

THE DAY MAY BREAK : CHAPTER TWO

NICK BRANDT

JANUARY 20TH — MARCH 4TH 2023

Opening Wednesday, 25th January, from 6pm to 8:30pm



Jame with People in Fog, Bolivia, 2022.
© Nick Brandt, Courtesy Polka Gallery.

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Polka Gallery is proud to present Nick Brandt's *The Day May Break Chapter Two*, exhibited for the first time in France.

The Day May Break is an ongoing global series portraying people and animals that have been impacted by environmental destruction and climate change. The first chapter, on view a year ago at the Polka gallery was photographed at 5 sancturaries/ conservancies in Zimbabwe and Kenya in 2020.

The Day May Break Chapter Two was photographed in 2022 in Bolivia. It had been more than twenty years since the photographer had worked outside of Africa. As in the first chapter, the men, women and children who agreed to be photographed, have all been badly affected by climate change, from extreme droughts to floods that destroyed their homes and livelihoods.

The photographs were taken at Senda Verde Animal Sanctuary where the animals are all rescues, victims of everything from habitat destruction to wildlife trafficking. These animals can never be re-released back into the wild. Because they were nearly all habituated to humans, it was safe for strangers to be close to them, photographed together in the same frame.

« *In spite of their loss, these people and animals are the survivors. And therein lies hope and possibility.* » said the photographer.

The fog is the unifying visual, symbolic of the natural world rapidly fading from view. Created by fog machines on location, the fog is also an echo of the smoke from wildfires, intensified by climate change, devastating so much of the planet.

In early 2023, Nick Brandt will continue this long term work for a Chapter Three in the South Pacific.

A book with the eponymous title will be published by Editions Hatje Cantz.



Lucio and Chascas, Bolivia, 2022.
© Nick Brandt, Courtesy Polka Gallery.



Juana and Hernak, Bolivia, 2022.
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The themes in Nick Brandt's photographic series always relate to the destructive impact that humankind is having on both the natural world and now humans themselves too.

In the early 2000s, with his Pentax 67II and two fixed lenses, he began to produce a trilogy. *On This Earth* (2001-2004), *A Shadow Falls* (2005-2008) and *Across The Ravaged Land* (2011-2012), show a different style from the animal photography as we know it. In fact, Nick Brandt established a style of portrait photography of animals in the wild similar to that of the photography of humans in studio setting, shot on medium format film, attempting to portray animals as sentient creatures not so different from us. Taken together, these three titles form a dark prediction: *On this earth a shadow falls across the ravaged land*.

In Inherit the Dust (2014), in a series of panoramas, Nick Brandt recorded the impact of man in places where animals used to roam. In each location, the photographer erected a life-size panel of one of his unreleased animal portrait photographs, placing the displaced animals on sites of human development. *This Empty World* (2019), his first color series, addresses the escalating destruction of the natural world at the hands of humans, showing a world where overwhelmed by runaway development, there is no longer space for animals to survive. The people in the photos are also often helplessly swept along by the relentless tide of progress. Each image is a combination of two moments in time shot from the exact same camera position, once with wild animals that enter the frame, after which a set is built and a cast of people drawn from local communities.

The ongoing global series *The Day May Break*, started in 2020 is described by the photographer as « *perhaps the biggest crisis of all : climate change, or a more fitting phrase, climate breakdown, which negatively impacts every living creature on the planet.* »

Born and raised in England, Brandt studied Painting and Film in London. He now lives in the southern Californian mountains.

In 2010, Nick Brandt moved to action and co-founded Big Life Foundation a non-profit in Kenya/ Tanzania that employs more than 300 local rangers protecting 680,000 hectares of the Amboseli/ Kilimanjaro ecosystem.

« *It is better to be angry and active than angry and passive. Once you become active, the despair feels less overwhelming. Your actions, no matter how small, can energize and focus you.* » writes the photographer in his essay from *The Day May Break*.



Lineth and Kini, Bolivia, 2022.
© Nick Brandt, Courtesy Polka Gallery.

Exhibitions (Selection)

- 2023** *The Day May Break : Chapter Two, Polka Gallery, Paris, France*
- 2022** *The Day May Break : Chapters One & Two, Shanghai Center for Photography, Shanghai, China*
- 2022** *This Empty World, Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, United-States*
- 2022** *The Day May Break : Chapter One, Polka Gallery, Paris, France*
- 2021** *This Empty World, Inherit the Dust & More, Fotografiska Museum, Tallinn, Estonia*
- 2019** *Inherit The Dust, National Museum of Finland, Helsinki, Finland*
- 2019** *Inherit The Dust, Fotografiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden*
- 2017** *Inherit The Dust, Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia*
- 2013** *On This Earth, A Shadow Falls, Preus National Museum Of Photography, Oslo, Norway*
- 2012** *On This Earth, A Shadow Falls, Fotografiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden*

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Carmen and Zosa II, Bolivia, 2022.
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Lineth and Kini, Bolivia, 2022.
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Lucio and Tarkus, Bolivia, 2022.
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Making of « Jame with People in Fog »



Making of « Lucio and Tarkus »



Making of « Luis and Hernak »



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