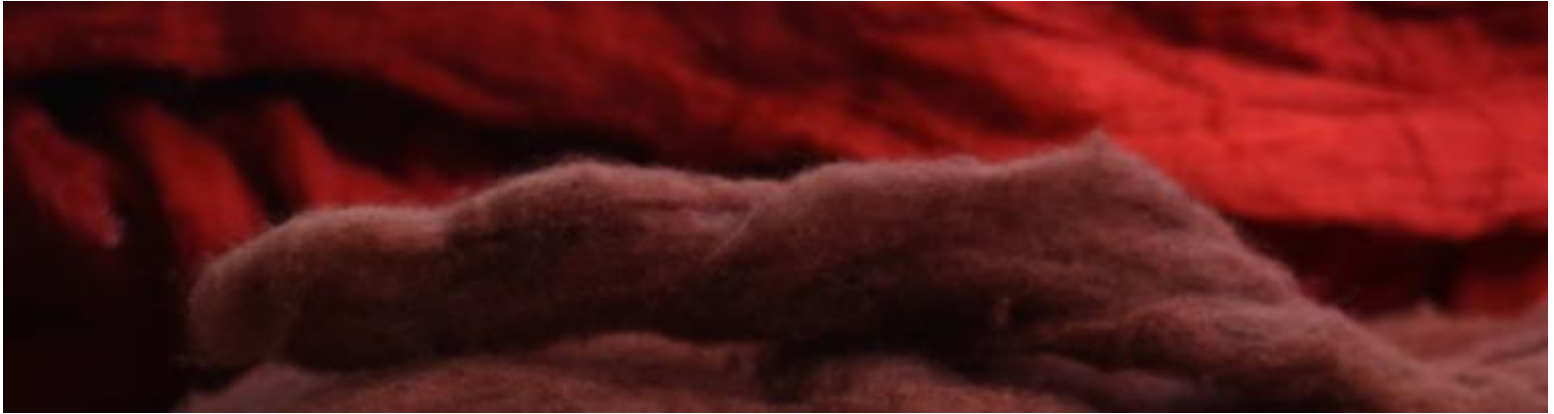


From May 11 at 3:00 pm, to September 3, 2023



## Cecilia Vicuña

*Dreaming water. A retrospective of the future (1964 - )*



**Recognized as one of the most internationally renowned Latin American artists, Chilean poet, visual artist and feminist activist Cecilia Vicuña presents the exhibition *Soñar el agua. A retrospective of the future (1964 - )* at the National Museum of Fine Arts, between May 11 at 3:00 pm and September 3. Giving an account of her work as a form of political and environmental action from poetry, the public will be able to review her 60 year career.**

A huge installation in the hall of the museum, called *Quipu menstrual (the blood of the glaciers)* and made with natural wool dyed by hand in red tones and terracottas, will welcome the public to this international exhibition, which will occupy the entire first floor of the MNBA with around 200 pieces, belonging to public and private collections, in addition to numerous archives, documents and audiovisual records.

With funding from the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, this is Cecilia Vicuña's first retrospective in a Chilean museum since 1971, kicking off the MNBA program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the coup d'état. After its presentation in Chile the exhibition, organized by the MNBA and the Cecilia Vicuña Precarious Art Foundation, will travel to the Malba Museum in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the Pinacoteca in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

"For the National Museum of Fine Arts, from its public vocation, the exhibition of Cecilia Vicuña is a unique opportunity to present to Chile the work of an artist applauded internationally, but whom has gone without the deserved recognition in her native country. Review her outstanding sixty years career, committed to the environment, women's rights, and ancestral knowledge, invites us to recognize ourselves as sentient beings, from a poetic and political perspective. This exhibition was Chile's debt to the artist, and its execution allows us to bring her thoughts to wide audiences and communities in Santiago and surrounding regions; and through her, as a museum, we will continue making contingent the work of so many other women artists", says Varinia Brodsky, National Museum of Fine Arts' director (s).

"The exhibition is a kind of retrospective of the future of my work. Not only of the past and the present, but of what my work can already be given to life, to the culture of Chile. It is an invitation to participate in the transformation of our reality to stop the destruction of the environment," says Cecilia Vicuña.

Born in 1948 and based since 1980 in New York, United States, the artist created the concept of "Precarious Art" in the mid-1960s, to give name to what disappears. Her work is considered an anticipated vision of ecofeminism and decolonization.

### Poetics for Change

Miguel A. López's curatorship underlines the gravitating place of Chile and the Andean memory in her artistic production, as well as the impact of the civic-military coup and the catastrophic effects of neoliberalism on the social and cultural landscape. The exhibition takes as its starting point ecological justice and the urgency of responding to the destruction of the planet manifested in the desertification of the earth, forest fires and the disappearance of glaciers.

Another key component is the understanding of her work as an action where the creative act summons new forms of participation and exchange. Likewise, the tactile and the word/fabric relationship are underlined as a political positioning before the world, but also to respond to the emotional effects of the pandemic, inviting us to think about our own sense of interconnection with other bodies, with the earth, with the cosmos.

Thus, the artist's permanent commitment to themes ranging from eroticism, feminist activism, colonial legacies, liberation struggles, the strength of indigenous thought and environmental devastation is evident.

"This is Cecilia Vicuña's first retrospective in Chile. It will offer a comprehensive review of her work, not only thinking about the past, but especially about the future. Her work is always an invitation to participate in a larger collective act aimed at mobilizing the body and desire. The engine of her work is poetry, which plays a weaving role. As one of her poems points out, we will witness the way in which poetry invites us to invert meanings and relationships, making unreality and reality change places," explains the curator.

The artist conceives education and public participation as a fundamental and transversal aspect of her work, the exhibition, and its multiple dynamics. In this context, a program aimed at various communities will be developed, which will allow the exhibition to reach different territories, thanks to the participation of the Creation Centers (CECREA) in Vallenar, La Ligua, Valdivia and Castro, as well as the 360° footage, aimed at school children and teachers of various subjects, which will be carried out by the Centre for Improvement, Experimentation and Pedagogical Innovations (CPEIP) of the Ministry of Education. Likewise, the Chilean subsidiary of EDF (Empresa Eléctrica de Francia), in its eagerness to promote the energy transition and carbon neutrality, participates in this exhibition by supporting the mediation program in the MNBA, which will be published on the website [www.mnba.gob.cl](http://www.mnba.gob.cl)

Within the framework of this exhibition, acts of activism will be carried out in the public space, such as the inauguration of a native garden in Parque Forestal carried out together with the Mayorality of Santiago, and an intervention through the use of posters from the Mercvria collective; in addition to actions in other cultural spaces such as a sample of their *Quipu Films* at the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, the premiere of the video *Calicata* at the University of Playa Ancha and a performance/launch of her book *Kuntur Ko* in the Victor Manuel Market.

**Meeting with the artist and the curator** | Friday, May 12, 11:00 am. | Registration required in the [following link](#) | Limited places  
Dialogue with Cecilia Vicuña, Miguel Á. López (curator of the exhibition) and José de Nordenflycht (researcher, art historian, academic at University of Playa Ancha) and moderated by Gloria Cortés Aliaga (MNBA curator). It will also be broadcasted via Youtube: @MNBACHile.

### International career

In recent years, Cecilia Vicuña has exhibited individually at the Turbine Hall, Tate Gallery in London; the Guggenheim Museum in New York, Kunstinstittut Melly (ex Witte de With) Rotterdam, The Netherlands; MUAC of Mexico; CA2M in Madrid, where she received the Velázquez Prize; the Miguel Urrutia Art Museum (MAMU) of the Bank of the Republic of Bogotá, Colombia; and in collective exhibitions at the MoMA Museum of Modern Art in New York; Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel; MALBA of Buenos Aires and Pinacoteca of Sao Paulo. She received the Golden Lion for lifetime achievement at the 59th Venice Biennale, 2022. In February 2023, she was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

### Sections

- 1. No Tribe.** It gathers records of actions, poems, paintings, drawings and documents created from the *No Manifesto* that Cecilia Vicuña wrote in 1967, giving rise to this group made up of young artists and poets who sought to express their opposition to conservative forces in Chile.
- 2. Paintings, poems, and explanations.** Taking the title of the artist's second solo exhibition in Chile (1971), mostly paintings that the artist began to execute in 1964, influenced by indigenous and mestizo art, are presented. The works depict nude women in protests, fantasies of animality, Andean philosophy, myths, and popular folklore. Some of them were ignored or labeled *naïve* or "primitive".
- 3. Artist for Democracy.** The year after the implementation of the dictatorship in Chile, the artist founded this group in London in solidarity with Chile, together with the artists David Medalla, John Dugger and Guy Brett. They created a festival along with other projects that mobilized other creators and intellectuals. The paintings, collages, documents, photographs, and printed materials exhibited here give an account of the massive demonstrations they held in Trafalgar Square demanding the reversal of imperialism and the colonial order, also denouncing human rights violations.
- 4. Vicuña in Colombia.** Between 1975 and 1980 the artist lived in Bogotá, where she had a fruitful period, making hundreds of drawings, collages, art actions, educational workshops, scenic projects and films in 16 mm. Although she held individual exhibitions (La Gruta and Casa Colombia galleries; and Gilberto Alzate Avendano Foundation), most of the works of that time were received with indifference and in some cases destroyed. She then settled in New York, where she resides to this day.
- 5. Palabramas (Weapon Words).** Exploration of the links between consciousness and the word, based on the transformative capacity of language in a period of political upheaval in Latin America and deep questioning of the West. Included is a selection of riddles produced in the late sixties and Palabramas produced from 1973 to the present. "(...) words are weapons, perhaps the only weapons allowed," says Cecilia Vicuña.

6. **Precarious.** Small assemblages, built with elements found "basuritas" (small garbage), dragged or modified by the forces of nature. The works of this type were made by Cecilia Vicuña on the beach of Concón, Chile in 1966. Over the years the artist has referred to them as "ritual performances", "spatial metaphors" and "multidimensional poems". They allude to precariousness, pollution, the privatization of resources and life.

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