

# GALERIA FILOMENA SOARES

## **Edgar Martins**

### ***Anton's Hand is made of Guilt. No Muscle or Bone. He has a Gung-ho Finger and a Grief-stricken Thumb.***

Opening reception: Saturday, September 21, 4pm - 7pm

September 21 - November 16, 2024

*Anton's Hand is made of Guilt. No Muscle or Bone. He has a Gung-ho Finger and a Grief-stricken Thumb.* is a research-based documentary project rooted on actual events, a lipogram and an imaginary anthropological study in one.

Developed in North Africa from 2018-2024, this part-documentary, part-speculative project is based on a poignant and personal experience: the death and disappearance of Edgar Martins' close friend, photojournalist Anton Hammerl, during the 2011 Libyan war. Hammerl's harrowing story serves as a springboard to explore the decisive but paradoxical role that photography has played in conflict zones, the misinformation ecosystem surrounding modern conflict, and the representation of death and personal loss.

Drawing inspiration from the writings of Georges Didi-Huberman and Georges Perec, and through a meta-representational approach that looks beyond the referent – which the artist terms 'impossible document' – the project seeks innovative approaches to respond to war, photographic ethics, bereavement and missing persons.

Like Perec and Didi-Huberman's work, this story is warped by absences. It speaks of the difficulty of documenting, testifying, witnessing, remembering, and imagining war.

This exhibition features immersive, multi-media installations encompassing original and archival photography, civilian imagery sourced from private Islamist, Libyan and dark web forums, sound, custom slideshows and equipment recovered from the Libyan conflict, such as mobile phones and 35mm photographic cameras.

This expansive and multifaceted exhibition is accompanied by a photobook by the same title, Martins' most ambitious and personal monograph to date.

*Anton's Hand is made of Guilt. No Muscle of Bone. He has a Gung-ho Finger and a Grief-stricken Thumb.* is the final iteration of Martins' *Our War*, a project which earned the artist several prestigious accolades, including the Sony World Photographer of the Year 2023, the International Photography Awards Film Photographer of the Year 2023, and the Juror' Choice Category of the Hariban Award 2023.

**Edgar Martins** was born in Évora (1977, Portugal) but grew up in Macau (China), where he studied Philosophy and where he published his first novel entitled *Mãe deixa-me fazer o pino*.

He studied for a BA (Hons) at the University of the Arts (London) and an MA in Photography and Fine Art at the Royal College of Art (London).

His work is represented in several high-profile public and private collections, such as those of the V&A (London), the National Media Museum (Bradford, UK), RIBA (London), the Dallas Museum of Art (USA), The Calouste Gulbenkian Museum (Lisbon), MAAT (Lisbon), MNAC (Lisbon), Fondation Carmignac (Paris), MAST (Italy), and more.

Between 2002 and 2022 Martins published 15 monographs, which were received with critical acclaim.

His first book— *Black Holes & Other Inconsistencies* —was awarded the Thames & Hudson & RCA Society Book Art Prize. *What Photography & Incarceration have in Common with an Empty Vase* was shortlisted for the 2020 Paris Photo & Aperture Foundation Photobook Awards as well as the Photo España Book Award in the best photobook of the year category.

Edgar Martins was selected to represent Macau (China) at the 54th Venice Biennale.

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