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## Salir del silencio: Arte y política en latinoamérica entre los años 60 y 80

Ana Longoni

La Red Conceptualismos del Sur es una plataforma internacional de trabajo, pensamiento y toma de posición colectiva que agrupa a un conjunto de investigadores y artistas preocupados por la necesidad de intervenir críticamente en los procesos de recuperación de la memoria de las prácticas poético-políticas surgidas en América Latina a partir de la década del 60. Nacida en 2007, la Red reúne a más de cincuenta integrantes dispersos en distintos puntos de América y Europa.

Impulsa distintos proyectos de archivos de artistas, en defensa de su condición inalienable como patrimonio común (esto es, su integridad y su indivisibilidad), y contribuye a generar condiciones para la preservación de estos archivos, su socialización y puesta a la consulta de todo interesado, así como propicia su inscripción local en donde acontecieron las experiencias de las que cada archivo da cuenta.<sup>1</sup> Asimismo, la Red viene impulsando diversos proyectos colectivos de investigación, que muchas veces desencadenaron experimentos de reactivación tales como exposiciones, publicaciones, declaraciones públicas, etc.

El proyecto más ambicioso y de largo aliento impulsado hasta ahora por la Red es “Perder la forma humana” (Losing the Human Form), investigación centrada en explorar los nuevos modos de relación entre arte y política que emergieron en los años setenta y ochenta, período signado por cruentas dictaduras militares y violentas convulsiones internas, así como también por diversas tácticas de resistencia que se desataron en medio (y a pesar) del “poder concentracionario” vigente, como lo ha nombrado Pilar Calveiro.<sup>2</sup>

Las relaciones entre arte y política ocurridas en América Latina en los años 60 vienen siendo profusamente revisitadas desde la investigación y la curaduría en los últimos años, pero en cambio estaba aún pendiente investigar ese tipo de cruces en la época posterior, atravesada por la derrota de los proyectos emancipatorios que clausuró un horizonte de expectativas que entendía la transformación revolucionaria como inminente e inevitable. Fueron años en los que se reinventó la acción política en nuevos términos, desde la precariedad, la falta de recursos y muchas veces la ausencia de estructuras (partidarias, institucionales). El cuerpo (desnudo, indefenso) aparece como el soporte privilegiado de esos nuevos modos de hacer arte y política.

Este proyecto nunca tuvo una aspiración panorámica ni exhaustiva, sino que se propuso mostrar la aparición múltiple y simultánea de tácticas afines, la invención de espacios y modos de acción colectiva en diferentes puntos de América Latina, en respuesta a situaciones de conflicto generadas por la represión de Estado y las violaciones a los derechos humanos, los inicios del neoliberalismo, la fractura del proyecto socialista y el desbordamiento del repertorio de la izquierda tradicional. Entre otros tópicos, explora las estrategias creativas de los movimientos de derechos humanos que disputaron la calle vedada por el terror, los circuitos *underground* y la invención de espacios alternativos para el encuentro con otros, y las desobediencias sexuales que irrumpieron entonces en el debate público impugnando el orden patriarcal y heterosexual como normalidad vigente. El proyecto se propuso dar visibilidad a las relaciones de afinidad y contagio que se entretejieron entre distintas experiencias puntuales ocurridas en Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brasil, Perú, Colombia, México y Cuba. Como resultado de

1. Entre los proyectos de archivo que la Red viene impulsando, vale mencionar el de Clemente Padín (Montevideo), el del grupo CADA (Santiago de Chile), el de Juan Carlos Romero/Luis Pazos y Carlos Ginzburg en Buenos Aires, el de Graciela Carnevale (Rosario), el de Elena Lucca (Resistencia), el archivo Memorias de la Resistencia (Asociación de Plásticos Jóvenes—Taller El Sol) en Santiago, el de Cira Moscarda (Asunción) entre otros. En la página web [www.archivosenuso.org](http://www.archivosenuso.org) pueden consultarse diversos fondos de archivos ya digitalizados.

2. Pilar Calveiro, *Poder y desaparición: Los campos de concentración en Argentina* (Buenos Aires, Colihue, 1998).

3. El proyecto fue coordinado por Ana Longoni (Argentina), Mabel Tapia (Argentina), Fernanda Nogueira (Brasil), André Mesquita (Brasil), Fernanda Carvajal (Chile), Miguel A. López (Perú) y Jaime Vindel (España). Participaron además los siguientes investigadores: David Gutierrez Castañeda, Sylvia Suárez, William López, Luisa Fernanda Ordóñez, Halim Badawi (Colombia)/Emilio Tarazona, Dorota Biczal (Perú)/Felipe Rivas, Francisca García, Paulina Varas (Chile)/Lía Colombino (Paraguay)/Cora Gamarnik, Daniela Lucena, Ana Vidal, Fernando Davis (Argentina)/Sol Henaro (México). El proyecto contó además con la valiosa interlocución de Roberto Amigo (Argentina) y Rachel Weiss (USA).

The Red Conceptualismos del Sur [Network for Southern Conceptualisms] is an international critical platform for research work, discussion, and collective position-taking that links researchers and artists concerned about the need to actively participate in the recovery and preservation of poetic-political practices developed in Latin America starting in the 1960s. Founded in 2007, the Red groups more than fifty members from various parts of America and Europe. It promotes

Ana Longoni

## Coming out of Silence: Art and Politics in Latin America from the 1960s to the 1980s

various projects for artists' archives, defending their inalienable status as a common heritage (in their wholeness and indivisibility), and helps generate conditions for their preservation, as public property available to anyone interested in consulting them, just as it favors the localities where those experiences took place as the best setting for their material preservation.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the Red promotes various collective research projects, which often led to experiments of recovery, such as exhibitions, publications, public declarations, and more.

The most ambitious, long-term project promoted so far by the Red is “Perder la forma humana” [Losing the Human Form], a research focused on exploring the new ways of merging art and politics that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s—a period marked by bloody military dictatorships and violent internal convulsions, as well as by various tactics of resistance unleashed in the middle of (and despite) the prevailing “concentrationary system,” as Pilar Calveiro has called it.<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between art and politics in Latin America in the 1960s has been frequently revisited in recent years by researchers and curators; by contrast, research remains pending on such intersections in the subsequent period, a time marked by the defeat of emancipatory projects and the closing-off of a horizon of expectations that regarded revolutionary transformation as imminent and inevitable. Political action was reinvented in new terms in those years, from the precariousness, the lack of resources, and often the absence of any kind of support from parties or institutions. The naked, defenseless body appears as the privileged medium for those new ways of merging art and politics.

This project never aspired to be panoramic or exhaustive; rather, it proposes to show the multiple and simultaneous appearance of similar tactics, the invention of spaces and forms of collective action in different areas of Latin America, in response to situations of conflict generated by state repression and violations of human rights, the beginnings of neoliberalism, the fracture of the socialist project, and the crisis of the traditional Left's repertoire. Among other topics, it explores the creative strategies of human-rights movements that fought for the public use of the streets banned as a free space by state terror, underground circuits and the invention of alternative spaces for meeting with others, and sexual disobedience that burst into public debate by challenging the patriarchal, heterosexual order as the prevailing norm. The project intended to give visibility to relationships of affinity and contamination that connected different, isolated experiences in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, and Cuba. As a result of this long collective research project, in which thirty-one researchers participated, a large-scale exhibition was launched in

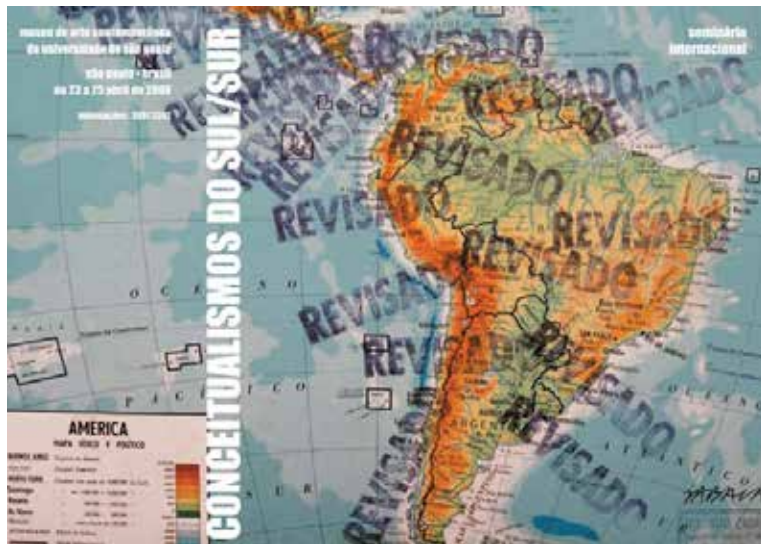
Forum

Translated from the Spanish by Jason Weiss.

1. Among the archival projects promoted by the Red, it is worth mentioning those by Clemente Padín (Montevideo), the group CADA (Santiago de Chile), Juan Carlos Romero/Luis Pazos and Carlos Ginzburg (Buenos Aires), Graciela Carnevale (Rosario), Elena Lucca (Resistencia), the Memorias de la Resistencia archive (Asociación de Plásticos Jóvenes, Taller El Sol (Santiago), and Cira Moscarda (Asunción), among others. Various collections already digitalized from the archives can be consulted at [www.archivosenuso.org](http://www.archivosenuso.org) (as of July 31, 2014).

2. See Pilar Calveiro, *Poder y desaparición: Los campos de concentración en Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Colihue, 1998).

3. The project was coordinated by Ana Longoni (Argentina), Mabel Tapia (Argentina), Fernanda Nogueira (Brazil), André Mesquita (Brazil), Fernanda Carvajal (Chile), Miguel A. López (Peru), and Jaime Vindel (Spain). The following researchers also participated: David Gutierrez Castañeda, Sylvia Suárez, William López, Luisa Fernanda Ordóñez, Halim Badawi (Colombia); Emilio Tarazona, Dorota Biczal (Peru); Felipe Rivas, Francisca García, Paulina Varas (Chile); Lía Colombino (Paraguay); Cora Gamarnik, Daniela Lucena, Ana Vidal, Fernando Davis (Argentina); and Sol Henaro (Mexico). The project also included the important involvement of Roberto Amigo (Argentina) and Rachel Weiss (United States).



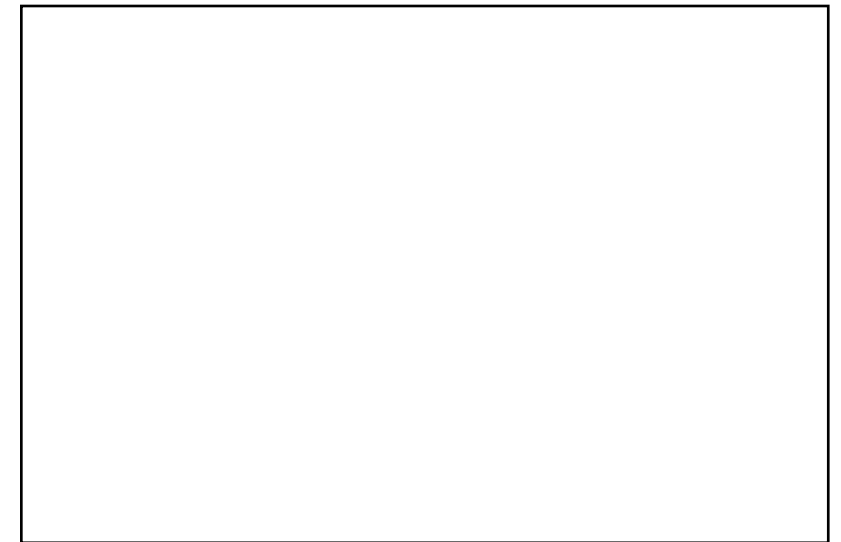
esta larga investigación colectiva, en la que participaron 31 investigadores,<sup>3</sup> se inauguró una gran exposición en octubre de 2012 en el Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía de Madrid, en octubre de 2013 en el Museo de Arte de Lima, y en mayo de 2014 en el Museo de la Universidad Tres de Febrero, en Buenos Aires. También se editó una publicación que —lejos del formato convencional de un catálogo de arte— se propone al lector como un glosario o caja de herramientas para abordar las relaciones y modos de hacer comunes de prácticas en apariencia desvinculadas a partir de una serie de conceptos o ideas-fuerza.<sup>4</sup>

La siguiente fase de la investigación prosigue —de manera más fragmentaria y dispersa— impulsando líneas de trabajo hasta ahora incipientes (episodios, zonas o problemas aún vacantes o escasamente trabajados) y buscando otros dispositivos de visibilidad (muestras y publicaciones específicas).

De alguna manera, este dossier preparado especialmente para *Art Journal* se enmarca en ese proceso y da algunos indicios de la continuidad de nuestras investigaciones sobre los cruces entre arte y política entre los años 60 y 80 en América Latina. Desde la reinención del museo como espacio público y posibilidad de trabajo en red que llevó a cabo el brasileño Walter Zanini, hasta experiencias de activismo artístico en Argentina que idearon nuevos modos de vida y creación muy distintos a la gris normalidad impuesta por el terrorismo de Estado. Desde la irrupción del feminismo y su entrecruzamiento con el conceptualismo peruano, hasta la reconstrucción de la tensa situación que atraviesan en 1989 los artistas críticos en la difícil situación cubana. Los cuatro ensayos reunidos tratan muy diversas situaciones que comparten un denominador común: su notoria ausencia o invisibilidad en los relatos canónicos de la historia del arte del período que circulaban hasta hoy. Las razones de este vacío o desmemoria son de órdenes diversos, entre ellas, su condición radicalmente efímera, su descuido o su directa negativa al registro (documental, fotográfico, filmico), su sostenida marginalidad respecto de las posiciones dominantes del circuito del arte, y su condición extrañada o fuera de lugar respecto de los relatos contemporáneos sobre el período en cuestión.

El artículo de Cristina Freire se centra en reponer la trayectoria de Walter Zanini, en particular su descolante gestión al frente del Museo de Arte

4. Una segunda edición bilingüe (castellano-inglés) se editará próximamente en Buenos Aires por Eduntref.



October 2012 at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, in October 2013 at the Museo de Arte in Lima, and in May 2014 at the Museo de la Universidad Tres de Febrero in Buenos Aires.<sup>3</sup> A book was also published that, far from the conventional format of an exhibition catalogue, served as a glossary or toolbox to help approach common relationships and ways of doing things in seemingly unconnected practices, starting from a series of concepts or core ideas.<sup>4</sup>

The next phase of the research is still ongoing on, in a more fragmentary, diffuse manner, impelling lines of work that are only just emerging (episodes, areas, or problems still open or barely worked on) and seeking other mechanisms of visibility (specific shows and publications).

In some way, this forum prepared specially for *Art Journal* belongs to that process and gives some hints of the continuity of our research on the intersections between art and politics from the 1960s to the 1980s in Latin America. From the reinvention of the museum as a public space and a possibility for networking brought about by the Brazilian Walter Zanini, to experiences of artistic activism in Argentina that devised new modes of life and creation quite distinct from the gloomy normality imposed by state terrorism; from the incursion of feminism and its intertwining with Peruvian conceptualism, to the reconstruction of the tense moment that critical artists went through in 1989 during Cuba's difficult situation; the four essays gathered here deal with quite diverse circumstances that share a common denominator: their obvious absence or invisibility in the canonical narratives of that period in art history that have circulated until now. There are various reasons for this gap or poor memory, among which, the radically ephemeral nature of these developments, their negligence or their direct refusal of any kind of recording (documentary, photographic, film), their sustained marginality with respect to the dominant positions of the art circuit, and their estranged or outsider condition as to current stories about the period in question.

Cristina Freire's article focuses on recovering Walter Zanini's career, particularly his outstanding performance as head of the Museum of Contemporary Art, University of São Paulo. There he served as the architect of a unique way of understanding, occupying, and engaging the museum and building the valuable

**Captions**

- 1.
- 2.

4. A second edition, bilingual (Spanish-English), will be published soon in Buenos Aires by Eduntref.

Contemporáneo de la Universidad de Sao Paulo, en tanto artífice de un modo de entender, ocupar y practicar el museo y construir la valiosa colección de arte conceptual como tarea colaborativa interdisciplinaria, inscrita en una red internacional alternativa, frágil pero poderosamente activa.

El texto de Miguel López reconstruye y contextualiza una serie de proyectos artísticos de la artista peruana Teresa Burga que cuestionan el “modelo viril de arte de vanguardia” y ponen en evidencia las condiciones de desigualdad de las mujeres tanto en la sociedad como en el sistema artístico. En particular, se focaliza en su último proyecto público, *Perfil de la Mujer Peruana* (1980–1981), realizado en coautoría con Marie-France Cathelat, un arriesgado experimento que cruzó la investigación sociológica con un dispositivo artístico conceptual, y que había quedado olvidado hasta ahora, a pesar de que tuvo amplias repercusiones públicas en el momento de su realización.

El texto de Tamara Díaz Bringas se centra en 1989 en tanto momento bisagra en la escena artística cubana, atravesada por las fricciones y el agotamiento que llevaron al éxodo de los jóvenes artistas que habían sido protagonistas de una vital producción crítica en los años previos. Esa generación había sido capaz de concitar nuevas tácticas y modos de politicidad desde el arte, muchas veces vinculados al juego y la parodia, para dar cuenta de la asfixia y el malestar que se vivían en la isla producto del aislamiento, las secuelas del bloqueo económico y la censura y el control estatal. La investigadora realiza un minucioso trabajo de fuentes documentales y testimonios para reponer sucesos que se evaporan de la memoria colectiva, por sus difíciles condiciones de realización e historización, al tiempo que también aparece su propia memoria afectiva —en primera persona del singular— de esos años en Cuba.

Por último, mi artículo es parte de una investigación en curso sobre el Taller de Investigaciones Teatrales (1977–1982), uno de los colectivos de activismo artístico que surgieron en la Argentina durante los años más duros de la última dictadura. En sus diferentes propuestas (talleres de teatro, cine, música y literatura, producción de festivales, edición de manifiestos y fanzines, grupo de discusión sobre la situación de las mujeres, etc.) reunieron a cientos de jóvenes para los que estaba vedada la militancia política, promoviendo la experimentación artística como un método radical no solo para sobrevivir: para vivir exaltadas experiencias de libertad, desenfado y provocación que desafiaron la normalidad instituida.

collection of conceptual art as a collaborative interdisciplinary task, inscribed in an alternative, international, fragile, yet powerfully active network .

The text by Miguel López reconstructs and contextualizes a series of artistic projects by the Peruvian artist Teresa Burga that question the “virile model of avant-garde art” and reveal the unequal conditions for women in society as much as in the art world. In particular, it concentrates on her last public project, *Perfil de la Mujer Peruana* (1980–81), created in collaboration with Marie-France Cathelat, a risky experiment that crossed sociological research with conceptual artistic devices, and which had been forgotten until now, despite the fact that it had wide public repercussions at the time of its realization.

The text by Tamara Díaz Bringas focuses on 1989 as a decisive moment in the Cuban artistic scene, fraught with the frictions and exhaustion that led to the exodus of young artists who had been protagonists in a vital critical production in the previous years. That generation was able to stir up new tactics and ways of political expression through art, often tied to games and parody, to account for the suffocation and discomfort experienced on the island as a result of isolation, the consequences of the economic blockade as well as state control and censorship. As a scholar she produces a detailed study of documentary sources and testimonies in order to recover events that are vanishing from the collective memory, due to the difficult conditions of their production and historization, while also offering her own emotional memory—in the first-person singular—of those years in Cuba.

Finally, my article is part of an ongoing research on the Taller de Investigaciones Teatrales (1977–82), one of the collectives of artistic activism that emerged in Argentina during the harshest years of the last dictatorship. In the workshop’s different activities (theater, film, music, literature workshops, production of festivals, publication of manifiestos and fanzines, discussion group on the situation of women, and more), it brought together hundreds of young people for whom political activism was prohibited, promoting artistic experimentation as a radical method not just for surviving, but for living frenzied experiences of freedom, self-assurance, and provocation that challenged the established normalcy.

For a biography of Ana Longoni, please see page TKTK.