

Transcript of the video

Kantupac – Studio Visit

Bryan: When my wife Abigail and I got together, we were already into rap. We've always been part of the hip-hop scene, and I really liked the style—the 90s hip-hop fashion, the outfits, the cuts. But what we found here for sale was all American brands, with everything written in English and... and the groups, the states from there and so on. I wanted something in that vein that would represent us, our Andean people from the Andes, of indigenous origin. Given that scarcity, we decided to create something inspired by hip-hop streetwear, but with our own Andean touch. We wanted to create something we could identify with and that others could identify with too—people like us—

meaning, since we're Bolivians, born in the Andes, we've always been influenced by the Andean worldview: Pachamama, Wiracocha, Inti, the Sun. And the aguayo has always been a part of that. Our brand works extensively with Andean aguayo. Aguayo is a traditional fabric used in textile production. It's a thick fabric, almost like wool. It's also widely used by cholitas as a carrying cloth. They put things in it—children and whatever else they need to carry. So it's an aguayo that dates back thousands of years. It used to be handmade in the past, always inspired by daily life, by Andean life, with designs, for example, of Tiwanaku, Wiracocha, the cholitas, llamas, and geometric patterns. This one comes from that piece. We used that piece to make this hat.

Abigail: Since we're self-employed, we do everything—from the labels

to the sewing to the cutting. It takes up a little bit of time, you know... because we make music, we work with clothes too, and we have to focus on both. Most of the time, we focus on sewing. But it's good because we're always together and we're working on what we really love.

Bryan: We see fashion as being heavily influenced by what is often dictated and imposed—that is, it's dictated by major public figures, and people feel obligated to wear those things because that's what's in style. Let's say that if you're not wearing that, you're out of the fashion loop. So we want to emphasize that fashion isn't necessarily something fleeting, but something that brings representation, something that represents a struggle, that represents a cause. That we know how the company operates around that brand. Because there are many brands

that rely on cheap labor, even slave labor. And we work on this issue of valuing why fashion exists, why the fabric is used, and who sews it. So, within our brand, you'll always know who made it for you, where it comes from, and what cause we're fighting for, right? So, I think decolonizing fashion is about us needing to know why we're wearing and consuming certain brands—and not just wearing them because they're in a store window or on a magazine cover.