



Metsá Rama / Pilar Arce

Noya Rao: Spirit of Peace, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

Noya Rao: Spirit of Peace (2025) is an embroidered textile piece that reimagines a master plant from the Peruvian Amazon. Noya Rao are plants that shift from one species to another. They are recognized in Shipibo culture for their ancestral powers and their ability, when consumed, to harmonize thought and strengthen feelings of peace and tranquility through breathing. The artist, translator, and educator Metsá Rama / Pilar Arce (Paoyhan, 1993) states that her work seeks to emphasize the constant reciprocity between human beings and the natural world, with respect for Indigenous knowledges, in contrast to the Western world's denial of Shipibo science and knowledges.



Wilma Maynas

Ayahuasca Ceremony, 2025

Embroidered with thread and paiche scales on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026, awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

In this work, Wilma Maynas (Panaillo, Rivera del Río Aguatya, 1964) presents a traditional Ayahuasca ceremony, which she describes as “a sacred ritual of healing and spiritual connection.” Ayahuasca leaves and the meraya (shaman or traditional doctor), who guides the meditation process, can be seen in the center of the composition. In Shipibo symbology, the frog represents purification of the body, the butterfly, spiritual transformation, while jaguars represent strength and protection. Surrounding the central circle are clusters of paiche scales and huayruro seeds, which complement the checkerboard of maya and xao kené patterns, which, along with the border of triangular figures shaped like piranha teeth, serve to protect the design.



Dora Inuma

Healing Plant, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

For Dora Inuma (Paoyhan, 1952), plants possess medicinal properties and powers in their leaves, flowers, stems, and roots, which naturally act on the body. In Shipibo culture, plants have been used since ancestral times to prevent, alleviate, and cure illnesses. That is because, in the Shipibo cosmivision, plants do not merely possess healing powers. There is something deeper: plants, or more precisely, their spirits possess consciousness and it is this consciousness that communicates with humans' blood and heals them. Plants are subjects that are considered to be brimming with knowledge. That is the source of their healing power.



Silvia Ricopa

The Energy of the Forest, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Inspired by the traditional cosmovision of Amazonian art, Silvia Ricopa (Viste Alegre, 1965) recreates a vision that originated in the rainforest. The artist considers the energy from deep in the jungle to be a constant flow that renews itself and incorporates animals, plants, roots, leaves, flowers, and chromatic vibrations in its path. Many of these visions stem from Silvia's childhood, when her grandmother taught her the practice of *kené* and introduced her to dreaming with *piripi* (a medicinal plant with powers), which she would carefully place in her eyes to dream and imagine the visions that she would later express in her artwork throughout her career.



Sadith Silvano

Hummingbird (Pino) and Serpent (Ronin)

Awake Ancestral Memory, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
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As a conversation between the pino (hummingbird) and the ronin (serpent), the work of designer, activist, and artist Sadith Silvano (Paoyhan, 1988) contains countless layers of meaning. In the artist's words, the hummingbird appears as a messenger between worlds, guiding sacred knowledge in the jungle. The toads and chomos (clay pots) on the edges allude to the transmission of ancestral spiritual heritage. The serpent, the great Joxin (Ronin), who Sadith calls "the mother snake of the river, mother of all, mother nature," is another central figure in the embroidered textile, which represents dialogue between living beings as an essential condition of natural life.



Sadith Silvano

Spirit that Weaves Life, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

This embroidery by Sadith Silvano (Paoyhan, 1988) elaborates on another foundational myth of Shipibo-Konibo culture: the mermaid or, in this case, the woman who turns into a mermaid upon consuming sacred plants. A ritual with Rao plants (medicinal plants with powers) allows the woman to transform into a mermaid and undergo a profound spiritual journey, during which she acquires different visions and images that enrich the spirit of the forest. Those same visions are the source of the kené designs, which is why the artist states that women artists are like the mermaids of her culture, able to transform the knowledge held by plants into images.



Lucy Silvano

Astral Connection, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

In the third edition (2025) of the book *“El Ojo Verde” Cosmovisiones Amazónicas* (*“The Green Eye” Amazonian Cosmovisions*), Peruvian researcher Gredna Landolt includes the testimony of the meraya (shaman or traditional doctor) Senen Pani (Antonio Muñoz Burga), who refers to ayahuasca as the center of life for the Shipibo people, “a way of understanding life more fully.” This interest in understanding life in a broader way is, according to the artist Lucy Silvano (Paoyhan, 1981), what led her to create this embroidery inspired by the heart of the ayahuasca vine, surrounded by maya kené, a contemporary form of kené characterized by round and symmetrical shapes.



Olinda Silvano

Vision of the World of Plants, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

The leader, activist, artist, and co-curator of this exhibition, Olinda Silvano (Paoyhan, 1969), has created several series of works in recent years related to visions of the world of plants. A key part of Olinda's work consists precisely of imagining bridges between the images in visions and contemporary life of the Cantagallo community (Lima, Peru). Thus she seeks to inspire generations who have not grown up in close contact with the customs of the Shipibo people on the banks of the Ucayali River (Peruvian Amazon). The artist turns to the figures of intertwined anaconda that resemble a heart crowned by a chomo (clay pot) containing several plants, including toé (brugmansia) and ayahuasca leaves and vines. Mother Yacumama (the great serpent) wraps around the embroidered piece. This "mother of all waters" is traversed by several types of kené. Olinda states that, in this work, Mother Yacumama is the key to understanding the spiritual worlds that surround us.



Llormé Buenapico Barbarán

Woman Weaver, Cotton, Natural Fiber, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026, awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

Llormé Buenapico Barbarán (Callería, 1979) based *Woman Weaver, Cotton, Natural Thread* on her grandmother. Modeling the close ties between the community and its territory, the history of women weavers is linked to the materials available in their communities of origin. Therefore, Llormé emphasizes the organic materials that her grandmother used in her work. Looking closely, we can also note the continuity between the weaving and the landscape, between the thread and the context, between the kené and the image, how inseparable units merge and flow together.



Silvia Ricopa

Ancestral Design, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

According to Silvia Ricopa (Viste Alegre, 1965), this embroidery is characterized “by intertwined symmetrical lines that form complex figures, such as spirals and curves.” There are different interpretations of xao kené, as this type of kené is commonly called. In *Kené, arte, ciencia y tradición en diseño [Kené, Art, Science and Tradition in Design]* (2009), anthropologist Luisa Elvira Belaunde explains that it is not a matter of simply associating these patterns with a meaning, but rather of establishing a relationship between a line and a meaningful aspect of the ancestors’ lives. This gives kené a series of multiple meanings that change from artist to artist. For Silvia, in this case, the ancestral design is, at the same time, a network and a map that can guide us back home.



Delia Pizarro

United Couples, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

In the artist's words, this design represents "the forest, the rivers, the fish and, in the center, the medicinal plant ayahuasca, which is essential in Shipibo-Konibo culture as a bearer of therapeutic dimensions." The two snakes, facing one another yet joined together, allude to the duality and symmetry characteristic of *kené* and are also a symbol of the union between couples and of community life.



Silvia Ricopa

Master Vision of the Ayahuasca Plant, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

In *Master Vision of the Ayahuasca Plant*, Silvia Ricopa (Viste Alegre, 1965) explore the visions that give rise to and shape her images of kené. Silvia explains that the idea behind this embroidery is to represent a revelation of the invisible world, that is not normally seen but, through rao plants (medicinal plants with powers), can be contemplated up close. For the Shipibo-Konibo people, these visions induced by plants can help connect with ancestral elders and the spirits of the forest, which demand respect, discipline, and preparation from their users and observers. Each plant has its mother, master, and/or spirit and Silvia emphasizes this dimension of equilibrium, diet, and reciprocity to empower visions and equality between living beings and their spirits.



Olinda Silvano

The Power of the Environment, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

Olinda Silvano (Paoyhan, 1969) has created a large body of work that reflects her concerns for the environment, which include advice and warnings about the destruction of the forest and the vital ecosystems surrounding us. In *The Power of the Environment*, she returns to that theme to remind us that, through the flower of life, the ascha (toad) sees the kené and protects us. On either side of the upper part of the work, Olinda places the Ino (jaguar) and the Rono (the great creator serpent or Ronin), that, according to the beliefs of the Shipibo-Konibo people, maintain balances of forces and help defend the forests.



Wilma Waynas

Encounter of the Spirits of the Jungle, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

This work by Wilma Maynas (Panaillo, Rivera del Río Aguatya, 1964) alludes to the spiritual connection between human beings and Amazonian nature. The artist explains that “in the center, a human figure and a serpent, a symbol of balance, can be seen together, forming a duality and union of energies.” They are surrounded by birds, frogs, flowers, and chomos (traditional clay pots), sacred elements that represent life, fertility, and ancestral wisdom. The kené designs that cover the entire fabric express spiritual paths and protection, “reflecting the cosmovision of the Shipibo-Conibo people and their profound respect for the forest.”



Ronin Koshi

Sacred Paths, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

In the Shipibo-Konibo community, women have historically been the creators of kené drawings and designs. But, like any living culture, it has transformed significantly in recent years. Ronin Koshi (Paoyhan, 1994) is an artist, activist, and cultural manager who grew up in a family of artists. Watching women create since he was a young boy, he has developed his own style and his own representation of his visions. In *Sacred Paths*, he focuses on the paths traced by his ancestors, in which the lines of kené can be maps of wide river channels, the veins of leaves in the forest, or musical scores to be sung and read communally. Each of these lines and strokes is, for Ronin, an archive of the knowledge and wisdom of his grandparents.



Jaminthon Martínez Ricopa

Kené and Amazonian Fauna, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

Jaminthon Martínez Ricopa (Vista Alegre, 1982) is an artist and community leader of Cantagallo, part of a group of men who have dedicated themselves to creating kené in recent years, transforming the tradition by which only women create kené. Jaminthon's conception of kené is represented in this embroidered piece, in which the artist narrates a complex worldview where spiritual nature and ancestral knowledge are found to be profoundly intertwined. In the artist's words, "kené is not a simple ornament; it is a sacred visual language, a spirituality that represents the paths of energy, life, and thought."



Marylú Silvano

The World of Ayahuasca, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

The face of the meraya, who Marylú Silvano (Paoyhan, 1985) describes as the “guardian of knowledge and mediator between the visible and spiritual worlds” appears in the center of *The World of Ayahuasca*. He is surrounded by leaves of the toé (angel’s trumpet) and other rao plants (medicinal plants with powers) in the Peruvian Amazon. The artist indicates that the kené geometric patterns that appear in the piece represent the ícaros (ritual songs) “that render homage to Shipibo-Konibo cultural identity, the wisdom of the forest, and the sacred relationship between human beings, nature, and spirit.”



Lucy Silvano

Mother Nature and Spiritual Power, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Ronin, Yacumama, the great serpent, the mother of water, or the sacred anaconda, are the names given to the serpentine image at the center of this embroidered piece by Lucy Silvano (Paoyhan, 1981). This is a recurring image in Shipibo visual culture. As artist, translator, and educator Metsá Rama / Pilar Arce recounts in issue 6 of **INSITE Commonplaces**, *Common Thread* (2023): the serpent is often an image-force representing the energy and power that an artwork or design can have within Shipibo cosmology. This power arises, above all, from the skin of the anaconda, that is often considered to be the very origin of kené design. Lucy recounts that, in addition to invoking this energy of the mother serpent, this piece is also a manifestation of the protection of the forest, along with medicinal plants.



Ronin Koshi

Mistress of the Forest, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Like an image observed through a microscope, *Mistress of the Forest* by Ronin Koshi (Paoyhan, 1994) suggest a molecular figure of the plant mistress of the forest. The masters or spirits who live in rao plants (medicinal plants with powers) are the ones who possess the knowledge to cure those who consume them. Of the many visual representations of plant spirits, the most well-known are those of Shipibo artist Lastenia Canayo (Pecon Quena), who has dedicated much of her life to creating a fantastic repertoire of different creatures. This piece by Ronin seems to follow this genealogy. However, it focuses on the invisible dimension of their representation, emphasizing the knowledges and powers that they bestow on those who consume the plant.



Nelda Silvano

Tree Felling, 2025

Embroidery with thread and huayruro seeds
on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026,
awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

Nelda Silvano (Panaillo, Rivera del río Aguatyá, 1970) is an artist who tends to incorporate fabric scraps, collage, and seeds in her compositions. In *Tree Felling*, Nelda adds images of animals, similar to those often used as patches on children's clothing, to emphasize the destruction of the natural world, which is innocent and full of life, in contrast to extractivist policies of indiscriminate logging and the subsequent desertification of the Amazon. When asked about this piece, the artist emphasized the urgency of this message: "Stop cutting down trees, because the survival of our animals depends on them. And we must protect our environment from contamination." Nelda finishes the embroidery with a series of fabric appliqués known as murrin, which highlight the ancestral dimension of xao kené, a design passed down from generation to generation.

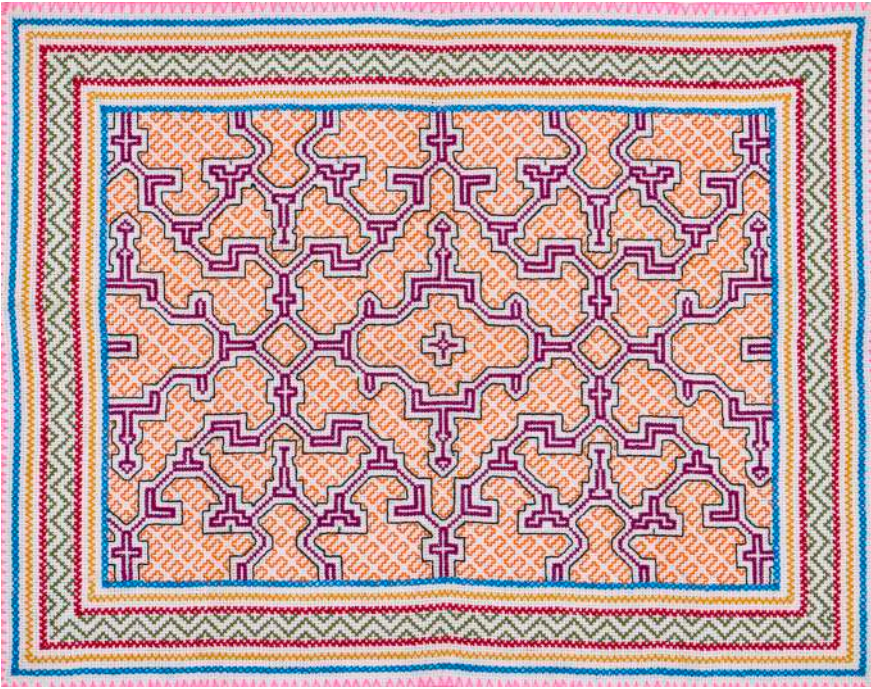


Olinda Silvano

The Protection of Love, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

In an interview with Gala Berger for the ICI (Independent Curators International), Olinda Silvano (Paoyhan, 1969) explains that, for her, kené is the energy of the Shipibo people and symbolizes the unity of the community. “It is our source of inspiration. Kené is not a geometric pattern that can be copied from someone else or from another drawing. Kené arises in your mind and takes shape when you pick up your brush and start to work. It is nourished from the energy of plants and the Ucayali River, which are vital for our lives, providing us with water, fish, and much more. You could even say that kené is art, but it is much more complex than art: it is philosophy, medicine, and science.” In this definition, Olinda presents a framework that could encompass all of her work, as in this piece titled *The Protection of Love*, in which she returns to the image of the ayahuasca plant, as a primordial mother plant that cares for, protects, and unifies all living beings under its influence.



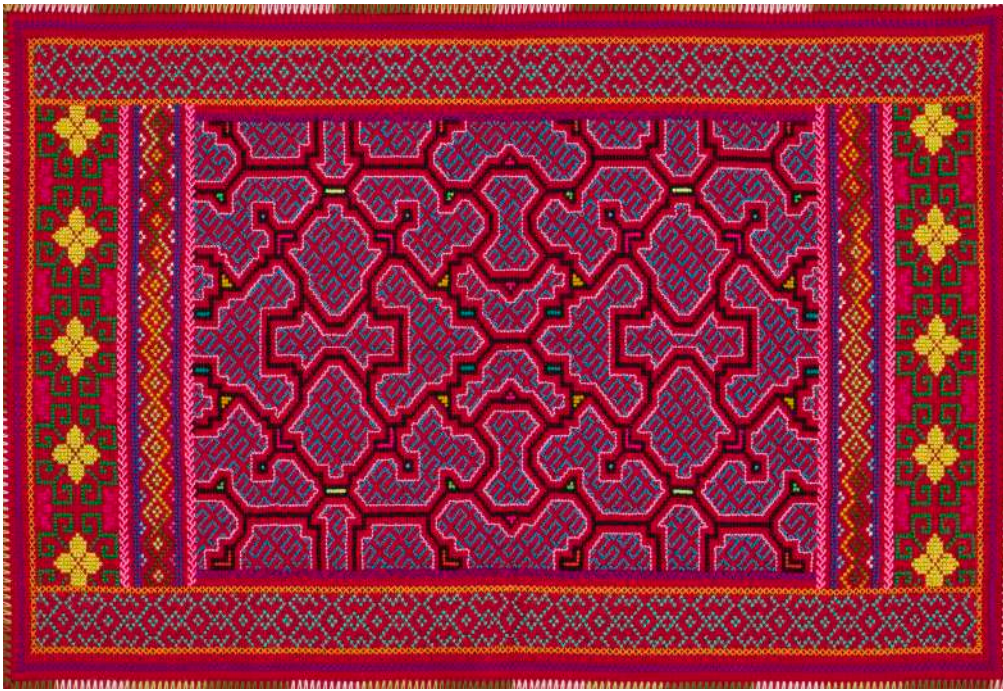
Marylú Silvano

Ancestral Memory, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work produced as part of the Situated Fellowship 2025/2026, awarded by Visible, Fondazione Pistoletto, and Fondazione Zegna

In *Ancestral Memory*, Marylú Silvano's (Paoyhan, 1985) evokes the *chitonti*, a traditional Shipibo wrap-around skirt, by employing the same materials used to make that garment. The exact date of the origin of *kené* geometric designs is unknown, but archaeological evidence points to an ancestral past within the visual tradition linked to native cultures of the Amazon, where these patterns have been used in pottery, clothing, and even in body decoration. According to Marylú, "These patterns do not only function as ornaments, but also as a symbolic system that represents the order of the cosmos, energy pathways, and the relationship between human beings, nature, and the spiritual world. Embroidery created by applying thread to fabric recuperates ancestral knowledges passed down from generation to generation, in which the act of weaving and embroidery is also an act of memory and cultural resistance. The continuous and interwoven lines suggest invisible maps, visual songs, and ritual paths that speak of identity, healing, and community connection."



Jade Rodríguez Maynas

Maya kené, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

In this embroidery, Jade Rodríguez Maynas (Yarinacocha, 1986) presents a series of constellations created with maya kené. According to Jade, this contemporary version of kené incorporates an intricate series of paths, in which, forests, animals, birds, the riverbank and, in the river, fish and the waterways, can be found. Along the edges of the design, stars form a celestial guide representing a spiritual itinerary, protection, and the Shipibo people's ancestral relationship with the sky and stars. The stars also symbolize knowledge passed down by ancestors and guidance on the path of life.



Salomé Buenapico

Medicinal Plant, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

In issue 6 of **INSITE Commonplaces**, *Common Thread* (2023), the artist, translator, and educator Metsá Rama / Pilar Arce developed a small glossary of Shipibo images. There she describes ayahuasca as a very important, healing, vine: “It cures all ills. Thanks to its power, many people have been cured of illnesses and have experienced visions.” It is no coincidence then that this plant plays a leading role in many of the pieces in this exhibition, such as this work by Salomé Buenapico (Yarinacocha, 1985) that once again centers the ayahuasca flower. This does not refer to the flower in itself, but rather to the figure that appears inside the ayahuasca vine when it is cut into slices. Inside the flower, Salomé includes representations of the plant’s leaves and designs that evoke the variety of Amazonian fish.



Nelda Silvano

Flower and Fauna, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Two inos (jaguars), two Ronin (serpents), and a series of visions come together in this piece by Nelda Silvano (Panaillo, Rivera del río Aguatya, 1970). According to the artist, the animals represented here are guardians that watch over and protect medicinal plants.



Nelda Silvano

A Woman Makes Pottery, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

The power of self-representation is an important dimension of the work of the artists residing in Cantagallo (Lima, Peru), manifesting in portraits of colleagues and neighbors, as well as tributes to important artists, single mothers, and community leaders. As pillars within a broader organizational structure, women artists support their families economically from a very young age. That is why their portraits appear in so many formats and media. In *A Woman Who Makes Pottery*, Nelda Silvano (Panaillo, Rivera del Río Aguatya, 1970) presents the portrait of what she calls “a fighting mother,” capturing her designs, visions, and inspirations as she works to sustain her household.



Zaida Silvano

Ceremonial Plant, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

Zaida Silvano (Paoyhan, 1977) is an artist who spends time in Cantagallo (Lima, Peru), but primarily resides in her native Paoyhan (in the Peruvian Amazon). Zaida's work is situated in close contact with nature, close to the river, the jungle, and the crops she tends daily. In *Ceremonial Plant*, she shifts from the figurative depiction of the connection with nature and plants to abstractions of what she calls "the invisible word and essence." As is in typical in her work, the embroidered kené of the central figure is surrounded by lines of the xao kené design.



Zaida Silvano

Protecting Life, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

Survival is a recurrent theme in many of the works by this group of artists. After facing migration, adapting to new customs in the city, language difficulties, and the necessary translations of feelings and beliefs, it is not surprising that so many pieces speak of protection and care. This amulet-work by Zaida Silvano (Paoyhan, 1977) is precisely a continuation of these themes. According to the artist, it is a type of plant that traveled from the rainforest to the city to purify the air and grant medicinal properties to prevent illnesses and heal the body.



Dora Inuma

The Power of Nature, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark
con corteza de caoba

Dora Inuma (Paoyhan, 1952) is a grandmother and mother of the Silvano family. Dora was also one of the pioneers in establishing the Shipibo community of Cantagallo (Lima, Peru). However, her textile works recall visions of her native Paoyhan, which are interwoven with images of the city in which Dora has lived for the last twenty-five years. In *The Power of Nature*, the artist embroiders the only tree in the Cantagallo community. Unlike the jungle, Lima is a desert with a coastline and little rainfall, thus not many species can grow without adequate access to water. This tree, in Dora's work, is depicted as resilient, surrounded by the energy of nature, connected with the earth, animals, and plants. In the artist's words: "It is an invisible force that flows constantly through plants in the cycles of life, time, emotions and harmony."



Jade Rodríguez Maynas

Union of Kené, 2025

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bark

Different types of kené have different meanings that vary from one vision to another, from one image to another. Xao kené and maya kené are the most commonly used by the artists living in Cantagallo (Lima, Peru), however, *Union of Kené* by Jade Rodríguez Maynas (Yarinacocha, 1986) features tayan kené, characterized by its diagonal strokes. For Jade, tayan kené represents the union of kené, the meeting points or interconnected lines that symbolize harmony in the community and balance between people, nature, and spiritual learning. The artist points out the ayahuasca leaves along the border, which establish a direct connection with the stories present in the icaros (ritual healing songs).

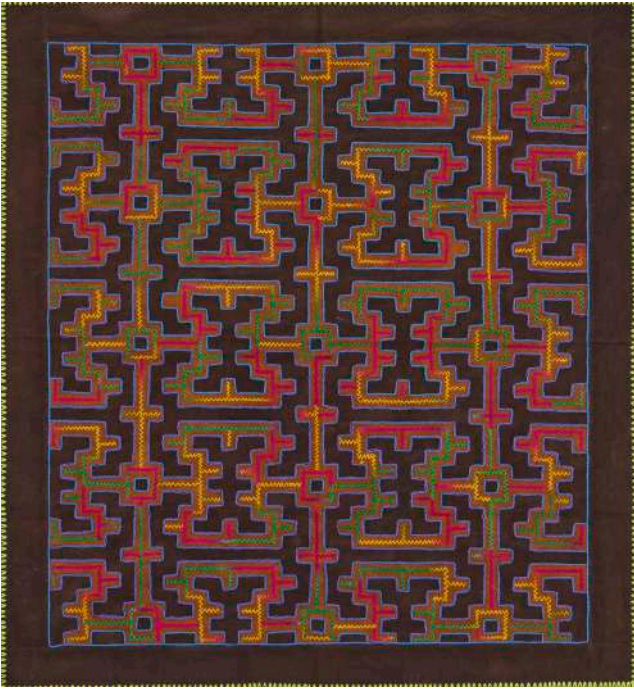


Jaminthon Martínez Ricopa

Spiritual Order of the World, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

In *Kené, arte, ciencia y tradición en diseño [Kené, Art, Science, and Tradition in Design]* (2009), anthropologist Luisa Elvira Belaúnde mentions that the Shipibo chant in ayahuasca rituals is an “expression of the synesthetic experience, the conjunction of visual, auditory, tactile, and olfactory senses, caused by ingesting the plant.” Under its effect, designs are seen, sung, touched, and smelled by the meraya (shaman or traditional doctor) and participants in the healing session.” The kené designs that surround and traverse the figure embroidered by Jaminthon Martínez Ricopa (Vista Alegre, 1982) respond to those synesthetic songs guided by traditional medicine. In the artist’s words, “These lines represents the routes traveled by spirits, healing words, and harmony of the universe. Each line has a direction, a rhythm, and a purpose, reflected in the balance between body, mind, and nature.”

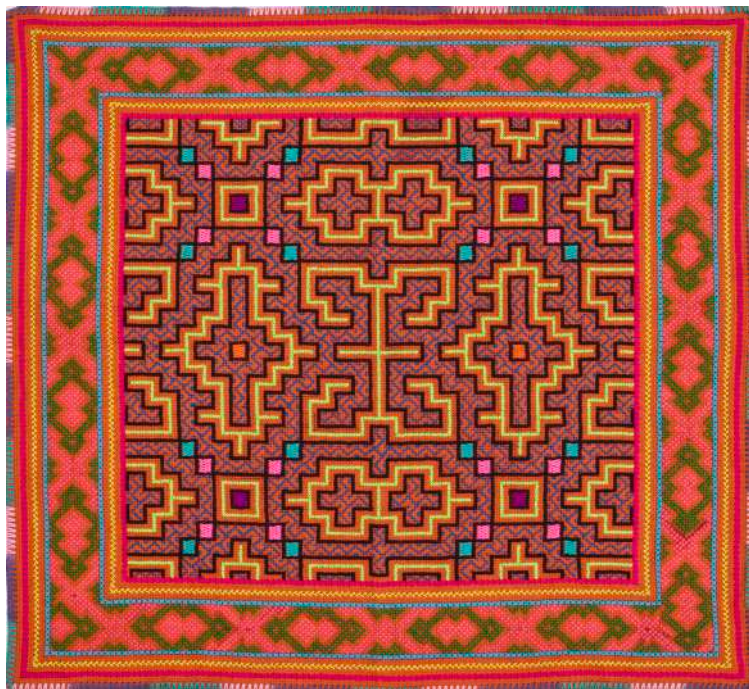


Salomé Buenapico

Paths of our Ancestors, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

Salomé Buenapico (Yarinacocha, 1987) presents a series of xao kené pathways, following the steps traveled by her ancestors in their journeys between communities. The artist mentions that this is an ancient design that harks back to ancestral times.



Wilma Maynas

Paths of Ancestral Kené, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

In *Paths of Ancestral Kené*, artist Wilma Maynas (Panaillo, Rivera del río Aguatya, 1964) presents a work that symbolizes the paths of energy, life, and ancestral knowledge. In the artist's words: "The symmetrical and intertwined shapes represent balance and harmony between humans, nature, and the spiritual world. The warm and contrasting colors represent the cultural identity of the Shipibo-Conibo people and their cosmivision."



Wilma Maynas

Heart of the Jungle, 2022

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

According to Wilma Maynas (Panaillo, Rivera del río Aguatya, 1964), *Heart of the Jungle* represents “the connection between nature, life, and the Amazonian spirit.” In the center is a heart shaped by the snake, plants, and leaves, that the artists confirms are “a symbol of love, vital energy, and harmony with the jungle.” The geometrical designs surrounding the main figure correspond to a combination of maya and xao kené. The colors, an important element in Wilma’s work, reflect “the cultural and spiritual richness of the Amazon.”



Olinda Silvano

Ayahuasca Vision: The Hypnotist, 2025

Thread embroidery on fabric

Ayahuasca Vision: The Hypnotist reflects on xao kené, one of the oldest forms of kené that, according to the artist, “marks the path and maps of the ancestors.” At the center is the flower of life, an essential part of the Shipibo cosmivision that represents longevity, surrounded by the huayruro plants and Yakumama (Ronin or the great serpent), mother of water and fish..



Sadith Silvano

Spirit of the Toad, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

Artist, designer, and cultural manager Sadith Silvano (Paoyhan, 1988) created this small embroidered textile piece to pay homage to the guardian spirit of the toad, “which protects healing medicine.” In turn, Sadith explains that the toad is a symbol of balance and that, upon living among the rao plants (medicinal plants with powers), acts as a direct intermediary between medicine and the spirits of the plants. The xao kené that appears in the background of the composition alludes to the path of the ancestors and the teachings of the spiritual world.



Sadith Silvano

Spirit of Transformation, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

This is the second piece by Sadith Silvano's (Paoyhan, 1988) representing the guardian toad. This time the toad appears as a vehicle of transformation, protection, and order in life. The artist indicates that "The toad symbolizes the profound connection with the earth, healing, and rebirth. And all transformation is born from respect of nature and the memory of the people."



Olinda Silvano

Spiritual Master, the Meraya, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

Olinda Silvano (Paoyhan, 1969) has embroidered various moments of the ceremonies with rao plants (medicinal plants with powers), from complex compositions featuring plants and animals to close family members who performed the rituals. In many of these images, the anthropomorphic animals are protagonists and they occupy a central place. In *Spiritual Master, the Meraya*, the woman-anaconda envelops the ceremony's guide transforming into a forest spirit with multiple eyes. In Olinda's words: "The spiritual master cares for the community through the visions of the plants."



Olinda Silvano

Piranha Tooth, 2025

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

Piranha Tooth is one of the smallest pieces in the exhibition. Its portability reminds us that many of these productions come from groups of artists that, for years, have had to survive as street vendors, selling small pieces and objects often categorized by the Western world as handicrafts or popular art. That is why, the majority of the pieces by Olinda Silvano (Paoyhan, 1969) in this format allude to domestic production and the energy of the home.

In *The Piranha Tooth*, Olinda utilizes the triangular point, known among the Shipibo as the sharpened piranha tooth, which prevents bad energies from approaching.



Zaida Silvano

Circle of Memory, 2021

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

The importance of remembering and keeping Shipibo cultural traditions alive is a central characteristic of the kené combinations of Zaida Silvano (Paoyhan, 1977). In the artist's words: "The circle of memory integrates the maya kené and xao kené designs in a circular composition that symbolizes identity, nature, and ancestral memory."



Silvia Ricopa

Toé Leaves / Brugmansia, 2021

Thread embroidery on fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

In this piece, Silvia Ricopa (Viste Alegre, 1965) presents one of the most important mother plants in Shipibo culture: the leaves and flowers of the toé plant (brugmansia). This plant not only ensures spiritual protection, but, through its consumption, it also transmits knowledge, visions, and messages from the spirits and ancestors to the body.



Silvia Ricopa

Double Leaf and the Yaucana / The Protective Pion, 2021

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric dyed with mahogany bar

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

For Silvia Ricopa (*Viste Alegre*, 1965), the pion (a medicinal plant with powers) located in the center of this piece “symbolizes vital force and resistance to disease. It is considered an ancestral ally, passed down through grandparents’ knowledge, as well as by the silent guardian of the home and territory.”



Nelda Silvano

Community Kitchen in the Pandemic, 2021

Embroidery, clay, collage on cotton fabric
dyed with mahogany bark

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Community Kitchen in the Pandemic recounts community experiences in Cantagallo (Lima, Peru) during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the emergency situation, the Peruvian state implemented a policy of isolation toward the inhabitants of Cantagallo, using armed forces to prohibit people from entering or leaving the community. This situation, exacerbated by the community's own limitations, limited access to clean water and electricity, and the inability to sell their artwork, motivated a group of mothers to come together to prepare communal meals everyday to feed their neighbors and family members. The piece also depicts the house of Olinda Silvano, the leader and artist who collected food donations to prepare the community meals. The central image is bordered by representations of xao kené, the traditional design, reminiscent of the Ucayali River, its fish and its populations.



Nelda Silvano

Anaconda, 2021

Embroidery with thread, wool, clay, collage on cotton canvas dyed with mahogany bark

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces* (2020–2023)

For Nelda Silvano (Panaillo, Rivera del río Aguatya, 1970), the anaconda represents the mother of the Ucayali River that, upon swimming in its waters, transforms into a boat or large vessel, carrying an incalculable number of fish with it. The trees evoke the rainforest and the houses a community on the banks of the Ucayali River. Nelda has sewn four industrial patches on the edges with the image of a hummingbird. In the Shipibo imaginary, the hummingbird is a symbol of love and well-being and its image brings peace and joy. Surrounding the images, xao kené and the toé (brugmansia) flower build a bridge between the visions and ancestral design.



Salomé Buenapico

Surviving the Pandemic with my Husband, 2021

Embroidery with thread, wool, clay, collage on cotton canvas dyed with mahogany bark

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces* (2020–2023)

Starting with the frame with yellow and red geometrical figures, moving to the second frame with images of xao kené, and the third circle with drawings of maya kené, Salomé Buenapico (Yarinacocho, 1987) guides us through the different layers that co-exist in the Shipibo imaginary. (Yarinacocho, 1987) guides us through the different layers that co-exist in the Shipibo imaginary. Here xao kené represents the tributaries of the Ucayali River, with applications of murrin (appliqué fabric), a popular technique across generations that, over time, has lost its central role. The maya kené, in its circular form, recounts the story of several small water sources and its black lines represent aquatic life. In the center of the piece, Salomé portrays herself with her husband and daughters in Cantagallo (Lima, Peru) during the Covid-19 pandemic. The family is shown sharing the steam of eucalyptus inhalations, using the only tree that grows in the community and that is centrally represented on the left side of the work. The horizon of Cantagallo and San Cristóbal hill, where other communities reside, can be seen in the distance.



Salomé Buenapico

Stories, 2021

Embroidery with thread, wool, clay, collage on cotton canvas dyed with mahogany bark

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces* (2020–2023)

In *Historias*, Salomé Buenapico (Yarinacocha, 1987) divides the central image of an ayahuasca flower into four narrative moments. The first depicts the story of a fisherman from the community of Puerto Alegre (Yarinacocha, Peru) on the Aguaytía River who is pursued by a mermaid. Salomé recounts that every time that the fisherman would go to sleep at night, he would dream of a mermaid who told him that many fish would fall into his nets. Indeed, when he would go out to fish during the day, many fish would fall into his nets, and this continued in every lake and lagoon. Until, one day, the fisherman heard the mermaid singing and he almost fell into the depths of the river, which frightened him so much that he never fished again. In the second image, Salomé presents the story of the lost lagoon. This time the story originates from the community of Paraíso (Ucayali, Peru). Here the fisherman comes to the town to exchange fish for bananas, where he meets a villager by the riverside who invites him to fish in a lagoon where the fish are

abundant. The fisherman accepts and finds the lagoon with many fish. On the third day, he wants to fish there again but he cannot find the lagoon. He asks about it in the community and they tell him that the lagoon never existed and that the villager who told him about it had died ten years earlier. In the third story, Salomé completely changes the narrative focus by concentrating on three women artists who come together to venture deep into the forest to look for huayruro, zara zara, and choloque seeds to make necklaces and bracelets. The women travel as a group due to the need for mutual protection and women's responsibility to provide for their families. In the fourth story, the artist portrays herself along with other Shipibo women, going back to living on the riverbank, longing to once again contemplate the currents, bufeos (pink dolphins of the Amazons), and boats that navigate its tributaries. This final narrative emphasizes the importance of water for life outside of the city and urgent need to protect it.



Isolina Tananta

Ayahuasca with Clay Pot / Jene ibo tita (Mother of Water), 2021

Thread embroidery on dyed cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Ayahuasca with Clay Pot / Jene ibo tita (Mother of Water) Isolina Tananta (Nuevo Loreto Native Community, 1980) states, “The work invites us to listen to the rhythm of nature and connect with the flow of life. Mother Water calls us to respect and honor the cycle of life and to find balance in harmony with nature and ancestral wisdom and, in doing so, to continue valuing our Shipibo-Konibo culture.”



Isolina Tananta

Medicinal Plants / Vision of Mother Ayahuasca, 2021

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Colección Haudenschild

Like the other piece by Isolina Tananta (Nuevo Loreto Native Community, 1980) included in this exhibition, this work also invites us to observe carefully. In Isolina’s words, “We must listen to our inner voice, honor ancestral traditions, and search for healing through connection with the divine and nature, through icaros (healing songs) and the vision of Mother Ayahuasca.”



Delia Pizarro

Xao Kené Ancestral Design, 2021

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Colección Cathe Burnham

Delia Pizarro (Roya, 1979) states that she does not remember when she first saw a xao kené design, that it has been part of her life for as long as she can remember and that she has seen it produced by everyone from her oldest family members to the youngest. In Delia’s words, “This design has been passed down from generation to generation, like a path from our ancestors.”



Dora Inuma

Healing Plants in the Jungle / The Resistance of the Jaguar, 2021

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Colección Leon Kassel

According to Dora Inuma (Paoyhan, 1952), this piece focused on the jaguar “represents strength, bravery, and the ability to survive. It is the powerful animal of the jungle.” Its strength is seen in its great energy, agility, and patience; it is a symbol of protection, leadership, and internal power.



Dora Inuma

Healing / The Meraya's Connection with Nature, 2023

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Colección Al Assad

Dora Inuma (Paoyhan, 1952) produced this work during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency in the community of Cantagallo (Lima, Peru). Worried about the health of her loved ones, in this piece, Dora explores the roots of the healing processes of her native Amazon, in which respect for all forms of life is key to ensuring survival. In the artist's words: "The meraya or wise one is part of nature and not its owner, therefore he teaches balance, respect, and harmonious co-existence with the environment. His connection with nature allows him to guide the community, protect life, and share values of wisdom, care, and reciprocity, strengthening the sacred relationship between human beings and the Mother Earth."



Zaida Silvano

The Connection of Medicinal Plants through Kené Design, 2021

Thread embroidery on cotton fabric

Work commissioned by *Common Thread–INSITE Commonplaces*
(2020–2023)

Colección Helena Stage y Randy Robbins

Starting with the title, Zaida Silvano (Paoyhan, 1977) invokes the connection between medicinal plants through kené design. In Zaida's words: "This work shows different medicinal plants that transmit the inspiration and essence of kené designs, reflecting the profound relationship between nature, ancestral knowledge, and artistic expression."



Cordelia Sánchez, Delia Pizarro, Dora Inuma, Jade Rodríguez Maynas, Jaminthon Martínez Ricopa, Marylú Silvano, Nelda Silvano, Llermé Buenapico Barbarán, Olinda Silvano, Pilar Arce (Metsá Rama), Ronin Koshi, Rosy Silvano, Sadith Silvano, Salomé Buenapico, Silvia Ricopa and Wilma Waynas.

Non Kené Nete, 2025–2026

Natural dyes and acrylic paint on cotton fabric

Produced especially for this exhibition, *Non Kené Nete*, is one of the largest pieces created by this group of artists. It was designed by interweaving representations of endangered seeds from the Peruvian Amazons and kené patterns. The work also alludes to the Shipibo-Konibo spiritual world, in which Mother Nature is represented by seeds that are essential for the survival of the ecosystems that sustain life in the Amazons. Additionally, the artists who currently reside in the migrant community of Cantagallo) incorporate a series of songs about their deep connection with the territory and collective work in the piece.



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