



Museo de
la Solidaridad
Salvador Allende
in Berlin

1974 1982 2020

daadgalerie
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Fragments of the different lives that came together in what is today known as the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA) [Museum of Solidarity Salvador Allende (MSSA)] have passed through the city of Berlin on at least three separate occasions. These include the artists who made the folder of prints *El pueblo tiene arte con Allende* [The People Have Art with Allende] that circulated in Berlin after being reprinted by Fabrik K14 (Oberhausen) in 1974 and the works by Latin American artists exhibited in *Künstler aus Lateinamerika* [Artists from Latin America] at daadgalerie in 1982. Now material from both instances come together with selected works from the collection of the MSSA to form part of the presentation of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende at the 11th Berlin Biennale of Contemporary Art.

Can a museum be a weapon? The Museo de la Solidaridad [Museum of Solidarity] (1971–73) has its origins in a small-scale counter-information campaign called *Operación verdad* [Operation Truth], which was devised to defend Salvador Allende’s presidency and “revolution without arms” from a CIA-sponsored international smear campaign. As an act of political solidarity with the struggle of the Chilean people, artists from around the world were asked to donate works toward the creation of an anti-imperialist experimental art institution for the “underprivileged of the Third World.” The artworks collected would form the basis for the Museo de la Solidaridad, containing “the cultural and artistic contradictions of the century” and founded on the principle that art and politics are inseparable.

Conceived as a free museum open to all and aimed at challenging the geopolitical monopoly of art and the privileges sustained by museums of capitalist metropolises, the Museo de la Solidaridad offered a collection “for the people, by the people.” Over 700 artworks had been received by the time of the military coup on September 11, 1973. All of these works were confiscated by the military, but from 1975 to 1989 those originally responsible for the museum, then political refugees, began to rebuild the collection under the name Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende (MIRSA) [International Museum of Resistance Salvador Allende (MIRSA)]. It functioned as an itinerant museum-in-exile, with newly donated works to be exhibited around the globe.

During the process of redemocratization, the museum’s many lives converged in the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), established in 1992. Gathering the disappeared artworks and those dispersed abroad, the institution’s original intention to radically question prevalent criteria of value in art was often undermined by the need to justify its precarious subsistence through featuring works by well-known artists in the collection. The selection presented here focuses mostly on works by Latin American artists, which convey the struggles that gave life to the museum “whose very name was already a program.” (MB)

**Museo de la
Solidaridad
Salvador Allende
(MSSA)**

El pueblo tiene arte con Allende

Art and exhibitions formed an integral part of the presidential campaigns of Salvador Allende, a Chilean doctor and Marxist who ran for president four times. The itinerant exhibition *El pueblo tiene arte con Allende* [The People Have Art with Allende] was organized by the Comité de Artistas Plásticos de la Unidad Popular [Committee of Visual Artists of the Popular Unity]. The exhibition consisted of a set of thirty silkscreens simultaneously exhibited in eighty locations throughout Chile in August 1970, just weeks before the election. The “catalogue” was a single sheet of paper that stated: “We want to make art that bears testimony to the struggles and realities of our people; art that is free and does not allow itself to be colonized; that is rebellious and new; courageous and incorruptible.” It was in this spirit, sharing the same core principles developed over the years by this group of cultural workers and artists and involving many of the same actors, that the Museo de la Solidaridad project was conceived. The prints were exhibited around the world as a way to reach an international audience and raise awareness about the revolutionary struggle in Chile; several sets were donated to institutions in Cuba, Colombia, Peru, and the GDR.

On September 11, 1973, Allende’s term was cut short by a US-backed military coup. Immediately afterwards, Fabrik K14 (Oberhausen) reprinted a set that had arrived in West Germany to create a new German edition of 1000. This was among the first acts of solidarity with the Chilean people, thousands of whom would join the growing population of political refugees fleeing the brutality of right-wing dictatorships in South America. Chile Solidarity Committees sprung up around the world, including West Germany, to generate awareness and financial support for families in exile and the resistance movement. (MB)



Das Volk hat Kunst mit Allende. El pueblo tiene arte con Allende, [1970] 1974, cover of folder with 32 prints on paper, ed. Heinz Brieden, Manfred Dammeyer, Karl Ernst Gläser, published by Fabrik 14, Oberhausen, produced by W. Th. Webels, Essen. Collection Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Berlin, acquired in 1974. Photo: Fabrik K14

The People Have Art with Allende
Eighty Exhibitions by Thirty UP Artists Opening
Simultaneously throughout Chile on
August 12, 1970, 6 pm

Visual artists of the Unidad Popular (UP) will inaugurate an exhibition of screen prints displayed in numerous locations throughout Chile in order to preserve this historical moment for our people and illustrate the place of art and culture within Salvador Allende's future administration.

The show will be seen by many thousands of Chileans of all social and cultural backgrounds, expressing our burning desire that art cease to be thought of as unique objects acquired only by the wealthy—a privilege for the very few. We emphatically reject cultural mercantilism. The iniquitous conditions that we are subjected to by the capitalist regime relegate us as artists to second-class citizens.

Given its social nature, we believe that art and culture should be well within everyone's reach. In our future popular government, elected by the majority will of the people, the visual arts, music, theater, literature, ballet, and film will no longer be a privilege but rather a right that is as inalienable as food, housing, work, and social security.

We want to make art that bears testimony to the struggles and realities of our people; art that is free and does not allow itself to be colonized; that is rebellious and new; courageous and incorruptible.

Artists and artisans will abound in the new economic, political, and social conditions we will create. Poverty, lack of education, and nonexistent opportunities impede far too many emerging talents. Our young people need a better today rather than a tomorrow full of promises. It is primarily for them that we will build a new society where our most basic potentialities as human beings are allowed to blossom, promoting solidarity, comradeship, cooperation, mutual respect, and humanity.

This exhibition marks a path toward new forms of artistic practice and commitment, openly contrasting to the monstrous campaign of lies, terror, and infamy currently unleashed by reactionary forces and imperialism.

Our action represents an unwavering decision to fight for a culture that is free, national, democratic, and popular as well as a gesture of solidarity with the passionate soul of our people.

José Balmes, Jorge Barba, Gracia Barrios,
Francisco Brugnoli, Alfredo Cañete,
Delia del Carril, Santos Chávez, Adolfo Couve,
Gonzalo Díaz, Dinora, Luz Donoso, José García,
Eduardo Garreaud, Patricia Israel, Carmen
Johnson, Eduardo Martínez Bonati, Ricardo Mesa,
Pedro Millar, José Moreno, Guillermo Núñez,
Patricio de la O, Agustín Olavarría, Aníbal Ortiz
Pozo, Julio Palazuelos, Alberto Pérez, Gustavo
Poblete, Alfonso Puente, Israel Roa, Dino di Rosa,
Fernando Undurraga, Elsa Urzúa

Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA)

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2020

English translation of the exhibition text, Comité de Artistas Plásticos de la Unidad Popular, "El pueblo tiene arte con Allende," leaflet, 1970. German translation published as "32 chilenische Künstler unterstützten im Präsidentschaftswahlkampf 1970 Allende" on the cover of *Das Volk hat Kunst mit Allende*, 1974



Unidentified women artists, Untitled, ca. 1973–85
Pieces of fabric sewn together (*arpillera*)
Collection Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende
(MSSA), Chile
Courtesy MSSA Collection. Photos: MSSA Archive

“Hospital” (embroidered text) depicts female doctors protesting and being repressed by police, 38.5 × 45.5 cm

“Mamá, ahí viene mi papito” [Mommy, here comes my daddy] (embroidered text) representing a family being reunited in exile, 45.5 × 37 cm

“Pedagógico” (embroidered text) depicts a student protest and confrontation with police on the Educational Sciences campus, 36.5 × 51 cm

“Lonquén” (embroidered text) refers to the site where in 1978 the remains of fifteen peasants disappeared by the dictatorship in 1973 were found, 36.2 × 49 cm

“Cualquier herramienta que se de el pueblo es legitima para romper las cadenas” [Any tool used by the people is legitimate in breaking the chains (of oppression)] (written text), represents the *cadena*, a common practice of popular protest where metal chains were used to short-circuit power lines and create large-scale power outages, 40 × 49 cm

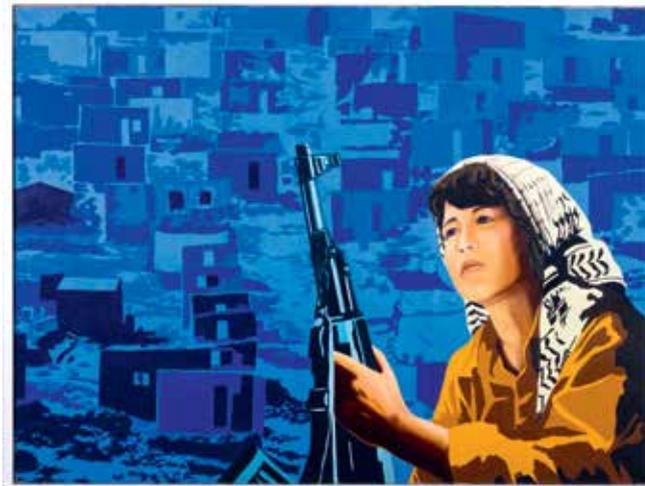
“Confederación Sindical” [Labor Union Confederation] (written text) depicts mass graves of workers and the persecution suffered by labor union representatives during the police, 36.2 × 49 cm



These small tapestries made by women during the military regime provided the world the first artistic depictions of what everyday life was like in Chile under the dictatorship. The makers were mothers, sisters, spouses, and daughters of the disappeared. After repeated encounters in hospitals, justice tribunals, and the morgue, where they would go to demand information about the whereabouts of their loved ones, these women started to recognize one another and began meeting on a regular basis to create these tapestries from rags and patches of fabric sewn together. The women used the *arpilleras* to denounce the dictatorship’s human rights violations but also to show the people’s resilience and resistance. Sometimes they would stitch or write in words to identify the places or situations depicted. As the tapestries could easily be folded and packed into suitcases, they clandestinely traveled around the world and were sold to raise money to support the families of the disappeared. For many of the women, this practice became not only a mode of protest and collective storytelling but also a means of subsistence and solidarity. Each *arpillera* is different because of the personal story it tells—rather than conform to a specific genre it reflects each woman’s idiosyncratic handiwork. (MB)



Teresa Montiel, *Fragmentos...* [Fragments...], 1983
 Graphite on cardboard and collage, 60 × 80 cm
 Collection Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende
 (MSSA), Chile
 © Teresa Montiel. Courtesy MSSA Collection.
 Photo: MSSA Archive



Claude Lazar, *Tel al-Zaatar*, 1976
 Oil on canvas, 97.4 × 130 cm
 Collection Museo de la Solidaridad
 Salvador Allende (MSSA), Chile
 © Claude Lazar. Courtesy MSSA Collection.
 Photo: MSSA Archive

All those involved in the Museo de la Solidaridad were forced into exile shortly after the 1973 coup. Despite several attempts to recover the works in the years that followed, the fate of the collection remained uncertain for decades. In 1975, the project was reborn as a museum in exile: the Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende MIRSA [International Museum of Resistance Salvador Allende (MIRSA)]. Those who had collaborated with the Museum of Solidarity in Chile began collecting new works and continued to do so over the course of the dictatorship. The spirit of the museum thrived in its new nomadic existence: Artworks accumulated in individuals' homes and borrowed institutional storage spaces, and fragments of the growing collection were shown in diverse locations during the seventeen years of military rule—from festivals to international solidarity events. Murals and large-scale paintings were often produced in situ by one of the international antifascist painters brigades made up of exiled Chilean and Latin American artists and their European collaborators, including artists Gracia Barrios and José Balmes, among others. This second life of the museum was supported by the widespread surge of solidarity for those displaced by the repressive dictatorial regimes of Latin America in the 1970s. Prominent intellectuals joined national committees in Cuba, Spain, France, and Mexico created for the museum to rebuild its collection. But just like those who carried on the project, the museum became a political refugee living a precarious existence. As a museum in exile, its counter-information campaign took on a new cause: solidarity with the plight of Chile and Latin America under military rule. (MB)

**Museo
 Internacional de
 la Resistencia
 Salvador Allende
 (MIRSA)**



Gracia Barrios, *Multitud III* [Multitude III], 1972
Pieces of fabric sewn together, 300 x 800 cm
Collection Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), Chile
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2020. Courtesy MSSA Collection. Photo:
MSSA Archive

Gracia Barrios,
***Multitud III*, 1972**

The people of Chile, including workers, peasants, and *pobladoras* [women shantytown settlers], are portrayed marching in a demonstration and appear to be headed directly into the exhibition space. Demonstrators carry the Chilean flag, but instead of waving it above their heads as in classical social-realist depictions, they carry it in front of their bodies, like a garment worn by the social body, flowing toward us. The artist Gracia Barrios conceived this large-scale textile piece for the Unidad Popular's most significant architectural project—an emblem of the revolution. The complex was built in record time to host the third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD III). Artists like Barrios contributed to the construction by creating pieces that would become integral features of the building, which later housed a large popular cultural center and was briefly considered as a site for the collection of the Museo de la Solidaridad. *Multitud III* [Multitude III] welcomed visitors as they entered the grand entrance hall from the main avenue outside, where most large-scale demonstrations in Santiago take place. Barrios produced this monumental work during a period in which she described her work as “informal realism,” combining abstraction and figuration to depict the faces and silhouettes of the revolutionary masses. Such elements can also be seen in her 1970 print for *El pueblo tiene arte con Allende*.

After the coup, Gracia Barrios fled into exile in France together with her partner, the artist José Balmes, who became part of the secretariat of the French committee of the Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende (MIRSA). *Multitud III* was one of many works that disappeared during the dictatorship; it was eventually recovered in 2000 and has been prominently exhibited by the MSSA ever since. (MB)

Künstler aus
Lateinamerika

daadgalerie
1982



Installation views,
daadgalerie, 1982,
top: Gracia Barrios,
*Se abrirán las
grandes avenidas....*
S. Allende, 1976,
bottom: José Gamarra,
Puzzle, 1975,
photos: © Ingeborg Sedgley

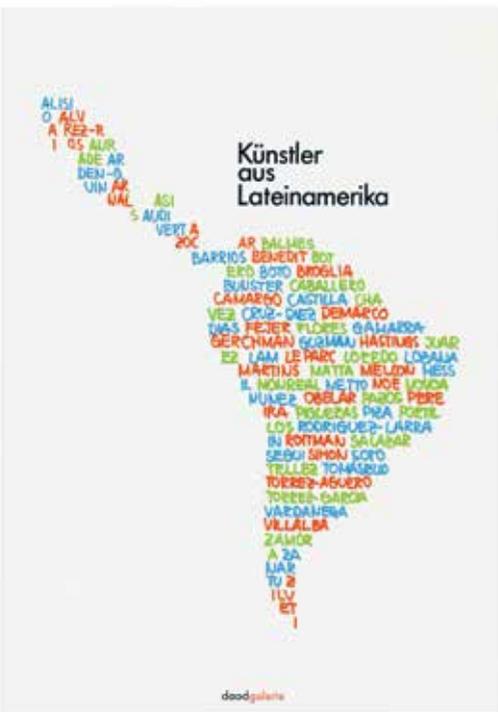
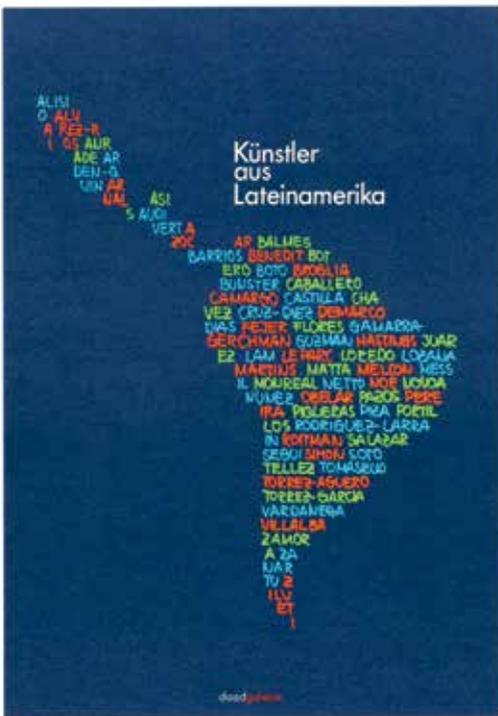
Künstler aus Lateinamerika [Artists from Latin America] was the title of a 1982 exhibition project held at the daadgalerie in its Kurfürstenstraße location. The Artists-in-Berlin Program organized this two-part exhibition as part of the annual Festival der Weltkulturen [Festival of World Cultures], which highlighted Latin America for its *Horizonte* (Horizons) edition that year. Wieland Schmied, the director of the program at that time, stated that he wanted the show to “provoke curiosity [...] about the art of a continent that is still largely unknown to us.” The exhibition presented a range of figurative and abstract works by sixty artists from ten countries. While its primary focus was on selecting those artists who had “already achieved integration within the Western art scene,” it also aimed to present others “who have not yet succeeded in making this step, or who have made a conscious decision for a life in their homeland.”¹

Almost half of the works shown were from the collection of the Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende (MIRSA) in Paris, the first of ten museums in exile that preserved, presented, and expanded the collection of the Museo de la Solidaridad after its dissolution resulting from the 1973 military coup in Chile. The daadgalerie’s director and curator, René Block, traveled to France to select works and request loans from MIRSA’s French committee. However, the Museo de la Solidaridad’s secretariat required that the entire collection of works by Latin American artists be shown as a coherent entity. In this way, MIRSA as a continuation of the Museo de la Solidaridad occupied an important place in the two parts of the daadgalerie exhibition.² Despite this, the secretariat’s desire that the collection communicate a united gesture of solidarity in the popular struggle against authoritarian regimes in Chile and many other Latin American countries remained somewhat in the background of its presentation at the daadgalerie. (MR)

***Künstler aus
Lateinamerika,
daadgalerie,
Berlin 1982***

¹ Wieland Schmied in the introductory text to the exhibition, *Künstler aus Lateinamerika*, exhibition catalogue, daadgalerie, 1982, ed. DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program, Wieland Schmied.

² Artists in the exhibition: Roberto Álvarez Ríos, César Andrade, Luis Eduardo Arnal, Antonio Asis, Jaime Azócar, Gracia Barrios, Mónica Bunster, Gerardo Chávez, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Hugo Demarco, Jorge Flores, José Gamarra, José Juárez, Julio Le Parc, Águeda Lozano, Andrés Monreal, Gontran Guanaes Netto, Leopoldo Novoa, Guillermo Núñez, José Pereira, Jorge Piqueras, Arthur Luiz Piza, Francisco Salazar, María Simón, Jesús Rafael Soto, Eugenio Téllez, Luis Tomasello, Leopoldo Torres Agüero, Virgilio Villalba, Patricio Zamora, Enrique Zañartu, Luis Zilveti.



TO THE ARTISTS OF THE WORLD

On behalf to the people and the Government of Chile, I wish to convey my heartfelt gratitude to the artists who have donated works that will be the basis for the future Museum of Solidarity. This is, no doubt, an unique event, which begins a new type of relationship between the creator of art and the people. Indeed, Chile's Museum of Solidarity, which later will be housed in the UNCTAD III building, will be the first one where the highest expressions of contemporary painting and sculpture will be brought to the great masses of the people thanks to the will of the artists themselves.

I feel especially touched by this noble form of contributing to the transformation process that Chile has put in motion to affirm her sovereignty, mobilize her resources and accelerate the material and spiritual development of her people. This is the proper framework for advancing on the road to Socialism which the people have chosen with full awareness of their destiny.

The artists of the world have clearly understood the profound significance of this Chilean style of liberation and, in an action without precedent in cultural history, have freely decided to make a gift of this magnificent assemblage of masterpieces, for the enjoyment of citizens of a remote country who otherwise would hardly have access to them. In addition to a deep gratitude, how could I not feel that we have assumed a solemn obligation towards them and those who give us their support, a commitment to respond to their solidarity?

This commitment, which we make with full confidence in the strength of our people and the support of our friends, is to persevere without dismay in the process begun after the democratic victory of the Popular Unity, which essentially is also aimed at the entrance of the man of the people, in conditions of dignity, into the realm of culture.

The Museum of Solidarity and the friendship of the artists represented here are already one of the best fruits reaped in our endeavour towards national liberation.

I also wish to thank the members of the International Committee of Artistic Solidarity with Chile, who have taken care of coordinating and executing the task of assembling and bringing to Chile the works of the world artists.


SALVADOR ALLENDE G.
Presidente de la República de Chile.

Das Museum Allende, Paris

Während der Regierung Salvador Allendes fand im Jahre 1971 eine Versammlung statt, an der wichtige Vertreter aus Kunst und Kultur verschiedener Länder teilnahmen. Dieses „Operation Wahrheit“ genannte Treffen sollte die sozialen, wirtschaftlichen und kulturellen Fortschritte der Regierung der Volksunion zeigen; zu einem Zeitpunkt, da der Vorstoß des Imperialismus sich bemerkbar zu machen begann und durch eine systematische Kampagne falscher Tatsachen über Chile den Staatsstreich vorbereitete. Als Zeugen des tiefen humanistischen Inhalts des Regierungsprogramms und der Wirklichkeit, die sie erlebten, suchten Intellektuelle und Künstler nach der besten Form, um ihre Solidarität mit dem Volk und unserer Regierung auszudrücken. Dies kam in einem Museum der Solidarität zum Ausdruck; eine umfangreiche Sammlung von Kunstwerken, die von ihren Schöpfern als lebendes und gewaltiges Zeugnis ihres Engagements als freie Menschen für das wichtige politische und soziale Werk des damaligen Chile gestiftet wurden.

Eine Kommission, deren Vorsitzender Mario Pedroso war, übernahm die Verwirklichung der großzügigen Stiftung. Zwischen 1971 und 1973 trafen mehr als 700 Werke aus Frankreich, Italien, England, den Vereinigten Staaten, Spanien, Mexiko und anderen Ländern in Chile ein. Ein Teil dieser großen Sammlung wurde am 11. September 1973 in einem neu für kulturelle Aktivitäten erbauten Gebäude der Öffentlichkeit zugänglich gemacht. Der andere Teil befand sich im Museum für zeitgenössische Kunst in der Universität von Chile. Das erstgenannte Gebäude dient heute als Sitz der Militärjunta. Die Universität wurde zu einer Kaserne. Es ist bekannt, daß ein großer Teil der Kunstwerke verschwunden ist, ohne jemals ausgestellt worden zu sein. Von den anderen Kunstwerken weiß man, daß sie einige Salons amtierender Generäle schmücken.

Einige dem Museum für Solidarität gestifteten Werke erreichten Chile nicht. Da sie dem chilenischen Volk gehören und keineswegs denen, die ihm seine Souveränität geraubt haben, teilen sie das Zwangsexil mit beinahe 1 Million Chilenen. Aber dieses kleine aus den Klauen des Faschismus entrissene Erbe von Kunstwerken hat sich weiter vergrößert. Der große Staatsstreich Pinochets führte dazu, daß die Künstler der ganzen Welt ihre Aktivitäten für die Solidarität mit dem chilenischen Volk verdoppelt haben.

So entstand dieses einzigartige Widerstands- und Exilmuseum, Eigentum des chilenischen Volkes, Botschafter seiner Hoffnung, Verwahrer seiner Anerkennung gegenüber den Künstlern der Welt.

Durch die uneigennützig Hilfe des Maison des Amériques von Havanna war es möglich, daß an zahlreichen Orten Europas und Amerikas nach und nach große Sammlungen von Gemälden, Graphiken, Zeichnungen und Skulpturen entstanden. Jede der Sammlungen ist ein Teil dieses großen Museums für zeitgenössische Kunst, das den Namen unseres Präsidenten trägt. Jede dieser Kunstsammlungen ist wie eine Modulation: in den verschiedenen Sprachen und Kunststilen unserer Zeit, über das gleiche und wichtige Thema der Solidarität und Gerechtigkeit zwischen den Menschen. Es ist also aufgrund seiner Entstehung nicht ein Museum wie jedes andere. Es ist vor allem die Frucht einer Idee, die weiterwächst und die sich planetarisch weiterentwickelt; die Idee der militanten Solidarität der Künstler mit den begründeten Methoden der sozialen Gerechtigkeit. Aber es ist auch gerade deswegen eine immerwährende Demonstration, daß Kunst militant sein kann, ohne seine Tugend zu verlieren.



VILLE DE BONDY



L'Association Bondy Culture
présente

LE MUSÉE INTERNATIONAL
SALVADOR ALLENDE



Du 26 Septembre 1981 au 18 Octobre 1981
OUVERT TOUS LES JOURS (SAUF LE LUNDI) DE 9 H A 20 H SANS INTERRUPTION
ESPACE MARCEL CHAUZY * BONDY

Das Depot des Museum Allende Paris im Rathaus von Bondy



Komitee für Frankreich:

Louis Aragon, Louis Althusser, Roland Barthes, François Biot, Jean Cassou, Françoise Choay, Julio Cortazar, Régis Debray, Mikel Dufrenne, Jean-Pierre Faye, Pierre Gaudibert, Jean-Clarence Lambert, Marc Le Bot, Jacques Leenhardt, Julio Le Parc, Jean Leymarie, Edgard Morin, Edouard Pignon, Bernard Pingaud, Pierre Restany, Antonio Saura, Pierre Soulages, Dominique Taddei, Bernard Teyssedre, Alain Touraine et Victor Vasarely.

Sekretariat des Museums:

José Balmas, Miria Contreras, Pedro Miras, Miguel Rojas-Mix, Jacques Leenhardt.

Das Museum im Exil, Ausstellung der Depot-situation des Museum Allende in der daadgalerie Berlin, Juni/Juli 1982



Translations of captions:
The depot of the Allende Museum Paris in Bondy town hall

The museum in exile; exhibition of the depot situation of the Allende Museum in the daadgalerie Berlin, June/July 1982

The Allende Museum, Paris

In 1971, during the administration of Salvador Allende, a conference took place in Chile with the participation of important artistic and cultural representatives from various countries. The aim of this meeting, called *Operación verdad* [Operation Truth], was to show the social, economic, and cultural progress made by the Popular Unity government at a time when the advance of imperialism was starting to make itself felt, with a systematic campaign of misinformation about Chile that paved the way for the military coup that was to come. As witnesses to the deeply humanistic content of the government program and enthusiastic about the reality they experienced, intellectuals and artists sought the best forms to express their solidarity with the Chilean people and our government. This found its expression in the Museo de la Solidaridad, a vast collection of artworks donated by their makers that provided a living and powerful testimony of their commitment as free citizens to the important political and social work of Chile at that time.

A committee chaired by Mário Pedrosa took on the task of realizing the collection. Between 1971 and 1973, more than 700 works from France, Italy, England, the United States, Spain, Mexico, and other countries arrived in Chile. A part of this extensive collection was made accessible to the public on September 11, 1973 in a new, specially constructed building dedicated to cultural activities, with the other part housed at the Museum of Contemporary Art at the University of Chile. The former building is today the headquarters of the military junta, and the university is now a barracks. A large number of artworks are known to have disappeared without ever being exhibited, while others now decorate the offices of acting generals.

Some of the works donated to the Museo de la Solidaridad never reached Chile. Since these belong to the Chilean people, and not to those who robbed them of their sovereignty, they share their forced exile with almost a million Chileans. But this small legacy, ripped from the jaws of fascism, has continued to grow, as Pinochet's dramatic coup has prompted artists around the world to intensify their activities in solidarity with the Chilean people.

And so it was that this unique museum of resistance and exile came to be—property of the Chilean people, ambassador of their hope, depository of their gratitude to the artists of the world.

The altruism of the Casa de las Américas in Havana meant it was possible to gradually build up collections of paintings, graphics, drawings, and sculptures at numerous locations across Europe and the Americas. Each forms a part of this museum of contemporary art that bears the name of our president. Every collection is like a modulation, in the various languages and artistic styles of our time, on the shared and crucial theme of solidarity and justice between people. The circumstances of its formation then mean it is a museum like no other. Above all, it is the fruit of an idea that continues to grow and develop across the planet: the idea that artists stand in militant solidarity with the established methods of attaining social justice. It is precisely because of this, however, that it also serves as an enduring demonstration that art can be militant without losing its virtue.

Committee for France:

Louis Aragon, Louis Althusser, Roland Barthes, François Biot, Jean Casou, Françoise Choay, Julio Cortázar, Régis Debray, Mikel Dufrenne, Jean-Pierre Faye, Pierre Gaudibert, Jean-Clarence Lambert, Jacques Lassaigne, Marc Le Bot, Jacques Leenhardt, Julio Le Parc, Jean Leymarie, Edgar Morin, Édouard Pignon, Bernard Pingaud, Pierre Restany, Antonio Saura, Pierre Soulages, Dominique Taddei, Bernard Teyssède, Alain Touraine, and Victor Vasarely

Secretariat of the museum:

José Balmes, Miria Contreras, Pedro Miras, Miguel Rojas-Mix, Jacques Leenhardt

Translation of catalogue *Künstler aus Lateinamerika*, pp. 30–31



Installation view, daadgalerie, 1982,
Jesús Rafael Soto, *Tes todas negras*, 1978,
photo: © Ingeborg Sedgley

Betr.: Kunst aus Lateinamerika; Zwischenbericht

1. Reise nach Paris.

Mehrere Gespräche mit Jacques Leenhardt, gemeinsame Besichtigung, bzw. Auswahl der Kunstwerke der Sammlung Allende war nicht möglich, so fuhr ich allein nach Bondy. Katastrophale Situation: In einem kleinen Abstellraum des Rathauses "lagert" der Bestand. Auspacken und Identifikation der Kunstwerke mußte bald aufgegeben werden, schien mir auch nach dem vorausgegangenen Gespräch nicht mehr so wichtig, da das Museo Allende Komitee auf einer gesamten Abnahme und Präsentation des Südamerikabestandes besteht. Nach der Besichtigung noch ein letztes Gespräch mit Leenhardt und einem weiteren Komiteemitglied: Man setzt als zugesagt voraus, daß die Kollektion Allende geschlossen präsentiert wird, daß Frau Allende eingeladen wird und ebenso mindestens ein Repräsentant des Pariser Komitees (habe zur Beruhigung eine Bestätigung dieses Gespräches aus Berlin zugesagt, aber keine Zusagen gemacht). Zwei Arbeiten von Soto, der zum Zeitpunkt meines Besuchs in Madrid war, 14 Arbeiten (7 Radierungen, 7 Gouachen) von Lam, 1 großes Bild von Matta (es waren in Paris nur sehr große Bilder erhältlich, die dazu noch weit außerhalb lagerten; mußte nach Fotos auswählen). Gruppe Madi: Eine Neuentdeckung und wie ich denke Bereicherung der Ausstellung durch die in den 40er Jahren in Argentinien tätige Gruppe Madi (Art Concret), die in einer gerade zu Ende gehenden Ausstellung in der Galerie Donguy zu sehen war. Mit Arden Quin, Asis, Roitman, Fejer, Boto und Vardanega leben die meisten der Künstler heute in Paris. Jacques Donguy erklärte sich bereit, einen Text über die Gruppe und hist. Fotomaterial beizusteuern. Donguy ist Kunsthistoriker und Literat.

2. Katalog.

Eingetroffen der Text von Donguy. Eingetroffen die Exponate aus Paris. Lagerung unter Schwierigkeiten in den Räumen über der DAAD-Galerie (über die Räume wird noch zu sprechen sein). Alle Exponate wurden unter großen Mühen dort fotografiert. Illegal, weil das Allende Komitee die Auslieferung an die Galerie untersagt hatte, bis alle Bedingungen akzeptiert und bestätigt seien. Text Soto-Museum: Dietrich Mahlow hat zur Zeit keine Zeit, empfahl Schmalenbach in Düsseldorf zu bitten, wäre bereit, einen sehr kurzen Text Anfang Mai zu schreiben, kommt Ende April aus N.Y. zurück. Mit Stein+Ott Vorschlag für Plakat und Katalog entwickelt, wobei Lateinamerika als geographische Form aus den Namen der beteiligten Künstler gebildet wird. Katalogkalkulationen sind angefordert.

3. Ausstellung.

Vorschlag: Teil 1 Konkret/Konstruktiv, Gruppe Madi, Soto und aus der Allende Sammlung Soto, Demarco, Le Parc u.a.; Teil 2 Matta, Lam und einige aus der Sammlung Allende # direkt aus Südamerika kommende Werke. So könnte auch der Katalog gegliedert werden (innerhalb der Teile alphabetisch). Museo Allende: aus der Vorort-Depot-Situation kam mir die Idee, die Sammlung in einem Raum als Depot aufzubauen. Regal quer durch den Raum, darin die nicht gerade speziell gezeigten Arbeiten, die auf Wunsch individuell gezeigt werden könnten. Informationstafel mit Allende-Aufruf etc. So hätten wir das Museo als indirekt verbindenden Komplex in

beiden Ausstellungsteilen und könnten auch die Bedingung des Komitees erfüllen, das Museo zusammenhängend und geschlossen zu zeigen und würden ein wenig auf die provisorische Situation des Museums hinweisen (was aber keine Kritik sein soll).

25. März

René Block

P.S. Leenhardt war Ende März in Berlin; kurzes Gespräch. Er verwies noch einmal auf die Konditionen, hatte meinen Brief noch nicht bekommen - ich den seinen noch nicht, in dem diese noch einmal formuliert sind. Versprach ihm Kontaktaufnahme durch Wieland Schmied nach dessen Rückkehr aus Südamerika.

Subject: Art from Latin America; Interim Report

1. Trip to Paris

Several conversations with Jacques Leenhardt; joint visit and selection of works from the Allende collection were not possible, so I traveled alone to Bondy. Catastrophic situation: inventory is currently being "stored" in a small utility room in the town hall. Unpacking and identification of artworks soon had to be abandoned, but this didn't seem so important to me anyway following the preceding conversation, since the Museo Allende committee insists that the South American inventory be taken on and presented as a whole.

Following the meeting, had one final conversation with Leenhardt and another colleague from the committee: they have made it a precondition that the Allende collection is presented in its entirety, and that Mrs. Allende is invited to attend along with at least one representative of the Paris committee (for reassurance I agreed to issue a confirmation of this conversation from Berlin, but made no commitments).

Two works by Soto, who was in Madrid at the time of my visit, 14 works (7 etchings, 7 gouaches) by Lam, 1 large picture by Matta (only very large pictures were available in Paris, also stored far away; I had to select them from photos).

Madi group: A new discovery and I think a gain for the exhibition with the Madi group (Concrete Art), active in Argentina in the 1940s, which appeared in an exhibition that just closed at Donguy gallery. With Arden Quin, Asis, Roitman, Fejer, Boto, and Vardanega most of the artists today live in Paris. Jacques Donguy declared himself willing to contribute a text on the group and historical photographic material. Donguy is an art historian and writer.

2. Catalogue

Text from Donguy has arrived.

Exhibits arrived from Paris. Stored under difficult conditions in the rooms above the DAAD gallery (the rooms will still need to be discussed). All exhibits were photographed there at great effort. Illegally, since the Allende committee had forbidden delivery to the gallery until all conditions are accepted and confirmed.

Text Soto Museum: Dietrich Marlow currently has no time, recommended asking Schmalenbach in Düsseldorf, would be prepared to write a very short text early in May, returns from N.Y. in April.

Developed a proposal for poster and catalogue with Stein+Ott, with the names of the participating artists forming Latin America as a geographic shape. Catalogue calculations have been requested.

3. Exhibition.

Proposal: Part 1 Concrete/Constructivist, Madi group, Soto and from the Allende Soto collection, Demarco, Le Parc et al.; Part 2 Matta, Lam, and some of the works from the Allende collection coming directly from South America. The catalogue could also be organized this way (and alphabetically within each section). Museo Allende: The situation of the depot on the city periphery gave me the idea of arranging the collection as a depot in one room. A shelf running diagonally through the room containing the works not featured, which could be shown individually by request. Info boards with Allende appeal, etc. We would then have the *museo* as an indirect connecting element in both parts of the exhibition, fulfilling the committee's condition that the *museo* be shown together en bloc while also making slight reference to the museum's provisional situation (which is, however, not meant as criticism).

March 25

René Block

P.S. Leenhardt was in Berlin at the end of March; short conversation. He referred again to the conditions, hadn't yet received my letter—nor I his, in which these are again formulated. Promised him that Wieland Schmied would be in contact upon his return from South America.



Translation of interim report by René Block, archive of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program



Installation view, daadgalerie, 1982,
photo: © Ingeborg Sedgley

A conversation between María Berríos
and Melanie Roumigière

María Berríos: Your research about the exhibition *Künstler aus Lateinamerika* [Artists from Latin America], organized by Wieland Schmied and René Block in 1982 for the daadgalerie, predates your current position there. How did you come across this material and what motivated you to look into this particular exhibition, which eventually led you to the archives of the Museo de la Solidaridad in Chile?

Melanie Roumigière: While working as a curator at a contemporary art museum in Berlin, I came across the publication of this exhibition by chance and was immediately struck by the fact that this had even happened in Berlin back then. I learned from the catalogue that the 1982 show was part of the Festival of World Cultures *Horizonte*, which focused on Latin America that year. I was very curious to know more about the Museo de la Solidaridad's involvement but couldn't find any information about the project.

MB: When did you visit the Museo de la Solidaridad in Chile, and how was the experience of sharing your knowledge about the exhibition at daadgalerie with them?

MR: In 2016, I made a research trip to several Latin American countries and included Chile in my itinerary because I wanted to visit the Museo de la Solidaridad in Santiago and look through its archive. During my visit there, I learned that Germany did not really participate in or support the museum and the initial idea behind it as other European countries did. I also discovered that no artists

donated work during the show in Berlin, which I found quite intriguing. When I visited the archive and realized that the museum was not at all aware that the Berlin exhibition had taken place, I was happy to fill this gap by leaving a copy of the catalogue there. This project had fallen through the cracks of the museum's own historical narration, and at the same time it seemed to have had no real impact at the time of its realization in Berlin.

MB: I think that in a way these multiple gaps and finding ways to trace and narrate the threads and stories of the lost works or the undocumented events and exhibitions that took place during those years is an organic part of the museum and its multiple lives. The museum was sustained by the energy and impetus of those involved and has followed their individual and collective trajectories. This meant that there was no single archive that could be passed on when the museum was finally able to return to Chile. During its time in exile from 1975 to 1989, as the Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende (MIRSA), it was a traveling museum without walls. Reconstructing this history has been taken on by an institution that for a very long time was actually just a group of individuals around the world, among them many tenacious women such as Carmen Waugh or Miria Contreras, who propelled the project forward under precarious conditions, with no physical space apart from temporary offices that Contreras had at the Casa de las Américas (Havana, Cuba). I'm interested in the feedback you received here in Berlin on your research. How did the museum where you worked react to your intention to develop an exhibition related to the history and concept of the Museo de la Solidaridad and its manifestation in Berlin?

MR: When I returned to Berlin, I presented the material and history to the team and developed the idea of a research-exhibition format to present and discuss proposals and concepts for “alternative forms of art museums” in different regions and contexts. At the time, I was part of a curatorial team involved in the “Global Museum” project initiated by the German Federal Cultural Foundation to investigate possible forms of revising the collections of major art museums in Germany by questioning their underrepresentation of global art history and artistic movements. My idea was to present this research-exhibition as a logical continuation of this project on global art history that was supposed to take place in 2019. Unfortunately, the museum decided not to pursue this field of research, which strayed too much from its focus on traditional modes of art historical narration and its criteria of relevance and production of artistic value from a German perspective. Ultimately, this meant that the planned exhibition series was never realized.

MB: You later ended up working at the very institution that conceived of the 1982 exhibition. When and how did you encounter the archival material about the daadgalerie exhibition? What did you find in the files and documents from that period?

MR: After joining the visual arts department of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program in late 2018, one of my main focus points was to organize and digitize the archive, which was maintained but had not been fully organized, actively used, or shared until then. Delving into historical files dating from as far back as the 1960s and scattered among different offices and storage areas, I managed

to find several folders and photographs documenting the 1982 exhibition. As I expected, no one had looked at them for a very long time and consequently the show was not part of the program’s official historical narrative despite the still existing, and quite thorough, documentation of the installation. The show’s catalogue is a very important record in understanding the institution’s attitude and motivation behind this exhibition.

MB: You told me that you also visited René Block to speak with him about the exhibition—particularly about the presentation of the collection of the MIRSA in Paris. From our exchange, I had the sense that this conversation showed some similarities to the dynamic you were describing at the museum you used to work for ...

MR: Yes, I was actually quite surprised that the motivation and idea behind the Museo de la Solidaridad, especially the fact that it had become a museum in exile, was not really seen as a relevant artistic endeavor but rather more a political gesture that the “Global West” needed to acknowledge during the Cold War. My previous impression that there had been little effort to discuss the subject within an artistic scene—to think about actively engaging participation in this idea by inviting German artists to participate and donate to the collection of the museum in exile, for example—was sadly confirmed. It seemed to me that there was a problem of recognition that led to crucial aspects of the project being neglected and not taken seriously, like the historical origins of the Museo de la Solidaridad in the early 1970s, the role of the artistic movement behind it, and its developments throughout the 1980s. The archive of the Artists-in-Berlin Program contained no

traces or follow-up of this project in the program’s activities or invited artists after 1982. So this absolutely *did* feel familiar, or even like a continuation of my previous experience.

MB: It seems so odd and is yet somehow revealing that a project such as the Museo de la Solidaridad, which emphasized the idea of artistic community by insisting that their collection could not be understood as a group of isolated, individual works but as a coherent whole founded on the political act of artistic solidarity was not considered relevant. This is especially baffling given the huge community of exiled Latin American artists, writers, and intellectuals living as political refugees in Europe at that time. From our conversations about this exhibition, I feel that the daadgalerie’s irritation with the Museo de la Solidaridad’s requirement to show *all* works by South American artists in the collection comes from a failure to understand the project in this aspect—the community building and allowing of access beyond the fortresses of art institutions as spaces of distinction. A structural part of the museum’s founding principles had to do with questioning the way that Western art history and museum institutions construct artistic value, as you mentioned before. In that sense, it’s interesting that the solution that the daadgalerie proposed to solve the problem of having to

Special thanks goes to the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA) and their team of amazing women: Claudia Zaldívar, María José Lemaitre, Caroll Yasky, Camila Rodríguez, Soledad García, María José Vilches, and Natalia Keller. They have exerted incredible effort to make showing these works possible despite the devastating consequences of Covid-19 in Chile. We are also grateful to Evi and Stephan Brieden (Fabrik K14), Claudia Berchenko, daughter of artist Teresa Montiel, and Conchita Balmes, daughter of artist Gracia Barrios, for supporting this project.

In memory of Gracia Barrios (June 27, 1927–May 28, 2020)

show all the works, which they were hesitant about, could also be read as a kind of democratic solution. Recently the Museo de la Solidaridad used this very same display to stage an exhibition entitled *Debut* (2018/19) about a series of recovered works. Could you speak a little about the exhibition display and the material that we will now show as part of the Biennale?

MR: We found a record of the proposal to partially exhibit the museum’s collection on the walls—together with loans from other sources—but to show a larger portion of it on a wooden shelf, reminiscent of a storage rack, with the paintings leaning against each other. The documentation of the exhibition gives quite a vivid impression of that gesture, meant to encourage the public to interact with the works. The idea behind that display solution was to find a way to show the collection of works by artists from Latin American countries in its entirety (as required by the museum’s secretariat) while pointing out MIRSA’s precarious storage facilities in Paris. The catalogue even features a photograph taken there, which says a lot about the ambiguous motives behind the daadgalerie exhibition. Paradoxically, this display ended up connecting the two parts of that exhibition—and, as you have mentioned, was recently appropriated by the museum itself.

This booklet is published on the occasion of the 11th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (5.9.–1.11.2020) curated by María Berríos, Renata Cervetto, Lisette Lagnado, and Agustín Pérez Rubio.

Published by the 11th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art and the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program

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Design: Till Gathmann

Print: Gallery Print, Berlin

All the works and material in this booklet are part of the Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA) on exhibit at Gropius Bau. The DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program archival material from the exhibition *Künstler aus Lateinamerika* [Artists from Latin America] at daadgalerie in 1982 was selected and compiled in collaboration with Melanie Roumiguère.

This publication is a collaboration between the 11th Berlin Biennale and the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program.

daadgalerie is one of the four exhibition venues of the 11th Berlin Biennale.

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The DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program is funded by the German Foreign Office and the Senate of Berlin

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Organizer:

KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.

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Auguststraße 69

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www.berlinbiennale.de

BERLIN BIENNALE

The Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art is funded by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Federal Cultural Foundation) and organized by KUNST-WERKE BERLIN e. V.



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