“The art piece is a matrix.” Rick Prelinger

"The ideology of an art piece is not only in its paradigm but on the device with which it is built." Jean Louis Comolli

Sacred (quechua)

ARTIST STATEMENT

Cecilia **Vilca** Ocharan

Peruvian transartist, feminist **chola** techno-witch, and language activist

mestizo (”peruvian”)

My artistic work is made with technology being this tool and object of reflection. I believe that knowledge is a continuum, I am a transartist. A techno-witch. I ritualize science. I am used to working with the invisible: beliefs and microorganisms are. My projects are born from my personal crusades and therefore they are made of the matter of cyclones, dreams and life. They are micropolitical flesh.

> *“Polona Tratnik coins the category "transart" (...), insofar as trans is something that passes through and is not fixed; it is a passing, a transit, a pure going (Jean Luc Nancy), and insofar as art works from the ontological and the epistemological.” María Antonia González Valerio*

Technology for me already has a speech, it means procedures and thus it speaks about identity. Any device or machine has a need that generates them. My main goal is to encourage reflection through revelation. I believe that science has its own poetics. I come from a family of scientists, and I grew up surrounded by images of electron microscopy. Since I was a child, I know that scientific instruments reveal through data. Things we do not see at first glance, information, procedures, or places we cannot reach, the macrocosm, microcosm. In this way it allows me to reveal a process, a behavior that society thinks are natural, a hidden political system. This aspect of technology is the most important for me and I have called it a *poetic of revelation.*

My lineage is woven of science and art and has survived the fiercest stereotypes.

I exercise my epistemological rebellion.

I have founded, and I lead Microverso, the creative division of MyAP, Scanning Electron Microscopy laboratory, dedicated to developing STEAM[1] and digital heritage projects. I have a deep commitment to the living heritage and the indigenous knowledge of Peru, my country. This includes the recognition of indigenous science. From an anticolonial vision, my aim is to connect ancient and contemporary STEAM to reflect and protect the identity of our peoples. I have been honored to work side by side with indigenous communities: Wounaan (Colombia) and Shipibo-Conibo (Peru). I turned all these experiences into "Southern Identities Laboratory", an itinerant laboratory of epistemological decolonization which raises the question:

What is the South? How to build an identity when its search is already a political act, since the subject ceases to be an object of exotic study in order to define itself?

For me there are mythologies about technology as a single, final and futuristic solution. And for countries in the Global South, technology (and science) is something that does not belong to us. With the word "technology," we refer only to the dominant technology, that is, white, CIS, and heteronormative because it is created by the dominant groups, but there are other technologies today and in the past. Technology, understood not only as a device but as a process, is a bridge to Indigenous ancestral knowledge. I strongly believe that this needs the vision of its heirs. We need an epistemological revision that includes their ways of acquiring knowledge. These are collaborative creations, and processes are preferred over products, understanding that culture and identity come from a greater whole, that is Nature. In the indigenous worldview, when we talk about Nature, we talk about rituality and knowledge; they are not separated.

My projects have oddkin[2]. They are always part of a cluster, I call them organism projects because I let them be born, grow, reproduce and, if it must be, they die.

Many of them develop in the porous "borders" (if there is any border) of art and science. In those, I ask if science is really that cold and, at the same time, what are the methodologies of beliefs. I use science tools and methodologies for artistic purposes. In the technical aspect, I craft my projects with programming, DIY/DIWO/DIT[3], low-tech, and scientific tools, and I mix all of them. This results in non-linear works, with modularity, uncertainty, and automation. The art piece is an object that does not exist as one, but as infinite versions without losing identity. My projects intertwine in an epistemological continuity, sometimes irreverent, where I could speak from any point, use any medium. Let the projects choose for themselves or choose me. Open its process at any time.

[1] STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics

[2] "Kin is a wild category" *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene,* Donna J. Haraway

[3] DIY/DIWO/DIT: Do-It-Yourself / Do It With Others / Do It Together

When I travel this epistemological continuity unleashes in chronicles.

Once again, a chronicler, always a chronicler.

Travel is a fundamental part of my process. This is how I have carried out artistic residencies that have allowed me to develop projects that otherwise, would be empty proposals. I am interested in trans disciplinary projects with teams from different countries and professional backgrounds.

From the collective to the rituality of the private. Identity and habitat are two concepts that intertwine.

A home-loving traveler believes that home expands and unleashes in the heart of all its cities.

My methodology involves my artistic practice and its reflection, which is completed with the retro feed of the audience/participant/data without which it would have no meaning. This involves me as an artist but also as a social individual that does not escape their environment. I have a commitment to a way of working that implies getting involved from the skin, heart, and wounds to heal together. Processes that from individuality become collective in a transversal and rhizomatic way.

The search for health is political.

A revelation from the epicenter of pain: art, my art, has become a healing device.

"Nixta Valley: el ritual," Cecilia Vilca, 14 min. 19 sec., 2021