

13 February—11 May, 2025



The Traveling Cloak



Kin Museum of Contemporary Art
in Giron/Kiruna

The Traveling Cloak

A cloak made out of bird feathers is the focal point in the exhibition *The Traveling Cloak*. The artist and activist Glicéria Tupinambá is occupied with studying the history of the cloaks that her people, the Tupinambá from Bahia in Brazil, have created since time immemorial. This practice of hers has led her to producing new cloaks in the same traditional vein as her ancestors. In addition to a new cloak that she and her kin as well her peers have been making together, the exhibition includes two videos, a banner, and two mind maps with facts from the research and visions of Glicéria Tupinambá.

There are eleven known and documented historical cloaks which all belong to different museums in Europe, with a potential twelfth cloak currently being verified by the Museum of Ethnography in Stockholm. Not a single cloak has remained in Brazil. Therefore, Glicéria Tupinambá and her collaborators have been making new cloaks, using historically accurate craftsmanship, using a mesh made of cotton fiber and palm leaves soaked in honey and covered with feathers. These new cloaks have become important tools to reclaim history and tradition.

Between wars, occupations, plundering, revolts, arrests, and forced conversions, genocide and ethnocide also run through the history of the Tupinambá people. This is a people who were declared extinct and had to request for their recognition to be reinstated—which FUNAI (the Brazilian government body responsible for establishing and carrying out policies relating to Indigenous peoples) granted them in 2001. At the same time, her kin Seu Aloísio and Dona Nivalda Amotara—met with one of their cloaks at the exhibition *Brasil 500+ Mostra do Redescobrimento (Brazil 500+ The Rediscovery Exhibition)* in São Paulo, which was part of Brazil's 500th

anniversary commemorating the arrival of the first Portuguese explorer, Pedro Álvares Cabral, on April 22, 1500. It was a cloak from the collection of the Museum of Denmark, which was returned to Brazil in 2024 after a long process of negotiations in which elders, as well as younger people like Glicéria Tupinambá, played a key role.

In the 2000s, Glicéria Tupinambá made a gesture that was both simple and powerful—while negotiations were underway for the return of the cloaks from Europe, she asked; why could not the Tupinambá people who are still alive in Pindorama (one of the indigenous names of the territory currently known as Brazil) make a new cloak? And that is what she did—with her village in Serra do Padeiro, with the elders and children, with bibliographical research and expeditions to European collections, with allies and with the support of her dreams and the permission of the *encantados* (non-human beings, akin to spirits). She did not start from the form, but from the gesture following from what Tupinambá calls the “spell of the thread”: she went on to recall, from the inside out, from the bird to the feather, from the knot to the mesh, what it means to make a new cloak.

The magnificent cloaks belong to the world of magic and the creatures and spirits which exist there, guiding the Tupinambá people through dreams and visions. When the European colonizers returned across the Atlantic from the 16th century onwards, they brought feather cloaks on board the ships. Some of the cloaks were diplomatic gifts, others were traded or bought, and yet others were simply stolen. In Europe, they ended up in cabinets of curiosities and in royal collections. They make appearances in 17th century European paintings by—among others—Jan van Campen and Charles de la Fosse, the latter in the ceiling of the Room of Apollo at Versailles.

In the past two decades, Glicéria Tupinambá has created three cloaks (and is currently working on new ones); one that dresses Cacique [chief] Babau on official occasions, another that is in the National Museum in Rio de Janeiro (together with the recently returned cloak from Denmark) and this third one that has landed here, in the heartland of the Swedish side of Sápmi, the land of Europe's only indigenous people, the Sámi. During its three-month stay at the Kin Museum of Contemporary Art, the cloak will function as the Tupinambá Ambassador to the Sámi people and will meet whoever hears its call, in order to weave new alliances and open new threads.

While finding out what it meant to make the cloak, Glicéria Tupinambá ended up coming across what the cloak does: the cloak is calling other cloaks, it facilitates land being taken back, alliances being created with other indigenous people around the world, dreams generating new dreams, all among conflicts and threats. After all, the cloaks are portals to access other worlds, to activate ancestry, to reclaim history, to unlearn and learn anew, to rebuild communities and develop new friendships with other people and nations.

Maria Lind and Benjamin Seroussi

The exhibition is a collaboration with Casa do Povo (São Paulo), a Jewish diasporic art space that understands the importance of acknowledging the similarities between the Jewish history and the tragedies and struggles of the Tupinambá people. This project was developed by Ana Druwe, Augustin de Tugny, Benjamin Seroussi, Caio Lescher, Fernanda Pitta, Juliana Caffé, Juliana Gontijo, Laura Daviña, Lívia Vigano, Olga Torres and others, in partnership with MAC-USP, the contemporary art museum of the University of São Paulo. Maria Lind and Christina Pestova, from Kin, joined as they were caught by the “spell of the thread.”

Glicéria Tupinambá is an artist, researcher, teacher, educator, farmer and activist, and one of the female leaders of the Serra do Padeiro village (Bahia, Brazil).

Glicéria Tupinambá was a teacher at the Tupinambá Serra do Padeiro Indigenous State College, in the Tupinambá de Olivença Indigenous Land. She completed an Indigenous Intercultural Degree at the IFBA and is currently working on a master's degree at UFRJ. In 2010, she was imprisoned for her role in the struggle for land. In 2019, she spoke at the 40th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, denouncing the violations of rights against Indigenous people by the Brazilian state.

Glicéria Tupinambá directed, with Cristiane Julião, from the Pankararu people, the documentary *Voz das Mulheres Indígenas [Voice of Indigenous Women]* (2015). She participated in several collective exhibitions and curated with Augustin de Tugny, Juliana Caffé and Juliana Gontijo *Kwá yapé turusú yuriri assojaba tupinambá [This is the great return of the Tupinambá cloak]*, at Funarte (Brasília, 2021) and, with the same group joined by Benjamin Seroussi, Caio Lescher and Fernanda Pitta, *Manto em Movimento [The Cloak in Movement]* at Casa do Povo, in partnership with MAC-USP (São Paulo, 2023). She was guest artist at the Hãhãwpuá Pavilion at the 60th Venice Biennale, curated by Gustavo Caboco, Arissana Pataxó and Denilson Baniwa.

Glicéria Tupinambá was the winner of the 10th edition of the ZUM/IMS Photography Grant with the work *Nós somos pássaros que andam [We are birds that walk]* (2022), created in dialogue with Mariana Lacerda and Patrícia Cornils and she won the PIPA 2023 Prize.

Her research looks into the process of accessing museums and listening to artifacts from the Tupinambá people.

Benjamin Seroussi is a São Paulo-based curator, editor and cultural manager. He works as artistic director of the Casa do Povo, a Jewish Brazilian autonomous art space.

Seroussi holds a Master in Sociology from Ecole Normale Supérieure and Ecole de Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales and a Master in Cultural Management from Sciences-Po Paris.

He was deputy director at Centro da Cultura Judaica in São Paulo from 2009–2012); associate curator on the 31st Bienal de São Paulo, *How To (...) Things That Don't Exist* (2014) with Charles Esche, Galit Eilat, Luiza Proença, Nuria Enguita Mayo, Oren Sagiv and Pablo Lafuente; chief curator of *Vila Itororó Canteiro Aberto* in São Paulo from 2014–2017; regional coordinator of COINCIDÊNCIA, the exchange programme for South America of the Swiss Art Council Pro Helvetia from 2017–2019. Seroussi lectures regularly on curating and cultural management.

Fernanda Mendonça Pitta is an Assistant Professor of the Research Division in Art, Theory and Criticism of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of São Paulo. She was an art historian and senior curator at the Pinacoteca de São Paulo from 2014 to 2022. There, among other projects, she curated the exhibitions *Trabalho de artista: imagem e autoimagem* (1826–1929), *Ninguém Teria Acreditado: Alvim Côrrea e 10 artistas contemporâneos*. She served as curatorial coordinator of *Véxoa: nós sabemos* and as consultant for the exhibition *Raio-que-o-parta: ficções do moderno no Brasil*. She is a curatorial committee member of the project *Manto em Movimento*. Her most recent curation was the retrospective *Eleonore Koch: em cena*, at MAC USP, which brought together around 180 of the artist's works. She was a fellow of FAPESP, AAMC, the Clark Art Institute, and the Getty Research Institute. She is the coordinator of the Brazil team of the project *Decay without mourning, future thinking heritage practices* (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond G121-0001). She is a Brazilian Committee for the History of Art (CBHA) member.

1. *Tupinambá Cloak, 2023.*

Glicéria Tupinambá and the Tupinambá People from the Serra do Padeiro. Bird feathers, cord with jataí beeswax.

2. *Untitled, 2022.*

Glicéria Tupinambá. Textile veil, dimension: 3,30mx2m.

Tupinambá climbed the cliff

All covered in feathers

He left, but he is

*He is the king of Jurema.**

**Brazilian plant considered sacred by many people.*

It belongs to the family of Acacia.

3. *Detective panel (Panels 1 and 2).*

Glicéria Tupinambá with Ana Druwe, Augustin de Tugny, Benjamin Seroussi, Caio Lescher, Fernanda Pitta, Laura Daviña, Livia Vignano, Juliana Caffé, Juliana Gontijo.

4. *Territory panel (Panel 3).*

Glicéria Tupinambá with Ana Druwe, Augustin de Tugny, Benjamin Seroussi, Caio Lescher, Fernanda Pitta, Laura Daviña, Livia Vignano, Juliana Caffé, Juliana Gontijo.

5. *Interview for the FUNARTE exhibition, 2021.*

Glicéria Tupinambá. Video, length 24'20'. Produced by syna mídia.

6. *Pena por pena: O Manto em movimento*

[Feather by feather: the cloak in movement], 2021

Glicéria Tupinambá and Fernanda Liberti. Sound design: Hanna Weibe. Video, length 08'57. Serra do Padeiro, Bahia, Brasil.

Thursday, 13 February

16:00 Floor 1. Opening Glicéria Tupinambá and Katarina Spik Skum with introductions by the artists and the ceremony Markerna, a work by Carola Grahn and Nils-Johan Labba.

17:00 Floor 5. A conversation with Glicéria Tupinambá, and curators Benjamin Seroussi and Fernanda Pitta.

Friday, February 14

16:15 Floor 5. Sharing the Burden? Artists and Museums' Colonial Collections.

A roundtable discussion with Michael Barrett, anthropologist and curator, Glicéria Tupinambá, artist and activist, d harding, artist, Benjamin Seroussi, curator, and Fredrik Prost, duojar and artist.

Colophon

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Graphic design: Marina Sergeeva

Kin's visual dialect has been conceived by the artists Inga-Wiktoria Påve and Fredrik Prost in collaboration with the designers Johanna Lewengard and Benedetta Crippa.

Kin Museum of Contemporary Art is the regional art museum of Norrbotten, founded in 2018 by the region and the Municipality of Kiruna.

Kin Museum för samtidskonst/dáládáidaga dávvirvuorká /nykyaijan taitheen myseymmi/Museum of Contemporary Art.

Kin museum för samtidskonst

kinmuseum.se

