Silät (Collective Founded 2023)

Since being established in 2023, the works of Silät have emerged from a collective and community-driven model of making led by Claudia Alarcón and developed among more than one hundred women weavers from the Alto la Sierra and La Puntana Wichí communities in Northern Argentina. Working with chaguar fibre harvested from the Gran Chaco forest, the collective expands ancestral weaving traditions through collaborative processes, allowing for multiple makers to contribute to a single work. Their textiles draw on the visual language of the traditional *yica* bag whilst opening new possibilities for scale, abstraction, and collective authorship. At once acts of cultural continuity and innovation, the works embody forms of knowledge inseparable from both community and the fragile ecosystems in which chaguar grows.

Wichí society is clan-based and matrilocal. Weaving with hand-spun vegetal fibres from the local chaguar plant has been a communal, female-led activity for centuries, and is fundamental to the visual culture, narrative history and economics of the Wichí people. Its centrality is articulated in a mythological tale, in which beautiful women, living in the sky as stars, would travel down to earth on woven chaguar ropes to dine on the fish caught by fishermen. Upon discovering this, the men employed the help of birds to snap the ropes and the women were trapped on earth for evermore, but continued to weave and pass the knowledge from the world above onto their daughters. The parable suggests a passage from the naivety and freedom of childhood to the societal responsibilities of adulthood; girls are taught to spin chaguar and weave functional objects from the age of 12, their creations a way to provide financially as well as to sustain ancestral cultural practices. In another sense, learning to weave presents a further awakening, an entryway into a collective conversation between the women of the Wichí communities. The textiles, formed of geometric motifs drawn from the surrounding environment, are a method of communicating unspoken thoughts within a culture that highly values forms of non-verbal expression, and the messages found within dreams and subconscious intuition. Silät, the name adopted by the artist collective, means ‘information’ or ‘alert,’ and reflects the role of their textiles to convey messages and a shared cultural sentiment.

The Silät collective emerged from the Thañí/Viene del monte organization, a wider public project aimed at reviving ancestral textile traditions across the Salta region. Coordinated by Alarcón and working closely with curator Andrei Fernández since 2015, Silät explores the possibilities of artmaking within and beyond these traditions. The collective have evolved established techniques into new forms, producing large-scale images that exploit the textural intricacies and earthy colours of chaguar yarn and natural dyes.

In addition to their practice under the leadership of Alarcón, the collective have also, more recently, developed their own, individual artistic voice, with such works being demarcated by the characteristic ‘S’ initial woven into the corners of each textile.

Silät (Argentina, collective formed 2023) was most recently the subject of a comprehensive solo exhibition at Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP), São Paulo (2026; 6

March–2 August), and currently features in the 59th Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (2026–27; 2 May 2026–3 January 2027). Silät and their founder, Claudia Alarcón, have been exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions at The Gund at Kenyon College, Ohio (2025), and De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, UK (2025), alongside group exhibitions including *Tejiendo Territorios de Memoria* at Centro Cultural de los Pueblos Originarios, Tartagal, Salta, Argentina (2026); *Threads of Nature* at Cecilia Brunson Projects, London (2026); *Arts of the Earth* at Guggenheim Bilbao (2025–26); Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2025); the 14th Mercosul Biennial, Porto Alegre (2025); *Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere* at the Venice Biennale (2024); MALBA–Puertos, Buenos Aires (2024); Guild Hall, New York (2024); the Ford Foundation, New York (2024); and Another Space, New York (2023). Their recent presentations also include Frieze London with Cecilia Brunson Projects (2026). In 2026, members of Silät participated in the inaugural PAC Art Residency in Houston, Texas. Works by Alarcón and Silät are held in the permanent collections of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts; Blanton Museum of Art; Denver Art Museum; The Gund at Kenyon College; Guggenheim Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; MALBA Collection, Buenos Aires; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Salta, Argentina; Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand (MASP); Nasher Museum of Art; RISD Museum; and the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.

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Silät
Collective formed in 2023, La Puntana, Salta, Argentina

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2026 *Claudia Alarcón & Silät: Living, Weaving*, curated by Adriano Pedrosa and Laura Cosendey, Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil

2026 *Claudia Alarcón & Silät*, PAC Art Residency, Houston, TX

2025 *Claudia Alarcón & Silät: Tayhin*, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, UK

2025 *Everyday Anew*, the Gund, Gambier, Ohio, US

2025 *Tayhin*, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, UK

2025 *Claudia Alarcón & Silät: Choreography of Imagination,* Cecilia Brunson Projects, London

2025 *Claudia Alarcón and Silät*, James Cohan, New York, US

2023 *Claudia Alarcón and Silät | Nitsäphä: Wichí Stories*, Cecilia Brunson Projects, London

2023 *Silät*, Hessel Museum at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, US (as part of the Thañí/Viene del monte organization)

Selected Group Exhibitions

2026 *Tejiendo Territorios de Memoria*, Centro Cultural de los Pueblos Originarios, Tartagal, Salta, Argentina

2026 *Cheong See Min and Silät: Threads of Nature*, Cecilia Brunson Projects, London

2026 *If the word we*, Carnegie International, curated by Ryan Inouye, Danielle A. Jackson, and Liz Park, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, US

2025-26 *Arts of the Earth*, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain

2025 *Grounded*, LACMA, Los Angeles, US

2025 *Picture Gallery in Transformation: Recent Gifts*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil

2025 *Geometrias*, Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil

2025 14th Mercosur Biennial, Porto Alegre, Brazil

2024-25 *La vida que explota*: *Gabriel Chaile en diálogo con Claudia Alarcón & Silät*, MALBA, Buenos Aires, Argentina

2024 *Stranieri Ovunque,* 60th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

2024 *Cantando Bajito: Chorus,* Ford Foundation Gallery, New York, US

2024 *Spin a Yarn*, Guild Hall, New York, US

2024 *Hecho a Mano*, Cecilia Brunson Projects, London

2023 *Spin a Yarn*, Another Space, New York, US

2023 *Una Historia que Cura,* Salta Museum of Anthropology, Salta, Argentina

Selected Public Collections

Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, Little Rock, Arkansas, US
Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Austin, Texas, US
Denver Art Museum, Colorado, US
The Gund Collection, Gambier, Ohio, US
LACMA, Los Angeles, US
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, US
Museo de Arte Latinamericano de Buenos Aires (MALBA), Buenos Aires, Argentina
Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil
Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Salta, Argentina
Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, North Carolina, US
Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), Providence, Rhode Island, US
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, US
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK