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## Walking birds: Brazil's participation highlights the production and resistance of native peoples at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

*Brazil renews its presence at the Venice Biennale with the exhibition Ka'a Pûera: we are walking birds. The exhibition features the resistance and artistic production of Brazil's native peoples, updating the problematic issues of colonization*

**São Paulo, January 30, 2024** – The Hãhãwpuá Pavilion – as the Brazilian Pavilion is referred to in this edition of the Biennale – marks its presence at the 60th Venice Biennale with the exhibition entitled *Ka'a Pûera: we are walking birds*, curated by Arissana Pataxó, Denilson Baniwa, and Gustavo Caboco Wapichana. The title *Ka'a Pûera* alludes to two interconnected interpretations. Firstly, it refers to areas of cropland which, after being harvested, become dormant, and low-lying vegetation emerges, revealing the potential for resurgence. In addition, the *capoeira* is also known by the Tupinambá as a small bird that lives in dense forests, camouflaging itself in the environment.

In this edition of the Biennale, headed for the first time by a South American curator, the Brazilian Adriano Pedrosa, the Hãhãwpuá Pavilion is notable for its presentation of native peoples and their artistic production, especially the resistance of the knowledge and practices of coastal inhabitants. The exhibition addresses issues of marginalization, dispossession, and rights violations, inviting reflection on resistance and the shared essence of humanity, birds, memory, and nature. **Glicéria Tupinambá**, previously announced artist, works with the **Tupinambá Community of Serra do Padeiro and Olivença**, in Bahia, to create her works. The Pavilion also features works by artists **Olinda Tupinambá** and **Ziel Karapotó**.

“The show brings together the Tupinambá Community and artists coming from the coastal peoples – the first to be transformed into foreigners in their own Hãhãw (ancestral territory) – in order to express a different perspective on the vast territory where more than three hundred indigenous

### Fundação Bienal de São Paulo

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04094-000 · São Paulo · SP · Brasil

[www.bienal.org.br](http://www.bienal.org.br)

T +55 11 5576 7600

[contato@bienal.org.br](mailto:contato@bienal.org.br)

peoples live (Hãhãwpuá). The Hãhãwpuá Pavilion tells a story of indigenous resistance in Brazil, the strength of the body present in the retaking of territory and adaptation to climatic emergencies,” say the curators.

The Tupinambá were considered extinct until 2001, when the Brazilian State finally recognised that not only had they never been exterminated, but that they were actively fighting to reclaim their territory and part of their culture, taken away by colonization.

“The exhibition is being held in the year in which one of the Tupinambá mantles returns to Brazil after a long period in European exile, where it had been since 1699 as a political prisoner. The garment spans time and brings the issues of colonization into the present day, while the Tupinambá and other peoples continue their anti-colonial struggles in their territories – like the Ka’a Pûera, birds that walk over resurgent forests,” the curators add.

Andrea Pinheiro, president of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, emphasizes that “we are living in a moment of convergence between the past, the present, and the future, in order to find a path towards sustainable ways of life and a rethinking of human relations. The questions raised by the work of the curators and artists point to relevant paths for the arduous process ahead of us”.

### **The works**

Glicéria Tupinambá summons the mantles of her people to form the *Okará Assojaba* installation. *Okará* is an assembly of the Tupinambá nation with the aim of creating a listening council where the leaders who wear the Tupinambá mantles gather: the women, the shamans, and the chiefs. The installation *Okará Assojaba* alludes to this assembly by presenting a Tupinambá mantle woven collectively by the artist with her family and the Tupinambá Community of Serra do Padeiro, which is accompanied by other mantles/*tarrafas* (fishing nets). The work is also made up of eleven letters written by Glicéria, jointly signed with the Association of the Tupinambá People of Serra do Padeiro and sent to museums that hold Tupinambá mantles and other parts of their culture in their collections.

In *Dobra do tempo infinito* [Fold of Infinite Time], a video installation with seeds, earth, nets, and *jererés*, Glicéria Tupinambá creates connections between the weaves of fishing nets and traditional costumes. According to the Tupinambá way of thinking, the intersections between the stitches of the fishing nets and the garments also connect the ages: the traditional and the present. In the work, the artist invites us to meet the masters of her community and to have a dialogue with the young people, adding more points to this temporal fold.

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With the video installation *Equilíbrio* [Balance], Olinda Tupinambá amplifies the voice of Kaapora – the spiritual entity that watches over our relationship with the planet and which also lends its name to the environmental activism project she leads in the Caramuru Indigenous Land. The work presents a portrait of the human condition on Earth and a critical discussion of civilization's destructive relationship with the planet on which it depends. Caring for this planet and interacting respectfully with other living beings is the only way to become truly civilized.

Ziel Karapotó, finally, confronts colonial processes in *Cardume* [School of Fish], an installation that combines a fishing net, gourd maracás, and replicas of ballistic projectiles, enveloped in a soundscape with the sounds of rivers and *torés* (traditional chants of the Karapotó people) mixed with the sounds of gunfire. *Cardume* evokes the struggle for territories in the face of genocidal processes that have been ongoing for the last 523 years, but above all it reinforces indigenous resistance through life: the *torés* affirm spirituality; the fishing net represents the currents of rivers, seas, and the abundance of fish; and finally, the maracá connects indigenous peoples to the land where they live.

### **The term Hãhãwpuá**

In this edition, the Brazilian Pavilion is referred to by the curators as the Hãhãwpuá Pavilion, symbolizing Brazil as an indigenous territory, with 'Hãhãw' meaning 'land' in the Patxohã language. The name 'Hãhãwpuá' is used by the Pataxó to refer to the territory that, after colonization, became known as Brazil, but which has had, and still has, many other names.

### **About the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo**

Founded in 1962, the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo is a private, nonprofit institution with no party, political or religious ties, whose actions aim to democratize access to culture and foster interest in artistic creation. Every two years, the Fundação holds the Bienal de São Paulo, the largest exhibition of the Southern Hemisphere, and its traveling exhibitions in several cities in Brazil and abroad. The institution is also the custodian of two items of Latin American artistic and cultural heritage: a historical archive of modern and contemporary art that is a standard reference in Latin America (the Arquivo Histórico Wanda Svevo), and the Cicillo Matarazzo Pavilion, the head office of the Fundação, designed by Oscar Niemeyer and listed as historical heritage. The Fundação Bienal de São Paulo is also responsible for conceiving and producing Brazil's representations at the Venice Biennales of art and architecture, a prerogative bestowed upon it decades ago by the Federal Government in recognition of the excellence of its contributions to Brazilian culture.

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**Brazilian Pavilion at the 60th International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia****Commissioner:** Andrea Pinheiro, president of the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo**Curators:** Arissana Pataxó, Denilson Baniwa and Gustavo Caboco Wapichana**Participants:** Glicéria Tupinambá with the Tupinambá Community of Serra do Padeiro and Olivença, Bahia, Olinda Tupinambá and Ziel Karapotó**Venue:** Brazilian Pavilion (Hãhãwpuá Pavillion)**Address:** Giardini Napoleonici di Castello, Padiglione Brasile, 30122, Venice, Italy**Date:** April 20th to November 24th, 2024**Preview for press and professionals:** April 17th-19th, 2024**Press contacts****Pickles PR**Júlia Frate Bolliger | [julia@picklespr.com](mailto:julia@picklespr.com) | +49 176 25155891Christina Almeida | [christina@picklespr.com](mailto:christina@picklespr.com) | +55 11 99293 3061**Fundação Bienal de São Paulo**

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