



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY PRESENTS FIRST NYC CAREER SURVEY OF MURIEL HASBUN



MURIEL HASBUN: TRACING TERRUÑO

On View

September 29, 2023–January 8, 2024

Location

79 Essex Street, New York, NY 10002

NEW YORK, NY (August 8, 2023)—*Muriel Hasbun: Tracing Terruño* is the first comprehensive career survey in New York City of multidisciplinary artist, educator, and advocate for Central American culture and history, Muriel Hasbun (b. 1961). Over the course of her career, Hasbun has developed a uniquely poetic and abstracted sensibility that she employs to explore identity and memory, using her personal story of migration from El Salvador to the United States to

examine collective histories through photography, video, and installation, from her earliest work in the late 1980s to the present. The exhibition includes nearly 80 works from throughout her career, some never before exhibited. The exhibition's title, *Tracing Terruño*, emphasizes the many ways in which Hasbun has reflected on the overlapping ideas of home, geography, borders, and place throughout her 35 years of practice. This exhibition is curated by Elisabeth Sherman, Senior Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Collections at ICP.

In our moment of mass migration, *Tracing Terruño* reflects upon one family's experience with dislocation across the twentieth century, urgently examining the effects of war and genocide across generations. A descendant of Salvadoran and Palestinian Christians on her paternal side and Polish and French Jews on her maternal side, Hasbun grew up in El Salvador. Reckoning with a family history filled with exile, loss, and migration, Hasbun herself left her home country in 1979 at the start of the Salvadoran Civil War. She moved to France and then the United States to study, settling in Washington, D.C., where she has since worked as an artist and professor of photography.

"Continuing our commitment to presenting important photography that can inspire our understanding of the world and act as a potential catalyst for change, ICP is pleased to work with Muriel Hasbun to develop her first career survey in New York City," said David E. Little, Executive Director of ICP. "It is especially fitting that this exhibition is presented here at ICP as both making photographs and expanding international educational networks align as core elements of ICP's mission and of Muriel Hasbun's artistic practice."

Muriel Hasbun: Tracing Terruño presents a selection of Hasbun's series, from her earliest photographic explorations in 1988 to recent experiments with chemigrams on expired photographic papers. The exhibition will include the entirety of the two-part series *Santos y sombras / Saints and Shadows* (1990–97), Hasbun's first major body of work. Using negatives of archival family documents and her own photographs, the artist layers images to create works that explore the history of both sides of her family. *Todos los santos / All the Saints* explores Hasbun's paternal lineage and her own experiences growing up surrounded by Catholicism. *¿Sólo una sombra? (Only a Shadow?)* traces her maternal family's experiences from Poland to France before and during WWII, collapsing receding memories with their impact on the present.

Hasbun began the series *X post facto (équis anónimo)* (2009–13) when she discovered her father's archive of x-rays from his dental practice after his death. By printing these medical records, she decontextualizes them, turning the images into landscapes and abstractions, thereby unlocking their metaphoric potential.

Selections from her most recent series, *Pulse: New Cultural Registers / Pulso: Nuevos registros culturales* (2020–ongoing), which maps El Salvador by combining art history with seismic records, will also be included.

The exhibition will also feature Hasbun's 2016 video *Scheherazade or (Per)forming the Archive*, as well as her multimedia installation *Auvergne – Toi et Moi* (1996 – 1998). Works from throughout her career will be interspersed through the galleries, reflecting the complex reflections on time and memory that she is continually exploring.

"We are honored to be able to work with Muriel Hasbun on this timely and overdue first New York City survey of her career," said Elisabeth Sherman, ICP's Senior Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Collections. "For more than 30 years, she has been making work that is poetic and personal, political and historical, inviting us into her family's unique story while charting forces of totalitarianism and xenophobia that have shaped our current world."

"I'm so thrilled to show my work at ICP," said Muriel Hasbun, "a renowned institution devoted to photography and photographic education. Working with Elisabeth Sherman has sparked retrospection and introspection during the process of bringing works together from different times in my creative life to share with communities in New York and beyond."

The exhibition will be complemented by an artist's zine published by Matarile Ediciones and a slate of public programs, including events that relate to Hasbun's work as an educator as well as conversations about photography and representation.

About Muriel Hasbun

Muriel Hasbun (b. 1961, El Salvador) is an artist and educator who focuses on issues of cultural identity, migration, and memory. Through an intergenerational, transnational, and transcultural lens, Hasbun constructs contemporary narratives and establishes a space for dialogue where individual and collective memory spark new questions about identity and place.

Her work has been internationally exhibited and is in private and public collections, including American University Museum, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Corcoran Gallery of Art, and Art Museum of the Americas, Washington, DC; Whitney Museum of American Art and El Museo del Barrio, New York; FotoFest, Houston; Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA; Museum of Photographic Art, San Diego, CA; Rencontres de la photographie, Arles; Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris; Centro de la Imagen, Mexico City; and the 50th Venice Biennale. Her awards and distinctions include CENTER Santa Fe's Producer's and Curator's Choice; Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship; Howard Chapnick Grant; Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Awards in Photography and Media; U.S. Department of State and the American Alliance of Museums' Museums Connect grant; Artist in Residences at Rutgers University as the Estelle Lebowitz Endowed Visiting Artist; Chautauqua/University of Colorado, Boulder; Centro Cultural de España, El Salvador; Escuela de Bellas Artes, Mexico; and the Corcoran's Outstanding Creative Research Faculty Award. She was a finalist for The Trawick Prize and Sondheim Art Prize, and is the recipient of a Fulbright Scholar fellowship.

Hasbun is the founder and director of *laberinto projects*, a transnational cultural memory and education initiative that fosters contemporary art practices, social inclusion, and dialogue in El Salvador and its U.S. diaspora. She is professor emerita at the Corcoran School of the Arts &

Design at the George Washington University, and previously, professor and chair of photography at the Corcoran College of Art + Design.

Hasbun received an MFA in Photography (1989) from George Washington University where she studied with Ray K. Metzker (1987–88) and earned a BA in French Literature (1983), cum laude, from Georgetown University.

Also on view at ICP this fall are ***Immersion: Gregory Halpern, Raymond Meeks, and Vasantha Yoganathan*** and ***Play the Part: Marlene Dietrich***. ***Immersion*** showcases three projects created by the artists during their respective residencies—Halpern’s in Guadeloupe, Yoganathan’s in New Orleans, and Meeks’s in France, first near the Spanish border and then along the coast of the English Channel. Consisting of alternating residencies between France and the United States, the Immersion program is a French-American Photography Commission created by the Fondation d’entreprise Hermès and presented in collaboration with ICP and the Fondation Henri Cartier-Bresson, Paris. ***Play the Part*** features approximately 200 photographs of Marlene Dietrich made between 1906 to 1978, examining the multifaceted evolution of her public persona. The exhibition includes photographs by Cecil Beaton, Irving Penn, and Edward Steichen, as well as noted Hollywood photographers George Hurrell, Eugene Robert Richee, and William Walling Jr. Assembled by collector Pierre Passebon, this exhibition marks the first time his noted collection will be shown in the United States.

Exhibition Access

ICP is open every day except Tuesday from 11 AM to 7 PM, and until 9 PM on Thursdays. Admission: \$18 for adults; \$14 for seniors (62 and over), military, and visitors with disabilities (caregivers are free); \$12 for students (with valid ID); \$3 for SNAP/EBT card holders; free for ICP members, ICP students, and all visitors 14 years and under. Admission is by suggested donation on Thursdays from 6 to 9 PM. Tickets can be reserved online at icp.org/tickets. Visitors are asked to arrive during the 30-minute window of their timed ticket to help ensure a safe flow in the lobby. For more information, read ICP’s updated [Visitor Information](#) and [Accessibility](#) guidelines and policies.

Exhibition Support

Exhibition support is generously provided by the ICP Exhibitions Committee.

Exhibitions at ICP are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



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About the International Center of Photography

The International Center of Photography (ICP) is the world’s leading institution dedicated to photography and visual culture. Cornell Capa founded ICP in 1974 to champion “concerned

photography”—socially and politically minded images that can educate and change the world. Through exhibitions, education programs, community outreach, and public programs, ICP offers an open forum for dialogue about the power of the image. Since its inception, ICP has presented more than 700 exhibitions, provided thousands of classes, and hosted a wide variety of public programs. ICP launched its new integrated center on Manhattan’s Lower East Side in January 2020. Located at 79 Essex Street, ICP is the cultural anchor of Essex Crossing, one of the most highly anticipated and expansive mixed-use developments in New York City. ICP pays respect to the original stewards of this land, the Lenape people, and other Indigenous communities. Visit icp.org to learn more about the museum and its programs.

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Image:

Muriel Hasbun, *Todos los santos (Volcán de Izalco, amén) / All the Saints (Izalco Volcano, Amen)*, from *Santos y sombras (Saints and Shadows)*, Gelatin silver print, 1995–96. © Muriel Hasbun