

Art and Marginality in Argentina and Chile during the 1980s and early 1990s

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My proposed research looks at a group of (assemblage, performance, video and photography) artists whose practice countered a society in denial and desensitised by the trauma of recent state violence and the contemporary AIDS devastation that took place in Argentina and Chile during the 80s and early 90s. By suggesting an empathetic and hospitable spectatorship; artists such as Omar Schiliro, Feliciano Centurión, Salvador Walter 'Batato' Barea, Liliana Maresca and Alicia D'Amico in Argentina and Paz Errazuriz, Diamela Eltit, Pedro Lemebel and Francisco Casas in Chile created new conditions of visibility for theirs and others' stigmatised subjectivities. In spite of the disavowed relationship to the aesthetic that has dominated critical discourse since the 70s, there is visual evidence that certain formal features of these queer and feminist artists were not only connected to formal aspects operating in correspondence with what regional criticism has understood as 'conceptual art' but also to certain intersensorial qualities that helped them conceive a possible future in spite of their devastating realities. In my research, I explore possible relationships between feminist and queer art which, in spite of its public vocation was conceived as an autonomous endeavour primarily concerned with issues of form and aesthetics. The project has two parts. The first one explores how a group of queer artists used certain formal aspects of modernism to connect with marginalised bodies while the second discusses the work of those artists who became marginalised themselves after being diagnosed with AIDS when that equated a death sentence.