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CONTEMPORARY

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ART IN CHILE

the

edited by florencia san martín,

carla macchiavello cornejo

& paula solimano

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***DISMANTLING
THE NATION***

CONTEMPORARY ART IN CHILE

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EDITORS:

**FLORENCIA SAN MARTÍN,
CARLA MACCHIAVELLO CORNEJO,
AND PAULA SOLIMANO**

Amherst
College
 Press

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The complete manuscript of this work was subjected to a partly closed (“single-blind”) review process. For more information, visit <https://acpress.amherst.edu/peerreview/>.

Published in the United States of America by Amherst College Press Manufactured in the United States of America

Library of Congress Control Number: 2023940774

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.12853055>

ISBN 978-1-943208-57-9 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-943208-58-6 (OA)

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Acknowledgments

This volume is based on a collective endeavor by the editors that would not have been possible without the contributors. Our profound thanks to each of the writers and artists whose compelling and dedicated research and creative practices define this publication. We would also like to thank the contributors for making images available for reproduction through various permissions.

We would also like to thank Beth Bouloukos, Director of Amherst College Press, Carl Lavigne, Digital Publishing Coordinator at Michigan Publishing Services at University of Michigan Library, and the anonymous reviewers of this book's manuscript for their thoughtful suggestions. Florencia San Martín is also grateful for research funds for this project provided by California State University, San Bernardino, and for a Fund for Publishing provided by Lehigh University's Office of the Vice Provost for Research.

Translations of essays originally written in Spanish were possible through funding provided by Il Posto, an art and research space in Santiago. Special thanks to its Art Director Sergio Parra, and to Thomás Rothe, who translated the texts by Colectivo Últimaesperanza, Paly Carvajal Bórquez, Matías Celedón, Mariairis Flores Leiva, Astrid González, María Luisa Murillo, Cristian Vargas Paillahueque, Demian Schopf, Ignacio Szmulewicz, and Cecilia Vicuña, José Pérez de Arce, and Carolina Castro Jorquera.

CHAPTER 19

Video Trans Americas: The Networked Body and Bordered Violence

Catherine Spencer

The work of Juan Downey in video, performance, and sculpture constitutes both an attempt to foster networked communication, and an exploration of the intersecting geographical, embodied, and psychosocial borders that fracture efforts to de-hierarchize information relays. In the 1990 statement “The Smell of Turpentine,” Downey compared Marcel Duchamp’s playful provocation that painters become addicted to turpentine with his own immersion in media technologies. Downey credited this experience to his fascination with “the will of something personal made public. A fragile signal is tenderly revealed, with the meaning of a bomb. An internal fact is unconcealed, like removing a glove with guts.”¹ The startling image of a glove being peeled back to reveal fleshy, viscous innards conveys how Downey’s engagement with video combined technocratic and utopian proclamations with a vivid awareness of how the body—in all its messy corporeality—might disrupt and divert the very communication networks it attempts to instigate.

As Downey expounds, these networks supersede the individual subject to encompass the transnational, global, and even planetary: “communication is attempted while trying to find the world-wandering flock of exiles that constitute my country.”² This statement immediately calls to mind Downey’s biography, as an artist born in Chile who traveled first to Europe and then to the United States, arriving in Washington DC in the mid-1960s and working between the latter city and New York into the 1970s, before undertaking multiple journeys across the Americas during this decade. However, we might equally interpret Downey’s assertion as a disavowal of the nation-state, instead positing the possibility of a dispersed meta-country defined by exilic experience. This consciously dis-located perspective became particularly pronounced after the 1973 CIA-backed military coup in Chile led by General Augusto Pinochet and murder of President Salvador Allende, which sharpened Downey’s critique of US imperialism in Latin America and his increasing ambivalence toward New York as a hegemonic art world site.

Downey's concerted attempts during the 1970s to supersede, alongside his simultaneous acknowledgment of, the border regimes that control and police mobility saw him undertake a project which can be compared to Walter Mignolo's deconstruction of the "idea of Latin America," notably his observation that: "Internal colonialism was [...] a trademark of the Americas after independence and was directly linked to nation-state building."³ Downey's videos, embodied performances, and alternative mapmaking consistently sought to unmake the colonial history of the Chilean nation-state, as well as the precarization, racialization, and impoverishment of Latin America through continental divisions, and of Latinx people in the US through border regimes and racial capitalism.⁴ He pursued this through a series of interventions into cybernetic discourse, critiquing systems of communications exchange that grew out of the Global North's military agendas.

The videos, performances, and drawings that relate to Downey's long-term project *Video Trans Americas* in the 1970s form a powerful—as well as challenging—manifestation of the drive in dissident cultural production across the Americas, articulated by Macarena Gómez-Barris, to "push beyond the boundaries of the nation-state by means of transnational analyses that make connections between racial, extractive, and military capitalism."⁵ The artist and writer Coco Fusco warns against reading Downey's work in Latin America, and in particular his engagement with Indigenous praxis, as an exploration of "his own roots," given his status as a "middle-class, [and] thoroughly Westernized," artist, while also observing that "his notion that Chilean culture is based on appropriation [...] has yet to be viewed as integral to his sense of identity."⁶ This chapter, building on writings by Julieta González and Bill Anthes which have contextualized Downey's work in relation to cybernetics and decolonization respectively, shows how his fragmentation of the constructed and repressive nature of Chile, and by extension "Latin America," resulted from his unique contribution to cybernetic thinking, in which the networked technologies of media feedback are not divorced from the drives, demands, and vulnerability of the body, but deeply imbricated with the "fragile signal" of the gut-filled glove.⁷

CYBERNETIC DECENTERING

Downey moved to Washington DC in 1965 at the invitation of José Gómez-Sicre, head of the Visual Arts Unit in the Organization of American States (formerly the Pan-American Union). Prior to this, after graduating from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, he studied for several years in Paris at the printmaking studio Atelier 17 with the British artist Stanley William Hayter.⁸ During his time in Washington, Downey co-founded the New Group with Douglas Davis and Ed McGowin, which undertook happenings and performances in the city, and participated in works by the Argentine artist Marta Minujín. The latter included Minujín's video installation *The Soft Gallery* (1973) at the Harold Rivkin Gallery in Washington, and her happening *Interpenning* (1972) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, for which Downey created an "invisible architecture" using

electronic waves.⁹ He also forged connections with the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, presenting a solo exhibition of his early sculptures in 1969. Built in collaboration with the engineer Fred Pitts, many of these were interactive kinetic works which established a basic feedback loop with the viewer. *Do Your Own Concert*, as its title suggests, offered audiences the chance to generate a soundtrack by pressing a series of buttons. Similarly, when a viewer clapped their hands in front of *The White Box*, this activated lights across the sculpture's surface.¹⁰

The framework within which Downey presented these sculptures was explicitly cybernetic, drawing on a discourse which had emerged within the context of World War II, spearheaded by Norbert Wiener's investigations at MIT into ways of making radar detection systems on airplanes more efficient. As Julieta González has shown in her scholarship on Downey's relationship with cybernetics, while his sculptures of the late 1960s map onto what has become known as first-order cybernetics—concerned with regulation, control, and the creation of recursive feedback loops—his subsequent work developed in tandem with the interest in reflexivity that characterized second-order cybernetics, which envisioned the reactive subject as not simply determined by an environment, but rather contributing dialectically to the construction of their networked context.¹¹

Cybernetics was a fundamentally interdisciplinary body of thought, expanding from mathematics, statistics, and computing to incorporate psychology, sociology, anthropology, and psychiatry.¹² There were many cross-overs with the system theory devised by the biologist Ludwig van Bertalanffy, who in a distinct but related way emphasized the interconnectivity of organic life.¹³ A number of art historians have shown not only how cybernetics and system theory were key reference points for artists working from the 1950s to the 1970s, particularly those involved with media technologies, but also how artists themselves made key contributions to this evolving array of ideas.¹⁴ This was particularly so in areas where, as Andrew Pickering has elaborated, understandings of cybernetics moved away from Wiener's emphasis on control, prediction, and homeostasis, and instead emphasized change and responsiveness.¹⁵

While cybernetics and system theory developed primarily in institutions in the US and Europe, particularly the UK, a large number of practitioners and institutions across Latin America engaged with both discourses.¹⁶ The Centro de Arte y Comunicación (CAYC) in Buenos Aires pursued interlinked exhibitions which took "art systems" as their organizing metaphor during the 1970s, and artists who featured in its projects, notably Luis Fernando Bénédict, engaged consistently with cybernetic theories and writings.¹⁷ Such invocations of cybernetics drew critiques from some contemporary commentators, such as Marta Traba (subsequently expanded on by the artist Luis Camnitzer), for their reliance on artistic and scientific frameworks from the Global North.¹⁸

Undeniably, these crossovers need to be understood within the wider context of what Joanna Page identifies as the imperialist networks of scientific funding in Latin America, dominated by US institutions.¹⁹ Yet Chile was also the site of an ambitious project initiated by the Allende government to fuse cybernetics with socialism. Project Cybersyn, developed by a team in Chile led by the engineer Fernando Flores, in collaboration with the

British cybernetician Stafford Beer, sought to use the possibilities to manage complex systems apparently offered by cybernetics to meet the challenges posed by the rapid nationalization of private industries undertaken by Allende. As Eden Medina has shown in her study of Cybersyn, Beer's approach to cybernetics rejected models of control based on domination, and instead sought responsive, homeostatic engagement with organizational complexes.²⁰ For Pamela M. Lee, Cybersyn's attempt to connect real-time information from multiple different enterprises constituted a form of "data-driven collectivism," but ultimately became "a relic of a failed utopia" when it was destroyed during the coup, before it could be implemented.²¹ Equally, Karen Benezra warns against interpreting Cybersyn as placing cybernetics at the service of socialism, instead pointing to the ideological complexity of the Popular Unity government Allende headed, and to the way in which Cybersyn fused managerial cybernetics with design in attempt to exploit labor along Fordist models which treated workers as "transmissible bodies of information."²² Cybernetics and systems theory potentially offered ways of counteracting hegemonic structures, but paradoxically because they necessitated acknowledgment and awareness of systemic control in the first place.

The work Downey created during the 1970s nuances the utopianism of socialist cybernetics. Rather than an alignment with nationalist aims, it moreover manifests a rerouted cybernetic potential to supersede national and continental border zones, that, following Page, might be said to decolonize the science of cybernetics, while attending to the challenges posed by embodiment to systematizing flows and their neoliberal tendencies.²³ The locational politics of Downey's position is significant in this respect. Despite being based in New York and immersing himself in the downtown scene of the early 1970s, he never felt rooted there. In a 1974 letter to the curator Jane Livingston at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Downey described how: "I recently returned (full of Andes) from Peru and Bolivia, where *Video Trans Americas* was enthusiastically received. Lots of hard work: beautiful life: super-quality! Although I have big plans in work; I still do not adjust to New York. Will I ever?"²⁴ While associating with the Raindance Corporation of video practitioners, and regularly contributing to the magazine *Radical Software*, Downey questioned the supposed hegemonic centrality of New York in relation both to the art world and to global politics.²⁵

Downey's disaffection with New York became particularly pronounced after the 1973 coup, and shaped the *Video Trans Americas* project referenced in his letter to Livingston, which he worked on between 1973 and 1976, and then again between 1976 and 1979 in a series of linked but distinct phases.²⁶ This project grew out of multiple journeys Downey made to countries including Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, and Chile, accompanied at different points by his wife Marilys Downey, her son Juanfi Lamadrid, daughter Titi Lamadrid, and members of the Raindance Corporation. On each visit, he made recordings which he then played back in situ, creating what the artist described as "infolded" feedback loops: "*Video Trans Americas* is a videotaped testimony extending from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. It is a form of infolding space while evolving in time—to play back a culture in

the context of another; the culture in its own context; and finally, editing all the interactions of time, space, and context into a work of art.”²⁷ Downey also showed the videos together in exhibitions, some of which involved a live performance response.

Downey’s notes from the journeys that generated *Video Trans Americas* between 1973 and 1976, parts of which would become incorporated into the soundtracks of the video themselves, logged the trip by car over the US/Mexico border in summer 1973, from Tennessee into Monterrey, followed by Mexico City, La Venta, and Yucatán. Later that year in December he traveled to Peru. In Lima he reflected on his physical and psychological distance from New York, writing that while the US city was a “fabulous” place where “ideas coexist, interact, copulate, rip-off and proliferate,” “there is nothing in New York that I wish to remember right now. The essence and the tenderness are in Latin America.”²⁸ Downey’s travels prompted him to reflect: “After ten years spent in Spain, France, and the USA, I realized that I would never adapt to the developed world and, conversely, my own third world would never be a market for my cultural aesthetic makings. A perpetual cultural shock was easy to handle at first: but age only increased the gap and the *saudade* for a country that no longer exists.”²⁹ These sensations of rupture were exacerbated by the fact that Downey could not enter Chile from Peru due to the military coup, and his travel notes are interspersed with references to assassinations and self-exhortations never to forget.³⁰ Downey’s work emerges from a desire to counter the bordered violence of neoliberalism, whereby states simultaneously reinforce their boundaries against people but open them up to the free flow of capital, instead centering bodily connectivity through cybernetic loops.³¹

THE BODY IN THE NETWORK

The writings Downey published in the New York-based magazine *Radical Software*, such as the 1973 article “Technology and Beyond” which celebrated “cybernetic technology operating in synchrony with our nervous systems,” need to be situated within his experience of geographical slippage and destabilization during this decade.³² Downey’s was ultimately a qualified vision that balanced the technocratic claims of cybernetics with an intimation of the eroticism and violence that threaten to undo predictable systems. Although these ideas would arguably receive their most sustained treatment in *Video Trans Americas*, they inflected the many works in video and performance that Downey undertook from New York, which can be approached as attempts not merely to establish communicative networks between embodied subjects, but as equivocal statements in communicating estrangement.

This tension can be detected even in apparently utopian projects such as *Three Way Communication by Light* of 1972, presented at Central Michigan University and the New York Avant-Garde Festival. The work involved an intricate, complex setup, comprising three performers placed in a triangle formed by laser beams. Their faces

were painted white, and each was provided with a hand mirror, a laser-voice receiver, a super-8 film projector, and a laser beam for voice transmission. The performers could communicate through the laser beams, which were not immediately visible to the audience; Downey periodically filled the space with fog to reveal their flickering trajectories. Meanwhile, the super-8 projectors screened footage of the performers onto each other, their whitened faces offering screens across which the images moved. Individual performers could watch the process by which their features fused with those of another using the handheld mirror. Downey videoed this setup for about half an hour, after which television monitors transmitting the recorded footage took the place of the performers.

Although in *Three Way Communication by Light* each performer gazed at their own reflection in a mirror, what they saw was their face overlaid by that of another. *Three Way Communication by Light* reconfigured the scene of cybernetic feedback as a multidirectional communication through which transformations—or, in Downey’s terminology, “transfigurations”—might occur via the interpenetration of consciousness.³³ The effects of *Three Way Communication by Light* were not as transparent as Downey’s descriptions of the work and his use of video apparatus indicate. When shown at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) in 2017, they conveyed less a sense of one united, transcendent collectivity forged through the self-corrective feedback of mirrors and film, than a divided, confused, and multiple self continually dissolving into pieces. The video footage of the performers attempting to communicate from beneath the layer of super-8 projection is uncanny and disconcerting. The viewer sees the three different faces assailed by shadows and movement, their contours repeatedly lost in those of another. The result is hardly a seamless fusion: fragments of different faces remain distinct and identifiable, sliding over each other in eerie formations.

Three Way Communication by Light’s treatment of subjectivity echoes the notion of a “divided self” put forward by R. D. Laing in his 1960 book of this name, which applied cybernetic ideas to psychoanalytic models of the psyche.³⁴ While Laing rejected mechanistic and behaviorist models for the relationship between the subject and the world—“account[s] of man as a machine or man as an organismic system of it-processes”—he nonetheless attended to the relationship of the individual to their environment, arguing that the manifestation of so-called madness was less an expression of a single person’s psyche, than an indication of the irrationality of society as a whole.³⁵ For all *Three Way Communication by Light*’s aspiration to networked communication and the creation of an interlinked psyche, it also explored the threat of bodily dissociation and division, encompassing the difficulty of interrelation as much as its desirability.

Around 1974–75, between the many trips that would result in *Video Trans Americas*, the photographic partnership of Harry Shunk and Janos Kender created four photographs of Juan and Marilys Downey at their White Street studio in New York. Each image positions their naked bodies in relation to a Portapak video camera. One is jokey and deliberately overblown, Downey angling the camera as penis substitute at his wife’s vagina, while

she smiles down at him with an air of resigned tolerance. Another reiterates the equation between the camera's invasive gaze and phallic dominance: Downey stands on the building's fire escape, the sun illuminating his skin, as he aims his priapic device upward. In the most striking photograph, Juan and Marilyns stand against a curtain as if posing for a nude studio shot (Fig. 19.1). However, the studio setting is thrown off kilter by the way in which Marylis's head is hooded in the hanging sheet. Downey's gesture toward her could be one of encirclement and protection, but for all its playfulness, the image is shadowed by violence and objectification. Their feet stumble together in an intimate yet awkward dance, threatening to become entangled in the wires that snake between video camera and monitor.

While this might initially appear to be scene of instant feedback, the monitor seems to relay another moment altogether, transmitting what looks like a playback shot of a woman lying horizontally, breasts exposed. This disrupted erotic-technological unification finds its apotheosis in a photograph where Shunk has used movement to generate a psychedelic image in which Marilyns and Juan can just be made out at the center of a blurry vortex. The series is striking because it indicates how, in even the most ostensibly technocratic understandings of video, frustrated, unintelligible, and even irrationally violent urges surge through its apparatus.³⁶ The traumatic side of what Laing described as the "unembodied" self thus shadows the utopian dispersal of body into fluid information envisaged by Downey's work.³⁷ In the studio photograph of Juan and Marylis, although the artist and his wife are in close physical proximity to each other, the obliteration of Marilyns's face introduces the specter of violence and inserts an insurmountable division between them. The possibility of erotic communion is displaced onto the monitor, where fantasy plays out on a disconnected, dissociated plane. Their physical bodies, meanwhile, are stuck, frozen in a frustrated and partial embrace.

This series of photographs, although seemingly idiosyncratic and even incidental to Downey's wider work, are instructive for how they figure the body's experience of networked subjectivity, and their reference to the confrontational eroticism and power imbalances that shape the dematerialized interactions facilitated through communications media. Within the context of *Video Trans Americas*, this bodily insight has geographic and geopolitical implications. The video from the series entitled *Yucatán* from 1973, for example, opens with the camera sweeping across a vista of empty canoes and lattices of lily pads on a river. It then charts the journey from the Mayan ruins of Tulum, which dramatically overlook the sea, to Palenque further inland in Chiapas, combining kaleidoscopic segments of black-and-white footage with a soundtrack of Juanfi reading from the diaries, together with the intense rasping of cicadas. But rather than a documentary study of the sites which can be easily followed, the video camera moves increasingly erratically, swinging across the ruins, zooming in and out on their architecture and refusing to settle. At one point toward the end, the camera captures another figure shooting further footage, but despite this self-reflective attention to information capture, the shifts of the video camera mitigate against coherence or transparency and induces a vertiginous sensation in the viewer.³⁸

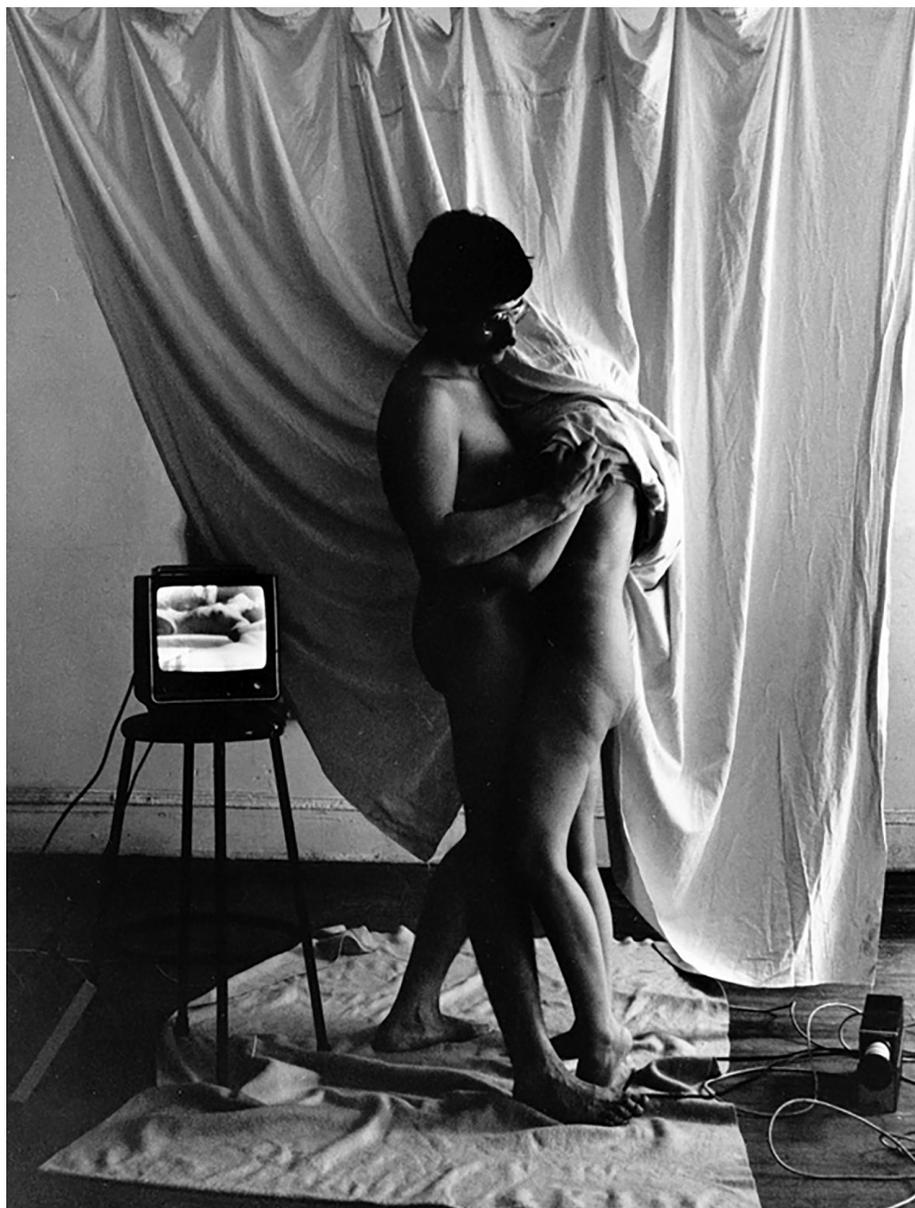


FIGURE 19.1 Shunk-Kender, Juan and Marilys Downey, New York, c. 1974–75. Black-and-white photograph. Getty Research Institute (GRI 2014.r.20.15473).

As well as screening video recordings made in different countries as they moved from place to place, Downey presented simultaneous screenings of the tapes in the US at the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse (1974) and the Whitney Museum of American Art (1976). In these presentations, Downey deployed multichannel video, live performance, and closed-circuit video projection, screening images across the spaces and videoing the interactions between audiences and images. At the Everson Museum of Art, the dancer and choreographer Carmen Beuchat—a frequent collaborator in Downey’s happenings and performances—moved underneath the *Debriefing Pyramid* (1974), which consisted of a circle of twelve monitors suspended from the ceiling showing footage gathered during his travels.³⁹ The photographic documentation of this performance positions Beuchat’s body as a sensitized receptor of the screened images, corresponding with cybernetic models of bodily integration with the environment. Downey also videoed Beuchat as she danced, and a thirteenth monitor placed in the floor of the plinth on which she moved relayed her messages back to her.

Video Trans Americas might seem to be a bid for integration, putting into practice the networked connectivity that Downey attributed to technology, when for example he described how the Telstar satellite facilitated a communications architecture that bridged distance and collapsed geographic borders: “The structure of our city is the means of communication that maintains our unity. My family in Chile is part of this invisible city when we speak by phone via Telstar. Thus, the satellite and its orbit around the earth exist as a living neural cell.”⁴⁰ Yet as Benjamin Murphy has argued, the temporality of *Video Trans Americas* was not the immediate present, but the recursive, disrupted, and fragmented time of playback; the project thus also speaks to loss and miscommunication.⁴¹ In the Everson Museum of Art screening-performance, Beuchat’s body functioned as both sensitized receptor, and a potential point of rupture and divergence. As Carla Macchiavello has shown in her in-depth analysis of this collaboration between Downey and Beuchat, and of Beuchat’s improvisatory choreography in particular, the work can be read as an interrogation—signaled by the “debriefing” of the title—which at once registered the interconnected pyramidal architectures of Mesoamerica (notably Teotihuacán, Palenque, Tajín in Mexico and Tikal in Guatemala) but also questioned their mediation.⁴²

The temporally and geographically spaced screenings of *Video Trans Americas* disclosed the chimerical dream of networked contiguity, shattering it through gaps, elisions, and failures to connect. *Video Trans Americas* shows how the fantasy of the networked psyche is indissolubly bound to its obverse: a fragmented psyche, the product of a subjectivity that is continually faced with what Laing termed “unembodiment” across time and space as well as its concomitant reduction to an object, as earlier works like *Three Way Communication by Light* intimated.⁴³ Beuchat’s dancing form under the *Debriefing Pyramid*, dominated by the hanging television screens, conveyed the challenge of processing information, and the pressures it places on the body.

The first phase of *Video Trans Americas* between 1973 and 1976 anticipates Downey’s later video recordings created with the Indigenous Yanomami on the border between Brazil and Venezuela during the second phase

after 1976, whereby he attempted to re-route ethnographic models of information gathering using video feedback. While these videos inevitably reinscribe the colonial structures in which ethnography is implicated, despite their problematic power imbalances, they also destabilize the documentary model.⁴⁴ When screened in the US, these works retained potential decolonial effects through their emphasis on Indigenous knowledge formation, together with their challenge to the legacies of colonialism in the bordered nation-states of Latin America. A computerized text exchange which Downey participated in together with the US critic Rosalind Krauss, the British sculptor Henry Moore, and the German artist Joseph Beuys in 1976 starkly illuminates this potentiality. The dialogue was organized by Donald Lupton, a computer scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology working in a lab funded by the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. A crucial moment in the exchange occurs when Downey refutes Krauss's conceptualization of modernist avant-garde activity, responding to her definition by saying: "Tell that to the Amazonians. They make art but they don't declare it as such. What we are dealing with here is a concept. The term art is a concept. Concepts do not represent given compartments in reality that are our instruments that deal with it."⁴⁵ Tellingly, Krauss retorts that she is "not interested in what the Amazonians make in this case [...]. The Amazonians may make quite fascinating things but they do not contribute to this discourse."⁴⁶ Downey's reaction is at once nonplussed and damning: he questions why Krauss is not interested in Indigenous creativity in the Amazon, asserting that "art has already engaged the political and philosophical."⁴⁷

Krauss's refusal to engage with Indigenous art in the Americas underscores the importance of Downey's intervention in foregrounding ephemeral Indigenous architecture, alongside the vast pyramid complexes of sites such as Tikal and Teotihuacán during the first phase of *Video Trans Americas*. That the exchange—or rather missed communications—between Downey, Krauss, Moore, and Beuys occurred on a cybernetic computer network sponsored by DARPA underscores the way in which Downey's own networking attempts sought to question the instrumentalized and militarized flows of information which characterized increasingly neoliberal regimes in the Americas.

BLOODY TRACES

Downey's activist interventions comparably addressed the geopolitical fractures and divisions relating to the construct of "Latin America" in *Video Trans Americas*. Although these aspects of his oeuvre are often not considered in direct relation, they have been brought together in exhibitions such as *Juan Downey: Radiant Nature* (2017). In 1972, Downey initiated *Doing Things Together: Imperialistic Octopus*, during which he and a group of friends made a giant papier-mâché octopus for a peace march in New York. Each tentacle of the octopus was labeled with a US firm linked to interference in Latin American politics. Downey videoed the making process and the ensuing protest, framing the pre-march discussion, debate, and creation as equal to the final statement in the street.

In a 1974 action that grew out of this earlier use of street performance, but specifically addressed the Chilean coup, Downey invited participants to gather outside the International Telephone and Telegraph headquarters in New York, an organization whose activities encompassed communications, transport, aerospace, and energy, and which was closely involved in the US political establishment. Downey printed T-shirts with the slogan “Chile sí, junta no” encircling blood-like smears. Downey videoed the march, which he edited and presented as part of *La Frontera* (1976) within *Video Trans Americas* (Fig. 19.2).⁴⁸ The stains on the T-shirts evoked the blood spilled during the coup. They contrasted the disembodied communication networks presided over by the International Telephone and Telegraph headquarters with a moment of visceral specificity, while the protest itself showed how such networks, rather than offering de-hierarchized communication, are in fact centralized nodes of imperial power.

If in other statements and works Downey eulogized global telecommunications networks, the *Chile Sí, Junta No* participants with their bloodied clothes registered the concrete bordered violence that supposedly dematerialized networks might uphold, as well as treating the body as a vital point of divergence from their regimes. The ephemeral, oppositional performance moreover established alternative connections with the graffiti and street interventions developed in Chile itself during the months and years after the coup, notably by groups such as Colectivo de Acciones de Arte (CADA), which as Sophie Halart has shown, sought with their most famous action *No +* (1983) to reconstitute the urban public sphere.⁴⁹ Although produced in New York, *Chile Sí, Junta No*'s re-signification through the combination of slogans and stains printed on clothes worn by breathing, marching bodies established a set of semiotic actions displaced from technocratic media into an affective DIY collectivity, contributing from afar to the “cuts and fractures” that Nelly Richard identifies as constituting the artistic *escena de avanzada* which emerged in opposition to the Chilean dictatorship during the 1970s.⁵⁰

The scholar Candice Amich situates the creation of precarious utopian zones through embodied performance in Latin American and Latinx art within the context of a neoliberal framework grounded in “the radical breakdown in communal and collective life that the Chilean coup originated across rural and urban regions of the Americas.”⁵¹ For Amich, the coup can be construed as “the site of the original neoliberal disaster” in Latin America, encapsulating the regimes of racism, extractivism, and exploitation that dominated colonial powers and the nation-states which followed.⁵² As Mignolo argues, this process involves “the elites celebrating their dreams of becoming modern while they slide deeper and deeper into the logic of coloniality.”⁵³ In a comparable way to the performances that Amich considers, Downey's foregrounding of the murderous Chilean coup, the traces of blood that mark the moment of obliteration, and the subsequent strengthening of nationalist borders, underscores how it is the body that suffers neoliberal's consummations of colonial violence, but nonetheless forms a site of potentiality for networked resistance.

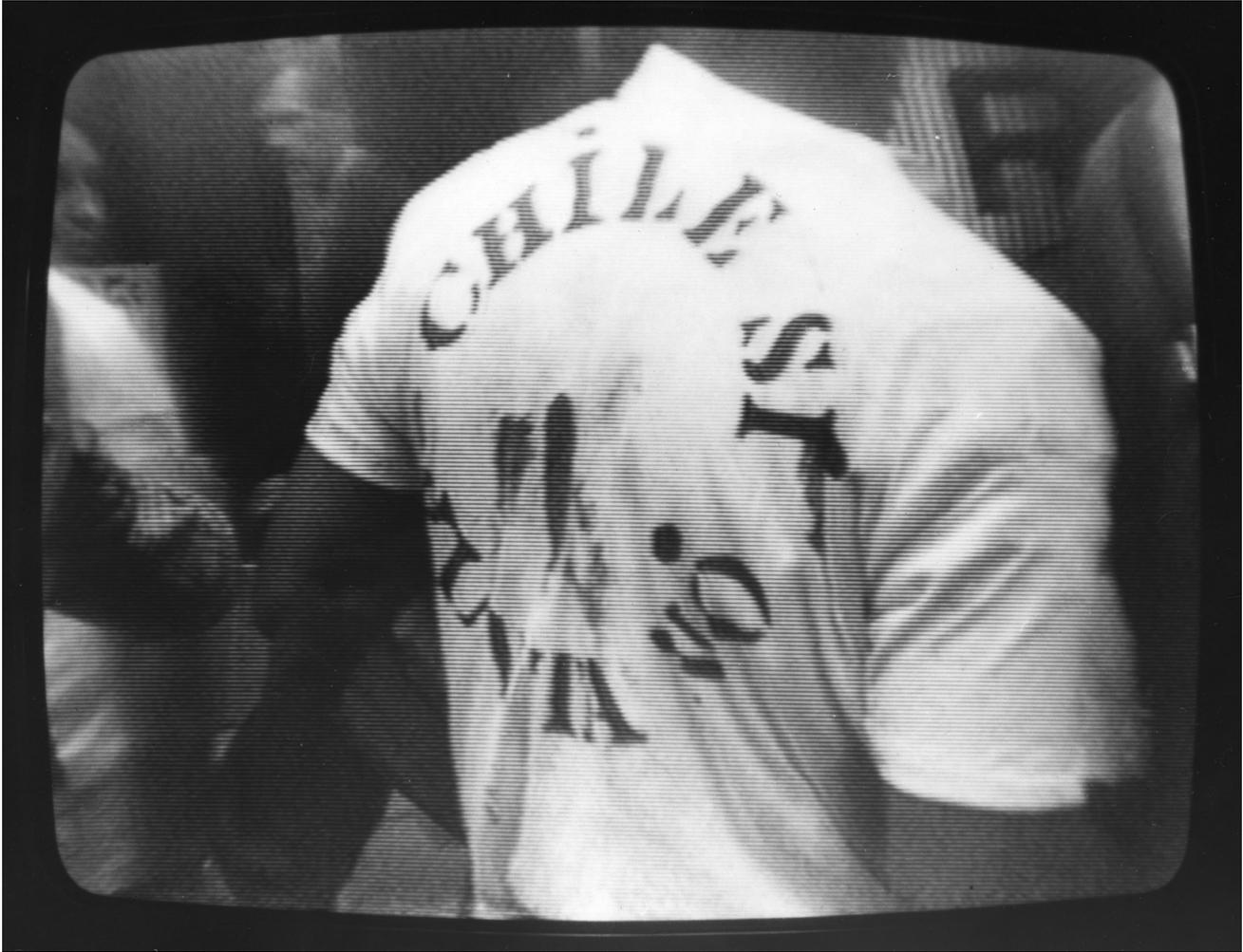


FIGURE 19.2 Juan Downey, *Chile Sí, Junta No.* 1974. New York. Video still.

Notes

1. Juan Downey, "The Smell of Turpentine," in *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, eds. Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer (New York: Aperture in association with the Bay Area Video Coalition, 1990), 343.
2. Ibid.
3. Walter Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 86.

4. Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, 95–148; Leticia Alvarado, *Abject Performances: Aesthetic Strategies in Latino Cultural Production* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 1–23; see also the foundational texts Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New Mestiza=La frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987); and Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America,” *International Sociology* 15(2) (2000): 215–232.
5. Macarena Gómez-Barris, *Beyond the Pink Tide: Art and Political Undercurrents in the Americas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018), 69–70.
6. Coco Fusco, “Ethnicity, Politics, and Poetics: Latinos and Media Art,” in *Illuminating Video*, eds. Hall and Fifer, 308.
7. Julieta González, “From Utopia to Abdication: Juan Downey’s Architecture without Architecture,” in *Juan Downey: The Invisible Architect*, ed. Valerie Smith (Cambridge, MA and New York: MIT List Visual Arts Center and Bronx Museum of the Arts, 2011), 59–74; Julieta González, “Juan Downey’s Communications Utopia,” in *Juan Downey: Una utopía de la comunicación=a communications utopia*, eds. Julieta González, and Arely Ramírez Moyao (Mexico City: Fundación Olga y Rufino Tamayo, 2013), 10–81; Julieta González, “Beyond Technology: Juan Downey’s Whole Earth,” *Afterall* 37 (Autumn/Winter 2014): 17–27; Julieta González, “The Use of Cybernetics in Juan Downey’s Early Work,” in *Juan Downey: Radiant Nature*, eds. Robert Crouch and Ciara Ennis (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions and Pitzer College Art Galleries, 2017), 81–95; and Bill Anthes, “Activating ‘The Difference which Makes a Difference’: Juan Downey’s Decolonial Field,” in *Juan Downey: Radiant Nature*, 177–183.
8. *Juan Downey of Chile*, exhibition pamphlet, Pan-American Union, Washington DC, September 23 to October 12, 1965, A0008; Juan Downey, Guggenheim Museum Artist Files, Guggenheim Archives, New York. Claire F. Fox notes that Gómez-Sicre and the PAU Visual Arts Section attempted to promote a “continental consciousness” whereby “Latin America would exchange parochial and fractious nationalisms for a progressive and outward-looking regionalism that did not dispense with the national altogether but instead featured it as one tier on a progressive scale of affective spatial and communal registers linking American metropolises to the rest of the world.” Downey’s work however developed in a way that built on, but ultimately challenged and questioned, this state-sanctioned model. Claire F. Fox, *Making Art Panamerican: Cultural Policy and the Cold War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 6.
9. Jimena Ferreiro Pella, “Interpenning, 1972,” in Victoria Noorthoorn et al., *Marta Minujín: Obras 1959–1989* (Buenos Aires: Malba-Fundación Costantini, 2010), 86.
10. Accounts of works taken from the exhibition catalog: *Juan Downey: Electronic Sculptures* (Washington, DC: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1969), n. p.
11. González, “The Use of Cybernetics in Juan Downey’s Early Work,” 89. González draws on the important writing of N. Katherine Hayles to make this argument; see N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
12. Andrew Pickering, *The Cybernetic Brain: Sketches of Another Future* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
13. For the crossovers but also the contrasts between cybernetics and system theory, see Manfred Drack and David Pouvreau, “On the history of Ludwig von Bertalanffy’s ‘General Systemology’, and on its relationship to cybernetics—Part III: convergences and divergences,” *International Journal of General Systems* 44(5) (2015): 523–571.
14. This literature is extensive, but on art and cybernetics see especially María Fernández’s examination of Jasia Reichardt’s influential 1968 exhibition *Cybernetic Serendipity: The Computer and the Arts* at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, “Detached from HiStory: Jasia Reichardt and Cybernetic Serendipity,” *Art Journal* 67(3) (Fall 2008): 6–23; and Kate Sloan, *Art, Cybernetics, and Pedagogy in Post-war Britain: Roy Ascott’s Groundcourse* (New York: Routledge, 2019). Art’s links with system theory have arguably received greater attention, as a result of Jack Burnham’s foundational 1968 *Artforum* essay “Systems Esthetics.” On the impact and implications of Burnham’s thinking, see Francis Halsall, *Systems of Art: Art, History and Systems Theory* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008); Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004); Eve Meltzer, *Systems We Have Loved: Conceptual Art, Affect, and the Antihumanist Turn* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2013); and Luke Skrebowski, “All Systems Go: Recovering Jack Burnham’s ‘Systems Aesthetics,’” *Tate Papers* 5 (1 April 2006), <http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/all-systems-go-recovering-jack-burnhams-systems-aesthetics> (accessed 23 April 2013).
15. Pickering, *The Cybernetic Brain*.

16. See Rodrigo Alonso, *Sistemas, acciones y procesos, 1965–1975*, trans. Jaime Arrambide, Laurence Henaff, and Agustín Bruni (Buenos Aires: Fundación Proa, 2011); and Elena Shtromberg, *Art Systems: Brazil and the 1970s* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016).
17. Vanessa Badagliacca, “Life Inside a System: Eco-critical Stances in the Art of Luis Fernando Bénédict, 1968–72,” *Burlington Contemporary* 5 (November 2021): <https://doi.org/10.31452/bcj5.benedict.badagliacca> (accessed May 2, 2022). I examine CAYC’s complex relationships with systems, structures and cybernetics in “Navigating Internationalism from Buenos Aires: The Centro de Arte y Comunicación,” *ARTMargins* 10(2) (2021): 50–72; and in “After Dematerialization, Cybernetics: Art, Systems and the Centro de Arte y Comunicación,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* blog, April 8, 2022, <https://jhiblog.org/2022/04/08/after-dematerialization-cybernetics-art-systems-and-the-centro-de-arte-y-comunicacion/> (accessed May 9, 2022).
18. Marta Traba, *Dos décadas vulnerables en las artes plásticas Latinoamericanas, 1950–1970* (1973; Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2005), 143; and Luis Camnitzer, *Conceptualism in Latin American Art: Didactics of Liberation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 248–250.
19. Joanna Page, *Decolonizing Science in Latin American Art* (London: UCL Press, 2021), 9.
20. Eden Medina, *Cybernetic Revolutionaries: Technology and Politics in Allende’s Chile* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 2011), 28.
21. Pamela M. Lee, *Think Tank Aesthetics: Midcentury Modernism, The Cold War, and the Neoliberal Present* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2020), 138 and 142.
22. Karen Benezra, *Dematerialization: Art and Design in Latin America* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2020), 136.
23. Page, *Decolonizing Science in Latin American Art*.
24. Juan Downey, Letter to Jane Livingston, February 4, 1974, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Curatorial Office Records, COR.0005.0.RG: Juan Downey, George Washington University Libraries Special Collections.
25. William Kaizen traces the cybernetic interests of the *Radical Software* group, which included the video artists Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot, in “Steps to an Ecology of Communication: *Radical Software*, Dan Graham, and the Legacy of Gregory Bateson,” *Art Journal* 67(3) (2008): 86–107. The name Raindance Corporation was a deliberate pun on the RAND Corporation, signaling an inversion of its neoliberal values.
26. In 1976, supported by a grant from the Guggenheim Foundation, Downey traveled to Venezuela; from August to October 1976 he stayed with the Indigenous Guahibo community and from November 1976 to May 1977 with the Yanomami. Downey’s stepdaughter Titi Lamadrid was involved in this later phase (notably *The Laughing Alligator* of 1979).
27. Juan Downey, *Videotapes and Drawings*, exhibition pamphlet, Everson Museum of Art, November 19, 1977 to January 15, 1978, A0008: Juan Downey, Guggenheim Museum Artist Files, Guggenheim Archives, New York.
28. Juan Downey, “Lima, Peru, December 28th, 1973,” from “V.T.A. First Journeys 1973–1976,” reprinted in Nuria Enguita Mayo, Juan Guardiola Román, and Marta Arroyo Planelles, *Juan Downey: With Energy Beyond These Walls=Con energía más allá de estos muros* (Valencia: Institut Valencià d’Art Modern IVAM, 1998), 331.
29. Downey, “Lima, Peru, December 28th, 1973,” 331.
30. Juan Downey, “Mexico City, next morning, July 28th, 1973,” from “V.T.A. First Journeys 1973–1976,” reprinted in Enguita Mayo, Guardiola Román, and Arroyo Planelles, *Juan Downey: With Energy Beyond These Walls*, 330.
31. Sayak Valencia, *Gore Capitalism*, trans. John Pluecker (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2018), 46.
32. Juan Downey, “Technology and Beyond,” *Radical Software* II, no. 5 (Winter 1973): 2
33. Juan Downey, “Three Way Communication,” *Radical Software* II, no. 5 (Winter 1973): 5.
34. Pickering, “Gregory Bateson and R. D. Laing,” in *The Cybernetic Brain*, 171–211.
35. R. D. Laing, *The Divided Self* (1960; London: Penguin, 2010), 23.
36. These are dynamics that the US critic Rosalind E. Krauss influentially ascribed to early video art in New York as a form in “Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism,” *October* 1 (1976): 50–64.
37. Laing, *The Divided Self*, 69.
38. See Juan Downey, *Yucatán*, 1973, 28:09 min, black and white, sound, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix.

39. On Beuchat see Gabriela Rangel, “Carmen Beuchat and Interdisciplinary Pollinations in the 1970s,” *BOMB* 120 (Summer 2012): 12–22. See also Archivo Carmen Beuchat, <https://carmenbeuchat.org/> (accessed May 9, 2022); and the essays collected in *Cuerpo y visualidad: reflexiones en torno al archivo*, ed. Jennifer McColl Crozier (Santiago: Ediciones Metales Pesados, 2019; Kindle), which is linked to the documentation gathered on the website.
40. Downey, “Technology and Beyond,” 3.
41. Benjamin Murphy, “Juan Downey’s Ethnographic Present,” *ARTMargins* 6(3) (2017): 44.
42. Carla Macchiavello, “Red invisible real: entretejiendo video, danza y archivos en torno a *Video Trans Americas’ De-Briefing Pyramid*,” in *Cuerpo y visualidad*, ed. McColl Crozier, 106.
43. See Laing, “The Embodied and Unembodied Self,” in *The Divided Self*, 65–77. The work might also be read in relation to the histories of psychoanalysis in Latin America, particularly the connections between psychoanalysis and the trauma of dictatorship traced by Nancy Caro Hollander, *Love in a Time of Hate: Liberation Psychology in Latin America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997); and Bruno Bosteels, *Marx and Freud in Latin America: Politics, Psychoanalysis, and Religion in Times of Terror* (London: Verso, 2012).
44. See Nicolás Guagnini, “Feedback in the Amazon,” *October* 125 (Summer 2008): 91–116. For an important critique of both Guagnini’s position and Downey’s use of video with the Yanomami community, which argues that the use of instant feedback reiterates one of the most problematic tropes in anthropological literature—that of the “timeless,” ahistorical nature of the othered subjects under study—see Murphy, “Juan Downey’s Ethnographic Present,” 28–49.
45. Juan Downey, in Joseph Beuys, Juan Downey, Rosalind Krauss and Henry Moore, “The Arpanet Dialogues,” March 22, 1976, reprinted in *Juan Downey: Una utopía de la comunicación=a communications utopia*, eds. González, and Ramírez Moyao, 326.
46. Rosalind Krauss, in “The Arpanet Dialogues,” 326.
47. Downey, in “The Arpanet Dialogues,” 326.
48. Anthes, “Activating ‘The Difference which Makes a Difference,’” 183.
49. Sophie Halart, “Cogs and Clogs: Sabotage as Noise in Post-1960s Chilean and Argentine Art and Art History,” in *Sabotage Art: Politics and Iconoclasm in Contemporary Latin America*, ed. Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra and Sophie Halart (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 121. See also Camilo D. Trumper, *Ephemeral Histories: Public Art, Politics, and the Struggle for the Streets in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).
50. Nelly Richard, “A Border Citation: Between Neo- and Post-Avant-Garde” (1990), reprinted in *The Insubordination of Signs: Political Change, Cultural Transformation, and Poetics of the Crisis*, trans. Alice A. Nelson and Silvia R. Tandeciarz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 24.
51. Candice Amich, *Precarious Forms: Performing Utopia in the Neoliberal Americas* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020), 16.
52. Amich, *Precarious Forms*, 24; Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).
53. Mignolo, *The Idea of Latin America*, 58.

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Contributors' Biographies

Carolina Arévalo Karl is adjunct professor in the School of Art and Craft at Universidad Academia Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago, Chile. A researcher and curator, her curatorial projects include *Sheila Hicks: Reencounter* at the PreColumbian Art Museum in Santiago (2019) and *Soft Territories* at the Knockdown Center in New York (2019), among others. Her research has been published in edited volumes and exhibition catalogs, including *Hilos Libres: Sheila Hicks* (Puebla, México: Museo Amparo, 2018), *Jaume Xifra* (Gerona, Spain: Universitat de Girona, 2018), and *Anni Albers Influjos Precolombinos y Legado* (Bogotá, Colombia: Goethe Institute, 2019). Carolina holds an MA in History of Design and Curatorial Studies from Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and The New School; and a BA in Design from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude. She also holds a certificate in Gender and Sexuality Studies from The New School in New York.

Francisca Benitez is a Chilean-born artist living in New York since 1998. Through video, photography, performance, and drawing, her art practice explores the relationships between space, place, politics, and language, being closely linked to the places where she has lived and the communities she interacts with. Her work has been exhibited internationally in galleries, museums, art centers and biennials, and recent exhibitions include *Riego* at Die ecke, Santiago; *In Support* at The Kitchen, New York; *New/Now* at the New Britain Museum of American Art, CT; *Uprisings* at the Jeu de Paume, Paris; *Much wider than a line* at SITE Santa Fe, NM. She holds a BA in Architecture from Universidad de Chile and an MFA from Hunter College, City University of New York. Francisca is an alto singer in the Stop Shopping Choir, an anti-capitalist direct action performance group based in New York City.

Ariel Bustamante is a sound artist based in La Paz, Bolivia, and a member of the Multispecies Laboratory at the Institute of Anthropological Research at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés, Bolivia. He is also a current artist fellow in the residency program of the Academy Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany. He is a wind follower who practices new and old ways of walking with humans and wind-persons, using breathing and conversation as a social form of healing.

Manuel Carrión Lira (he/they) is a Pikunche researcher, video-artist and curator originally from Pikunmapu/Quillasuyu (Quillota, Chile). Currently, Manuel is pursuing their PhD in Cultural Studies at the Department of

Literature at University of California San Diego as a Fulbright International Fellow. Manuel holds an MA in Latin American Art, Thought, and Culture from the Instituto de Estudios Avanzados at Universidad de Santiago de Chile; and a BA in Design at Universidad de Valparaíso. As a member of the Catrileo+Carrión Community, they have collectively published the volumes *Poyewün Nütramkan Pikunmapu/Qullasuyu* (2020); *Poyewün witrál: bitácora de las tejedoras de Neltume* (2019); *Torcer la palabra: escrituras obrera-feministas* (2018); and *Yikalay pu zomo Lafkenmapu* (2018). Manuel is also part of the Global Center for Advanced Studies Latin America Collective.

Fernanda Carvajal is a postdoctoral researcher at the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET) and teaches courses on cultural studies at Universidad de Buenos Aires; Universidad del Salvador; and Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero in Argentina. Her work examines the crossroads between art, sexuality, and politics in the Southern Cone since the 1970s through the present. A member and former Coordinator of the Red Conceptualismos del Sur, she has co-curated the exhibitions *Perder la forma humana. Una imagen sísmica de los años ochenta en América Latina*; and *La Bondadosa Crueldad. León Ferrari 100 años*, both at the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid. She is currently leading the digital project “Archivo Yeguas del Apocalipsis” alongside Alejandro de la Fuente. Fernanda holds an MA and PhD in Communication and Culture from the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA). She lives and works between Santiago de Chile and Buenos Aires.

Paula (Paly) Carvajal Borquez is the daughter of Laura and Manuel. She grew up in San Félix, a town in Alto del Carmen in the region of Atacama in the Chilean Norte Chico. A cultivator of her Diaguita culture and roots, her work includes the collective making of dolls and textile, as well as cooking and cultivating agri-food, and practicing oral tradition. A writer of short stories about the Diaguita cosmovision, she published the books *Voces de Huasco Alto (tradicion oral del Valle del Guasco Alto)* in 2010; and *Cuentos de las abuelas Kakanas (relatos de la tradicion oral diaguita y cuentos inéditos)* in 2021. She is currently working on the book *Historias con sabor a valle (cuentos relacionados al patrimonio alimentario de los valles transversales, territorio diaguita mestizo)*.

Carolina Castro Jorquera is an art historian, critic, and curator. She is guest lecturer at the MFA program in image making and research at Universidad Finis Terrae in Santiago. Her first book, *Camino de la conciencia: Mira Schendel, Víctor Grippo y Cecilia Vicuña*, was published by Ediciones Universidad Finis Terrae in 2020. As a curator, she has organized numerous exhibitions, including *Alejandro Leonhardt: Líquida Superficie Sólida* at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Santiago (2021) and *Rodrigo Arteaga: Diorama en expansión*, at the Museo de Artes Visuales in Santiago (2021). Her articles have appeared in international art magazines and newspapers such as *Artishock*; *Latinxspaces*; *The Miami Rail*; *Terremoto*; and Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros. A participant of the 4th Gwangju Biennale International Curator Course in 2012, Carolina holds a BFA from Universidad del Desarrollo; an MA in Contemporary Art and Visual Culture from the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía; and a PhD in Art History from Universidad Autónoma in Madrid.

Antonio Catrileo Araya (they/them) is a Mapuche writer, artist, and weaver from Pikunmapu/Qullasuyu (Curico, Chile), currently pursuing their PhD in Ethnic Studies at the University of California, San Diego. They hold a BA and an MA in Chilean and Hispanic Literature from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso. Antonio is the author of the books *Awkan epupillan mew: dos espíritus en divergencia* (2019) and *Diáspora* (2015). As a member of the Catrileo+Carrión Community, they have collectively published the volumes *Poyewün Nütramkan Pikunmapu/Qullasuyu* (2020); *Poyewün witrál: bitácora de las tejedoras de Neltume* (2019); *Torcer la palabra: escrituras obrera-feministas* (2018); and *Yikalay pu zomo Lafkenmapu* (2018). They are currently part of Fecundações Cruzadas, a network of transfeminist dialogues and Indigenous epistemologies of Abya Yala, as well as a collaborator of the Global Center for Advanced Studies Latin America Collective.

Matías Celedón is a Chilean award-winning novelist, journalist, and screenwriter. The author of the novel *La Filial* (Alquimia Ediciones, 2012; Sudaquia Editores, 2014) translated by Samuel Rutter as *The Subsidiary* (Melville House, 2016), Celedón is also the author of the novels *Trama y urdimbre* (Mondadori, 2007; Hueders 2019); *Buscanidos* (Hueders, 2014); and *El Clan Braniff* (Hueders, 2018). Celedón has worked as a screenwriter for documentary and fiction projects in Chile and Argentina, and holds a BA in Communication Studies from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. He lives in Santiago, Chile.

colectiva somoslacélula is a New York-based research and activist collective founded in 2019 by Amanda Lotspike, Ángeles Donoso Macaya, and César Barros A. As a tool for popular education, colectiva somoslacélula produces video-essays that interrogate founding notions of national and transnational hegemonic narratives. They also disseminate different forms of activism throughout Abya Yala. The audiovisual work by colectiva somoslacélula has been featured at the Film Anthology Archives and Maysles Documentary Center (NYC), as part of *The People's Revolt: A Showcase of New Chilean Experimental Cinema*, as well as at the Interference Archive (NYC), Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral (Santiago, Chile), and Khôra Gallery (Quito, Ecuador).

Colectivo Últimaesperanza is an artistic collective directed by Sandra Ulloa and Nataniel Alvarez, which was born in 2004. Using both analog and digital means, Últimaesperanza explores the particularities of the rurality of Tierra del Fuego/Patagonia and the subantarctic territory in terms of collective memory, history, and local identity. Ironically taking its name from the toponyms given to the territory as a gesture of resistance, the collective re-reads and makes visible community life in rural areas, rescuing the voices and memories of their inhabitants and the legacy of the first nations, which have been silenced by official history. In recent years, their work has consisted of undertaking expeditions to the maritime domain with artists, scientists, and historians and establishing a dialogue with the human and non-human beings that populate the territory. Establishing networks with artists from other parts of the country and abroad, since 2010 the collective has created the territorial exploration laboratory

“Liquenlab,” a space for reflection and thought, highlighting the South as a place from and in which to experience and rethink the territory.

Carl Fischer is Professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Fordham University in the Bronx, New York, where he teaches courses on Latin American visual culture, film, and literature. He is the author of *Queering the Chilean Way: Cultures of Exceptionalism and Sexual Dissidence, 1965–2015* (2016) and co-editor (with Vania Barraza) of *Chilean Cinema in the Twenty-First-Century World* (2020). His writing has been published in *American Quarterly*, *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*, *Hispanic Review*, and *Comunicación y medios*, among other academic journals. Before getting his doctorate, he worked as a translator for the Chilean government. Currently, he is working on a new book project, tentatively titled *Cosmic Racisms: Fascism, Geopolitics, and Aesthetics in Latin America’s Southern Cone*.

Mariairis Flores Leiva is an independent researcher, critic, and curator. The cofounder of the newly inaugurated art gallery in Santiago, Espacio218, she is currently working on the research project “Bajo el signo mujer” and her work has been supported by the National Fund for the Development of Culture and the Arts (FONDART) and the Chilean Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage (Mincap). She writes for the art magazines *Artforum* and *Artshock*, and has co-authored with Sebastián Calfuqueo the book *Desbordar el territorio* (2016), and with Varinia Brodsky the volume, *Mujeres en las artes visuales en Chile 2010–2020* (2021). She has also worked on the digital projects “Mezza: Archivo liberado”; the website www.carlosleppe.cl; the book *Arte y política 2005–2015 (fragmentos)*; and has collaborated with Museum of Fine Arts, Houston’s International Center for the Arts of the Americas (ICAA). Mariairis holds a BA and MA in History and Theory of Art from Universidad de Chile.

Gregorio Fontaine Correa (a.k.a. Gregorio Fontén) is a postdoctoral fellow at the Arts Institute of Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso. A researcher and artist who works in poetry, music, and visual arts, his songs, which surface as the resonance between the body and its surroundings, explore the oscillation (*vacilación*) between listening and dancing. Fontén holds a PhD in Sonic Arts from Goldsmiths, University of London, and his work has been published in *Contemplación* (Libros de la Elipse, Santiago 2001), *FM* (Veer Books, London 2014), and *Transducción* (Sonhoras, Barcelona 2018), and presented at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (London), Center for New Music (San Francisco), Fundación Phonos (Barcelona), CMMAS (Morelia), and Teatro Municipal de Santiago (Santiago de Chile). Fontén is currently preparing a book that frames the artistic practice of *vacilar* as a South American sonic onto-fiction.

Marcelo Garzo Montalvo (he/they) is a musician, dancer, and Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies at California State University, San Marcos. He is a first-generation Chilean-Canadian-American of Mapuche and Spanish descent. They hold a BA, MA, and PhD in Comparative Ethnic Studies from UC Berkeley. Their teaching and research focus on comparative and critical approaches to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Xicanx Studies as well as Dance and Performance

Studies. They have worked as a scholar-activist and published articles on abolition, decolonization, and social movements for food, healing, and ecological justice. Their current book project, *Armas Milagrosas/Miraculous Weapons*, is a study of embodied knowledge, cultural decolonization, and Xicanx Indigeneities in the practice of Anahuacan ceremonial dance (Danza Azteca, Danza Mexica, Danza Chichimeca-Tolteca). They also served as the Co-coordinator of the Abiyala Working Group of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association for the 2021–2022 academic year.

Astrid González is a multi-media artist and researcher who explores the historical processes of communities of African descent in the Americas. Her work has been exhibited internationally in venues such as Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín; Galería Vigil Gonzáles in Cusco, Peru; and Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos in Santiago, Chile. She was awarded the first place in Nuevos Talentos in 2021 by Cámara de Comercio de Medellín, Antioquia, and second place in the 8th Bienal de Comfenalco Arte Joven in Medellín. González is also the author of *Ombbligo cimarrón. Investigación creación* (2019, Editorial F.E.A., Santiago de Chile). She holds a BFA from the Fundación Universitaria Bellas Artes in Medellín.

Milena Grass Kleiner is Professor in the School of Theater at the Faculty of Arts, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. A translator and theater scholar, her fields of interest range from research methodologies in the arts; traumatic memory, postmemory, and theater in postconflict societies; and the analysis of performativity in social mobilizations as an expression of citizenship. Milena is the former Director of the Millennium Nucleus Art, Performativity and Activism, and Vicepresident of the International Federation for Theatre Research. Her Spanish translations of English, American, and French plays have been produced by leading Chilean directors, and have also been published along with various translations of books and papers on Chilean history, and theater studies.

Sophie Halart is Assistant Professor at the Institute of Aesthetics of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. She is the co-editor with Mara Polgovsky Ezcurra of *Sabotage Art: Politics and Iconoclasm in Contemporary Latin America*, recently re-published by Bloomsbury (2022). Halart's research interests are feminism and maternity in the Southern Cone and, more recently, the articulation of new artistic methodologies in the face of climate change in contemporary Chile. She holds a PhD in Art History from University College London; an MA in Culture Industry from Goldsmiths College; and a BA in Art History and English Literature from the University of York.

Bernardita Llanos M. is Professor of Spanish and Women's and Gender Studies at Brooklyn College, CUNY. Her areas of research are Latin American women writers, documentary films, women's testimonies, and feminist activism. She has published the books *Passionate Subjects/Split Subjects in Twentieth Century Narrative in Chile. Brunet, Bombal and Eltit*; and *Redescubrimiento y Reconquista de América en la Ilustración Española*. Many of her articles have appeared in well-known American, Latin American, and European journals. She has co-authored and edited several books, among

them *Poner el cuerpo. Rescatar y visibilizar las marcas sexuales y de género de los archivos dictatoriales del Cono Sur; Fronteras de la memoria: cartografías de género en artes visuales, cine y literatura en las Américas y España; Paisajes de Chile Actual: Arte, Cine, Narrativa, Poesía y Teatro Contemporáneo; Letras y proclamas: la estética narrativa de Diamela Eltit; and Reinas de otro cielo. Modernidad y autoritarismo en la obra de Pedro Lemebel.*

Nicole L'Huillier is a transdisciplinary artist who works with sounds, vibrations, resonances, and multiple transductions to explore sound as a construction material that intertwines agencies from the micro to the cosmic, stimulating new imaginaries, sensitivities, and collectivities. Nicole holds a PhD in Media Arts & Sciences from Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab, and was awarded 1st Prize in the MIT 2020 Schnitzer Prize in the Visual Arts, a DAAD fellowship as part of the Transnational Sound Initiative (TSI) and the 2019 SIMETRIA prize to participate in a residency at CERN, Paranal, and ALMA Observatories. Recently, her work has been shown in Transmediale, the Venice Architecture Biennale, Ars Electronica, and Bienal de Artes Mediales Santiago, among others.

Carla Macchiavello Cornejo is Associate Professor of Art History in the Department of Music and Art at The Borough of Manhattan Community College BMCC/CUNY. She has published on contemporary Latin American art, performative poetics and video art, solidarity networks and their woven meshes of resistance, art and education, and artistic practices aimed at social transformation. She co-edits the periodical *Más allá del fin/Beyond the End* for Ensayos, a collective research practice centered on the ecopolitics of Tierra del Fuego, and is co-editor of the book *Turba Tol Hol-Hol*, a compendium of ecocultural thought of Latin American authors, which is part of the Chilean pavilion at the 59th Venice Art Biennale. She also has a forthcoming book on Chilean art and territoriality during the military dictatorship, which will be published by Ediciones Metales Pesados.

Camila Marambio is a curator based in Chile and the founder/Director of Ensayos. She is Postdoc Fellow of The Seedbox Program at The Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm. She holds a PhD in Curatorial Practice from Monash University in Melbourne; an MA in Modern Art and Curatorial Studies from Columbia University; and a Master's in Experiments in Art and Politics from Sciences Po School of Public Affairs in Paris. She is a letter-writing dancer who practices magic, delights in telling ancient circular stories, and is concerned with human/non-human health. She is also the curator of the Chilean pavilion at the 59th Venice Art Biennale.

María Luisa Murillo is a Chilean curator and artist and the director of Art and Projects and the Art, Science, and Humanities residency program at the Casa-Museo Alberto Baeriswyl, in Tierra del Fuego. In the framework of this program, she has curated exhibitions of Chilean and Swiss artists at venues located in Chile, including the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (Santiago de Chile), Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Cerrillos (Santiago de Chile), Centex (Valparaíso, Chile), and Museo Regional de Magallanes (Punta Arenas, Chile). As an artist, she is interested in the

intersections between photography, architecture, contemporary art, cultural heritage, and science, and makes work that explores the themes of memory and inhabitation. She has exhibited at venues in Chile and abroad, such as Centro Cultural Palacio de la Moneda (Santiago de Chile), Museo de Artes Visuales (Santiago de Chile), Centro de Cultura Contemporánea de Barcelona (Barcelona, Spain), Kadist Art Foundation (Paris, France), and East Asia Contemporary Art (Shanghai, China), among others.

José Pérez de Arce is a Chilean musicologist and artist. Since receiving a PhD in Latin American Studies from Universidad de Chile in the 1980s, he has researched native music from the Andes. As a scholar, his publications and participation in conferences have explored issues related to Pre-Columbian, Indigenous, and *mestizo* traditions from that territory, musical instruments, and the spatial and temporal dimension of sonic exchanges. As an artist, he has collaborated with scientists in creating illustrations, has participated in bands, and created and edited sound and audiovisual installations. He is also a member of the band La Chimuchina, where he plays the traditional 25-string guitar from Central Chile. He has received awards for his work from the Fundación Pedro Montt, the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage, and Universidad de Chile.

Florencia San Martín is Assistant Professor of Art History at Lehigh University, where she teaches and writes about contemporary art in the Americas, decolonial methodologies, and the relationships between art, politics, and literature in the neoliberal present. Her work has appeared in academic journals and edited volumes in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, and her research has been supported by institutions including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Rutgers University, California State University, San Bernardino, Lehigh University, and CONICYT. The co-editor with Tatiana Flores and Charlene Villaseñor Black of the volume *The Routledge Companion to Decolonizing Art History* (Routledge, 2023), Florencia is currently working on her first academic monograph in which she reframes the art and thinking of Alfredo Jaar through a decolonial perspective.

Demian Schopf is a German-Chilean artist, writer, and university professor. He holds a BFA from Universidad Arcis; an MFA from Universidad de Chile; a PhD in Aesthetics and Art Theory also from Universidad de Chile; and a Post-doctorate on Cluster Analysis in Computer Science and Analytical Philosophy from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (2017). From 2002 to 2004, Schopf was a Fellow at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne, supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). In 2013, he completed an art residency at the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie (ZKM) in Karlsruhe. He is the recipient of multiple awards, including the Juan Downey Prize at the XI Santiago Media Arts Biennial in 2013; the Altazor Prize in 2007; and VIDA: Arte e Inteligencia Artificial from Fundación Telefónica in Madrid in 2009. A regular contributor to academic journals, Schopf's work has been exhibited widely in Chile and abroad.

Paula Solimano is the Head of the Museography and Exhibitions Department at the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, Chile. Her research and curatorial practices explore theories of affect and belonging and methodologies of humor and play in Latin American contemporary art and culture. She has curated shows at venues including Centro Cultural Matucana 100 (Santiago, Chile), Parque Cultural de Valparaíso (Valparaíso, Chile), Sala Alcalá 31 (Madrid, Spain), and Leubsdorf Gallery (New York City). She has also led seminars and laboratories on Contemporary Curating and Art History at universities and independent art spaces. An MA in Art History from Hunter College, CUNY, and a BFA from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, her studies have been supported by Queen Sofía Spanish Institute and the David and Estrellita B. Brodsky Family Foundation.

Catherine Spencer is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews. Her research and teaching focus on performance art in Europe and the Americas, and publications in this area include essays in the journals *Art History*, *Art Journal*, *ARTMargins*, *Tate Papers*, *Parallax*, and *Oxford Art Journal*. Her book *Beyond the Happening: Performance Art and the Politics of Communication* was published by Manchester University Press in their Rethinking Art's Histories series in 2020. With Jo Applin and Amy Tobin, she is the co-editor of *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent and Ephemeral Networks, 1960–80* (Penn State University Press, 2018). Her art criticism has appeared in venues including *Artforum*, *Art Monthly*, and *Burlington Contemporary*.

Ignacio Szmulewicz is a PhD student of Architecture and Urban Studies at PUC Santiago, a lecturer in art history at PUC Temuco, and an independent critic and curator based in Santiago. He has curated exhibitions such as *Coma, 2/3 Special Issue for the Conventional Election* (Gretta Rust Editorial House, Valdivia-Berlín, 2020), *Chinese Whispers* (U10 Gallery, Belgrade, 2017), and *Ciudad H* (Centro Cultural Matucana 100, Santiago de Chile, 2015). More recently, alongside María Verónica San Martín he curated *Collective Roadmap*, an artist book project created by 15 international artists inspired by the process of writing a new Chilean Constitution. A regular contributor to the magazine *La Panera*, Szmulewicz has published the books *Fuera del cubo blanco. Lecturas sobre arte público contemporáneo* (Metales Pesados, 2012), and *Arte, Ciudad y Esfera Pública en Chile* (Metales Pesados, 2015). He was the Director of the Documentary Center for Visual Arts at the National Center for Contemporary Arts from 2017 to 2020. He holds a BA in History and Theory of Art from Universidad de Chile, and an MA in Architecture from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

Verónica Tello is a Senior Lecturer of Contemporary Art History and Theory at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia. A Chilean-Australian art historian, her work is dedicated to engaging and animating queer and diasporic archives in/across Australia and Chile. She is currently finalizing a manuscript on the exhibition history of *Art in Chile: An Audio-Visual Documentation* (1986, co-curated by Juan Dávila and Nelly Richard) and the accompanying catalog/book *Margins and Institutions: Art in Chile Since 1973* (with Sebastián Valenzuela-Valdivia).

Cristian Vargas Paillahueque is a PhD candidate in Latin American Studies at Universidad de Chile. He holds an MA in Art History and Theory and an MA in Latin American Studies from the same institution. His area of research centers on the relationships between images and the Mapuche world across media and languages, including contemporary art, photography, theater, film, and craft. As an independent researcher and curator, he has worked on the Mapuche collection at Universidad de Chile's Museo de Arte Popular Americano, and has organized exhibitions alongside artists Sebastián Calfuqueo and Paula Baeza Pailamilla for venues such as Galería Metropolitana, Centro Cultural de España, and Universidad Católica de Temuco's Sala de Arte. He is currently Coordinator of "Artes Visuales de los Pueblos Indígenas y Afrodescendientes" (Visual Arts from Indigenous and Afro-descendant Peoples), a project supported by the National Fund for the Development of Culture and the Arts (FONDART).

Cecilia Vicuña is an artist whose practice includes poetry, performance, Conceptualism, and textile craft in response to pressing concerns of the modern world, including ecological destruction, human rights, and cultural homogenization. Born and raised in Santiago, she was exiled during the early 1970s after the violent military coup against President Salvador Allende. The resulting sense of impermanence, and a desire to preserve and pay tribute to the Indigenous history and culture of Chile, have characterized her work throughout her career. Vicuña received her MFA from the University of Chile and continued with postgraduate studies at University College London. Solo exhibitions of her work have been recently organized at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York; Museo Banco de la República in Bogotá, Colombia; Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo (CA2M) in Madrid; and Lehmann Maupin in Seoul. Vicuña has received several awards, including the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 2022 Venice Biennale.

Sebastián Vidal is Assistant Professor of Art History at Universidad Alberto Hurtado. He is the author of the book *En el principio: Arte, archivos y tecnologías durante la dictadura en Chile* (Metales Pesados 2013), and has published articles and exhibition catalog essays on conceptual art, video, and art documentation. He has curated exhibitions for institutions such as the National Museum of Fine Arts in Santiago, Chile; Ars Electronica Festival in Linz, Austria; and the National Museum of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He also curated the exhibition *Festival Franco Chileno de Video Arte: 40 años*, at the Centro Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo in 2022, and is currently working on a research project on video art in Latin America supported by the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT). Vidal holds a BA and MA in Art History and Theory from Universidad de Chile; and a PhD in Art History from The University of Texas at Austin, which he pursued as a Fulbright Fellow.