



oro
by vio

organic rainforest goods



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NATURE Lover

"For over twenty years, I have dedicated my life to design and the environment, inspired by cultures, nature and the beauty around us on a personal and professional level. However, my soul has been reaching for deeper meaning." Violeta Villacorta

After working for six years as senior designer at Patagonia, my own collections and other companies since 1989, I dedicated much of 2009 to my inner journey. In the stillness, I listened for insights that would guide me to my true purpose and mission.

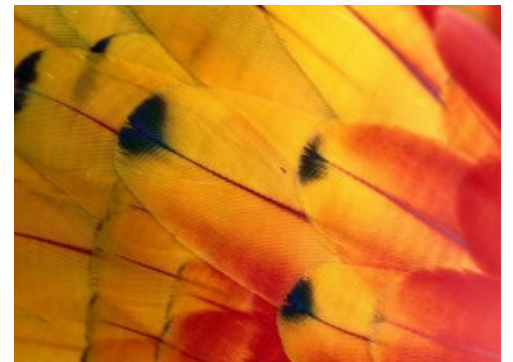
Born in Peru, raised in New York and educated at the United Nations International School, I was immersed in a richness of cultures and global awareness. Although I adopted a green consciousness early in my personal and professional life, it was no longer enough to create earth friendly goods or live 'green'. I was moved to incorporate my values and skills in work with indigenous Amazon communities. These are not uncontacted communities. They are communities threatened by development, with high quality forests in their ownership seeking to use markets to add value to their forest while protecting it.

In 2000 I took a break from fashion and worked for Amazon Watch, which works to protect the rainforest and advance the rights of indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin. Since then, I have continued to support and be involved with them. It is through Amazon Watch in 2010, that I connected with the Cofán in Ecuador to work in partnership with the artisans and promote arts and crafts by creating quality goods for discerning conscious consumers and promoting sustainability for communities.

When we align ourselves with our true purpose, all the pieces fall into place effortlessly and the real work begins. As responsible global citizens, we can create a better world by living consciously and making choices that will enhance our experience on Earth and protect the place that is our home.

Love & Light ♥
Vio







organic rainforest goods



ORG by vio

ORG (gro backwards) by vio was created as an umbrella for promoting and selling Amazon crafts. Designer Violeta Villacorta works in partnership with artisans in the Amazon to develop designer collections of seed, fiber and natural rubber goods as a source for a sustainable economy.

While dedicating her life to her own eco custom clothing, and after six years of working as senior designer for Patagonia, Violeta Villacorta was inspired to use her skills in design in the Amazon, seeing the importance for these areas to remain intact and its cultures thriving to protect their territories.

The Amazon is one of the richest areas in the World, responsible for regulating World climate, plays a vital roll in carbon sequestration, has a rich biodiversity with countess medicinal plants ~ the backbone of pharmaceuticals with many more yet undiscovered ~ and wildlife.

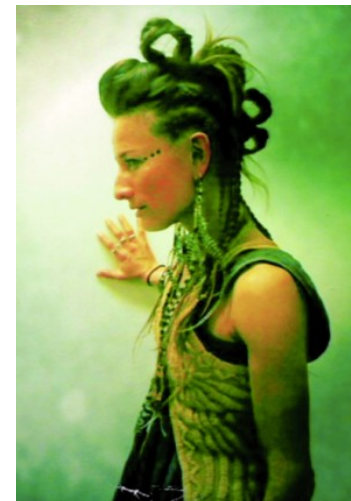
It is a fragile area, which continues to be exploited for its resources, including oil, gas, lumber, arable land

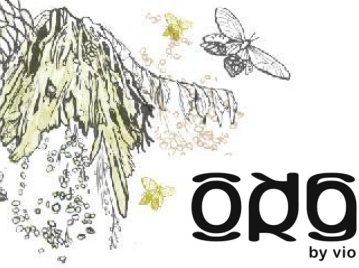
and clearing for cattle grazing. Its protection is important for the people, flora and fauna that inhabit it, as well as for the World. By creating industries in partnership with Amazon communities that are sustainable, we support the livelihood and culture of these communities. They are vital to the health of the Amazon as they have been the protectors of the rainforest for centuries.

Artisans are paid a fair trade price for each piece. In addition, 50% of profits are contributed back to the community. This contribution funds their varied needs through projects and trainings to manage their businesses independently, enhancing their livelihood and community.

The purchase of high design and quality Amazon accessories contributes directly to Amazon communities and helps protect their culture and territories, allowing them to remain in their land as protectors of the forest and determine their own destiny.

“When we align ourselves with our true purpose, all the pieces fall into place effortlessly and the real work begins.” Violeta Villacorta





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Empowerment Through Design

"A holistic approach empowering communities by providing artisan-based opportunities which preserve the beauty and richness of the Amazon and its people." Violeta Villacorta

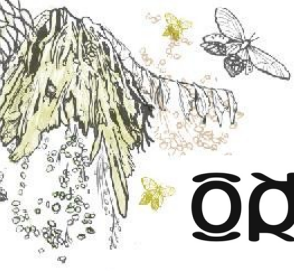
We are living in an age of unparalleled opportunities as we are able to exchange dialogue between communities around the world which were once unable to communicate the importance of their culture and traditions. Through the power of sustainable business we can promote the culture of these beautiful indigenous communities and environment, as well as provide sustainable opportunities to create lasting economic benefits and growth that are in par with sustainable development and community empowerment.

The goal and mission of ORG by vio is to work with indigenous communities from around the World; take experts to train them in areas that will benefit the communities; to act as a conduit and share design skills and ties to relevant markets, as well as organizations working for the protection of the environment and advancement of indigenous rights while creating beautiful high quality products based on these cultures' unique arts and crafts. By working with communities and sharing the tools that will allow them to run their businesses independently and become self-empowered, these communities can maintain their traditions while creating income and livelihoods to support their families and communities.

With the help of a number of contributors, designer Violeta Villacorta raised funds to build a creative work and show space for the Asociación Sukû artisans in the Cofán community in the Ecuadorian Amazon. The funds allowed the set up of Asociación Sukû's bank account, the purchase of laptops for the Arts Center, and the set up and monthly dues of internet service for the artisans. A computer and internet service in the community is beneficial for communication, sharing their culture with the outside World, as well as collaborating on designs and other needs. Funds also provided the opportunity to purchase tools, supplies and materials, as well as the creation of new collections of high quality products.

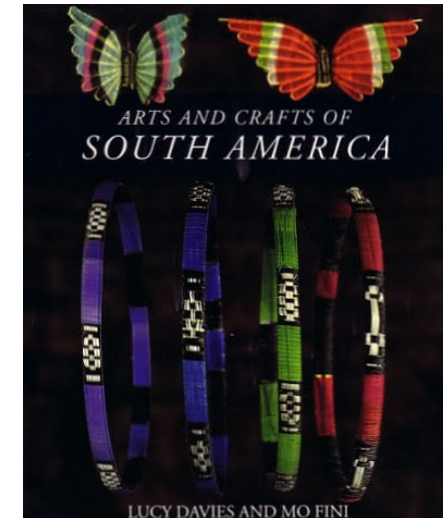
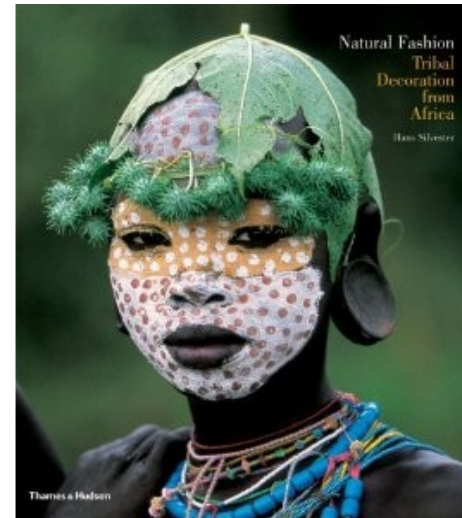
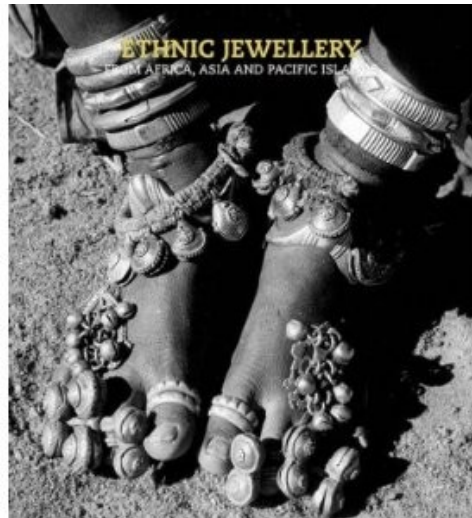
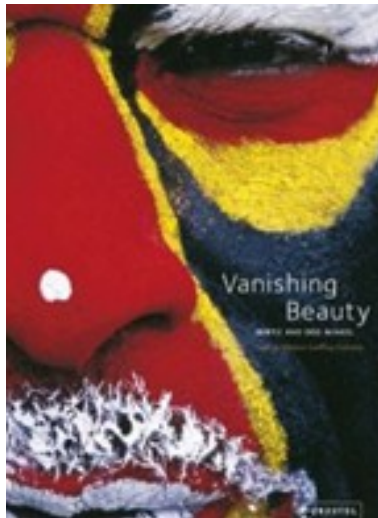
All this triggers the growth of a sustainable economy for the community based on the promotion of their arts and crafts, through innovation and design, while incorporating their millenary work into contemporary designs, as they remain authentic to their autochthonous artistry. At ORG by vio, we firmly believe that the cooperation of people is an indispensable element of building sustainability and creating powerful opportunities and partnerships around the world.





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Organic Beauty

"Body ornaments are not just about beauty, but also about beliefs."

Assistant Professor Mayurie Veraprasert, Archaeology Faculty

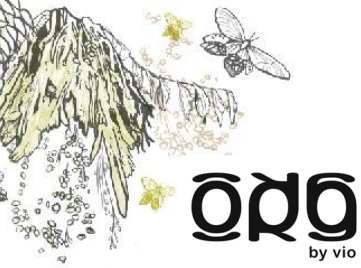
Silpakorn University, Bangkok

For as long as human beings have existed, the practice of body adornment has represented symbols of status, membership, and beauty. For thousands of years, body painting, decoration and personal adornment have carried deep spiritual significance irrespective of religion, race or culture.

To many indigenous communities around the world, jewelry and adornment of the body are steeped in cultural significance. These beautiful, organic traditions are not just a means of artistic expression. They are vital symbols of culture, history, and a connection to Mother Earth. The context and designs vary from place to place, but invariably the use of earth pigments to color the body is indicative of an intricate relationship between human beings and the environment.

"I believe that adornment is a way to connect us to something higher. It's not just superficial, it honors the beauty of Earth and is symbolic of the beauty and power of nature." Violeta Villacorta

The preservation of indigenous communities and their way of living is imperative to a world where life is sustainable. ORG by vio is dedicated to the self-empowerment of indigenous peoples and the preservation of world ethnic cultures.



Asociación Sukû



Asociación Sukû is an organization of women artisans whose mission is to contribute and improve social, economic and cultural development of its members and the community, strengthening their cultural and spiritual identity through projects in agriculture, forestry, arts and crafts, and protection of the rainforest.

They live in the Ecuadorian Amazon in the Cofán Community of Dureno, along the Aguarico River in the province of Sucumbios, amongst 40 families with a population of 500 people. The Cofán population totals around 1,500, down from 15,000 in the mid-16th century, with settlements spread throughout the Ecuadorian and Colombian Amazon.

Violeta Villacorta is working in partnership with Asociación Sukû artisans on accessories made with seeds and fibers grown in their community, creating high quality goods for discerning markets that generate higher revenue to benefit their community.





Deep in Forests

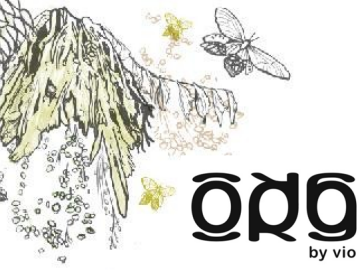
Deep in Forests is a network of indigenous communities and six companies working together with a shared vision: committed to the protection of the rainforest and its cultures. Formed in 2010 in the Peruvian Amazon, it is made up of accomplished businessmen and women who are adding value to the Amazon through ecotourism, fashion, carbon credit, food, traditional crafts and furniture industries. The partner communities are comprised of six ethnic groups: Asháninka, Awajún, Eseeja, Machiguenga, Yanasha and Yine. Each possesses richness in culture, ancient wisdom and resources.

Violeta Villacorta brings to the group 20 years of experience as a fashion designer, to develop high quality products in collaboration with artisans of partner communities, which include seed jewelry, clothing, natural rubber accessories and other exquisite forest goods.



“Working together with a shared vision committed to the protection of the rainforest and its cultures.” Violeta Villacorta



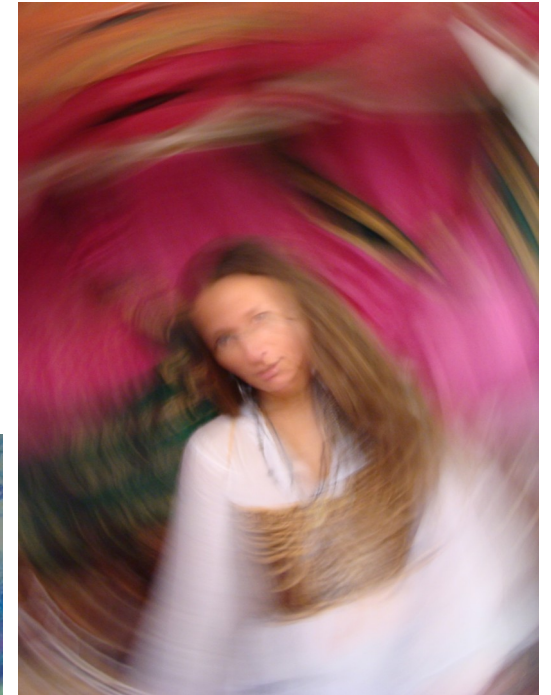


Violeta Villacorta

Violeta Villacorta's membership in the world family has cultivated a designer with a remarkably eclectic vision. She sees our differences as something to embrace, to learn from and to respect. As these differences are what create harmony in the world. Specializing in custom clothing made with organic, natural and repurposed materials. Each piece is crafted with love, care and precision. Each is a beautiful work of art to be worn and to be collected. Timeless clothing that surpasses the test of time.

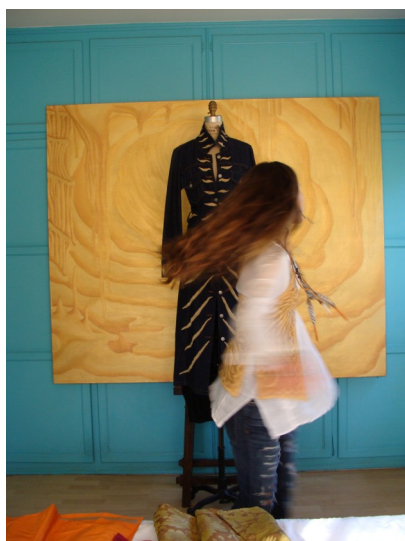
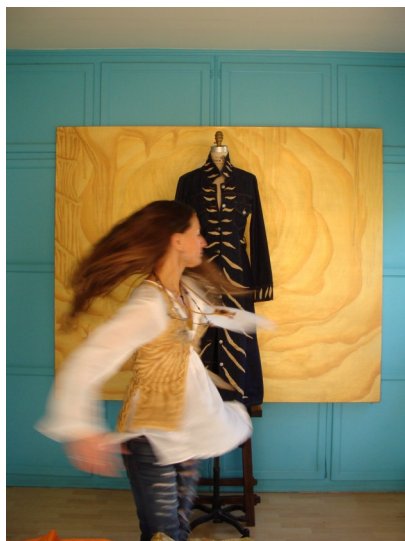
Violeta Villacorta's clothes have been shown at MOCA Geffen Museum in Los Angeles and featured in national and international magazines. She has been interviewed on television in the U.S. and Europe; and has dressed luminaries in the music and film industry.

She is currently working in partnership with indigenous communities in the Amazon, to promote their arts and crafts, by incorporating their millenary work into contemporary designs, as a means to generate a sustainable economy for the stewards of the most biodiverse ecosystem. These **organic rainforest goods** are part of the ORG by vio registered trademark.





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Tokens of Love

Designer Violeta Villacorta works in partnership with artisans in the Amazon to develop designer collections of seed, fiber and natural rubber goods as a source for a sustainable economy.

The collections are made entirely with seed and plant materials that are grown and harvested sustainably. Plant-based materials have been chosen to avoid the use of metals and other materials that come from industries that are detrimental to the planet. The mining and petrochemical industries have a long history of destruction and pollution, leaving a trail of devastation in its path from extraction to end product.

By making sustainably harvested hand crafted accessories, we are bringing exquisite plant based accessories to a conscious consumer that can continue to be stylish, while honoring their values.

Our conscious eco chic woman wears a beautiful seed accessory to accent a gorgeous evening dress at night or a simple white tank top and jeans in the day.





**"When we adorn ourselves,
we celebrate life."** Violeta Villacorta





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Violeta Villacorta



COCO ECO | LIVE

JOURNEY into the Amazon

WRITTEN by Violeta Villacorta
PHOTOGRAPHY provided by Violeta Villacorta and Maura Villacorta

For over twenty years, I have dedicated my life to design and the environment, inspired by cultures, nature and the beauty around us on a personal and professional level. However, my soul has been reaching for deeper meaning.

After working for six years as senior designer at Patagonia, my own collections and other companies since 1989, I dedicated much of 2009 to my inner journey. In the silence, I listened for insights that would guide me to my true purpose and mission.

Born in Peru, raised in New York and educated at the United Nations International School, I was immersed in a richness of cultures and global awareness. Although I adopted a green consciousness in my life and profession early on, it was no longer enough to create earth-friendly goods or live green. I was moved to incorporate my values and skills in the work with indigenous Amazonian communities.

Through AmazonWatch, I met Emergilio Croña, President of the Colla Community of Duroso

in Ecuador. While at a private screening of Avatar at director James Cameron's office, we spoke of our mutual interest to promote arts and crafts to generate sustainability for communities. Upon his invitation, I traveled to Ecuador where I spent a week working with Colla artists.

Asociación Saldá is an organization of women artisans whose mission is to contribute and improve social, economic and cultural development of its members and the community, strengthening their cultural and spiritual identity through projects in agriculture, forestry, arts and crafts and protection of the rainforest.

My first trip involved getting to know them, learning their goals and needs, while earning their trust. I told them my intention was to work as partners, making quality goods for discerning markets and generate higher revenue to benefit their community. Arts and crafts are one of the main sources of income for the Colla, yet they currently do not have lucrative outlets for their products.

With a goal to keep my promise and return in October to continue the first phase of our collaboration, after raising funds from a network of friends, family and colleagues through Kickstart.com, I returned to work with them for a month. The arts and crafts center, built with the funds raised before I arrived in the community, is a place where the artisans can work and showcase their products. Once there, we collaborated on product to generate orders and open new markets. We also worked on communication and technology trainings, including strategies to bring exports in business and marketing so they can run their businesses independently.

In the meantime, I connected with others working with Amazon



communities in Peru. Roberto Peralva, a financial consultant at Amazonia, introduced me to a remarkable group of visionaries from varied fields. Accomplished businessmen and women who are adding value to the Amazon through ecotourism, fashion, carbon credit, food, traditional crafts and furniture industries.

On our first meeting via Skype, I met Kurt Holle, cofounder of Rainforest Expeditions, and Pat's designer and entrepreneur Gerry Cusick who works with Amazon communities on exquisite managed-forest products. During a cross-cultural forum at the University of Pura organized by Wampus intellectual Shua Villacorta, Kurt met indigenous communities who wanted to engage in the market place. He explained, "It's not that they do not want to participate in the markets. They do. But they want to do it on their terms. These are not uneducated communities. They are peoples threatened by development, with high-quality forests in their ownership looking to use markets to add value to their forest and protect it."

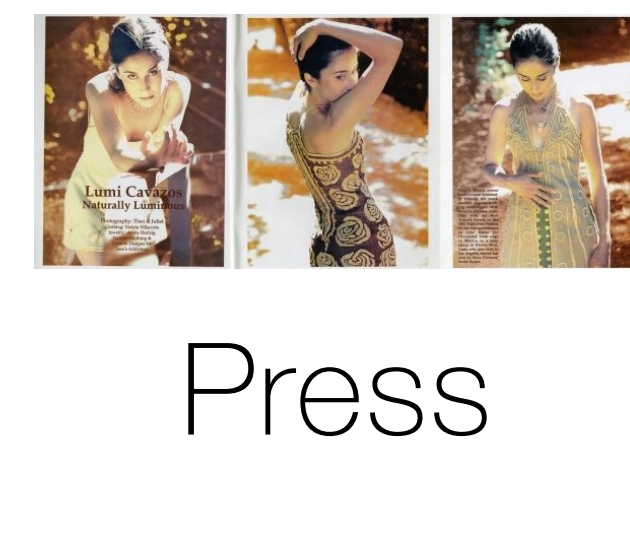
Historically, indigenous people have been, intentionally or not, hurt or taken advantage of by government programs, timber extractors, miners, and oil companies, creating an almost tangible wall of distrust.

I traveled deep in the Amazon where Kurt invited the group of creators, entrepreneurs and 19 indigenous leaders to a four-day retreat at one of REEP's eco lodges in the Tambopata Reserve in Puerto Maldonado, Peru, in November. Attendees were carefully selected and so companies with a track record for sustainability. Making the first trip barrier of distrust in a paradoxical setting Kurt said, "The only thing on our agenda is to generate friendships."

We spent days exploring the rainforest, and evening talking about ways indigenous communities can participate in business arrangements. Didi Bustamante, from the Asháninka community of Culicumbi, summarized the group's feeling: "The partner must not only share his income, he must also share his knowledge. We want to learn to be the administrators of the business, so we can do it on our own."

In a powerful meeting of minds and hearts Deep in Forest was born. We all came with a shared vision committed to the protection of the Amazon and cultures that are the stewards of the most biodiverse ecosystem. Four main actions were agreed upon to evaluate business models to establish profitable and sustainable ventures: create a brand to sell sustainable Amazonian products and services; search for capital to invest in these ventures; and implement communications tools to facilitate operating the joint ventures.

While we start with Deep in Forest, I continue my work with the Colla in Ecuador. When we align ourselves with our true purpose, all the pieces fall into place effortlessly and the real work begins. www.cocoeconmagazine.com



Press



Credits

Teresa Inés Cruz, Eco Brand and Business Strategy, Founder at AYNÍ

Abel Villacorta, ORG by vio Brand Logo Design

Alison Casson Illustrations

Scott Aschenbrenner at Asch Photography

Gerard Boucher Photography

Jeff Byrnes Photography at Créama Buscaro

Theo & Juliet Photography

Gregor Soleo Galos Photography

Amazon Watch

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