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Cecilia Paredes: the artist that fades inside her works



Her identity camouflaged in the backdrop.

Multidisciplinary artist **Cecilia Paredes** mixes painting, sculpture and photography using her body, that seems to be the main subject of the "photo performance", but that essentially merges with the background of her compositions often made of patterns borrowed from tapestry or wallpapers filling the entire frame, including her body. The omnipresence of **vegetal or animal design** suggests the vision of Paredes of an **"ideal world"** where humanity blends in it instead of dominating it.



"De alas y espinas"

Her work explores themes such as exile, integration, connection to nature, biocentrism, all of them connected to her life: born and raised in **Peru**, in the 1970s, as political activist when student in Lima, she was forced to leave the country, "a form of exile, a shearing away from family and culture", as in the words of the artist herself. That's why in her art she often evokes qualities as isolation and incertitude, reflecting the unseen, psychological dimensions of that exile, so much that the observer is able to reckoning with the self in **moments of profound interiority.**

to build a kind of alchemical process: skin becomes canvas and body becomes sculpture in a perfectly crystallized moment.

As in her own words: *“I wrap, cover or paint my body with the same pattern as the backdrop and represent myself as a part of that landscape. With this act, I am building my own identity through the entourage or the part of the world where I live, or where I feel I can call home. My bio has described me as nomadic so maybe this is also a need of addressing the process of constant relocation. Another preoccupation I have in mind is the fact that flora as we know it, is coming to be endangered. I think that in my work, aesthetics bind with anthropology in order to register fragments of my personal and social memory”.*



“Blue Flight” – 2021

The 2021 photo performance **Blue Flight** reflects how much Paredes puts of herself when creating: her autobiography, literature, mythology and spirituality meet the **complexities of her identity** and the place they occupy in the world. Here the artist is surrounded and **covered by a textile** embellished with the stylized form of a heron, a bird that possesses a multitude of associations across cultures: self-determination, self-reliance, stillness and tranquility, a beautiful bird but with an aggressive gaze. In the Japanese tradition, for example, it drives away plague and returns with purity, making it an apt

In contrast to the earlier photo performances, now Paredes's painted body is quite undiscernible from the fabric's intricate patterns: **textile and skin are blended** together till she becomes nearly **invisible. In The Whisper**, for example, we see Paredes hidden by luxuriant foliage, her hands up to the face, revealing only her eyes gazing outward. With the body totally transformed, Paredes alters herself into something that is not animal, but a being with the capacity and the need for camouflage.



“The Whisper”

The tapestries also display the influence of her native culture in the quipus, the system of elaborately knotted strings invented by the Inca to record numerical data like tax records or inventories and to act as mnemonic devices to recount histories or encrypt data.

been understood by the Spanish colonizers. It's this **capacity to hold stories and keep secrets** that particularly fascinates Paredes.

Paredes works in the studio alone, with no assistants or collaborators save for the occasional days when a crew assembles to assist in the realization of a photograph. For the past 30 years, she has exhibited in the **most renowned museums**, from the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia to the Lowe Museum in Miami, USA, via the Royal Museum of Arts in Brussels, Belgium. Her "photo performances" are now part of countless **private, corporate and museum collections internationally.**

The artist is represented by the **Echo Fine Arts Gallery**, a gallery based in the French Riviera. The gallery is also media partner of **Excellence Magazine** and of the **digital platform beyond.luxury**.

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