First solo show by Makuxi indigenous artist brings together around 60 works that focuses on his visions around the chief-tree known as Jenipapo or Ruku

About
Galeria Millan is pleased to announce the exhibition Presentation : Ruku, the first solo show by Makuxi indigenous artist and curator Jaider Esbell. Curated by the artist himself, with the assistance of anthropologist Paula Berbert, the show brings together around 60 works, including paintings, objects and drawings, which highlight the artist's diverse production.

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Starting from the notion of artivism—a conceptual neologism that covers both the field of art and the social sciences—Esbell combines paintings, writings, drawings, installations and performances to weave intersectional discussions between cosmolgies, original mythic narratives, spirituality, critiques of hegemonic culture and socio-environmental concerns. His more recent research has also delved into txaismo—a way to weave relationships of affective affinity in the intercultural contemporary art circuit led by indigenous protagonism.

Since 2013, when he organized I Encontro de Todos os Povos (1st Meeting of All Peoples), Esbell played a central role in the movement for the consolidation of Contemporary Indigenous Art in the Brazilian context, acting in a multiple and interdisciplinary way and uniting the role of the artist, curator, writer, educator, activist, and cultural promoter and catalyst.

For the exhibition at Anexo Millan, the artist showcases a set of works, produced between 2019 and 2021, that focuses on his visions around the chief-tree known as Jenipapo or Ruku, a “fruit-technology and one of my grandmothers,” in Esbell’s words, from which is produced natural paint used by countless indigenous peoples for body painting and ritual ceremonies.
In a passage from his curatorial text for the exhibition, the artist states:

“I sign, as the Native Indian I am, this *Presentation*. After all, we are still, and finally, face to face and there is nowhere else to go. I know that I am who I present myself as and was told to take the first step. I invite you to be by my side. I have left the traps elsewhere; I stand now completely exposed. Believe me, I bring a rare gift, that which never lies. Do you want your soul back? This we understand well, for it was up to us to come first and I feel that you no longer dream.

Since before time was time, plants have shared amongst themselves the mastery of life: they are entryways to portals of further mysteries. Today in crisis, as the humans we believe ourselves to be, we still have, perhaps, the last opportunities to connect to the whole. A bush, no matter how small the branch, contains all the antidote for the poison that is the megalopolis: the overcrowding of the village, the perdition of senses. Drink tea and the fever will cease, drink tea and heal the pain, drink tea and speak to the Divine. That shouldn’t even be a secret, although it still is – segregation.”