

Gui Christ, Fissura

By [Olga Yatskevich](https://collectordaily.com/author/olia/) / In [Photobooks](https://collectordaily.com/category/photobooks/) / March 25, 2021

JTF (just the facts): Self-published in 2020 ([here](https://guichrist.com/shop/fissura/)). Hardcover (6.5 x 8.6 in), 112 pages, with 72 color photographs. Includes essays by the artist and Thiago Godoi Calil. In an edition of 500 copies, each numbered and signed. Design by Gui Christ. (Cover and spread shots below.)



(<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/3C4C2A0B-1096-4C4B-AFA1-EA5CD7445AE7-1024x768.jpeg>)



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AE479266-4CB0-4263-8064-00C83045F907-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/7DA5D804-3E35-43D1-AC86-8F345742549A-1024x768.jpeg>



(<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/363EFE07-BoC3-40FD-89F5-92B1D56FC8EB-1024x768.jpeg>)



(<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/E4014CDE-B79B-4B40-8D5B-5FAF27242015-1024x768.jpeg>)



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2A4381D1-E606-446D-9FE5-BE96DE6AD218-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FFDB6D57-C6E8-4624-AF05-F2600A38FCF2-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/1BoAE2CE-C643-4045-B201-315C6EE42D79-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/84DE4BB9-4EDB-4F50-8D52-A0586FBA50B5-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/254526EF-69BC-428E-8ECB-B4681306153D-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/D4B4075B-22E9-4B93-B517-9F433ACA372E-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/87855D6A-FD18-4062-A3E8-9CA52ECFE119-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/65283436-B3F2-4DE3-8362-8C584E9EC0D6-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/E576C585-A3D2-4F2F-9799-FE0EB6444088-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FB8CD458-6106-4E2E-B4DA-56DA31393352-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/B17B4C43-65BB-49D1-9457-B42EC0B4D1Co-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/161BD935-611B-4899-929D-8EC78E16984F-1024x768.jpeg>



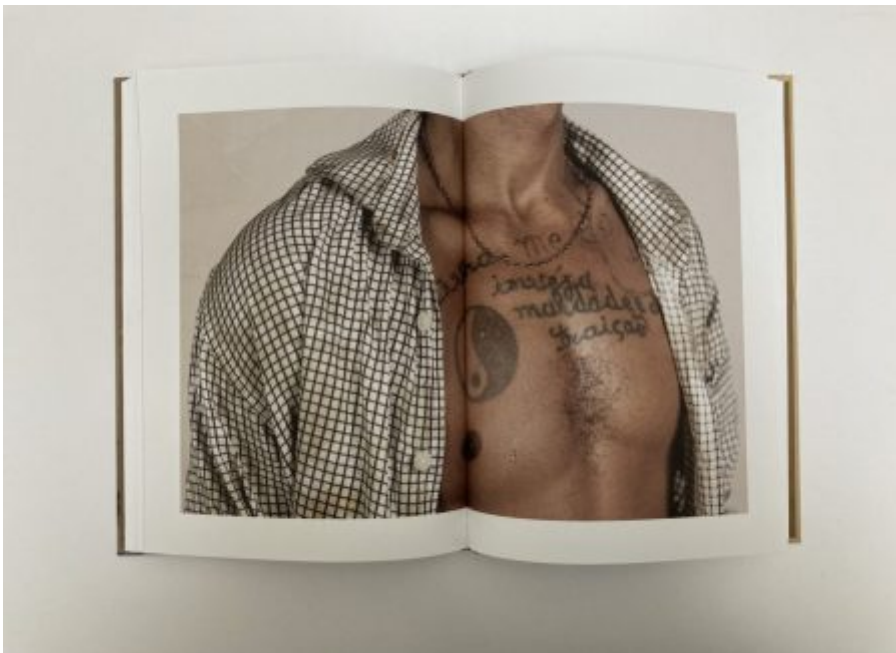
<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/69244EFD-9E91-457C-81FC-21ABF60F36D3-1024x768.jpeg>



<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/5B862346-29C1-4037-B462-21FA5CAEAE1E-1024x768.jpeg>



(<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/894A6762-F753-4DE6-867E-Do3701BD7F1B-1024x768.jpeg>)



(<https://collectordaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/DC94B272-EB19-4173-A9F5-oBD4E5E36099-1024x768.jpeg>)

Comments/Context: *Fissura*, a photobook by the Brazilian photographer Gui Christ, opens with a quote placed at the bottom of the first spread, “What leads to chemical dependence isn’t drugs, but the necessity to run from a sad reality.” Christ wants us to keep this in mind as he immerses us into a visual narrative depicting Cracolândia, the neighborhood in São Paulo known as the largest open-air drug market in the world, and tells us a more complex and nuanced story of the area and its residents than we might have expected.

Growing up, Christ always avoided downtown São Paulo – it didn't have a good reputation, it was a place “where people lost their souls between abandoned buildings and dirty streets.” Years later, he eventually made his way there, and at first, he tried to take portraits of people at the common space that provided food and a shower, but because of the social stigma, many didn't feel comfortable with having their photos taken. Christ was ready to give up when a man asked him for a portrait photo so he could look for a job, and then a woman wanted a photo to send to her family to say she was still alive. On his next visit, Christ set up a mobile studio offering free photographs, and over the next two years, he photographed roughly 2,000 people. Christ's photobook tells the story of these people, as he tries to get beyond enduring stereotypes.

Fissura is a medium sized photobook with a straightforward, elegant design. The image on the cover is a skull sculpture, with a wire connecting the jawbone to the rest of the skull. For Christ, it represents how society sees and treats drug addicts. The title of the book “fissura” in Portuguese means “crack, rifts or wounds,” and it is also a slang term used to describe the compulsion to use drugs. Inside, most of the photographs have generous white space around them, with a list of thumbnails and captions appearing at the very end.

A sequence of TV news screenshots opens the book, with a full bleed blurred image of the crowd at the drug market, filled with groups of people making deals. It is followed by images documenting heavily armed police officers storming the area – out of focus and disorienting, the photographs capture the violence and chaos of the moment. This series serves as an introduction to the place, and how it is typically depicted and presented in the media.

To tell his story, Christ combines images of the area with photographs of the people who occupy its streets. Christ's portraits are all set up in a similar way, shot against a light brown background and at medium height while his sitters look straight into the camera. Each portrait is paired with a photo of a pipe they use for smoking, also shot against the same background. One of the first portraits is of Claudio, a middle aged man wearing a Brazil national team soccer jersey, who has a black mark on his forehead and under his right eye. A portrait of a young woman Mel is paired with a photo of a pipe made out of an apple. Eudoxio has an intense stare, and he uses a radio antenna as a pipe. And Heloisa is an elderly woman, with deep wrinkles on her face, and her portrait is paired with a pipe made out of gas pipe tubing.

Many of Christ's sitters have visible scars and rough tattoos, reflecting their harsh lives and surroundings, but Christ's portraits show them with empathy, as real people forced to the edge of society. He heard stories of “men who started using drugs to forget the anguish of unemployment, of women who took drugs to endure shame of prostituting themselves to support their children, and of

children who smoked crack to forget the violence, the cold and the hunger of living on the streets.” By taking their portraits with such empathy and compassion, Christ gives them back their dignity and humanity.

The images in and around Cracolândia provide the backdrop of their lives: streets covered with trash after a police raid, decaying and abandoned buildings, a sculpture covered in paint, a dead bird in a crack hotel, a broken sculpture of Jesus Christ. Together, these images and others reveal a degraded and inhuman place, the cracks in the buildings symbolizing the similarly broken lives.

Christ also looks into the history of the neighborhood and how it became a refuge for the city’s addicted and abandoned. It used to be the richest neighborhood in the city, built to welcome the influential coffee barons. Everything changed in 1929 when the crash on the New York Stock Exchange destroyed these Brazilian coffee exporters, forcing them to leave. Over the subsequent years, the area declined further, the mansions turned into warehouses and the crime rate rising, thereby attracting more and more homeless people. In the early 1990s, drug dealers took over the neighborhood, turning it into a drug ghetto. In building up his story, Christ adds photographs that connect the neighborhood back to its history – like the old railway tracks, built a century ago to support coffee production. Today, the lack of useful public policy, as well as limited access to public health, work, and affordable housing only widens the inequality and stigmatization.

Fissura challenges a simplistic understanding of drug addition and those it has ensnared, and encourages us to humanize the way we relate to each other. Christ uses photography to preserve this history, offering an attentive testament to people whose lives have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Collector’s POV: Gui Christ does not appear to have consistent gallery representation at this time. As a result, interested collectors should likely follow up with the artists directly via his website (linked in the sidebar).

Read more about: [Gui Christ, \(https://collectordaily.com/artists/gui-christ/\)](https://collectordaily.com/artists/gui-christ/) [Self Published \(https://collectordaily.com/publishers/self-published/\)](https://collectordaily.com/publishers/self-published/)

[LEAVE A COMMENT](#) ▶

PUBLISHED BY

Self Published

OTHER LINKS

PUBLISHER INDEX

Select a publisher

SPONSORED ADS



(<https://collectordaily.com/ads/internal-mailing-list/>) (<https://collectordaily.com/ads/support-us/>)



(<https://collectordaily.com/ads/twitter/>)

RECENT ARTICLES

[Auction Results: Dora Maar, Unpublished, photographic collection, June 27 and 28, 2022 @Artcurial](https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-dora-maar-unpublished-photographic-collection-june-27-and-28-2022-artcurial/) (<https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-dora-maar-unpublished-photographic-collection-june-27-and-28-2022-artcurial/>).

(<https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-dora-maar-unpublished-photographic-collection-june-27-and-28-2022-artcurial/>).

A treasure trove of vintage Dora Maar negatives came up for sale earlier this week at Artcurial in Paris, offering an unusual bargain for buyers. In addition to the rare ... [Read on.](https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-dora-maar-unpublished-photographic-collection-june-27-and-28-2022-artcurial/)
(<https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-dora-maar-unpublished-photographic-collection-june-27-and-28-2022-artcurial/>)

[Auction Results: Photographs, June 21, 2022 @Doyle](https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-photographs-june-21-2022-doyle/) (<https://collectordaily.com/auction-results-photographs-june-21-2022-doyle/>).

[Tony Gum, Milked in Africa @Fotografiska](https://collectordaily.com/tony-gum-milked-in-africa-fotografiska/) (<https://collectordaily.com/tony-gum-milked-in-africa-fotografiska/>).

[Lee Friedlander: American Musicians @Luhring Augustine Tribeca](https://collectordaily.com/lee-friedlander-american-musicians-luhring-augustine-tribeca/) (<https://collectordaily.com/lee-friedlander-american-musicians-luhring-augustine-tribeca/>).

[ABOUT \(HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/ABOUT/\)](https://collectordaily.com/about/)

[CONTACT US](https://collectordaily.com/contact/)

([HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/CONTACT/](https://collectordaily.com/contact/))

[SUBSCRIBE](https://collectordaily.com/subscribe/)

([HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/SUBSCRIBE/](https://collectordaily.com/subscribe/)).

[SUPPORT US](https://collectordaily.com/support/)

([HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/SUPPORT/](https://collectordaily.com/support/)).

[ADVERTISE](https://collectordaily.com/advertise/)

([HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/ADVERTISE/](https://collectordaily.com/advertise/)).

[POLICIES \(HTTPS://COLLECTORDAILY.COM/POLICIES/\)](https://collectordaily.com/policies/)

[🐦 \(HTTPS://TWITTER.COM/DLKCOLLECTION\)](https://twitter.com/dlkcollection) | [✉ GET OUR NEWSLETTER](#)

