

## Languages in transit. Latin American artists on the European art scene between the 1960s and 1970s .

**Fields of Study :** Arts and culture, Anthropology, History, Linguistics, Political Science, Sociology

### SUPERVISORS

	First name	LAST NAME	University	Research Unit
<b>Supervisor</b>	Ivana	Passamani	UNIBS	Department Civil, Environmental, Architectural Engineering and mathematics (DICATAM)
<b>Co-Supervisor</b>	Carole	Brandon	USMB	Department of Communication / Hypermedia LLSH

### KEYWORDS

Visual arts; experimental art; Latin American art; art and exile; 1960s.

### ABSTRACT

The 1960s in the visual arts were characterized by groundbreaking achievements arising from the breakdown of artistic categories and the emergence of a free attitude towards languages. Some Latin American women artists who went into exile in European countries during the 1960s and 1970s played an important role in experimentalism during this period, in which, alongside the emergence of counterculture and movements such as conceptual art, body art, land art, video art, happenings and performances, state violence reigned in their countries of origin due to military coups that imposed restrictions on freedoms and persecuted and tortured opponents. Iole de Freitas, Cecilia Vicuña, Marta Minujín, Marie Orensanz, Feliza Burnstyn, Maria Evelia Marmolejo, Lea Lublin, Marcia Schvartz and Teresa Trujillo are artists who have contributed to the advancement of contemporary art in proposals that have used new media and dealt with themes as current as the female body and its representations. Countries such as Italy, France, Spain and England offered them political asylum or conditions of stay and further artistic training. While living their experiences of exile in European lands, the artists dialogued and/or collaborated with groups and eminent figures in the visual arts, film and video, theater or dance. These interdisciplinary relationships and dialogues had implications for their productions and reverberated in the environments and groups they frequented. This project investigates the context of the plastic arts in Europe from the 1960s to the 1980s and its relationship with the careers of the artists listed.



## Research aims and methodology

The general aims of this research project include:

- To understand the trajectory of the artists: Iole de Freitas, born in Brazil in 1945 and based in Milan between 1970 and 1978, Cecilia Vicuña, born in Chile in 1948 and based in London, where she sought political asylum, between 1973 and 1975, Marta Minujín, born in Argentina in 1943 and based in Paris from the 1970s onwards, Marie Orensanz, born in Argentina in 1936 and resident in Milan between 1972 and 1975, Feliza Burnstyn, born in Colombia in 1933, died in France in 1982, in exile in Paris between 1981 and 1982, María Evelia Marmolejo, born in Colombia in 1958 and resident in Madrid between 1985 and 1995, Lea Lublin, born in Argentina in 1929 and died in France in 1999, living in Paris from the 1970s onwards, Marcia Schwartz, born in Argentina in 1955 and living in Barcelona between 1979 and 1983 and Teresa Trujillo, born in Uruguay in 1937 and exiled in various cities, including Madrid, in the 1980s, with the aim of investigating their European experiences and partnerships with leading artistic groups from different sectors, such as theater, photography, dance and cinema, researching webs of influences and collaborations.
- To investigate possible institutional stay/subsidy programs for Latin American artists in the countries where they settled or went into exile (Italy, France, Spain and England) from the 1960s to the 1980s.
- To investigate the contributions of Latin American artists to the experimentalism of languages in international contemporary art and to verify the particularities of their poetics and fields of interest.

Our methodology will be based on the following activities:

- Surveys will be carried out in scientific databases, libraries, museums, documentation centers and cultural institutions. Academic and non-academic productions related to the theme and period of interest will be researched. In addition to bibliographic material, documentary and iconographic material will be collected from collections dedicated to the artists and/or belonging to the artists themselves, with a view to accessing primary sources such as photographic records, correspondence and writings.
- Periodicals relevant to the subject will be collected, such as magazines and newspapers, as well as exhibition catalogs, in order to contribute to an understanding of the cultural context.
- Surveys will also be carried out in the cities where the artists developed their activities, such as Milan, Barcelona, Madrid, Paris and London, during the 9 months of external field research provided for in the call for proposals.
- We intend to conduct interviews with the artists themselves during the course of the research, seeking their views on the experience of the period, their artistic collaborations and the implications for their trajectories.
- Systematization and critical analysis of the material with a view to publishing and disseminating the results.



## Relevance and added-value of the proposed research in relation to the current state of knowledge

Contemporary art is currently going through a period of important revisions of references, whether historiographical, museographical, social or cultural, proposing new perspectives. (We can think, for example, of the theme proposed for the Venice Biennale 2024 "Foreigners Everywhere" and the extent to which art institutions have been open to these readings). The investigation of the trajectory of these still little-studied Latin American artists who related to European production between the 1960s and 1980s aims to contribute to this field of new studies, as it presents itself as a possibility of understanding this art production beyond geographical borders, understanding the global context of the period and the fruitful art produced in the 1960s to 1980s as the result of relationships, cooperation and dialogues established between artists from different origins and groups, which resulted in the experimental production of new languages.

These new perspectives also bring new theoretical references. Authors of different nationalities have dedicated themselves to the broad study of the arts in Latin America, such as Traba (1977) and Ramirez (1999), and to the investigation of some of its specific aspects, such as the relevant presence of conceptual art, such as Camnitzer (2007) and Freire (2009); however, in a more recent panorama, issues such as the feminine and its representation have been incorporated into studies on art in Latin America, by authors such as Andreia Giunta and Cecilia Fajardo-Hill ("Radical Women: Latin American Art 1960- 1985", 2017), who defend the notion of the body as a 'political field', which would have led to a radical change in the iconography of the female body in the history of art.

Although there is a field of research in the making, which connects Latin American artistic production to the most burning issues in contemporary art, the relationships that visual artists maintained with the European artistic environment between the 1960s and 1970s in a context of exile or self-exile have not yet been sufficiently mapped. The studies by Jaremtchuk (2016; 2023) discuss the flow of Brazilian visual artists to the United States during these decades, considering the cultural relations between the countries in Institutional terms and international relations, a mapping that also seems convenient for the case of Latin artists and the European countries where they lived. The current historical period seems interesting for this type of research because, with the exception of Feliza Burstyn and Lea Lublin, the other artists are alive and still very productive, which allows for a fairly up-to-date assessment of their production.



## Interdisciplinary nature of the research together with the alignment with the CHORAL programme and complementarity expertise of the teams

This project is aligned with the theme of the study "Study and preservation of tangible CH", focused on the visual arts. The interdisciplinary nature of the proposal consists of approaching the European cultural context (more specifically Italian, Spanish, French and English) between the decades under study, considering its historical, political and social aspects, and also contemplating the investigation of the cultural contexts of the Latin American countries from which the artists originate, namely Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Colombia, during the same period. With regard to the individual trajectories of the artists, there is also another sphere of interdisciplinarity, related to the specific field of the arts, since they interacted with artists and groups of different natures, promoting a creative broadening of boundaries between artistic supports. We can mention, for example, the work of Uruguayan Teresa Trujillo, related to dance, video and performance, having created a series of "dance films".

This project is linked to the University Degli Studi di Brescia under the supervision of Professor Ivana Passamani, an experienced researcher of cultural heritage, especially in Italy. Its Co-Supervisor is Professor Carole Brandon, from the Department of Communication and Hypermedia at the Université Savoie Mont Blanc, member of the Laboratory of Languages, Societies, Transborder and International Studies LLSETI and a scholar of the relationship between body/machine in artistic devices and texts, images and digital arts. We envisage the possibility of also obtaining the Co-Supervision of Professor Concepción Lomba Serrano, from the University of Zaragoza, art historian of the Vestigium research group and researcher of contemporary art in its social contexts and the role played by women in the artistic scene, among others subjects.

Since the project encompasses the cultural context of Italy (artists Marie Orensanz and Iole de Feritas lived in Milan), France (artists Lea Lublin, Marta Minujin and Feliza Burnstyn lived in Paris) and Spain (where Maria Evelia Marmolejo, Marcia Schwartz and Teresa Trujillo settled between Madrid and Barcelona) and encompasses different artistic trends, we believe that the expertise of the professors involved could make an important contribution to advancing the research. (We note the particularity of the proposal encompassing the English context, since the Chilean artist Cecilia Vicuna lived in London between 1973 and 1975. We are considering the possibility of collaborating for visits or partnerships with Professor Michael Asbury, founding member of the Transnational Art, Identity and Nation - TrAIN research center at UAL University of the Arts, with whom we already have contact due to previous partnerships}.

## Output plan including publication and dissemination activities

The publishing activities of this project include the production of scientific articles in specialized journals, the writing of book chapters (we can mention the organization of the book In progress with the theme "Art and Dictatorship In Latin America" and the writing of a chapter on the theme for the publisher of UNILA Universidade da Integração Latino-americana, In Foz do



Iguaçu, Brazil) and other publications or reviews that specifically contemplate the careers of the artists.

As dissemination activities, we intend to participate in symposiums and conferences with themes aligned with the study theme and we envision the possibility of holding exhibitions of the works of the artists studied in exhibition spaces belonging to the institutions involved in the program or other viable spaces, organizing events that could include the presence of the artists for lectures or workshops.

## Estimated schedule

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES	Timeline									
	2024 II	2025 I	2025 II	2026 I	2026 II	2027 I	2027 II	2028 I	2028 II	2029 I
Survey of Educational institutions that providing scholarships, museums where artists exhibited, schools and training centers where they studied. Milan, Barcelona, Madrid, Paris and London										
Material research, systematization and analysis of documents										
Conducting interviews with the artists										
Writing articles for participation in scientific events and/or publication in journals										
Period of study and improvement (international research group) USMB, 6 months. Co-supervisor: Carole Brandon UNIZAR, Spain. 3 months. Co-supervisor: Concepción Lomba Serrano.										
Holding art exhibitions, lectures or workshops										

