

AYLLU

Memories and Visions



Director: Ariel Cholan

Executive Producer: Native Land Digital Inc. General Producer: Victor Sauca Key Community Members: Mama Rosa Minga, Tayta Francisco Lozano, Tayta Miguel Guallas, Victor Sauca, Manuel Andrade, Margarita Cholan, Polivio Guaman, Alonso Cartuche and Namarin Community

Photography: Henry Zaruma Research and Script: Victor Sauca, Silvia Medina

Edition and Post-production: Ariel Cholan & Henry Zaruma Archive Footage: Victor Sauca, Silvia Medina

Music: Tayta Churon, Willak Awki Guaman Poster: Jonathan Terreros (Pachay) Graphics: Darío Zhunaula Original Idea: Victor Sauca

ORIGEN
Creative Studio

NATIVE LAND DIGITAL INC.

SM

AC
ARTIST CUALAN

DARIO/ZHUNAUULA

VDSM

Pachay
Jonathan Terreros



SYNOPSIS

AYLLU: Memories and Visions is the story of the evolution and implementation of a syncretic administrative system that enables the Ñamarín Community to address its challenges related to water. It is the recognition of the power of tradition and innovation in unity for implementing the development the community wishes to experience. It is a reflection on the gradual construction of the pillars that support the organizational structure, allowing community members to shape their visions for the future of Ñamarín.

LOGLINE

It is the story of the evolution and implementation of a syncretic administrative system that enables the Ñamarín Community to address its water-related challenges and shape their future.

TITLE STYLE GUIDE

Ayllu [ai-ill-u] is Kichwa, a variant of Quechua. When writing the title please use both Kichwa and English and capitalize the Kichwa word. Example: **AYLLU: Memories and Visions**.

Length: 18:12 / Aspect Ratio: 16:9
Color, Black & White, 2K
Languages: Spanish & Kichwa
Audio Format: Estereo

FILM CREW



*Ariel Chalán, Víctor Sauca, Silvia Medina y Henry Zaruma (Film Crew).
Photo by Ayllu Land.*

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Silvia Medina (Kichwa Saraguro)

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER, SCRIPT, ART DIRECTION

Silvia Medina is a member of the Kichwa Saraguro people. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Communication from the Salesian Polytechnic University. Throughout her professional career, she has taken on roles such as production assistant, managing the planning and coordination of various creative and logistical processes.

She has also been responsible for conceptualizing ideas and developing scripts, ensuring that each project is guided by a coherent vision and a strong narrative framework. Her expertise extends to art direction, where she has led the creation of visual elements that bring stories to life, always with meticulous attention to detail and a clear aesthetic identity. Furthermore, her skill in idea conceptualization and process coordination has been instrumental in realizing projects that authentically reflect the realities and perspectives of Indigenous communities.

Ariel Chalán (Saraguro Kichwa)

DIRECTOR

Ariel Chalán was born on March 24, 1998, in Loja, Ecuador. He is currently a student of Film and Video, as well as Advertising and Marketing, at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito. Throughout his career, he has been involved in various projects, including short films, music videos, and advertising campaigns. He has worked as a director of photography on the documentary *La Única Cofán* and has directed the short films *Al Paso Que Vamos*, *Ideograma*, and his debut documentary *Dónde Está Mamá*.

His work as a director of photography includes the short films *Obraje*, *Ausencia*, and his debut film *Dibujando*. He also served as gaffer on the short film *Flores Secas*, which was selected for the Quito Latin American Film Festival. Currently, he is producing the short film *Sin Ser Amada* and developing various audiovisual projects in the areas of documentaries, music videos, and advertising campaigns.

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Henry Zaruma (Kañari Kichwa)

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Henry Zaruma was born on September 26, 2001, in Cañar, Ecuador. He is a young videographer, designer, and director of photography. Passionate about documentary filmmaking, he has built a versatile career, participating in cinematic projects, music videos, advertising campaigns, documentary series, and media outlets, including radio and television.

In 2017, he made his debut as a director of photography with the documentary *Mancha Morada*, a work that explores social issues in rural communities in Ecuador. He later joined the team of the project "*Comida de Casa*" and worked as a cameraman for a radio program broadcast by Corape Satelital, further consolidating his experience in audiovisual production.

Currently, he leads the communications committee for the IX World Quinoa Congress and serves as the creative director for *Muyu Fest*, a festival that promotes the cultural and environmental richness of his community. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with international organizations such as FAO and Trias South America, participating in documentary productions addressing social and environmental issues with a humanistic and critical perspective.

His work is characterized by his ability to capture authentic and visually impactful stories, highlighting his commitment to preserving the cultural identity of his people and creating narratives that raise social awareness

Víctor Sauca (Kichwa Saraguro)

GENERAL PRODUCER, SCRIPT

Víctor Daniel Sauca Macas is a Kichwa Saraguro. He lives in Ecuador, in the Ñamarín Community, where he served as President of the Community Government in 2023. He holds a bachelor's degree in First Nations and Indigenous Studies from the University of British Columbia. Currently, he works as a researcher for Native Land Digital Inc.

An amateur photographer, he is passionate about exploring the organizational life and traditions of his people. His mission is to build networks of community members and multidisciplinary professionals to enrich his surroundings through the exchange of ideas and experiences in audiovisual productions.

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT (Ariel Chalán)

"Directing this documentary was a transformative experience; it has been a journey through the memory, wisdom, and work of our community leaders. Each interview and each creative decision represents an opportunity to better understand the history and life of the place where I grew up.

We are a story that holds its roots in the intangible, where water, more than a resource, is a living inheritance that not only nourishes the body but also the collective soul. It not only brings people together, but it also connects them to their past and gives them strength to face the future.

I am deeply grateful to all those who shared their stories with us and to those who made this documentary possible. With this piece, I aim not only to tell a story but to build a bridge between the wisdom and work of our elders and the new paths ahead."

Ariel Chalán

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - KEY ELEMENTS

Ayllu



*Ñamarín Community in the middle ground.
Photo by Henry Zaruma.*

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In its Spanish translation, the Kichwa term ayllu is commonly associated with words such as "family," "clan," or "kinship," as well as a "community made up of several families." Its interpretation as "system" is the least used, but it is the one we have adopted for the context of the title of this work: Ayllu as the concept that captures the essence of the organizational system of the Ñamarín Community.

Thus, Ayllu is a model of an organizational system among the diversity of systems existing around the world. Over time, this system has evolved and adapted to the needs of each era of the community life, but its oldest fundamental principles remain a current and integral part of our community. Its oldest pillars are the mayorales, the mingas, and the Saraguro traditions that organize us. The more contemporary pillars are the assembly, the council, and the commissions.

Within the documentary and in this document, Ayllu is also used as an interchangeable term for the concept of community. The reader may interpret it as system or community depending on the context. When referring to the system and the community, we capitalize Ayllu.

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Kipa



Kipa.
Photo by Víctor Sauca.

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The kipa is the symbol of the mayoral. It is an instrument that occupies a very particular space and time within our community organization. It is used to call for the mingas and to encourage the community with its sound during the day of collective work. They are generally made with cattle horns. Some of them have their own history within the community, as those have been passed down from previous mayorales.

Due to the respect and seriousness inspired by its sound, the kipa should not be played on any occasion except for specific moments such as early in the morning on a minga day, during the minga, and during the proclamation of the community's festive days, among other moments dictated by the context. In these moments, the mayorales rely on the sound of the kipa to strengthen the sense of unity and purpose. Failing to follow the established protocols for sounding it may create confusion among the community members and could even result in the loss of the mayoral position for those who violate these agreements.

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The Mayorales



*Mayoral Resurrección Guailas sounding his kipa. By his side his wife Emilia Guamán.
Photo by Ariel Chalán.*

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The Mayorales are individuals recognized for their experience, wisdom, and leadership abilities. Although they are not elected by vote, their position is for life, held until their death or until they decide to resign for personal reasons. They are considered an ethical and moral reference in the community.

On days of the community's general minga, very early in the morning, their kipa resonates, reminding the community members that a minga will take place. During the day, the Mayorales not only help organize and direct the work groups, but they also provide "fuercitas" (shots of alcohol such as chicha or sugar cane rum) to motivate the people. Among other duties, they also accompany the Cabildo at community and interinstitutional events, ensuring that traditional protocols are followed correctly in every act.

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Minga



*Minga day in the Ñamarin Community.
Photo by Henry Zaruma.*

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The minga is work, it is action in unity, a common effort to achieve a purpose. Inherited from time immemorial, it is a fundamental pillar in the organizational structure of our community. This tradition harnesses our creative capacity and functions as the instrument to gather and organize the labor force of families in our territory.

At the community administration level, the minga is the result of a collective agreement to provide labor and carry out the necessary tasks within the community. It is what adds strength and talents to new projects and maintenance work. The community has built itself through the mingas. Hands work and through the minga an idea becomes a reality. That is why the minga is the engine of the Ayllu.

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Tupo



*Tupo, jewelry of the Indigenous Saraguro women.
Photo by Victor Sauca.*

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The tupo is a silver jewel that is part of the traditional attire of the Indigenous women of the Kichwa Saraguro People. It is usually inherited. Its main function is to hold the rebozo (wool shawl), although it has also been used as a weapon of defense.

Symbolically, the center of its design represents the origin, the starting point of the community. The human faces that adorn the outer ends of the axes represent the leaders and community actors of the Ayllu, who are considered the pillars that support the community. Meanwhile, the crossed arms represent unity. Its circular shape symbolizes the sun and the expansive growth of the Ayllu. In general, the design condenses the structure of the Ayllu. It is also conceived as a symbol of defense and energetic protection for the wearer. This accessory includes a chain that not only serves as decoration but also prevents it from being lost.

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PRODUCTION BACKGROUND

AYLLU: Memories and Visions was filmed in the territory of the Ñamarín Community, Saraguro People, Kichwa Nationality, located in the southern Andean region of Ecuador.

The final idea emerged in 2023 as a proposal by Víctor Sauca, Research Lead at Native Land Digital, after serving for a year as president of the Ñamarín Community. While holding this position, he realized that there are daily processes and activities that, although they may seem ordinary, are key to understanding the relationship between water and the organizational structure of the community.

Motivated by this reflection, he proposed an audiovisual production project to the organization with the goal of bringing Native Land Digital to physical Indigenous territories to support self-representation from the communities. This is how the documentary eventually focused on the management evolution of the Ñamarín Community in relation to water, aiming to explore how traditional knowledge is integrated into administrative practices. The project took shape in 2024 after receiving approval from the community to carry out the recordings. This is an original production by Native Land Digital. Produced by Ariel Chalán, Henry Zaruma, Silvia Medina, and Víctor Sauca.

NATIVE LAND DIGITAL INC.

Native Land Digital strives to create and foster conversations about the history of colonialism, Indigenous ways of knowing, and settler-Indigenous relations, through educational resources such as maps. They strive to go beyond old ways of talking about Indigenous people and to develop a platform where Indigenous communities can represent themselves and their histories on their own terms. In doing so, Native Land Digital creates spaces where non-Indigenous people can be invited and challenged to learn more about the lands they inhabit, the history of those lands, and how to actively be part of a better future going forward together.

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CREDITS

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Director of Photography:	Henry Zaruma
General Producer:	Víctor Sauca
Associate Producer:	Silvia Medina
Executive Producer:	Native Land Digital Inc.
Interviews:	Mama Rosa Minga Tayta Francisco Lozano Tayta Miguel Guailas Víctor Sauca Manuel Andrade Margarita Chalán Polivio Guamán Alonso Cartuche
Archive Footage:	Víctor Sauca Silvia Medina
Music:	Tayta Churón Willak Awki Guamán
Research and Script:	Víctor Sauca Silvia Medina
Special Thanks:	Native Land Digital Inc. Comunidad Ñamarín Zoila Chalán Tayta Espiritu Macas Mama Rosa Minga Vicente González Luz Macas Benigno Paqui Mama Emilia Guamán Mary Medina Samy Macas Néstor Macas Said Chalán Tayta Resurrección Guailas Mabel Ordóñez
Poster Design:	Jonathan Terreros - Pachay
Graphic Design:	Darío Zhunaula
Translation to English:	Cecilia Paqui Analiz Poma Amy Chalán Víctor Sauca
Voz en off:	Silvia Medina Mama Rosa Minga

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PRESS PHOTOS



*Ariel Chalán, Margarita Chalán, Henry Zaruma and Víctor Sauca, during an interview.
Photo by Silvia Medina.*



*Silvia Medina, Henry Zaruma and Mayoral Resurrección Guailas, during a scouting.
Photo by Víctor Sauca.*



*Henry Zaruma, Ariel Chalán, Manuel Andrade, Damian Minga, Pedro Minga and Jaime Macas, shooting during a maintenance minga of the community's water storage tanks.
Photo by Silvia Medina.*



*Margarita Chalán, Maywa Chólán, Belén Chalán, Said Chalán, Ariel Chalán Silvia Medina, Mary Medina, Samy Macas, Nestor Macas, Carmen Macas, Gabriela Macas, Víctor Sauca and Henry Zaruma, during a photo shoot for the poster.
Photo by Ayllu Land.*

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*Henry Zaruma, Silvia Medina and Ariel Chalán, during a voice-over recording session.
Photo by Víctor Sauca.*



*Henry Zaruma, Clementina Macas and Ariel Chalán, shooting for anex footage.
Photo by Víctor Sauca.*

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