



ANDAR PARA EXISTIR / RUN IN ORDER TO EXIST.

Lorenzo Armendáriz & Brun Morais

29. September till 7. December 2023 . Thr – Sa: 4pm till 7pm
Opening: Thursday, 28. September 2023, 7-10pm


With the exhibition *Andar para existir* ("Running to Exist") by Lorenzo Armendáriz and Brun Morais, the Kai Dikhas Foundation pursues two main goals: to make the German public aware of some of the realities of Roma in Latin America and, at the same time, to stimulate a debate about photography, identity and processes of subjectivation in the context of Roma art and culture. Photographic images not only depict reality, but also create new realities themselves, and these realities are not simply (visual) objects or decorations in our lives; they impose a way of seeing and being on us. What we see and what we don't see, that is, the regime of visibility in which we move and observe. It is not something spontaneous or free, but is permeated by dominant or hegemonic distinctions that organise the possibilities of seeing. The images in fact impose a repertoire of frames and values, of divisions and edges that make certain identities visible or make others invisible.

Lorenzo Armendáriz (Mexico, born 1961) remembers his grandfather's large hands and rings. He was a tall, dark man who lived in a truck and was called "El Húngaro" (the Hungarian). He visited him as a child, but only as an adult did he learn that he was not from Hungary, but part of the Mexican Roma community. His photographic Project is an inner search for his personal traces and the portrait of Roma culture, which is little known in Latin America despite its centuries-old presence. The project emerged from this restlessness. Since 1995, Armendáriz has built up a photographic archive of the lives of some Roma families in Mexico. There, he has used his camera to capture the lives and memories of the LUDAR. This group, originating from the former Romania, came to Mexico at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century and integrated themselves into Mexican society by performing on the streets, trading and running travelling cinemas. It was nomadic families who travelled much of the Mexican territory in the 50s, 60s and 70s. This memory of wandering is what Lorenzo photographed, where the journey is not an escape but a way of life to exist and affirm oneself. His black and white images delve into the lives and histories of Roma families, playing with shadows, reflections and atmospheres to make the photographs vivid, contextualised documents that aim to break down stereotypes.

Brun Morais (Brazil, born 1989) confronts the dominant representation of Roma identity through inverted sentences and quotations from decolonial theory in both his anthropological research and his interactive art installations made of mirrors. His exhibited multi-part installation "Reflections", which is one of the latest acquisitions of Kai Dikha's collection, combines contemporary art and academic concepts in a series of installations that invite us to think about subalternity, marginalisation, intersectionality and standpoint theory. "Reflections" is based on

Info@kaidikhas.com
www.kaidikhas.com
Steuernummer: 27/641/09380

Prinzenstraße 84.2, 10969 Berlin
Telefon + 49.30.343 99 309
Telefax + 49.30.346 63 643

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the reading of "Can the Subaltern speak?" by the Indian author, scholar, literary theorist and feminist critic Gayatri Spivak (1985), who is a very important mastermind in the context of postcolonial studies. Against the universalism of hegemonic Western culture, Morais develops an expressive power based on a pluriversalism of Roma identity.

Both artists, each with their own artistic means, belong to different generations and are actively searching for their own identity. Running to exist.

Curated by: Álvaro Garreaud / Moritz Pankok