

**MASP PRESENTS EXHIBITION BY MEXICAN ARTIST MINERVA CUEVAS
ON SOCIAL ECOLOGY**

The multidisciplinary exhibition, featuring installation, sculpture, painting, posters, and video, closes the Histories of Ecology cycle and highlights the environmental crisis as a social issue



Minerva Cuevas, *Understorm*, 2022. MASP Collection

December 5, 2025, to April 12, 2026

MASP – Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand presents ***Minerva Cuevas: Social Ecology***, an exhibition bringing together works by Mexican conceptual artist Minerva Cuevas (Mexico City, 1975) that address the connections between environmental issues and social structures. Featuring 42 pieces, it is the artist's largest solo exhibition in Brazil to date.

Working across a range of media, including installation, murals, painting, and video, Cuevas critically investigates the mechanisms of capitalism and their impact on the environment. For *Understorm* (2022), Cuevas immerses a found painting in *chapopote* (tar), which spills over the edges of this and other older canvases. The gesture evokes oil spills caused by petrochemical platforms and ships. Known in Brazil as *piche*, the material is a petroleum by-product but also recalls the customs of pre-Hispanic communities, who used it in various contexts, from waterproofing ceramics to ritual practices.

Curated by André Mesquita, MASP curator, with assistance from Daniela Rodrigues, MASP's supervisor of mediation and public programs, the exhibition closes the museum's 2025 cycle dedicated to the *Histories of Ecology*. The show explores the social, economic, and political dimensions of ecology, examining how power dynamics shape relations between humans and non-humans.

According to Mesquita, "the exhibition underscores that ecology is, fundamentally, a social issue, because we will not overcome the ecological crisis while living in a hierarchical society. We need to open a collective discussion about our habits, customs, and values. Art can open and carry forward this essential debate for ecology."

Cuevas's practice also explores the symbolic dimension of cacao, contrasting its ritual uses with the large-scale production of chocolate. In *Feast* (2015), Cuevas uses chocolate to prompt reflection on the Mesoamerican origins and mythologies of cacao, as well as on the colonial processes embedded in its global trade. The artist investigated cacao's role as currency in the pre-Hispanic era and its cultivation in contemporary Mexico, in a region also marked by oil extraction. Her work illuminates the historical conflicts and commercial interests surrounding these activities, showing how economic pressures shape territory and affect the lives of local populations. *To Rebel* (2015) subverts the packaging of chocolate, a product transformed into an emblem of global consumption. Together, the works reveal how a natural element travels across time and contexts, assuming meanings that range from the spiritual to the commercial.

Her works also subvert logos, advertising campaigns, and symbols of major corporations to question issues such as consumption, value, and ownership. By appropriating advertising codes and brand language, Cuevas turns symbols of consumption into instruments of critique. Works like *Égalité* [Equality] (2001) expose the contradictions of a system that turns essential resources, such as water, into luxury commodities. In this piece, water bottles with modified packaging are distributed free of charge to visitors, undermining market logic by challenging the monetary value assigned to a natural element vital to all forms of life.

On the same day the exhibition opens, MASP also inaugurates *André Taniki Yanomami: Being Image and Video Room: Maya Watanabe*.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Minerva Cuevas (Mexico City, 1975) is a Mexican conceptual artist whose projects engage with anthropology, history, and the natural sciences. Her work spans a wide range of media, including installation, muralism, painting, video, and performance. Founder of *Mejor Vida Corp.* (1998), a nonprofit corporation, Cuevas has gained international recognition through solo exhibitions such as *The River* (Cc Foundation, 2024), *Game Over* (Museo Jumex, 2022), and *SCOOP* (Whitechapel Gallery, 2010).

Minerva Cuevas: Social Ecology is part of MASP's annual program dedicated to the *Histories of Ecology*. The 2025 program also includes exhibitions by Claude Monet, Frans Krajcberg, Abel Rodríguez, Hulda Guzmán, Clarissa Tossin, and Women Affected by Dams.

ACCESSIBILITY

All MASP temporary exhibitions offer accessibility resources, with free admission for people with disabilities and one companion. The museum offers visits in Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) or with audio description upon request via email at acessibilidade@masp.org.br, as well as texts and labels in large print and audiovisual content with audio description, subtitles, and Libras interpretation. All materials are available on the museum's website and YouTube channel and may be used by people with or without disabilities, school groups, teachers, non-literate visitors, and any interested public, during spontaneous visits or visits accompanied by MASP staff.

CATALOGUE

A bilingual catalog in English and Portuguese will be published, featuring images and texts on the exhibition. The book is edited by André Mesquita with assistance from Daniela Rodrigues. It includes essays by Mesquita, Julieta Gonzalez, and T. J. Demos.

MASP STORE

In dialogue with the exhibition, the MASP Store features special *Minerva Cuevas: Social Ecology* products, including tote bags, magnets, and postcards.

SUPPORT

Minerva Cuevas: Social Ecology is made possible through the Federal Culture Incentive Law.

SERVICE

Minerva Cuevas: Social Ecology

Curated by André Mesquita, MASP curator, with assistance from Daniela Rodrigues, MASP supervisor of mediation and public programs.

December 5, 2025 – April 12, 2026

Lina Bo Bardi Building

2nd basement level

MASP — Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand

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Opening hours: Tuesdays: free admission, 10 am–8 pm (last entry at 7 pm);

Wednesday–Thursday: 10 am–6 pm (last entry at 5 pm); Friday: 10 am–9 pm (free admission 6 pm–8:30 pm); Saturday–Sunday: 10 am–6 pm (last entry at 5 pm); closed on Mondays.

Online booking required at masp.org.br/ingressos

Tickets: R\$ 75 (full price); R\$ 37 (half price)

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