

Inhotim Presents the First Major Solo Exhibition of Edgar Calel in Brazil

Exhibition brings together new works, fostering a dialogue between San Juan Comalapa, Guatemala, and Minas Gerais

Brumadinho, Minas Gerais — Beginning October 18, Inhotim inaugurates **Ru Jub'ulik Achik '– Aromas de um sonho** (Scents of a Dream) at Galeria Lago, marking Edgar Calel's first major solo exhibition in Brazil. Renowned for weaving together contemporary art and the Kaqchikel-Maya cosmovision, the Guatemalan artist presents an immersive experience featuring works—most of them commissioned by the museum—that underscore the communal, spiritual and political dimensions of his production. This long-term exhibition will be on view through 2027.

To host the show, Galeria Lago's exhibition space has been transformed: in place of conventional wall construction, soil is now erected, an element that shapes the experience of the exhibition. This gesture draws a direct connection between the volcanic landscapes

of Guatemala and the terrain and soils of Minas Gerais, forging bridges between territories, imaginaries, and political contexts. The transformation aligns with the museum's artistic program, which in recent years has increasingly emphasized engagement with territory and dialogue with themes of nature.

“Calel invites us to reflect deeply on territory, rooted in a Kaqchikel-Maya cosmovision. For us, as an institution, it is essential to embrace perspectives that propose learning from nature and offer new insights into contemporary challenges and the territories we inhabit. These themes permeate the exhibition and also reverberate through our management and governance practices. This is a commitment expressed in this exhibition and one that guides Inhotim's programming as a whole,” says Júlia Rebouças, Inhotim's artistic director.



Throughout **Ru Jub'ulik Achik - Aromas de um Sonho**, audiences are invited to traverse a landscape of works composed of leaves, stones, wood, and soil—natural elements that tell stories and embody Indigenous cosmologies. In *In b'aqil* (I Am a Piece of Bone; 2005), the artist strips plaster from the gallery walls, in a movement of inquiry into past occupations of that architectural space and the territory it occupies. Large-scale works engage the senses, such as *Q'eq Ulef Xan* (Fertile Soil Wall; 2025),

a monumental eight-meter-wide embroidery created in collaboration with Calel's family; and *Kej-chi'ch'* (Metal Deer; 2025), a life-size sculpture of the family's red pickup truck accompanied by 18 life-size sculptures of people— a work entirely produced by Inhotim Studio in collaboration with the artist.

The exhibition culminates in an immersive domestic environment that evokes Calel's home-studio in San Juan Comalapa, or Chi Xot (in Kaqchikel), Guatemala.



Edgar Calel.
Image from the artist's collection.



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la, a space for gathering and creation with his family. From the window of this intimate environment, visitors glimpse *Tab'el* (A Sacred Place Not to Be Forgotten; 2025), installed in the gallery's outdoor area. This stone altar with candles and religious objects, complements the atmosphere of devotion and memory that permeates the exhibition.

"In this exhibition I present works that arise from the experience of living with my grandmother during my childhood. Many works stem from memories—sounds, songs, prayers in the mountains, offerings, from imagining moving a stone in the air, or perceiving a grandfather or grandmother in the form of stone. I believe this is one of the most emblematic exhibitions I've created in the past ten years, because the works have both the scale and the duration they require," reflects Edgar Calel.

In all, twelve works were commissioned by Inhotim — *Ru b'ix Qa Tzub'al* (Visual Chant for Our Spirit; 2025); *Aqu'oman-ik Paruwi Juyu'* (Healing on the Mountains; 2025); *Kotib'ib'al k'ux* (Swing Your Spirit; 2025); *In b'aqil* (I Am a Piece of Bone; 2025); *Oxi ijatz, oxi ixim, oxi ab'äj* (Three Seeds, Three Corns, Three Stones; 2025); *Tzalen siwan* (Profound Abyss; 2025); *Qatit Qa Mama' Wawe Oj k'owi Chawech* (Grandma, Grandpa, We Are Here in Front of You; 2025); *Kej-chi'ch'* (Metal Deer; 2025); *Q'eq*

Ulef Xan (Fertile Soil Wall; 2025); *Nimajay kaqchikel* (Kaqchikel's Big House; 2025); and *Tab'el* (A Sacred Place Not to Be Forgotten; 2025).

These are presented alongside three additional works—*Ix b'alam Winaq* (Earth Woman, Jaguar Complete Person; 2019–2025); *Ki munib'al qatit qa mama'* (Offerings for Our Grandmothers and Grandfathers; 2025); and *Xi ni chajij* (They Guarded Me with the Essence of Fire / They Covered Me with Ashes to Protect Me; 2022)—that broaden the dialogues proposed by the curatorial project, co-curated by Beatriz Lemos and Lucas Menezes. The titles of the works, including the exhibition's, are presented in the Kaqchikel language with Portuguese translation—and translated into English for this press release. Kaqchikel is a Mayan language spoken in Central Guatemala by the Kaqchikel people, to whom Edgar Calel and his family belong.

Research and Travel

The curatorial framework is the result of an extensive research process that intensified with Calel's first visit to Bru-madinho in July 2024. As part of this process, earlier this year Inhotim's Curatorial, Studio, and Education teams traveled to Guatemala, where they shared the artist's daily life and immersed them-

selves in his homeland. This experience proved essential in shaping the exhibition, ensuring a presentation attuned to Calel's practice. At the same time, this immersion enabled Inhotim's teams to anticipate and prepare effectively for the exhibition's production and educational programming, forging strategic and crucial bridges.

"Edgar Calel's production is deeply rooted in his hometown. As our research progressed and we discussed key issues and initial concepts for the exhibition, it became clear that being with the artist in his own territory was essential. The relationship that the artist establishes with his Mayan ancestry is not referential, it's present in every dimension of everyday life. With this understanding, we left Guatemala with the project ready, everything had its place, we saw everything integrated. The result is an unprecedented exhibition in the artist's career," says Lucas Menezes, co-curator of the exhibition.

Two Homes, Two Studios: San Juan Comalapa and Brumadinho

During this process, Calel authorized—for the first time—that part his work be produced outside his family studio in Guatemala. The meeting with the Inhotim Studio team, led by Studio Manager Elton Damasceno, resulted in a pact of trust, establishing a collaborative workflow between San Juan de Comalapa, Guatemala, and Brumadinho, Brazil. The dialogue between these two homes permeates the exhibition and reinforces its communal and spiritual character.

"When talking about my family, I also recognize the importance of the connection between them and the entire team that dedicated themselves to producing the ideas in the Inhotim studios. There is a profound connection between one point and another, between one people and another. What exists is something so beautiful and so important: recognizing that contemporary art is being made by the peoples. This approach is fundamental, because it is also about the memory of the peoples we are conveying through these works," reflects Calel.

It was in this family context that the Inhotim Studio revived a production technique already known to the team. To

produce the sculptures of Calel's family that make up *Veado de metal* (2025), Inhotim collaborators served as models for the construction of the molds, which were later filled with clay to compose the work. A similar technique was employed 20 years ago, when the museum commissioned the works *Abre a Porta* (Opening the Door; 2006) and *Rodoviária de Brumadinho* (Brumadinho Bus Company; 2005), by John Ahearn & Rigoberto Torres, in which residents of Brumadinho are portrayed in large panels at Galeria Praça.

"Inhotim takes great pride in its ability to produce large and complex artistic projects. This vocation has shaped the institution into what it is today and helped it become truly unique. In this exhibition, we had the honor of connecting our studio to the artist's family studio, materializing and reinforcing a dialogue that already exists within the exhibition itself: one that unfolds between the territories of Brumadinho, Brazil, and San Juan de Comalapa, Guatemala," concludes Júlia Rebouças.

About the Artist

Edgar Calel (Chi Xot – San Juan Comalapa, Guatemala, 1987) is a Kaqchikel artist, the firstborn of a family of artists and artisans from his hometown. A graduate of the Escuela Nacional de Arte Rafael Rodríguez Padilla, he develops a practice that moves between drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, embroidery, installation, performance, video, and poetry—always in profound connection with Kaqchikel ancestry and Mayan spirituality, in dialogue with the ritual and communal cycles that structure his family's daily life. His work articulates word, memory, and symbols, confronting coloniality and systemic racism while proposing an art that is at once spiritual celebration and decolonial critique. Producing from his hometown, he also circulates in different international contexts. He first arrived in Brazil in 2011, establishing a unique relationship with the art scene. In 2023, he participated in the 35th Bienal de São Paulo (Choreographies of the Impossible). Recent solo exhibitions include *Pa Ru Tun Ché* (From a Tree Top) (Proyectos Ultravioleta, Guatemala City, 2021), *B'alab 'äj* (Jaguar Stone) (SculptureCenter, New York, 2023) and *Ni Musmut* (It's Breezing) (Bergen Kunsthall, Oslo, 2023). He also participated in the 11th Berlin Biennale (2020), the 58th Carnegie International (2022), the 14th Gwangju Biennale (2023), the 12th Liverpool Biennial (2023), as well as Radical Playgrounds

(Berliner Festspiele, 2024) and *El espacio en medio* (MAMM, Medellín, 2024). His works are held in collections such as Tate Modern (London), Museo Reina Sofía (Madrid), Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), Rijkscollectie (Netherlands), MADC and Fundación Teor/Ética (San José, Costa Rica). In 2023, he was featured in ArtReview magazine's Power 100: The Annual Ranking of the Most Influential People in Art, affirming his position as one of the most significant voices in global contemporary art.

About the Curators

Beatriz Lemos (Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1981) is a curator, researcher and writer. She is currently Coordinating Curator at Inhotim. From December 2020 to January 2024, she was Chief Curator at Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro. She holds a bachelor's degree in Art History from Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and a master's degree in Social History of Culture from Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro. She is the founding director of Lastro, an organization dedicated to transdisciplinary creative and educational processes focused on art in the Global South. Her curatorial work began in 2003—highlights include participation in the Visiting Curator program at Escola de Artes Visuais do Parque Lage

(Rio de Janeiro 2015/2016); participation in the curatorial committees of the 20th Festival de Arte Contemporânea Sesc_Videobrasil (2017) and Bolsa Pampulha (2018/2019). From 2019 to 2021 she was part of the curatorial team of the 3rd Frestas – Trienal de Artes (Sorocaba, São Paulo). In 2023, she was honored with the Regents Lecturer distinction by the University of California, Los Angeles, recognizing international professionals from different areas of expertise for their lifetime achievement.

Lucas Menezes (Barreiro, Brazil, 1986) is a curator, researcher and educator. He is Assistant Curator at Inhotim. He holds a bachelor's degree in History from Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, a master's degree in Social History from Universidade Federal Fluminense and a PhD in Art History from Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne. He served as tutor for the 2023-2024 edition of the residency program at the Museu de Arte da Pampulha. He has worked in the education departments of various institutions, including Instituto Inhotim, Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil Belo Horizonte and Museu Casa Kubitschek. In 2017, he co-curated the documentary exhibition *Images voyageuses : photographies brésiliennes en France* at the Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian in Paris. He has also worked as an educator in social projects, a researcher in the field of cultural heritage, and a professor in basic education.

Event details

Exhibition

Ru Jub’ulik Achik ’ – Aromas de um sonho, by Edgar Calel

Opening: October 18, 2025

Location: Galeria Lago — Inhotim, Brumadinho (Minas Gerais)

General information



VISITING HOURS

Wednesday to Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

In January and July, Inhotim is also open on Tuesdays.



ADMISSION

Full Price: R\$60.00 | Half Price*: R\$30.00.

*Check the half-price eligibility rules on the website:

inhotim.org.br/visite/ingressos



FREE ADMISSION

- **Inhotim for Free:** Access the special guide on free admission at Inhotim.
- **Admission is free for residents of Brumadinho registered** in the Nosso Inhotim program; Amigos do Inhotim members; Children from 0 to 5 years old; patrons, sponsors and partner institutions of Inhotim.



FREE ADMISSION

- **Inhotim Free Wednesdays:** Admission is free every Wednesday.
- **Free Sunday:** Last Sunday of every month is free.



INHOTIM APP

With the Inhotim App, visitors can plan their visit, find their way around Inhotim more easily, and get a 10% discount on admission. Available on major app stores.



LOCATION

Inhotim is located in the city of Brumadinho, 60 km (about 37 miles) from the city of Belo Horizonte, capital of the state of Minas Gerais (a trip of approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes). Access via federal highway BR-381 at km 500 – Belo Horizonte/São Paulo bound. You can also reach Inhotim via federal highway BR-040 (a trip of approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes from Belo Horizonte), Access via federal highway BR-040, Belo Horizonte/Rio de Janeiro bound. Take the Retiro do Chale exit.

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