

The image features a large, textured brown background. On the left side, there is a silhouette of a person's head in profile, facing right. Inside the silhouette, there is a small landscape scene with a body of water, a dark rock formation in the foreground, and a sunset or sunrise sky with orange and yellow hues. In the center of the image, the word "KUEKA" is written in a large, stylized, orange font. The letters are composed of horizontal segments, giving them a segmented or woven appearance.

KUEKA

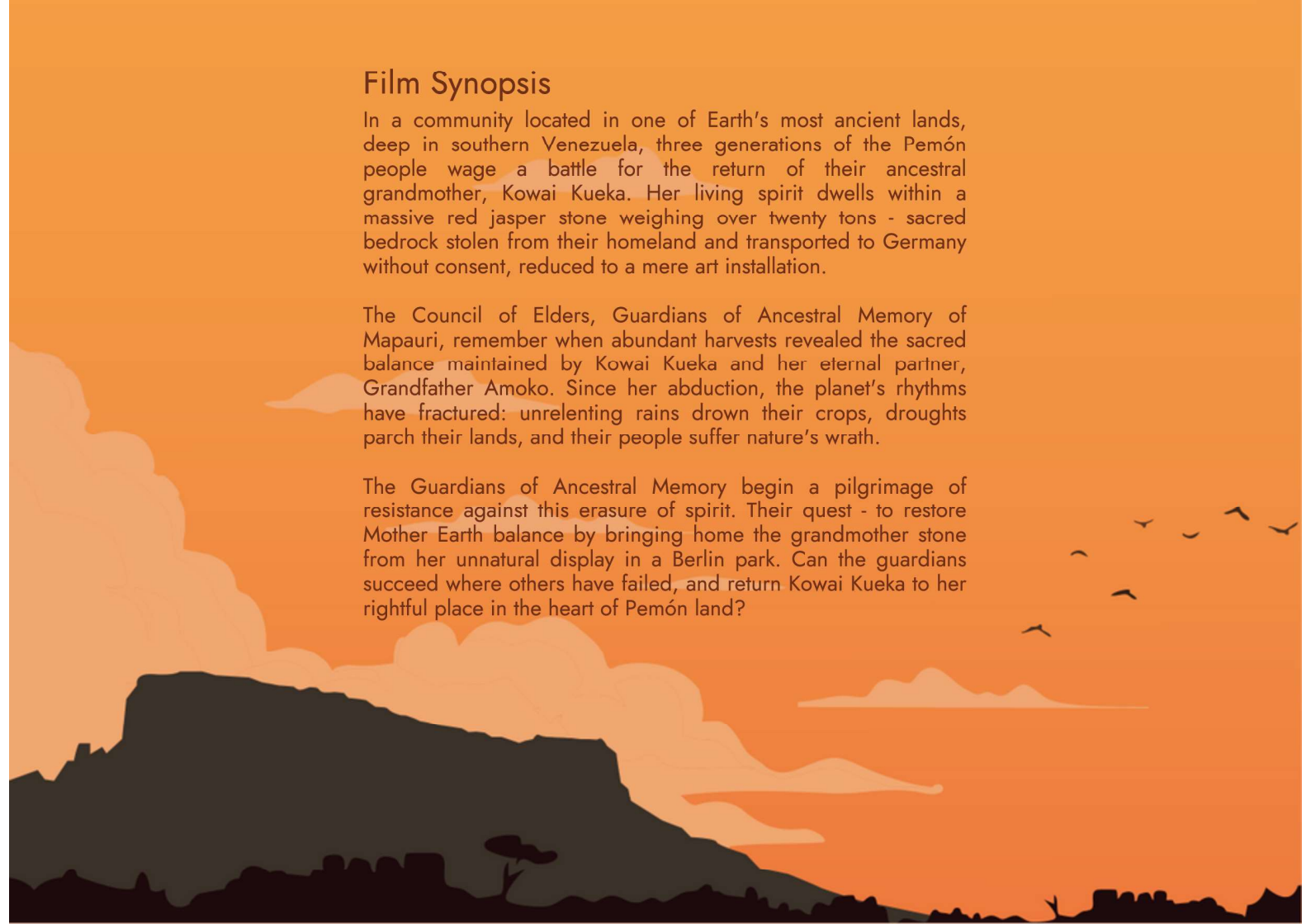
MEMORIA ANCESTRAL
GUARDIANS OF ANCESTRAL MEMORY

Film Synopsis

In a community located in one of Earth's most ancient lands, deep in southern Venezuela, three generations of the Pemón people wage a battle for the return of their ancestral grandmother, Kowai Kueka. Her living spirit dwells within a massive red jasper stone weighing over twenty tons - sacred bedrock stolen from their homeland and transported to Germany without consent, reduced to a mere art installation.

The Council of Elders, Guardians of Ancestral Memory of Mapauri, remember when abundant harvests revealed the sacred balance maintained by Kowai Kueka and her eternal partner, Grandfather Amoko. Since her abduction, the planet's rhythms have fractured: unrelenting rains drown their crops, droughts parch their lands, and their people suffer nature's wrath.

The Guardians of Ancestral Memory begin a pilgrimage of resistance against this erasure of spirit. Their quest - to restore Mother Earth balance by bringing home the grandmother stone from her unnatural display in a Berlin park. Can the guardians succeed where others have failed, and return Kowai Kueka to her rightful place in the heart of Pemón land?



Historical and Cultural Context

Santa Cruz de Mapauri is an indigenous Pemón Taurepán community located in southeastern Venezuela, within Bolívar State, Sector V Kavanayen-Mapauri, along the El Dorado-Santa Elena de Uairén highway, 50 km away from the municipal capital of Gran Sabana. This region represents the ancestral and traditional territory of the Pemón people. It is also home to Canaima National Park, spanning three million hectares (30,000 km²), declared a Special Administration Area (ABRAE) in 1960 and a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site in 1994, making it one of the largest ecological reserves in the world.

Mapauri has been a focal point of Pemón resistance against development projects imposed without prior consultation, most notably the Venezuela-Brazil Electric Grid Project, which faced its strongest opposition in this community. Known for their collective work ethic, the people of Mapauri organize community-driven initiatives for the common good.

The Council of Elders, composed of the community's wisest men and women, serves as a consultative and collective decision-making body and played a pivotal role in demanding the return of Kowai Kueka. The community is also recognized for its resistance against encroaching mining operations that threaten their land, as well as for its artisanal craftsmanship, producing utilitarian pottery and woven baskets that reflect their cultural heritage.

Population	
Male	367
Female	234
Total	601

Students	
Male	109
Female	96
Total	205

Source: Health Census Summary (Santa Cruz de Mapauri, Kako/Jaspe, Wailarimüpai y Kadau-Kadau), feb 2020.



Director

María de los Ángeles Peña Fonseca (Aragua, Venezuela) is a journalist, decolonial social researcher, and activist for the rights of indigenous peoples and communities. A specialist in intersectional violence and intercultural conflict mediation, she is a social communicator by training and a documentary filmmaker at heart and soul. A graduate of the Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV), she transforms filmmaking into an act of resistance and memory, challenging extractivist logics that exploit the images, knowledge, and voices of indigenous communities.

Her work centers on decolonial narratives, amplifying marginalized perspectives through collaborative and ethical storytelling. As both a researcher and practitioner, she bridges academia and activism, using film as a tool for social justice and cultural preservation.

Her thesis project, the medium-length film documentary *Conflict in the South* about the Pemón people's resistance against an Electric Grid development project, marked the beginning of her path of active solidarity with Indigenous communities fighting against non-consultative initiatives. She completed a seminar "Through the Cameras" offered by the International Commission of Visual Anthropology and the Orinoco Indigenous Peoples Science Museum Foundation, and undertook a course in rhythmic composition, aesthetics, and film narrative during post-production at the COTRAIN Cinematographic Training Institute.

As an educator, María de los Ángeles served as professor at the Indigenous University of Venezuela (UIV), mentoring the institution's first Yek'wana woman graduate, while also teaching Indigenous Rights at the Vive Suriá Foundation. Holding a Master's in NGO Management and Social Justice from Hamline University (Minnesota, USA), she emerged as one of the first researchers to bring attention within mainstream academic circles to the precarious conditions of Central American migrant workers and labor exploitation.

Her work with CLACSO (Latin American Council of Social Sciences) on Indigenous youth and decoloniality highlights and examines the complex intersections between identity, modernity, and Indigenous struggles. For over two decades, she has documented with both critical perspective and heartfelt commitment the Pemón people's resistance in Venezuela - from their fight against the Venezuela-Brazil Electric Grid project and large-scale tourist complex, to the battle to reclaim their sacred ancestral heritage embodied in Grandmother Kowai Kueka. She was part of the team that achieved Kueka's repatriation, meticulously coordinating with both rigor and cultural sensitivity the chain of custody for this ancestral symbol.

In 2020, her work was honored with the Aquiles Nazoa Award, granted by Venezuela's Ministry of Popular Power for Culture, in recognition of her commitment to Venezuelan culture and human rights defense. She founded the social organization Tejidos de Dignidad (Weavings of Dignity), which promotes dialogue as a means for peaceful conflict transformation, fosters critical reflection on community knowledge in the age of algorithmic dictatorships, and denounces human rights violations affecting Indigenous and peasant communities.

María de los Ángeles Peña Fonseca is not merely a documentary filmmaker or activist: she is a voice for the dignity of social struggles, a guardian of histories, and a tireless fighter for a world where interculturality and decoloniality become pillars of a more just future. Her work stands as a call to remember, reclaim, resist, and rebuild.

For eighteen months, she was under court supervision, facing charges brought by the economic power structures of cattle ranchers who had displaced Yukpa communities from their ancestral territories. All charges were eventually dismissed, and she continues to expose cases of impunity affecting Yukpa Indigenous people, revealing the intersecting realities of racism, historical discrimination, and gender-based oppression that impact Yukpa mother-activists' lives.

PROFILE

María de los Ángeles Peña Fonseca (Aragua, Venezuela) is a documentary filmmaker, activist, and indigenous rights defender whose life's work is inextricably linked to the struggles of Venezuela's native peoples.

For over twenty years, she has chronicled the Pemón people's resistance movements, most notably their historic campaign to reclaim the sacred Grandmother Kueka stone.

Founder of the grassroots organization Tejidos de Dignidad ("Weavings of Dignity"), her contributions were recognized with the prestigious 2020 Aquiles Nazoa Award.





TECH SPECS

Year of Production: 2025
Country: Venezuela
Language: Pemón Taurepan
Subtitles: Spanish, English, Russian,
French, Portuguese (BR)
Genre: Feature-Length Documentary
Runtime: 74 minutes
Director/Producer: María de los
Ángeles Peña Fonseca
Screenplay: María de los Ángeles
Peña Fonseca & Dayana Gauthier

PRODUCTION DETAILS

Social Impact Campaign:
LibreStudio & Tejidos de Dignidad
Social Impact Distribution
Coordinator: Mayerlin Colmenárez
Distributors: Amazonia Films,
Cinemateca Nacional, CNAC
Oral History Research &
Reconstruction: Council of Elders,
Mapauri Community

- Melchor Flores.
- Alcides Loyola.
- María de los Ángeles Peña Fonseca.

CREATIVE TEAM

Photography & Stills: Joel Ochoa, Marcos García,
Andrés Durango Peláez, Rodrigo Benavides,
Mohamed Hussain
Camera Operators: Joel Ochoa, Marcos García,
Andrés Durango Peláez, Mohamed Hussain, Eva
Pérez, Kuyujani Saul López, Osmar Romero, Nolberto
Guerrero, David Borges, Juan González
Drone Operators: Andrés Durango Peláez, Alvaro
Nieto, Mohamed Hussain, Eric Contreras
Sound Design & Music: Lino Ocando
Editor: Dayana Gauthier
Co-Editor: Henry Contreras
Color Grading: Rafael Lacau
Narrator: Maria Cipriana Benavides
Translation: Melchor Flores, Alcides Loyola, Bibiana
Benavides

MUSIC CREDITS

End Title Song: "Weyuú dakutön" - Elena Gil, recording
Sessions at National Disc Center Foundation (Cendis)
Featured Song: "Abuela Kueka" - José Alejandro
Delgado

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Alejandro Piña, LibreStudio





























PROD

ROLL

KUEKA

SCENE

52.1A

TAKE

1

DIRECTOR:

Mina Da Los Angeles /
Mahamad Hussain

CAMERA:

Hussain / Eva Peler

DATE:

INT EXT DAY NITE SYNC MOB



























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Viva Venezuela
MI PATRIA QUERIDA



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C.N.A.C.
DESOM
Centro Nacional
de Estudios y
Cineematografía

Amazonia Films

Fundación
ESPO
Cinemateca
Nacional

mp
PUEBLOS INDÍGENAS

libre
studio

