic photography with film still photography as the basis for his research for the film of the same name. The project addresses the collective memory of the populations living at the foot of the Serra da Estrela, documenting the spaces, objects, people, and animals that form the social fabric of that region. João Bernardo explores visual fragments that reveal the solitude and abandonment of an ageing and gradually depopulated territory. In this project, photography plays a central role in the pre-production process, serving as a way to highlight and document the traces of life, and the absence of life. By rejecting linear narrative, the project seeks a more emotional connection with the memory of this place, blending facts with the personal and collective imagination of those who inhabit it.

Lastly, Raul Macedo, who attended an undergraduate degree in Fine Arts, presents the project *Hummin' that old distant melody*. His photographic approach is more intimate and personal, reflecting his way of seeing and thinking about the world around him. His photographs capture seemingly banal and ephemeral moments, from portraits of strangers in the streets to everyday urban scenes, such as fog and walks through cities. For Raul Macedo, photography is a medium of introspection, a distillation of sensations accumulated over time, recording the passage of life through layers of thought and memory that shape his gaze.

**About the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto**

The teaching of photography at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Porto stands out for its interdisciplinary approach, allowing students from different courses to integrate photography as an essential tool in the development of their projects. In both undergraduate programmes, such as Fine Arts and Communication Design, and Master's degrees, like Image Design, Graphic Design and Editorial Projects, photography emerges as a cross-cutting medium for expression, research, and documentation, enhancing the student's education and encouraging various narratives and contexts in dialogue with other artistic and scientific fields.

For this edition of *Contrast*, four students were selected who developed their projects during the 2023/2024 academic year, exploring the photographic image as a form of artistic expression and demonstrating its relevance in the development of personal approaches to memory, history, and identity.





***Gonçalo Estêvão***

