

Chili hors du Chili. L'art de la solidarité en Italie entre expositions, exil et mobilisations culturelles (1973–1977)

Abstract

Although various forms of international solidarity influenced artistic responses to the 1973 Chilean coup d'état from the 1970s onward, the Italian context has been largely overlooked in the historiography of the cultural Cold War. This article aims to fill that gap by analysing three exhibitions organized in Italy between 1973 and 1977 in support of the resistance against Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship: "Per il Cile con Matta" (Bologna, 1973), "Mostra incessante per il Cile" (Milan, 1974–1977), and the special section "Libertà al Cile" at the 1974 Venice Biennale. By highlighting the central role of visual practices and curatorial strategies in transnational artistic mobilisations responding to the Chilean dictatorship, the article proposes a reinterpretation of solidarity as a process of cultural co-creation. Drawing on theoretical tools from art history, political history, and the study of international cultural relations, the essay explores how artists, activists, and exiles contributed to the formation of horizontal aesthetic-political networks. Far from reducing solidarity to a symbolic gesture or a one-way response, this study emphasizes its role as an active cultural device capable of generating shared imaginaries, alternative circuits, and new geographies of artistic participation. Through a comparative analysis of the three case studies, the article reflects on how Italy represented a crucial node in these visual mobilisations, while also proposing a decentred reading of Cold War artistic practices and questioning the limits of a Eurocentric art historical narrative.