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FROM **MYRIAM HERNANDEZ**  
ABOUT THE GAWI PROJECT

# GAWI

## AN ANCESTRAL RARÁMURI DREAM ON THE CARE OF MOTHER EARTH



GAWI is a virtual reality dream experience co-created by Myriam Hernandez (Atlantic Fellow for Social and Economic Equity) and the Rarámuri, an indigenous community of northern Mexico.

GAWI is a Rarámuri word that can be interpreted as “Land” or “Territory”, and caring for it is at the heart of the Rarámuri way of life. The traditions of the indigenous peoples remain to this day in spite of external threats.

Isabel, a Rarámuri leader, guides you through the places and ancestral traditions of her community – inviting us to (re)learn about their ways of caring for and loving the Earth.



Comunidad Huetoachi

### STORYTELLING TO “STORY-LIVING”

Virtual reality moves us from storytelling to “story-living”. When you put on a headset you embody an experience, and this is a powerful tool of learning and understanding.

This co-produced project explores the extent to which virtual reality can be both ethical and powerful. How can campaigns for social change use this as a tool for communities’ self-representation, and as a way of respectfully connecting worlds that are very distant from each other?



**Production | July 2022**  
Relationship-building by sharing meals, walks, rituals. Participatory workshops on immersive storytelling, impact distribution and use of VR gear.



**Now: Impact distribution**  
November 2023 to present  
GAWI has premiered in international and national festivals, and won VR awards. It is now reaching global advocacy events like COP16.

**Pre-production | May 2021 to June 2022**  
AFSEE funding allows Myriam to create an ethical checklist for storytelling, and run a call for applications to participate in this research-action project.



**SCAN HERE**  
to watch a short film  
“Making GAWI”  
(co-creation process)



**Post-production | August 2022 to October 2023**  
Atlantic Institute supports GAWI’s post-production. The graphic identity co-designed with Experiencias Rarámuri is developed.



### DRAW OR WRITE YOUR DREAM

In the Rarámuri culture, a way of asking “How are you?” is to ask “What did you dream about?” From there you start a conversation and you produce your reality. This film is an invitation for you to connect with your dreams.



Mariela and Judith, Rarámuri storytellers



Silvia Viviana Monarca, Rarámuri storyteller

During the production, children in the community were very engaged with the process, learning how to use the cameras and equipment.

“WE DANCE SO THAT  
THE EARTH DOES NOT  
BREAK APART...”

Rarámuri communities from the Sierra Tarahumara



Isabel Monarca Cruz, Rarámuri storyteller

### CO-CREATION, CONSENT, SOLIDARITY

For the last five years Isabel and Lorenzo have been organising a community-led tourism initiative called “Experiencias Rarámuri”, built on the same principles as the film, of co-creation, consent and solidarity.

The Rarámuri forms of resistance echo many other indigenous struggles in Latin America, and they had a clear vision of the potential and purpose of making a VR film.



Lorenzo Moreno Pajarito, Rarámuri storyteller



Herculano Moreno Torres, traditional dancer

### CREDITS

Photography: Mariana Gongora, Victor González and Dane Christensen

