

Cecilia Vicuña

*La Migranta Blue Nipple*

In 1977, I decided to cross the Amazon by land. I was living in Bogotá and wanted to visit my cousin Barbara who was exiled in Rio de Janeiro. I traveled by bimotored airplanes, boats, buses, rafts and trucks, whatever means I found to go across the giant rivers and a half-built Trans-Amazonian Highway. During that two-month journey, some of the poorest people of Brazil opened their homes to me and offered hospitality. I learned about the sacred world they inhabited and of rituals they practiced that offered protection from colonial violence.

The paintings gathered in this exhibition recreate, in oil, the original drawings I made on brown wrapping paper, with chalk and pastel, upon returning to Bogotá in 1978. To my knowledge only five of those original drawings and a handful of photos have survived. The original set included around 30 large drawings.

Today, as the Amazon rainforest is going up in flames, its people and animals are suffering, I bring back my own version of the *Orixas* goddesses of the Afro-Brazilian pantheon I first met on the shores of the Solimões River in 1977, to invoke their help in the struggle to restore the forest.

If we are to survive the current violence and dehumanization in the world and create peace for all, we need to migrate to a new state of mind and soul.



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