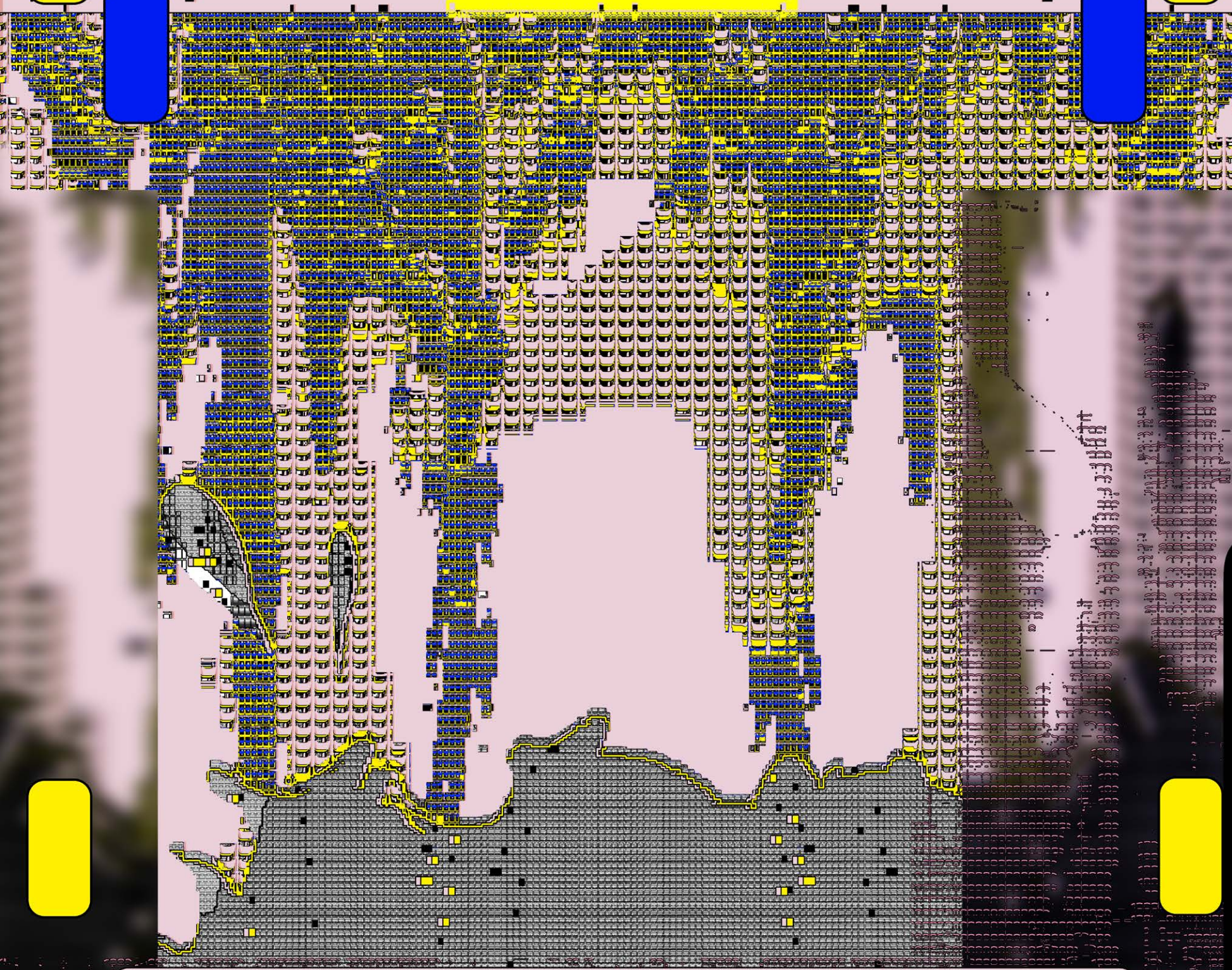


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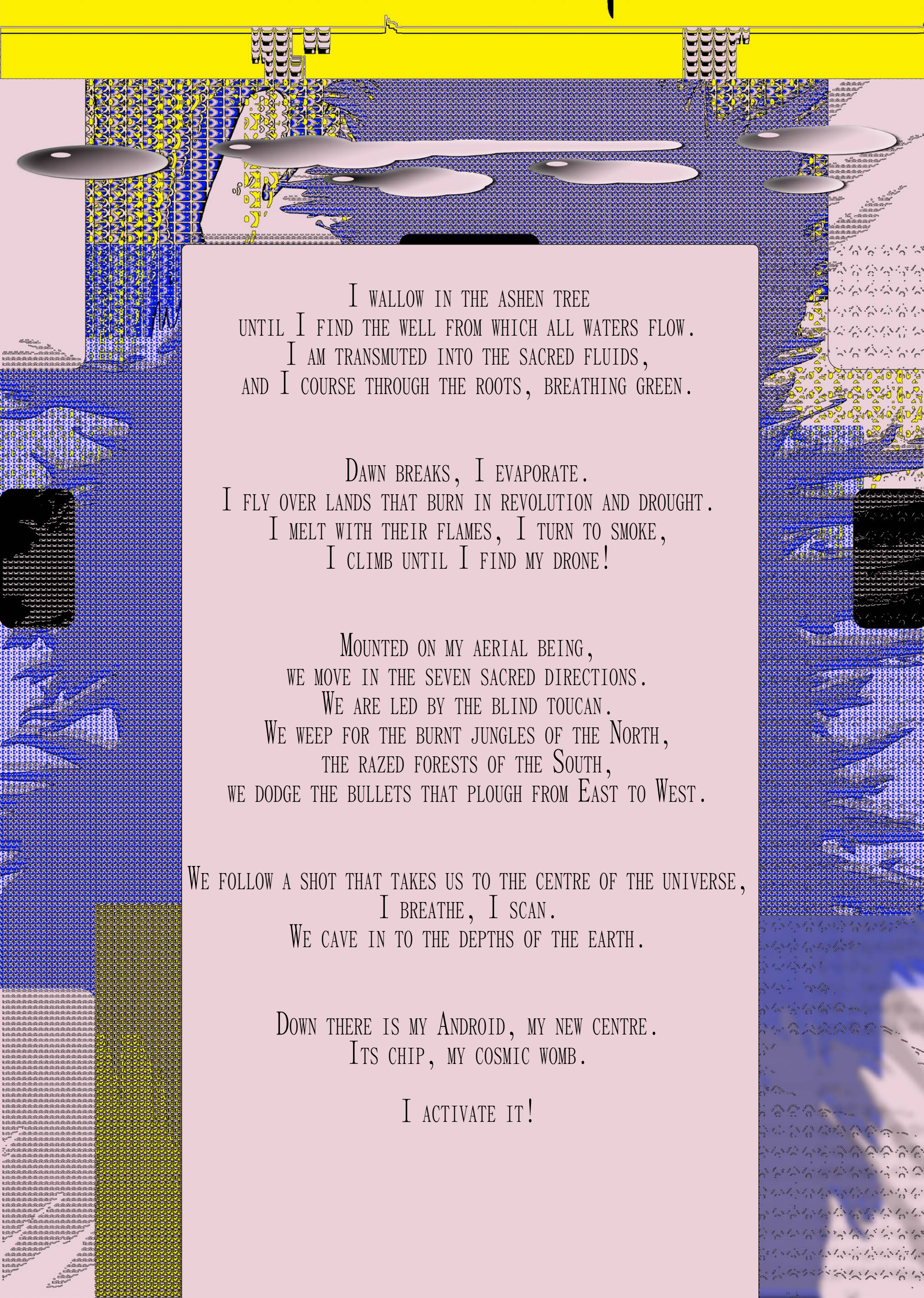
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I MOUNT ON A DRONE. WE FLY OVER THE FIRES, THE THIRST, THE REVOLUTION.

WE ARE LED BY THE BLIND TOUCAN.



I WALLOWS IN THE ASHEN TREE
UNTIL I FIND THE WELL FROM WHICH ALL WATERS FLOW.
I AM TRANSMUTED INTO THE SACRED FLUIDS,
AND I COURSE THROUGH THE ROOTS, BREATHING GREEN.

DAWN BREAKS, I EVAPORATE.
I FLY OVER LANDS THAT BURN IN REVOLUTION AND DROUGHT.
I MELT WITH THEIR FLAMES, I TURN TO SMOKE,
I CLIMB UNTIL I FIND MY DRONE!

MOUNTED ON MY AERIAL BEING,
WE MOVE IN THE SEVEN SACRED DIRECTIONS.
WE ARE LED BY THE BLIND TOUCAN.
WE WEEP FOR THE BURNT JUNGLES OF THE NORTH,
THE RAZED FORESTS OF THE SOUTH,
WE DODGE THE BULLETS THAT PLOUGH FROM EAST TO WEST.

WE FOLLOW A SHOT THAT TAKES US TO THE CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSE,
I BREATHE, I SCAN.
WE CAVE IN TO THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH.

DOWN THERE IS MY ANDROID, MY NEW CENTRE.
ITS CHIP, MY COSMIC WOMB.

I ACTIVATE IT!



REDAIINTA

01 Calmly, the blind toucan felt me with its right side. It looked at me from time to time with its left side. The fire burned out one of its eyes, turning it into a mythological animal that emerged from the flames. It has been transformed into a machine for seeing, with no need to use its eyes, to fly, or even to spread its wings. It is now a monster that sees beyond the visible.

"The blind toucan would glide in circles if we tried to get it to fly," José, the owner of the Hotel Biotermal de Aguas Calientes in Roboré, Bolivia, thought feelingly. I am still haunted by that image of the bird flying round and round infinitely. On the second day I was helping in the sanctuary, they brought in several animals affected by the fires that raged in Bolivian Chiquitanía and the Amazon from July to September 2019. A toucan arrived with its tail and feet burnt, four hungry wolves, and a fox that had failed to survive the trip, dying of dehydration. *We had to return it to the parched earth.*

That day, the blind toucan arrived too. They told us it had gone up to a house on the edge of the village to ask for water. It was dehydrated and burnt by the smoke in the forest. Seeing it was disoriented, the man who lived there threw a stone at it to try to catch it and make it his pet. The stone hit it in the eye and left it blind. Municipal officials found it tied up in his garden and took it away from him so that it could be cared for in the sanctuary.



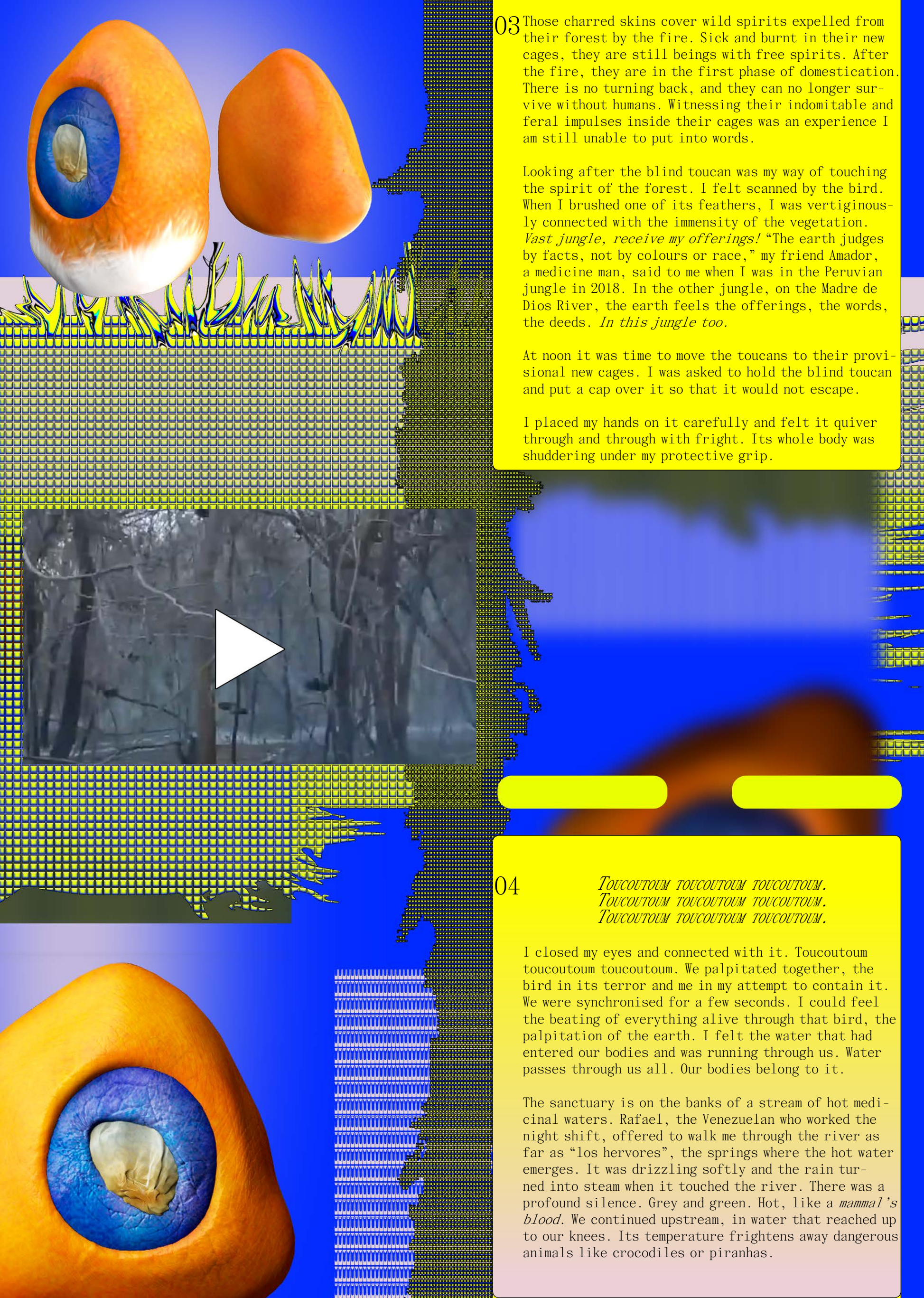
02 The Hotel Biotermal de Aguas Calientes - the Biothermal Hot Springs Hotel - is a cross between a medicinal spa hotel and an animal rescue centre. Given the countless wildlife affected by the fire, the sanctuary was improvised by the community to tend injured animals. Soon afterwards it was officialised by the government. The owners of the hotel closed its doors to guests and opened them to animals and volunteers.

The month before my arrival, more than 1,500 *guests of the fire* had passed through, including volunteers, firemen, scientists, soldiers, politicians, activists, journalists, National Geographic photographers, and even the president of Bolivia at the time, Evo Morales.

The carer in charge of the toucan was Darwin, a 17-year-old youth who worked at the sanctuary. I picture Darwin as a sci-fi guardian of those lands and their multiple species. *You're a silent hero, Darwin! Armed with a cellphone that thumps out reggaeton and your perfume of fire.*

I took a photo of him next to 'Maléfico', 'the Evil One', a green parrot. The green exuded by their bodies remained captured in the image. Green, the colour that keeps us sane. Darwin and the Evil One. What a couple! They make me think about the theory of species and the survival of the fittest. These burnt animals are the last links in the chain of creatures affected by fires. *Darwin's fucking theory.* There's nothing left now but their burnt skins.





03 Those charred skins cover wild spirits expelled from their forest by the fire. Sick and burnt in their new cages, they are still beings with free spirits. After the fire, they are in the first phase of domestication. There is no turning back, and they can no longer survive without humans. Witnessing their indomitable and feral impulses inside their cages was an experience I am still unable to put into words.

Looking after the blind toucan was my way of touching the spirit of the forest. I felt scanned by the bird. When I brushed one of its feathers, I was vertiginously connected with the immensity of the vegetation. *Vast jungle, receive my offerings!* “The earth judges by facts, not by colours or race,” my friend Amador, a medicine man, said to me when I was in the Peruvian jungle in 2018. In the other jungle, on the Madre de Dios River, the earth feels the offerings, the words, the deeds. *In this jungle too.*

At noon it was time to move the toucans to their provisional new cages. I was asked to hold the blind toucan and put a cap over it so that it would not escape.

I placed my hands on it carefully and felt it quiver through and through with fright. Its whole body was shuddering under my protective grip.

04 *Toucoutoum toucouthoum toucouthoum.
Toucouthoum toucouthoum toucouthoum.
Toucouthoum toucouthoum toucouthoum.*

I closed my eyes and connected with it. Toucouthoum toucouthoum toucouthoum. We palpitated together, the bird in its terror and me in my attempt to contain it. We were synchronised for a few seconds. I could feel the beating of everything alive through that bird, the palpitation of the earth. I felt the water that had entered our bodies and was running through us. Water passes through us all. Our bodies belong to it.

The sanctuary is on the banks of a stream of hot medicinal waters. Rafael, the Venezuelan who worked the night shift, offered to walk me through the river as far as “los hervores”, the springs where the hot water emerges. It was drizzling softly and the rain turned into steam when it touched the river. There was a profound silence. Grey and green. Hot, like a *mammal's blood*. We continued upstream, in water that reached up to our knees. Its temperature frightens away dangerous animals like crocodiles or piranhas.

05 On the way we crossed paths with a group of Bolivian Mennonites who were going back down river. Their religion forbids them the use of technology. Their pale skins have not been pierced by the blue lights of cellphones. I wondered if their de-digitalised bodies feel the water differently. I also wondered if they noticed the electric shocks that were now running through Rafael and myself.

They passed by us in silence, greeting us with their eyes.

*I AM LED BY THE BLIND TOUCAN.
I AM COACHED BY A DRONE,
INFERNAL MACHINE, ALLY OF POWER.
I LEVITATE AND RISE UP WITH THEM!
THE DRONE HAS THE PENETRATING VISION OF A MACHINE.
IT IS AN ARCHAIC MONSTER FOR LOOKING.
GIVE ME YOUR BLIND TOUCAN'S PERCEPTION!
GRANT ME YOUR DRONE'S DIGITAL VISION!*


06 The smoke from the fire followed me all the way from Roboré to the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Hundreds of kilometres away, the ashes from the burnt forests still clouded our lenses. We could smell the burnt wood, voluntarily sacrificed to be able to enlarge the areas for cultivating coca, hide the sheds for cocaine production, and donate scorched earth to those living on the other side of the country as a means of buying political votes.

*BY ENLARGING THE COCA PRODUCTION AREA,
THEY'VE LEFT MY TOUCAN BLIND.
MAY THE SPIRITUAL LAW BE IMPLACABLE!
MAY MY TOUCAN NOT GO UNREQUITED!*

The author David Topí has warned of the dangers of using sacred plants for financial gain. It happened with the plants and flowers used as the basis for producing opium, cocaine, hashish and crack, and

07 it is happening with the devastated forests. Topí explains that the decision taken by the earth is "to withdraw and leave to die, and neither assist nor aid nor boost the growth of any plant that human beings are processing, cultivating and using as the basis and raw material for the creation of opiates, drugs or elements that are then turned into narcotic substances used in worldwide trafficking, illicit trade and the enrichment of a few at the cost of the addiction of others." Neoliberalism has blown the coca leaves from the Bolivian altartop to the offices of Wall Street. Perhaps, as Topí says, Gaia has decided to stop producing these plants so as not to take part in this planetary misuse of sacred vegetation.

At the beginning of October 2019, the fire leapt from the Amazon to the revolution in Ecuador, and from there to Chile, Colombia and Mexico. *In this*



08 month of writing, June 2020, to the United States and its pending revolution. The pulse of the living accelerates with the flames. The toucan palpitates, the fire crackles, the human is traversed by the heat. The fire pursues us in barricades and looting, toppling order. Did they perhaps think that injustice was not going to touch our radiant centres or our *energetic lungs*? Or that social violence would not ignite our spirits?

At the end of that month of October, the city of Santa Cruz came to a halt to protest against the illegal re-election of Evo Morales. Each person took charge of closing off the block they lived in. I was living with two artists in the heart of the citizens' blockade for 11 of the 21 days the civic stoppage lasted.

The government's opponents cut off the supply chain, and so there was no cash or petrol. They only let a minimum of food through. Prices inflated in a matter of hours in the market of Los Pozos. On some days, we would go out to buy any food we could find. *"Pachichi, as the Mexicans up north call food that's going off," my friend Toño said to me when I handed him the overripe tomatoes we had managed to obtain.*

There was silence in the streets. While a cyclist in a hood rode past peacefully, I had the sensation I would witness these apocalyptic moments more and more frequently: being cooped up involuntarily, only able to go out to look for food, and surrounded by bullets and barricades. And I wasn't wrong.

09 The pandemic itself has made it evident that we are a single body distended in Gaia. Until the last person on the planet is in a position of inequality or suffering, all of us are similarly condemned. We are joined by cosmic bonds as a being, a species. It is inconceivable that some should be well off while others are in misery. *I don't know if you've read Octavia Butler's Parable of the Sower?* Quite simply everything will burn, country by country, until new systems re-emerge among the ashes. We have to understand we're all in this together.

A few days before the civic stoppage, I went to buy a deckchair for a gift. The man who sold them took me into a back room where hundreds of deckchairs were on display. Each one had its specific combination of colours. While I scanned the available tones and patterns, he remarked to me that the colour green brings the energy of the trees to stop us from going mad in the city. He said it was important to be radiated with green to stay sane in times like these. That man understood the invisible holograms expelled by everything that exists. And the green of the forests is a hologram of life, of calm.

*PLANT GREEN,
GREEN PIXEL ON A CELLPHONE SCREEN.
HUMANS, GREEN AND DESTINY
ARE FOREVER INTERTWINED.*