Centro Chileno del ITI
Chilian Centre of ITI

INDIGENOUS PERFORMING ARTISTS CONDUCT THEIR FIRST NATIONAL SURVEY AND MEETING

Who are the performing artists from Indigenous communities in Chile, where are they located, and how do they sustain their work? These are the questions that an unprecedented national survey, promoted by the Epew Collective Foundation and the Chile Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), seeks to answer.

The survey form will be open until November 8, and its results will be a central focus of ***TRAWÜN: 1st Meeting of Performing Arts and Indigenous Communities in Chile.*** From **October 24 to 30**, TRAWÜN will feature in-person and online activities, workshops, performances, and recognition of artistic achievements.

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The survey will explore which communities Chile's First Nations artists belong to, in which territories they work, what disciplines they practice, how they learned their trades, and what are the main difficulties in sustaining their careers are some of the questions that will be addressed by the **first National Survey of Performing Artists from Indigenous Communities**, an initiative that seeks to build a profile of a sector about which, until now, there is no diagnosis of these characteristics.

"The importance of this survey lies, first and foremost, in its unprecedented nature. We don't know how many Indigenous artists are currently working in the performing arts, nor is there any previous survey of this kind. It will allow us to have a state-of-the-art overview of their creations and the representation of First Nations in different territories," explains **Roberto Cayuqueo , director of Colectivo Epew and President of the Chile Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI)** .

Claudia Palominos,
Journalist, PUCV
Communications, EPEW Collective
+56989669030/ claupalominos.cp@gmail.com

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The survey will be a central component of ***TRAWÜN*** (Meeting), **the 1st Meeting of Performing Arts and Indigenous Communities in Chile**, organized by both institutions from October 24 to 30, with events in Santiago and El Bosque, as well as online activities. The initiative aims to create a space for encounter, visibility, and recognition, along with generating information to inform future actions.

A map that doesn't yet exist.
Through an open call, the survey seeks to identify artists, companies, and performing arts practitioners from different towns and territories, considering background information on their origins, geographic location, disciplines, and professional trajectories. It will also explore learning methods—from formal studies to oral, familial, or community-based transmission—and the difficulties they face in accessing funding, training, creative spaces, distribution, and dissemination.

“This first snapshot will allow us to know how many of us there are and where we are, but also to recognize the main needs of indigenous artists, not only economic, but also related to visibility, spaces for creation and exchange,” Cayuqueo points out .

The call for submissions encompasses a wide range of artistic expressions, from theater and dance to performance art, oral storytelling, epew (traditional Andean folk songs), and other performing arts practices. The information gathered will allow for a characterization of each community, territory, and discipline, which will also serve as a starting point for a permanent record maintained by the Centro Chile ITI.

For **Rallen Montenegro, a renowned actress of Mapuche origin and vice president of the Epew Collective Foundation**, the value of the initiative also lies in fostering connections between creators who don't necessarily share the same territories or networks. “This survey encompasses different disciplines, from performance art to dance and theater, but above all, it's a meeting place. It originated from a Mapuche collective, but it's designed to be cross-disciplinary and inclusive of all First Nations communities in Chile: the idea is that we can meet and talk,” explains the performer.

One of the challenges will be reaching those who work outside of Santiago and institutionalized networks. To facilitate this participation, the event will combine in-person and remote sessions. “For those who cannot attend in person but are interested in participating, it is very important to complete the form. We will also have online workshops and sessions, so that distance does not prevent anyone from being part of this process,” she adds.

From Wallmapu to a national network
The initiative gathers the experience of Fundación Colectivo Epew, an organization born in 2015 in Wallmapu and which for a decade has developed projects that link artistic creation, intercultural education, research and cultures of native peoples.

Their work has spanned from rural schools in La Araucanía to international venues. The Tayül School, created in collaboration with the Elisa Avendaño Curaqueo Foundation, linked sound creation, memory, language, and intergenerational transmission; while *Epew: The Fox with the Condor / Ngürü engu Mañke* toured five rural establishments in La Araucanía with artistic performances and mediation.

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In parallel, Roberto Cayuqueo developed academic activities on site-specific theater, cartography and Mapuche theater at the Shanghai Theatre Academy, while *FILLKE PEWMA* toured the Wereldmuseum Leiden in the Netherlands and the BCN Off Festival in Barcelona.

From that territorial and international experience, the project seeks to establish the performing arts of native peoples as a permanent line of work of the Chile ITI Center, a member of a Latin American network that connects the country with centers in Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico, among others.

Four days of creation, training and recognition.
The gathering will begin on **October 24** at the Mahuidache Ceremonial Center with Mapuche Theater for children, continue the following day, **October 25**, with a ceremony at the Ruka in O'Higgins Park in the morning, returning to Mahuidache for a day on Mapuche dance and performing arts led by Elisa Avendaño Curaqueo, Cristian Waman and Natalia García Huidobro. On the **28th** , Roberto Cayuqueo will conduct an online workshop on writing and dramaturgy; and on the **29th**, Rallen Montenegro will lead an acting workshop at the Ruka in a O'Higgins Park. The closing ceremony will take place on **October 30th at the Ruka in O'Higgins Park**, with a public recognition of established performing artists from indigenous communities.

The process will be documented through a report, audiovisual recording, and written record, serving as a starting point for expanding regional participation in future iterations and generating new initiatives based on the information gathered. Thus, the registry functions as a call to visibility and, simultaneously, to connect: a first collective snapshot to identify who is currently developing the performing arts of Indigenous peoples in Chile, where they are located, and what conditions they require to sustain and expand their work.

www.colectivoepew.cl

MEETING OF PERFORMING ARTS AND COMMUNITIES OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES IN CHILE
October 24, 25, 28, 29, 30 2026
Quinta Normal Park | Novedades Community Theater | Mapuche Ceremonial Center of El Bosque | online activities.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF INDIGENOUS PERFORMING ARTISTS . National
call for applications.
Registration form.
Organized by: Fundación Colectivo Epew / Centro Chile ITI.

REFERENCE VIDEO
https://youtu.be/yKw4CIrwiTw?si=AxKSBJMG4BqKPFf9

ABOUT COLLECTIVE EPEW
The Epew Collective Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 2015 in Wallmapu , comprised of professionals in the arts, culture, education, and social sciences. Its work integrates artistic creation, training, research, and intercultural exchange, with a special emphasis on the cultures of Indigenous peoples and First Nations, human and environmental rights, and the collective rights of Indigenous peoples.

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