



Cimmarones

2006 | Colombia
15 pics 40 x 60 cm each
c-print

African slavery in Colombia began in the first decade of the sixteenth century. The Afro-Colombian slaves fought for their freedom from the beginning of their arrival to the country. In the jungle of Choco they built free African towns called palenques where Africans could live as cimarrones - that were Africans who escaped from their oppressors.

The Afro-Colombian communities developed their own living patterns, which are very respectful of the environment and emphasize social values such as peace, friendship and solidarity, rather than money and capital accumulation. The exuberant rainforest, complex ecosystem, wealth of natural resources and preservation of their ancestral traditions and culture, have not been enough to pull them out of endemic poverty. Historically, large companies have reaped the wealth of their mining and forestry resources. They have left the people with extremely poor living conditions - the poorest in the country.

In addition to these serious social problems, the cruelty of the armed conflict has come to the territory. Now they are the military targets of armed actors, especially paramilitary units who terrorize the population, committing horrendous massacres leading to great indices of displacement. faced with this formidable attacks on their cultural, economic and physical well being, they still preserve assertiveness. They are the pride African heart of Colombia.