

“Faces of the Earth”

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Background

In 2017, Mexico ranked second in femicides among twenty-four nations, just below Brazil. However, in 2019 it ranked first. Fifty-nine percent of women who have a partner suffer physical, emotional, and sexual violence. Tragically, at least 10 women are murdered in Mexico every day.

The Mezquital Valley is in the central Mexican highlands, within the physiographic province of the neo volcanic plateau. It encompasses on the western side of the State of Hidalgo, north of Mexico. The Valley of Hidalgo is a valley where the Otomi and Nahuatl indigenous heritage survives, harmoniously united by the Hispanic heritage.

The lifestyle in this area is conditioned by external factors that gradually have affected the environmental, cultural, and social balance. Impoverishment has long caused the migration of its inhabitants, thus initiating a period of diaspora that results in the detachment of the peasants from the land. In particular, the environmental and cultural wealth of rural areas in Hidalgo is not utilized for the benefit of its inhabitants as there is a lack of basic services (potable water, roads, electricity, etc.).

It is in this area, where women have positioned themselves in various settings to make themselves heard as key authors in the decision-making processes that concern the various needs of their localities, fighting for equality and respect. Women are frequently excluded from social and development processes, and this oppression perpetuates their vulnerable position throughout their lives. In addition to the high rate of domestic violence to which they are subjected, they generally come from families with minimal income. Due to this economic precariousness, the men commonly emigrate abroad illegally, mainly to the United States of America, leaving the women and their children adrift. Ultimately, it is the women who provide for their families financially.

Development

The project is based on field work in the Valle del Mezquital, through direct contact with the populations affected by the Mexican political system, it aims to record through photography and video, their precarious living conditions while placing an emphasis on the invaluable and crucial role played by women in creating and maintaining their communities.

The exhibition project will combine photography with documentary video. A short video will be created with testimonies from women who will tell their personal stories in parallel. Each of them will talk about their daily life and the surrounding circumstances that have determined their living conditions. They all live in the Valle del Mezquital, in different communities and do not know one other. However, their powerful stories collaborate to express the dire need for profound changes to be enacted to relieve them of the excessive suffering experienced within their families as well as withing the external environment.

Along with the short video, a series of photographs will be exhibited that will show the women and their immediate surroundings. The portraits of the protagonists will be enlarged to a large format and together with these, there will be small and medium enlargements that will capture their lives at home, work, the surrounding environment, etc.

Photographs

Some selected images are shown below. However, a great deal of material was obtained during the extended stay, so the selection shown is merely a sample.

Human Beings













Loves









Places







HOGA BUI
YA HNAHNU
NGUE A



DE GUEHYU
YA UENDARA
BATHA RABOTAH I



OTOMIES ILUSTRA

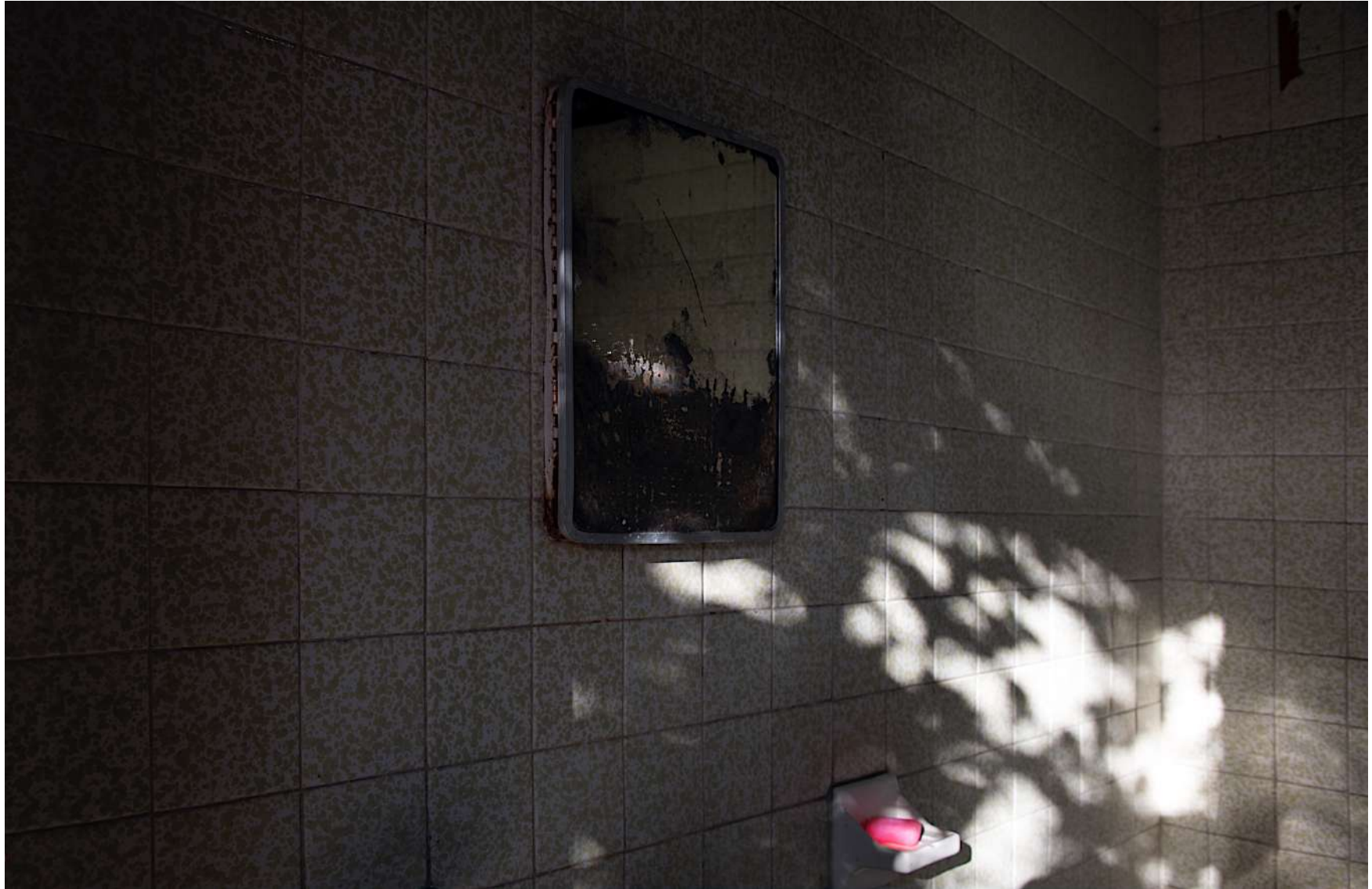




Homes















Household Chores











