

FOLIL TRAFÜN

(Joining roots in Mapuzugün)



Collaborative showcases of Indigenous films from
Latin America

@November 2023



The aim

Folil trafün (Joining roots) was a four-day showcase of Indigenous and Afro-diaspora films made in Latin America, followed by dialogues to deepen understanding of the films and accompanied by culturally relevant food. The films, and subsequent conversations were framed on themes like Indigenous and Afro-descent identities, migration, land, and complex relationships between industry and Indigenous communities.

The project brought together an unprecedented collaboration between **Ficwallmapu** (<https://www.ficwallmapu.cl/>), an Indigenous and Latinx collective that puts on a yearly film festival and various smaller film events in the Wallmapu (traditional territory of the Mapuche people); **The Latin American Cultural Centre** (<https://vlacc.ca/>), a local hub for both Latinx and non-Latinx residents to experience Latin American arts and culture; and the Justice-EDI team of the **Faculty of Forestry** (<https://forestry.ubc.ca/about/equity-diversity-inclusion>), a leading forestry school globally.

We were able to host two-hybrid (in-person and online) lunch showcases on September 15th and 22nd, one dinner showcase in collaboration with St. John's College on September 26th, and a full-day showcase including a Musqueam dinner by Salishan in collaboration with UBC Connects on September 28th.

We have been able to host these events and collaborations thanks to the financial and in-kind support of the Faculties of Forestry, Land and Food Systems, Science, and Applied Sciences, UBC Connects, St. John's College, Partnership Recognition and Exploration Fund (PREF), the Global Lounge Fund, the Inspiring Community Fund (Utown), the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation (BCCIC), and the Alma Mater Society of UBC-Vancouver (AMS).

About our collaboration

We allowed ourselves to pilot a new way of collaboration among community partners and sponsors, built on trust, flexibility and openness. When discussing the films to be included in the showcases with Ficwallmapu, we agreed on selecting films that could advance the process of **truth, reconciliation, and decolonization**. We were particularly interested in exploring themes of **identity, justice, migration** and, **land rights** in different Latin American contexts but with similar challenges and opportunities. This resulted in more than 220 min of films representing several nations present in what are known today as American countries and states including: Kanaka Maoli (Hawaii); Mixteco, Amuzgo, Ñomndaa, Purépecha, Maseuales, Totonakus, Mayas Qeq'chi, Quiché, Ixiles, Qanjobales, and Afromexican (Mexico); Garífuna (Guatemala); Guna dule-Wayuu (Colombia); Kichwa Otavalo (Ecuador); Aymara (Bolivia); Quechua (Peru); and Mapuche (Chile). About 71% of the films were directed by an Indigenous person, and about 64% of all the films were directed by a female director. This was an unprecedented collaboration and representation of films, including animation, fiction, documentary and fiction.

We wanted to ensure that the effort of this collaboration allowed complex dialogues. We also made it a priority to serve Musqueam food by Salmon and Bannock, and Salishan Catering services, as food has always had importance in bringing people together.

Folil Trafün core team: Hisham Zerriffi, Estefania Milla-Moreno and Neftali Hernandez (Faculty of Forestry), Jeannette Paillán and Antü Antillanka (FicWallmapu), and Danais Yera (VLACC).

Impacts of the project

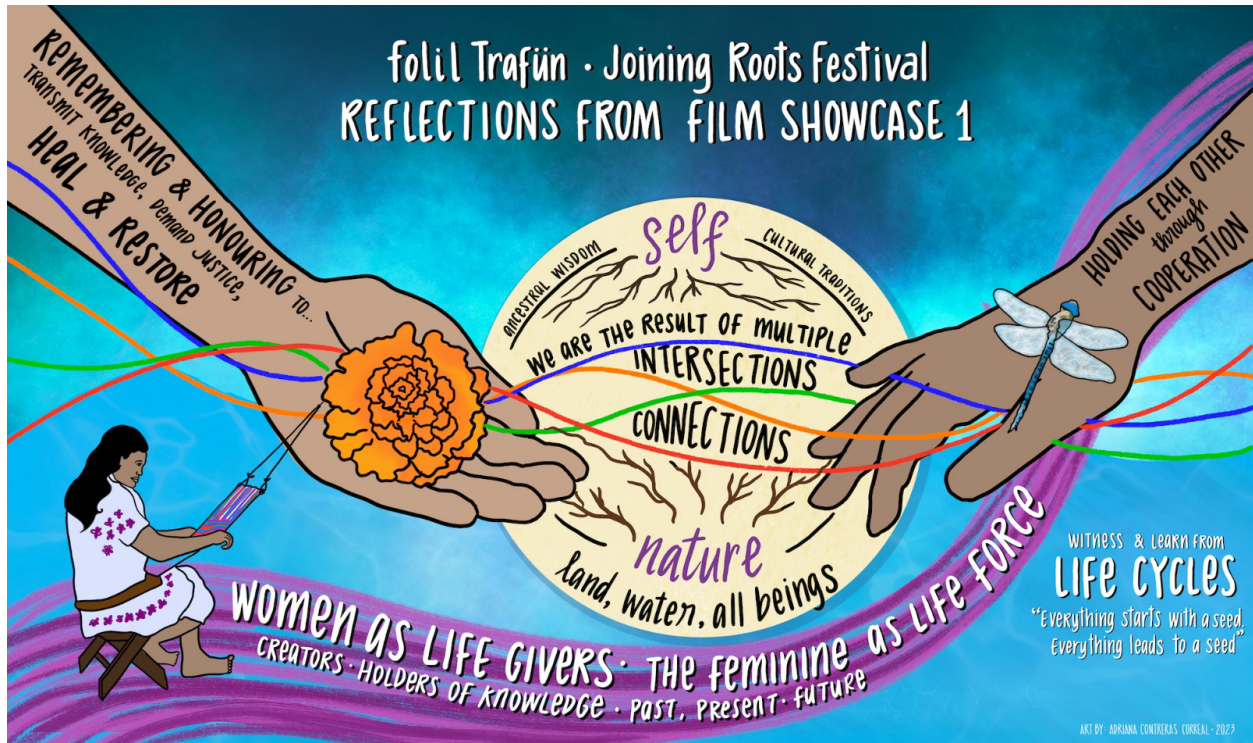
Our **first** event was a **Lunch Showcase** held on September 15th, 12:00-1:00 PM. at The Centre for Advanced Wood Processing (CAWP), Faculty of Forestry, UBC, with Savoury Chef catering. We welcomed 21 participants, most of whom heard about the event through a friend or colleague (40%), social media (20%) and email (10%). About 15% of the attendees identified as Indigenous. The films showcased during the event were Flores de la Llanura (FDLL), Kii nche ndutsa (KNN), and Wüfko (W). Attendees shared that the films allowed them to gain "Awareness about Indigenous cultures" and appreciate "How nature is a centered component of the lives [of those showcased] in the three movies". Here are some of the comments received for each film:

FDLL: "I love their community and how they supported each other through the difficult times. Stronger together! A beautiful way of talking about 'femicides' which is often a hard talk."

KNN: "The world is changing and we need to remember in order to transmit that knowledge to future generations."

W: "A beautiful reminder of how connected us women are to the Earth." Participants also shared that they appreciated "Being able to hear the folks with lived experience rather than the lens of outsider."

They noted that "The films were powerful" and that they loved "The women's weaver cooperative film." Attendees also mentioned that "The films and discussion were incredibly impactful" and that the food was excellent! However, some attendees expressed that there was "Very limited time for discussion" and that "This kind of event should have a bigger audience."



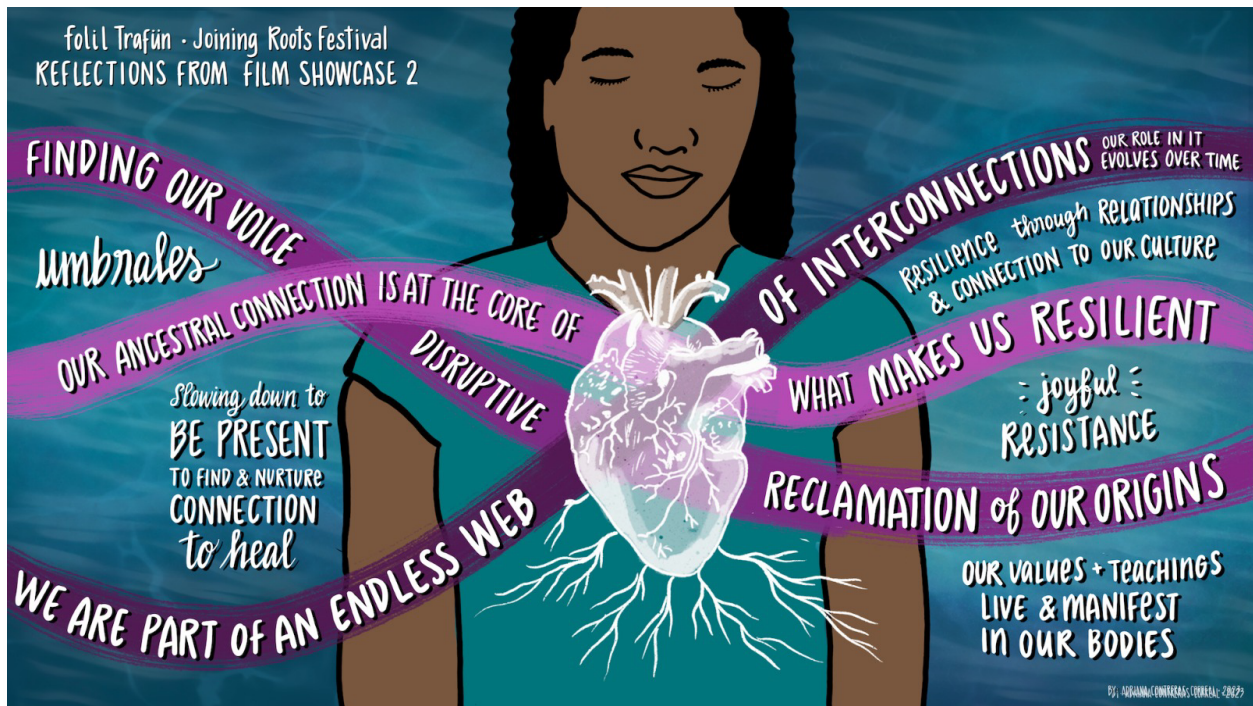
On September 22nd, we hosted our **second Lunch Showcase** at CAWP, 12:00-1:00 PM, with Savoury Chef catering and we were thrilled to see a doubled attendance compared to the previous event. The films this time were: Liremu barana (LB), Jisk'a Pacha (JP), and La espera (LE). The Indigenous participation was similar to the previous showcase, with a representation of 13%. Most of the participants heard about the event through word of mouth from a friend or colleague (47%), followed by social media (18%) and email (16%). The feedback from the participants was mostly positive, and they found the event to be very rewarding. They appreciated the Queer representation, the cross-cutting themes, and the reminder of their collective responsibilities. Some participants also reflected on their roots in Southeast Asia, and they were pleased to watch Indigenous Latin American films and hear native languages. The participants also enjoyed the quality and content of the films and the inclusivity of the space where everyone was sharing their experiences and views on the films. Some of the specific comments to each of the films are:

LB: "Thinking about the intersections between Indigeneity and Blackness that occur across Latin America, and how this communities bond"; "All of these films have such tenderness in the midst of destruction and regression. This one brings it home strongly. The resilience of love."

JP: "Honouring the descriptions and the way Indigenous Peoples relate to the land, thinking about their Science and ways of knowing in a land that seems so desolate, there is life and beauty"

LE: "We are often shown the perspective of migrant/seasonal workers who struggle being away from home, this has the perspectives of those who are staying in the place with little economic support, which is a powerful and fresh perspective. The 'coping' was a surprising element."

Attendees suggested some areas for improvement. For instance, they recommended having small groups to facilitate discussion to make it easier to speak to a larger audience. They also wished for more direct engagements with the content and expressed their concerns about the waste. Although all the cutlery and plates were compostable, we failed to reinforce that with the attendees. We appreciate the feedback and will take it into account for our future events. We will also work on making the events more sustainable and reinforce the message about compostable cutlery and plates.



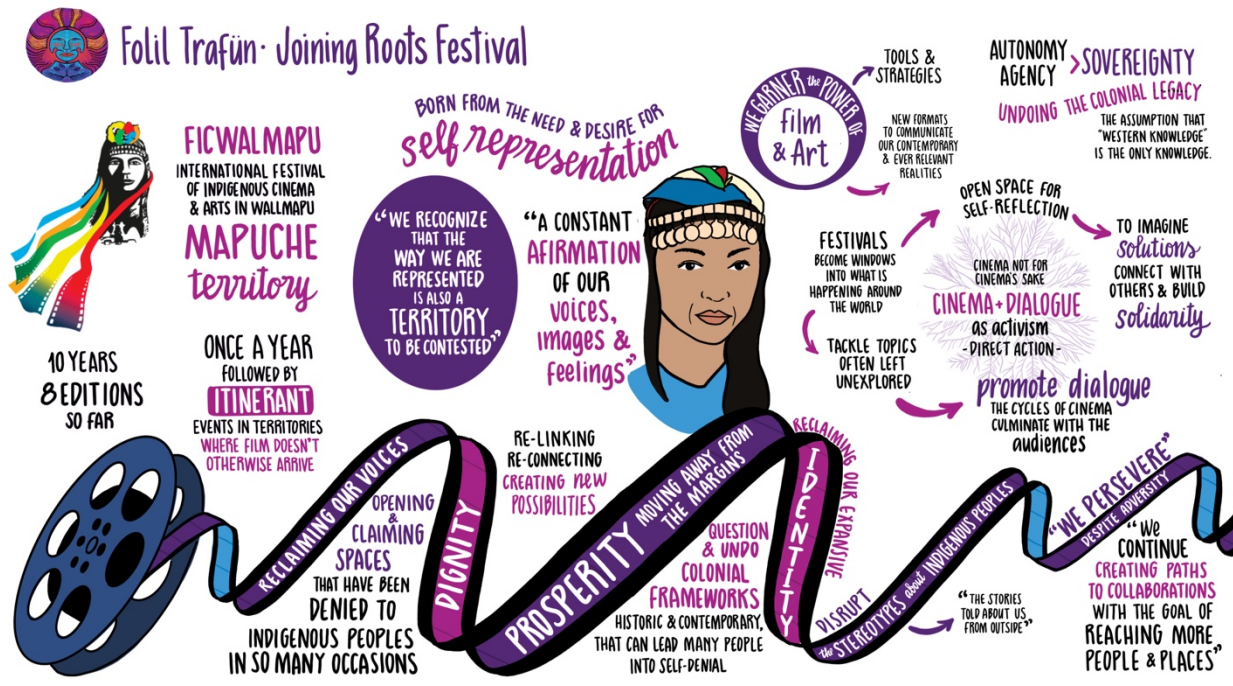
In collaboration with St. John's College at UBC, we successfully hosted the **third Showcase** on September 26th, 6:00-8:00 PM. This event was the annual Ingram Dinner for St. John's. The event started with a cocktail and the screening of Meli, followed by a Land Welcoming by Elder Larry Grant and a

dinner buffet. The highlight of the event was a panel discussion with our special guests from FicWallmapu: Jeannette Paillan (General Coordinator) and Antü Pradines Antillanca (Image Director), moderated by Dr. Hisham Zerriffi (Associate Dean of EDI at the Faculty of Forestry). We had 97 registered attendees for the event, and the room was fully packed. Some of the highlights from the attendees perspective were related to 'The inclusiveness: the food (especially the merken!), the film, the discussion, community building. It was all amazing!' and 'The structure of it. I've never been to an event treated as a family/friends gathering'. However, some also noted that the parking was expensive and the short time for networking.



Our **grand finale event**, took place at UBC Robson Theatre, thanks to a UBC Connects partnership, on September 28th from 2:00-9:00 PM. We screened two long films: *Energía de los Pueblos*, and *Folil*, and three short films: *Kapaemahu*; *Tita, tejedoras de raíces*; and *Mama para*. We secured a family-friendly space adjacent to the theatre, where Emilia Rojas, a multidisciplinary Andean artist and Early Childhood Educator, facilitated children's activities including films and the presentation of her book 'The Adventures of Nubit'.

Musqueam Catering Salishan provided dinner, and a panel discussion with Jeannette Paillan (General Coordinator) and Antü Pradines Antillanca (Image Director) was moderated by Dr. Alessandra Santos (Department of Theatre and Film, UBC). We had 112 attendees, of which 9% self-declared as Indigenous descent. The attendees heard about the event through various sources, with the UBC Newsletter being the most popular (26%), followed by social media (10%), and community organizations (7%). All the participants unanimously agreed that they learned something new and gained new insights and perspectives by attending this event. Some of the comments we received from them were: "Great passionate speakers and organizers...really felt something shift and gained some new understandings of Indigenous issues and the role of land protectors and the needless tragedy of their deaths", "The childcare was incredible! Thank you for creating such a thoughtful and engaging space", "Thank you everyone for your hard work and your great stories full of resilience". However, some participants shared their feedback that the food was not enough and requested better labeling of the food. We also received suggestions to ease the registration process for families instead of having individual entries.



Acknowledgments of Gratitude

Our UBC team is incredibly and privileged to have partnered with such talented and inspiring individuals, beginning with Jeannette and Antü. The vision and stories they shared in the showcases left an indelible impact on both the attendees and us. Another highlight was reflecting on the Folil Trafün relations and insights, which were featured on a knowledge wall (live graphic recording) by Adriana Contreras, a gifted Colombian artist. Her work fostered dialogue and created conditions for sense-making, connection, accessibility, imagination, and vision for each of our events. We also feel grateful to have been able to provide better access for families in the main event thanks to the possibility of providing a children-oriented space with the assistance of Emilia Rojas, a multidisciplinary Andean artist and Early Childhood Educator.

Finally, we are also grateful to Jacob Power and Paulo Ramos for their exceptional work as photographers for the events on the 26th and 28th, capturing the essence of the events with great sensitivity and quality.

To Ficwallmapu, thank you so much for allowing us to work with your festival and build a relationship with your team. We felt transformed and inspired after each meeting, screening, discussion, and gathering, and hope to provide continuity to this collaboration. Rume mañum! (Thank you so much!).

To VLACC, we feel so lucky to have a local partner that understood the importance of having these conversations in this land. We hope to continue to collaborate and are grateful for all the volunteers you brought to Robson.

To St John's College, it has been an absolute pleasure to work in such fraternal ways, ensuring we didn't move fast but far. We are grateful of all your team and accommodations to create a family gathering in your Dining. Thank you for hosting Antü and Jeannette. They felt they belonged to the SJC Community.

To BCCIC, thank you so much for trusting us and supporting our lunch showcases funding culturally relevant food. We are in awe for your labor

articulating several organizations conducting decolonial work and are proud to have worked with you.

To UBC Connects, thank you so much for all your help designing, planning and executing a full screening day at the Robson Theatre. We are so moved by the support you provided us, allocating a children's space, helping us arrange the buffet section, screening the movies, supporting the marketing, and a very long list of support that made of the last event, the climax of our screenings.

To our various other funders at UBC, thank you for your generous support for putting this showcase of films together and allowing us to be able to bring Jeanette and Antü from Wallmapu to the Coast Salish territories to participate in person and provide their insights and perspectives.

To our volunteers, thank you for aiding us from day one, ensuring the registration remained organized, arranging the rooms, helping us in various roles and most importantly, accompanying this process with a smile.

To the attendees, thank you for supporting each one of the events. The attendance escalated, and we quickly reached room capacity from day two. Your feedback will help us appreciate the impact of these showcases and collaborations and, simultaneously, provide us with a way to improve in the future.

An image worth more than a thousand words

We are so grateful of the support that Jacob and Paulo provided, with their powerful photography! Please visit this gallery to check out some of the beautiful moments of **Folil trafün**: <https://forestry.ubc.ca/folil-trafun-joining-roots-festival-photo-gallery/>. This photo gallery was provided by UBC Forestry's Sonya Adloff, who behind the scenes, has helped us with all the graphic material of **Folil trafün**.