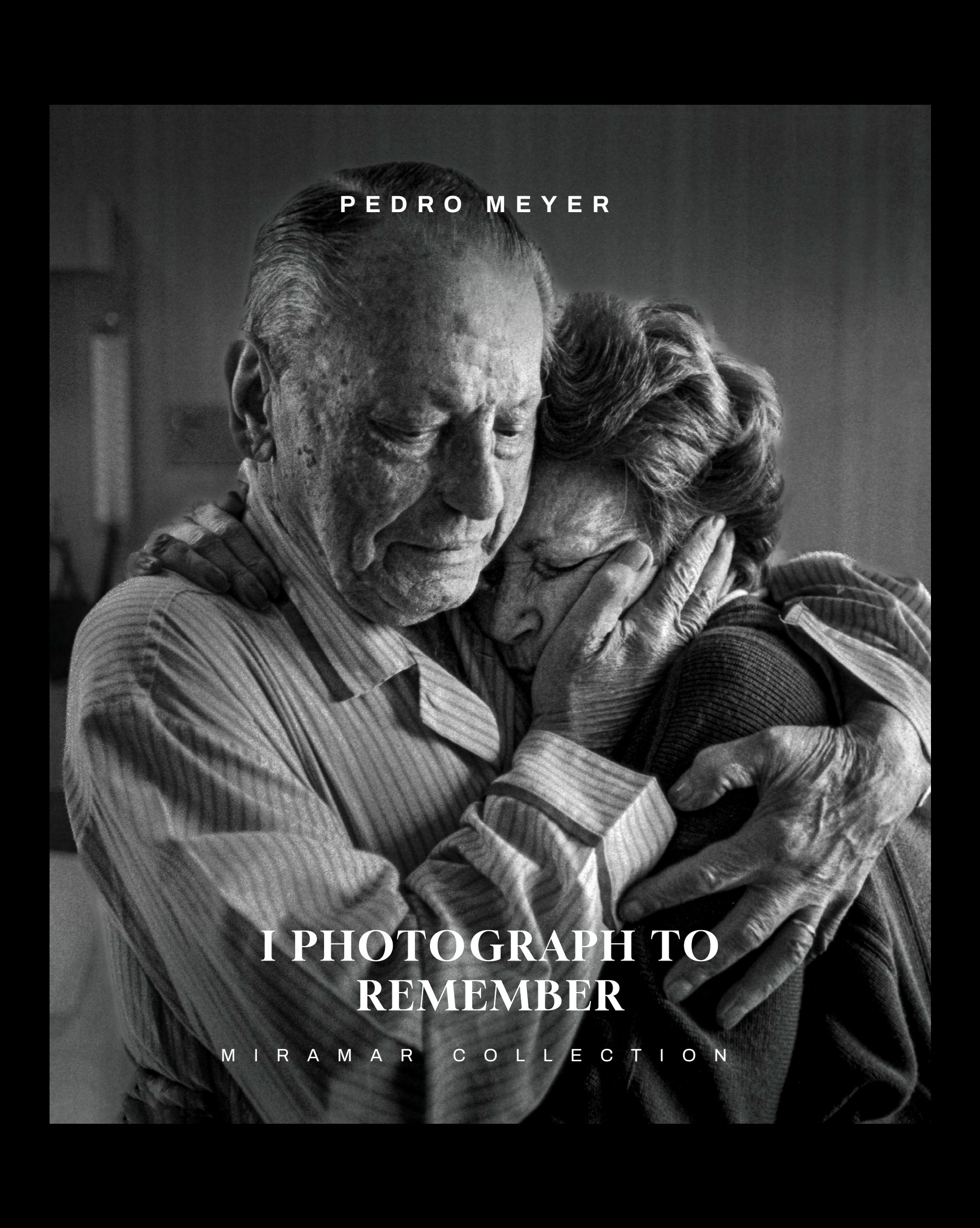


A black and white photograph of an elderly couple in a close embrace. The man, on the left, is wearing a striped shirt and has his eyes closed, leaning his head against the woman. The woman, on the right, is also wearing a striped shirt and has her hand near her face, looking down. The background is dark and out of focus.

PEDRO MEYER

I PHOTOGRAPH TO
REMEMBER

M I R A M A R C O L L E C T I O N

I PHOTOGRAPH TO REMEMBER

What began in 1991 as the first photographic essay to combine still images with stereophonic sound on CD-ROM has traveled a remarkable path of reinvention—from the earliest days of the internet to its later success on YouTube—ultimately finding new form in this volume. Digital media may continue to evolve without end, yet the printed page remains a singular vessel, capable of enduring across generations. These pages bear witness to that permanence, preserving the audiovisual narrative of Pedro Meyer without diminishing its original spirit.

Through carefully constructed photographic sequences, closer in rhythm to cinema than to the static image, the author chronicles the intimate unfolding of illness, pain, and the love shared by his parents for one another and for their son. In *I Photograph to Remember*—a work recovered by the artist himself together with editor Mariana Gruener—the reader moves from astonishment to tenderness, while moments of quiet magic continue to linger, such as the unforgettable scene in which the author’s father dares to “fly,” alongside many other deeply moving and cherished images.

To view the digital version with audio, visit the Pedro Meyer Foto YouTube channel.

MIRAMAR COLLECTION

For over 60 years and through over 1 million images in his archive, Pedro Meyer has taken on the role of exploring an enormous variety of stories that accompany this work in constant evolution. These stories not only reflect his photographic vision; they also highlight the significant contributions he has made to the world through his work.

The Miramar collection is a retrospective and autobiographical compendium comprising more than 41 volumes. It’s a journey that spans from the 1950s to the integration of cutting-edge technologies, including AI.

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To my parents.

1933

Page 6

I want to introduce you to my parents.

Page 8

A few months later, on their wedding day.

Page 13

After their wedding, they moved to live in Spain.

Page 14

I was born in 1935, right at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War

My father took this photo, placing me among the dolls that were part of his toy sample collection. He sold toys as a traveling agent throughout the Iberian Peninsula, as well as in Palma de Mallorca.

In 1936, when the Spanish Civil War began, the German government urged all its citizens living in Spanish territory to leave the country and return to Germany. We took a ship that sailed from Spain to the coasts of Italy, where a train was waiting for us to take us to German territory. On the train, people started to whisper that if there were any Jewish travelers, it was best for them to flee and not arrive in Germany. The Gestapo officers had collected our passports, but my mother and an aunt managed to retrieve them in exchange for a gold coin, and we managed to get off the train in Innsbruck.

Page 17

Questa foto è stata scattata da mio padre. Mi mise in mezzo alle bambole che facevano parte del suo campionario di giocattoli. Viaggiava in tutta la Spagna, compresa Palma di Maiorca, per vendere questi prodotti come agente di commercio.

Page 18

A year later we were expected from Spain.

My parents crossed Europe on foot with me in a market basket, fleeing from Nazism and concentration camps until they reached Belgium. Once in Brussels, the government offered my father protection in exchange for him exporting Belgian products to a Central American country. This is how my father traveled to Mexico while my mother and I stayed behind until he had enough money to buy our ship tickets. In 1937, we managed to take a ship from Antwerp to Veracruz and arrived in Mexico, a country that would be our home forever.

This photo of my parents, taken in 1938 in the garden of their home in Mexico, was sent to my paternal grandmother who still lived in Germany.

Shortly after, my grandmother returned the photo, broken, by mail with the following message on the back: "Destroyed by the Nazis, along with other things, on November 10, 1938. The horde arrived at 9:20 in the morning and stayed the whole day. Everything they saw, they broke or stole."

My father had to stop importing products from Belgium because during the war the Germans sank almost every ship that attempted to cross the Atlantic. During World War II, he tried to export Mexican products to other countries in the continent, but after the war, there was no longer any interest in those products, so he came up with the idea of going to Japan. He thought it would be a good business to sell Japanese products throughout Latin America. So he decided to go to the East and set up in Tokyo a business he called La Exportadora Mexicana.

Page 33

I still remember the camera that appeared in the picture, it was a very special model, it took 3d pictures.

He went from town to town and country to country selling his Japanese products. He would set up his display in his hotel room and go out to find customers, bringing them back to see the dishes, cameras, sewing machines, and what seemed to me like very strange balloons that I later discovered were condoms.

Years went by, I grew up and got married too. In 1960, I had a son named Pablo, with whom my father always maintained a close relationship.

Page 39

Ernesto and Pablo

1985

We arrived in the city of Houston where my father was going to undergo a lung surgery. In the photo, we see my mother on the phone, inquiring about the biopsy results that had not yet arrived.

Page 44

Those were moments of great anguish.

Page 45

I felt like we were awaiting a verdict on my father's life

I took this picture when the doctor told my father that he estimated he only had four to six weeks left to live. They found cancer in both lungs and in the colon. They had decided not to operate on him since it didn't make sense to subject him to surgeries that could hardly benefit him. My mother broke down. My father tried to calm her down and took it on with remarkable strength.

He was always a guy with a huge love for life, so much so that he turned to me and said: "You know something? We're gonna take this thing on."

Back then, I was working on a project in Yuma, Arizona, and I dropped everything to fly to Houston to meet up with them. After the news, he told me: "Head back to Yuma and finish your project. And then, go to Mexico; we'll meet up there."

Inside myself, I wondered if I would really see him again...

Page 58

He managed to live three more years.

Back in Mexico, one day I asked for permission to take his portrait. We were sitting there chatting when he asked me: "What do you want me to do for the portrait?", to which I replied: "Whatever you want. You tell me."

Then he slowly turned in his seat and said to me:

Page 64

I'm going to fly!

Page 68

After a year...

My father gradually lost mobility.

A complicate and Tendency had grown between my parents and every moments had become, something significant, Constantly, I would find them hugging and kissing.

My mother insisted on taking my father for a walk in the park every day. Before leaving, he would stuff a bunch of sweets in his pocket, as he loved to give them to the children he met along the way. He was fascinated by watching the ducks. Suddenly, a series of things that had been unimportant to him in his life became very, very significant moments.

On that day, I saw this scene that struck me as truly significant: there was this little girl being helped to walk, while at the same time, my old man was being aided to walk too.

How they help us to enter life and how they help us to exit it.

A specialist had found a tumor in my dad's brain. Here we were, in consultation with his primary care doctor, who at the moment was apologizing for his mistake. In the X-rays, he had failed to detect the information and thus had not made the diagnosis.

This picture was taken on my dad's 80th birthday. My mom loved inviting relatives and friends. It was very important to her that he felt surrounded by people who loved him.

This was scene i would encounter regularly.

They would hold hands or embrace each other for hours as she provided him with assurance.

As my father grew weaker, she did everything in her power to support him... She never discouraged him. On the contrary, she encouraged him to make an effort and achieve things on his own.

Here he is telling her that his arm hurts a lot.

The day i printed these images in the darkroom i was shalled.

My son had a very close relationship with his grandparents, and my father loved to joke with him. Here we see him on a day when he was feeling better and in the mood to joke around with his grandson.

The tumor in his head had grown, causing his eye to close.

We stayed like that, holding hands for a long time, while my other hand operated the camera. He transmitted a great energy to me, a feeling of strength that has stayed with me forever. Sometimes my fingers would turn blue from the pressure with which he held mine. I felt with absolute clarity everything he wanted to express to me in those moments.

The role had reversed, and now the figure of strength was actually that of my mother.

I was in southern Mexico, photographing the lives of oil workers for a book about Pemex. That morning, I was at a hospital capturing images of this girl being born.

On that same day I found myself in the need to travel to Mexico City due to an emergency in another hospital.

My mother had suffered a brain hemorrhage. I found her in a coma; the hemorrhage had been caused by a brain tumor. She also had cancer. The doctors had warned me that if she was not operated on within a few hours, she would inevitably die. Moreover, they told me that the operation, of course, could not be something guaranteed and there was a risk of her becoming paralyzed. I opted for the surgery, considering that she, like my father, had a strong desire to keep on living.

Suddenly I found myself in the situation of having to decide about my mother's life or death.

Here they are preparing her for the surgery. At that moment, I couldn't help but think of the images I had seen of prisoners in Nazi concentration camps.

At that moment, capturing those images was the only way for me to ensure that someday in the future I could try to understand what was happening at that moment then.

Ten days after the surgery.

So, my mother started to pick herself up bit by bit. She would spend hours doing her makeup, wanting to feel attractive. Even though her visual coordination had declined, she insisted on doing it all herself. She often joked with me, saying she wanted to look beautiful for my photos. Truth is, she had a great sense of humor, even in the toughest circumstances.

Not long after, my mother turned 75, and we invited many friends and relatives to the party. My father was very emotional, struggling to communicate, and I could see tears streaming down his face.

The tumor grew back.

My mother's condition worsened everyday, and I perceived that she was going to leave us that some night...

I had to say good by to her...

The funeral took place the next day.

I didn't tell my father that my mother had passed away. It didn't seem to make sense to tell him. However, somehow, he knew.

He would sit there for hours, with food in his mouth, caressing an imaginary figure that was surely that of my mother.

Three years after being sentenced to only a few short weeks of life, his will to go on extinguished, self.

His breathing became weaker and weaker and after nine weeks...

...He also passed away.

This was the last time, he and i spend ourselves together.

As I hold on to these memories, i think my mother was right when she asked me "why can't we have thin closeness all our lives?"

I PHOTOGRAPH TO UNDERSTAND

by Mariana Gruener

*"What is remembered has been
saved from nothingness."*

John Berger

LOVE

Not always do kisses and hugs express love; that is what I have learned over time. But when I see a person constantly caring for, supporting, observing, and listening to another, I recognize that love exists.

I Photograph to Remember is a record of a long farewell. In this book, Pedro Meyer recovers moments of his parents between 1985 and 1988, in everyday events such as a walk in the park, a visit to the bathroom, a walk around the living room, or holding hands for hours. Then, with images and words, he elaborates a piece that reveals the love story between a man and a woman, and at the same time, the story of a son who observes the imminent departure of his parents.

He captures every apex of those everyday moments because he senses that he will want to see them again later to decipher them.

At that time, capturing those images was the only way to ensure that someday, later, he could try to understand what happened back then.

When we talk about understanding in this context, it is not about why things happen but about how they happen. We are all destined to lose our parents, although sometimes children leave before them. It is difficult to explain death, and we still wonder why we have to die.

The images in *I Photograph to Remember* help to start a dialogue about this condition that eludes our understanding and that we resist accepting.

Pedro Meyer not only photographed to remember, but also made an act of observation to understand the illness and death of his parents, as well as to appreciate the great love they had. He photographed with the intention of being able to review what had happened, as if it were a movie that is seen several times, and each time new aspects of the story are discovered.

“Why can’t we have this closeness all our lives?”, asks Pedro’s mother. I suppose that when we know that minutes are counted, we feel the urge to make the most of each moment. It invites us to rethink our values, to let go of battles that confront us with the other, instead of making what we feel towards that person evident.

MEMORY

Photographers try to make sense of events, evidence some of the phenomena that the rest of society may overlook. They use photographic images to leave testimony of what happened, construct the language that allows us to name and share what we are to give meaning to life.

Illness and death, when they occur in our families, are events that demand all our energy and force us to make hasty decisions while they are happening. In the end, we are left exhausted, without having an answer to what or how things happened.

But what happens when the photographer records their own life? When the emotional closeness is such that the eye does not observe from a foreign place but is part of the scene? It takes great strength to operate the camera, to have the conviction that those events must be recorded.

What comes after death? We do not know, but for those of us who remain, there is silence, absence, a cascade of blurry images, similar to a dream. Memory is porous; a large part of the events lived escapes between its millions of gaps, and those that are stored lose sharpness over time. Photographic evidence helps us reinterpret them and build different perceptions.

THE MEDIUM: SCREEN VS. PAPER

Today I sit down to write these words after 20 years of knowing Pedro. We have talked and laughed; we have argued, and above all, these years have given us the possibility of understanding each other.

In 2002, when I arrived at Pedro’s studio, he was already on board the technology train, which was full steam ahead ever since.

He understood that we had to take advantage of advances to have a more efficient, free, and widely distributed photographic practice. I, on the other hand, defended the flag that the most important thing was the content of the work and the language, and not so much whether the support was analog or digital. In the end, we both wanted the same thing: the best tools for photographers to express themselves.

Technological evolution is important, and we must know how to take advantage of it to convey our ideas. *I Photograph to Remember* is the best example. The first version came out in 1991 in CD-ROM format. It was the first photographic essay with continuous stereophonic image and sound. Pedro decided to edit the

images along with a narration in his own voice, with original music by Manuel Rocha. This was an excellent combination to tell his story, and the CD-ROM was the ideal support at that time to facilitate distribution: it was a lightweight disc, production costs were not very high, and it allowed for the combination of images and voice in a sequence that offered something completely new: the possibility of telling a story. No one imagined that the cold cathode computer screen could be the support of an intimate work.

Audiovisuals already existed in slide carousels, but the CD-ROM, whose initial purpose was only to store figures, opened the possibility of presenting the material in places where there was a computer: museums, galleries, libraries, educational centers, etc. Around one million copies of *I Photograph to Remember* were circulated. The problem was that the development of digital technology meant that just four years later, new devices were unable to read it.

Pedro then modified it to distribute it over the internet. At first, he had technical difficulties due to the weight of the file, because operating systems constantly changed, and because it was not yet possible to integrate sound.

He spent several years modifying the piece to make it work until it appeared on YouTube in 2012, because this turned out to be the best platform to spread it.

With YouTube, *I Photograph to Remember* became a generous piece; thousands of people since then can see it without depending on a specific time or place, without the need to pay or have expensive or specialized equipment. Thus, it managed to become an inclusive work of art, perfect in its original narration. So, why move it to printed pages?

Books have not disappeared, nor will they ever disappear, although some predicted their death at the beginning of the digital era. Since ancient times, they have told stories, and they have been the reason why libraries were built to house knowledge, feelings that give us the face of humanity. Inked pages are capable of providing intimate narratives that survive through generations.

This new revision of the photos allowed us to find something that was not in the original piece. Pedro meticulously photographed several of these events, minute by minute, for hours. For example, one day they take his father to the hospital, and we see him getting out of the car, how they transport him to the room, and the doctor's thorough examination. We see the weakened body due to illness, as well as the love and support of his wife.

Another day, Pedro wants to take a portrait of his father, and he asks him, "What do you want me to do for the photo?" Pedro replies, "Whatever you want." Then his father says, "I'm going to fly!" And slowly, in a series of four frames, we see his father preparing and flying.

Taking a sequence of photos is a style of representation that allows for capturing a process in a way that is closer to cinematic storytelling.

Over the years, the channels for spreading *I Photograph to Remember* have adapted to technological advances, and its audiovisual narrative has managed to transition seamlessly onto the pages of this book without losing its essence. What is remembered has been rescued from oblivion: the love story of a couple, as seen through the eyes of the son who watches them leave.

Mexico City, 2021

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Pedro Meyer

From a young age, he wanted to be a photographer, but with no formal schools available, he taught himself. His career has been a continuous exploration of technology and visual storytelling. He founded Grupo Arte Fotográfico, launched the first Latin American Photography Colloquia, and created the Mexican Council of Photography. Later, he developed ZoneZero, the first website dedicated to showcasing photography, publishing the work of over 1,500 photographers worldwide. He pioneered *I Photograph to Remember*, the first photographic CD-ROM, and his retrospective *Heresies* was exhibited in more than 60 museums across 17 countries. He also created the Pedro Meyer Foundation and the Foto Museo Cuatro Caminos. Since 2020, he has been working on the *Miramar* collection, a series of more than forty books spanning six decades of work, offering a reflection on images, memory, and life in times of constant transformation.

Mariana Gruener

As a visual artist, she has participated in various solo and group exhibitions in Mexico, the USA, Canada, the Netherlands, and China. She curated “The International Artist Book Fair” in 2009 and 2011, *Heresies*, a retrospective of Pedro Meyer’s work, *200 years of being proudly Mexican* - a monumental window to our history, and the artist book exhibition of the Third and Fourth Editions at the Carrillo Gil Museum. She is the editor of the books *I Photograph to Remember* by Pedro Meyer and *The Other Book of Hugs* by Susana Zabaleta. She received the Young Creators grant and the Support for Studies Abroad grant from Fonca in 2005. She has been a professor at the CENART Transits Diploma, the National School of Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving “La Esmeralda,” the Centro de Diseño-Cine-Televisión University, and the Master’s program at the Ibero Campus León.

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- Virgil

And 23 more in progress.

To get more information about the titles in the *Miramar* collection, scan the QR code

<https://pedromeyer.com/es/miramar/>

We thank everyone for their collaboration on this collection:



AUTHOR'S NOTES

A pertinent clarification: all errors in this edition are entirely my responsibility. I am aware that I do not have all the tools to avoid errors, but the desire to have these books published is greater than the risk of getting it wrong. I hope, dear reader, for a certain degree of understanding for that delicate balance between perfection and the best possible attempt.

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This edition consists of 200 numbered copies of the classic series, 50 copies of the gallery series, and 50 copies of the collector's series.

COPY N.º _____



PEDRO MEYER