

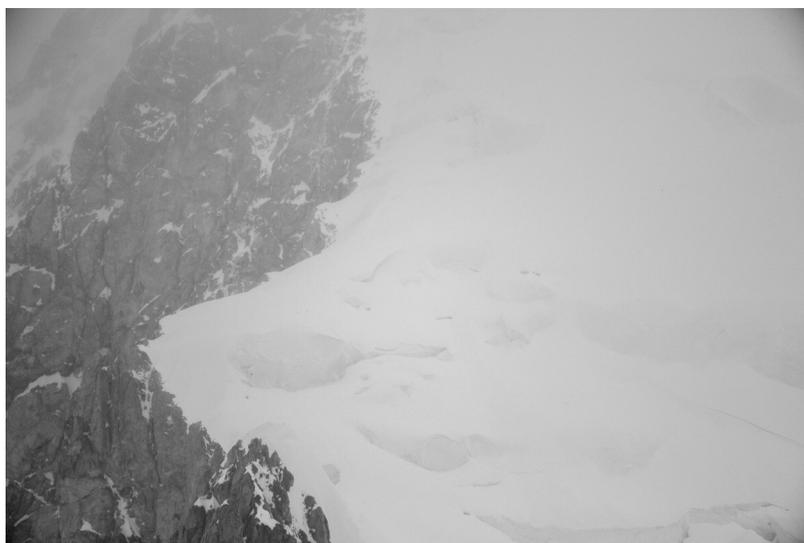
Arkaitz Saiz / www.arksaiz.com/ ark@arksaiz.com / +34 647 016 759

In my early twenties I moved abroad to Germany and later to London where I lived and worked for about ten years. I moved again, this time to Barcelona but after a while I quit my job in the IT business industry and in 2010 I got an education as a Mountain Guide in Durango, Spain.

At the same time I developed an interest in photography, focusing on mountains, climbers, alpinists and anything related to the mountains.

For many years my photographic work has been focused on capturing the moment while working as a mountain guide.

Photography has always interested me as a hobby but not as a professional career. For many years my photographic work has focused on capturing the moment working as a mountain guide, making nature and mountaineering my main interest.



The photo that decided the the rescue. Can you spot the tent of the missing mountaineer?
Gasherbrum II, Karakoram. Pakistan.



In the glacier Baltoro, Karakoram. Pakistan.
Photo courtesy by Alberto Iñurrategi.

In 2017 I joined the WOPEAK expedition with the alpinist Alberto Iñurrategi, Juan Vallejo and Mikel Zabalza in the Karakoram of Pakistan, we got involved in the rescue of a mountaineer in need.

A photograph I took helped locate the missing climber. This event caused a turning point in my career, altering my practice and adding new layers of meaning to my photography beyond mere aesthetic purpose.

I started wondering more about the social side of the mountains, bringing a personal need for storytelling beyond panorama mountain photography.

I decided to register for a Photojournalism course at Black Kamera Documentary Photography School (Bilbao, Spain) having as the teachers Moises Saman, Cristina de Middel (Magnum), Andoni Lubaki, Pep Bonet (Noor) and Diego Ibarra Sanchez.

They gave me the first tools to introduce narrative in my photography, changing the pure landscape and the mountain activities to a new way of seeing which aims its attention to the social documentary.

As a result, in 2020 the project "Bidassoa" was born about the Bidasoa river in my hometown Irun, a natural border between Spain and France and the issues with migration and the refugee movement.

Being two photographs of the project selected by the curator Juantxo Egaña to be part of the collective exhibition "Errefuxiatuak" at the Fotomuseo Zarautz with photographers with Andoni Lubaki, Diego Ibarra, Javi Julio, Ricardo García Vilanova and Santi Palacios.



Two young migrants being held by the Spanish police while being identified.
Irun, Spain.



Migrants resting in a safe house in Irun before continuing their journey to France.
Irun, Spain.

In 2021 "Bidassoa" was selected and presented in the project EnfocaH organised by Doctors Without Borders – MSF Spain "refugee and migrant populations" with the editor of the publication 5W, Anna Surinyach.

I was awarded a scholarship as a participant in the Fotoevidencia Workshop in France. A workshop focused on the education of photographers to work on humanitarian missions and work with NGOs.

My photographs also appear as a documentary reference for the Open Connection project. A comic made by young migrants from the Namasté Group of Caritas Bizkaia and the illustrator Kike Infame.



A man doing his exercise morning routine while bathing in the Mar Menor.
Playa de Colón, Lo Pagan. Murcia, Spain.

In May 2022 Bidassoa, ruta migratoria was presented in the AMAIA KZ Hall (Irún), produced by the Culture Department of the Irún City Council, within the Bidassoa project. An exhibition combining my photographs with illustrations by Josune Urrutia Asua showing the reality of the border on the Bidasoa river.

In 2021 ARKAMEYERS was born, a collaborative project with the artist Raquel Meyers. Its projects reflect on the paradoxes of the everyday and the distant, the analogical and the digital, memory, past and future emotional landscapes, the «polite neglect» and the Anthropocene.

The Interdependence Library project was selected for the Wikiriki 2022 residence. Other projects, Boria on the environmental disaster of the Mar Menor, the largest salt lagoon in Europe, have been exhibited within the human rights festival Gizazineak in Bilbao, in the Museum of Environmental Education (Pamplona), IORTIA (Alsasua) or Hika Ateneo (Bilbao). It is currently being published.



Jon a volunteer in the NGO "Irungo Harrera Sarea" talking to Shila a migrant from the Republic of Guinea.
Irun, Spain.
Illustration courtesy by Josune Urrutia.