



CADÊ ELAS?

Black LGBTQIA+ People and the Portuguese Dictatorship

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|--|---|--|---|
| 1
Beco da Mitra
70 X 70 | 4
Avenida da Liberdade
70 X 70 | 7
Beco da Mitra
3x 70 X 70 | 10
Marvila Public Urinal
70 X 53 |
| 2
Damas
2x 21 X 70 | 5
Avenida da Liberdade
70 X 70 | 8
Avenida da Liberdade
70 X 70 | |
| 3
Avenida da Liberdade
3x 70 X 70 | 6
Beco da Mitra
70 X 70 | 9
Marvila Public Urinal
2x 35 X 24 / 2x 24 X 35 | |

Cadê Elas? Black LGBTQIA+ People and the Portuguese Dictatorship
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WWW.AFRONTOSAS.PT

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English version



ARCHIVES OF SILENCE, TRACES OF RESISTANCE

The absence of explicit records about black LGBTQIA+ people not only limits official memory, but also calls on us to produce meaning. Through images, fragments, and small gestures preserved in archives, it is possible to reconstruct narratives and reclaim presences.

PHOTO-PERFORMANCE AS A FABULATORY GESTURE AND REINSCRIPTION OF PRESENCES

One of the methodologies adopted by the “Cadê Elas?” project was photo-performance: an artistic resource to challenge the silence of the archives and create a new imaginary about the presence of black LGBTQIA+ people during the Portuguese dictatorship. Faced with the absence and historical erasure found in the documentary research, the Afrontosas Collective developed a fabulatory exercise in which art becomes a strategy for memory and resistance.

After traveling along emblematic routes of that time, such as the old Mitra Palace, the public bathrooms and urinals in the Marvila region, and Avenida da Liberdade, the artists position themselves as a channel of continuity for a struggle that also belongs to them, even when history insists on denying their existence.

The images stage bodies, gestures, and affections that could have inhabited those times, not as gratuitous fiction, but as a political gesture of reinscription. Thus, photo-performance operates as a device of reexistence: it projects presences where the archive is silent, restores humanity to what was denied, and broadens the horizon of the social imagination.

The exhibition Where Are They? invites us to reflect on this forced invisibility and to dig into layers of history that have not been documented, but which exist and persist. Looking at the few records available—some of which will be prominently displayed, including images with the original numbers visible in the upper right corner—it is possible to glimpse the silences, but also the signs of a queer black history that insists on telling itself, even when erased.

