

“The Aesthetics of Information”: No Olvidaremos

María Verónica San Martín

**Presented by:
Department of Fine Arts / Studio Arts Program
and The Watkinson Library, Trinity College**

curated by Erica Wessmann

Trinity College
HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Location: Widener Gallery / Austin Arts Center
Watkinson Library

Address: 300 Summit Street, Hartford, CT 06106

Exhibition dates: March 13 – May 13, 2023

Performance by the artist and public reception:
April 6, 4:30 - 6:30PM, at Widener Gallery
Free admission

Widener Gallery Hours: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday - Friday
1:00 pm to 6:00 pm Saturday, Closed Sunday

Note: Gallery will be closed during Spring Break, March 18 to March 26

Watkinson Library Hours: 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm Monday - Friday
Closed weekends

supported by the Trinity College Arts Initiative



Dignidad, 2018, 30 minutes performance, Museum Meermanno, The Hague, ND, 2019.

Chilean artist María Verónica San Martín commemorates the 50th anniversary of the U.S. supported military coup d’etat in Chile, which overthrew the democratically elected president and imposed a regime of repression, human rights violations and political torture. At Trinity, San Martín brings together several projects that grapple with and memorialize this history: Dignidad (2018), The Javelin Project (2021), and examples from her Moving Memorial series (2012-ongoing).

Dignidad (Trans. Dignity) is based on the story of Colonia Dignidad, a secretive colony in the south of Chile that became a major site for clandestine operations by the DINA—the Pinochet regime’s intelligence forces—in collaboration with the CIA and Nazi officers, who had been re-located to Chile after World War II. At least 300 people were tortured and close to 100 people were executed without trial at the site. Many of the bodies have still not been located; some are buried in mass graves and some were incinerated in 1978 to eliminate evidence.



Dignidad, 2018, The National Archive of Chile. Santiago, Chile. 2018

Dignidad features original files from the National Archives of Chile and previously unreleased audio found by Winfried Hempel, a survivor of Colonia and lead lawyer for the human rights violation case being prosecuted in Chile at this time. Hempel and San Martín have been collaborating on the exhibition since 2016. Through sculpture, sound, performance, text, and a selection of archival materials, San Martín reveals a complex system of codes and transcontinental actions that culminated in crimes against minors and opponents of the Chilean civic-military dictatorship (1973-1990).



“The Aesthetics of Information” : No Olvidaremos , exhibition view, Widener Gallery, Department of Fine Arts, Trinity College. Hartford, CT. 2023



Historical archives of Colonia Dignidad , Deposito de Coleccion, Matucana, Chile. Courtesy The National Archive of Chile. 2018

The Javelin Project comprises several elements including sculptural objects and a three-channel video encapsulating a 30-minute ritual-performance with music. Inspired by sports, and more specifically by the javelin throw, the project seeks to reflect on issues of power and patriarchy through a choreography based on simple movements and gestures that articulate many references, from early aboriginal cultures to the capitalist system we inhabit. The Performance was conceived alongside and in collaboration with Chilean choreographer Jose Vidal.



The Javelin Project, 30 minutes performance at Parque Cerrillos, Santiago, Chile. 2021

Moving Memorials is an ongoing project composed of 13 mobile handmade artist books incorporating printmaking techniques that explore historic truths, human rights issues and mass resistance in contemporary Chile.

Memory is one of our most basic means of holding the information which will become our story. It is held within our bodies, embedded within objects, and inherent to the spaces it occupied and inhabited. That memory is made evident through our words and gestures, and discovered in the traces we leave behind. Attempts at the disappearance of memory – disappearing a legacy and the information it gives –

is an attempt to erase our past and to circumvent history. This attempt has been made repeatedly throughout the history of human civilization, but just as the tree which falls alone in the forest bears no witness, its reverberations are felt, its body will be found, and its story will be told. María Verónica San Martín's "The Aesthetics of Information" : No Olvidaremos seeks to unearth pasts disappeared, and champions the feminine body as holder and keeper of memory acknowledging the burden of that patriarchal weight.

- Erica Wessmann, Curator

Special thanks to: Christina M. Bleyer, Pablo Delano, Chris Cox, Elisa R. Griego, Eric Ben-Kiki, Pete Kyle, Clarence McLay, Lynn Sullivan, Joe Transue, Tracy Quigley and the artist.



Memory and Landscape: Unveiling the Historic Truth of Chile, 2013. artist book with printmaking

María Verónica San Martín (b.1981) is a Chilean, New York-based multidisciplinary artist and educator. She was a fellow at the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program and has an MA from The Corcoran School of Art and Design, George Washington University, Washington DC. She has exhibited nationally and internationally at BRIC Arts Media, Brooklyn, NY; Artists Space, the New York Immigrant Artist Biennial, the Queens Museum and Rockefeller Center, all in New York, NY; and at the Chilean National Archive, Galleria NAC and Galería Animal in Santiago and at the Museum Meermanno, The Hague, Netherlands. She has been awarded with two NYFA and three National grants from Chile and her work is held in more than 60 collections including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; The Watkinson Library, CT; The Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Santiago, Chile; and The Centre Pompidou, Paris, France.

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María Verónica San Martín

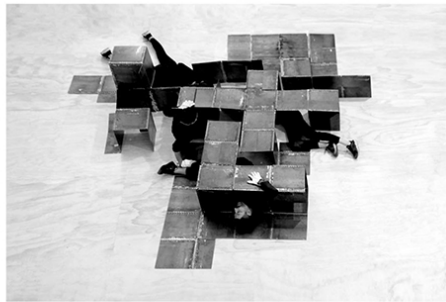
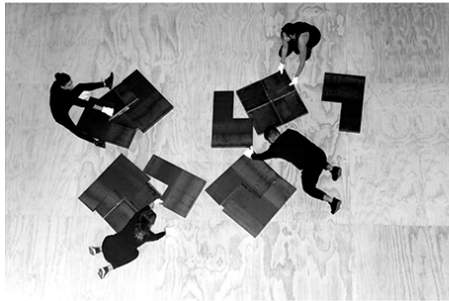
Solo performance by the artist
and reception

April 6th, 4:30 PM
Widener Gallery / Austin Arts Center

A project based on secret telephone documents
on Colonia Dignidad.

In collaboration with The National Archives of Chile, The Association
of Memory and Human Rights on Colonia Dignidad and the
ex-settler and lawyer Winfried Hempel.

Dedicated to women and men disappeared from Colonia Dignidad



Dignidad, 2018, 30 minutes performance, The National Archive of Chile, Santiago, 2018.

You'll experience sculpture, performance, text, original files from Chile's National Archives (where the project was exhibited this year), and the audio of recording that reveals the secret operations between Nazi agents in Peru, Germany, and Chile, the audio of previously unreleased tapes from one of the survivors, now a lead lawyer in a human rights case currently being prosecuted in Chile.

"I define this performance as a political abstraction, which refers to the history of Colonia Dignidad through the construction and deconstruction of symbols of power. The spaces of segregation and repression can be imagined spatially and conceptually through the architecture of the bunkers of the Colonia Dignidad period. The physical transformation of the sculpture manifests as the history's relevance and resonance of the ideologies evoked by the following symbols and spaces"

The case: Colonia Dignidad

The land

The SS

The swastika

The enclave

The cross

The crucifix

The cells

The bunkers

The case: Villa Baviera