

**Press Release - Please share**

## **America**

Emilia Azcárate  
Jacques Bedel  
Fernando 'Coco' Bedoya  
Paulo Bruscky  
Jorge Caraballo  
Elda Cerrato  
Emilio Chapela  
Guillermo Deisler  
Noemí Escandell  
Nicolás García Uriburu  
Anna Bella Geiger  
Leandro Katz  
Leonel Luna  
Jonier Marín  
Juan José Olavarría  
Alejandro Puente  
Osvaldo Romberg  
Horacio Zabala  
Carlos Zerpa

**October 21, 2015 – February 10, 2016**

Henrique Faria Buenos Aires  
Libertad 1628 - Buenos Aires 1016  
Tel.: + 54 11 4813 3251

Mondays through Fridays from 11:30 am to 8.00 pm  
Saturdays with a previous appointment.

[info@henriquefaria-ba.com](mailto:info@henriquefaria-ba.com)  
[www.henriquefaria-ba.com](http://www.henriquefaria-ba.com)



**Nicolás García Uriburu.** *Visión Latinoamericana del mapamundi-relación Sur-Norte y no Norte-Sur paternalista*, 1970. Marker and graphite on paper. 34 x 22 cm

## America

### ***Multiple profiles for one continent***

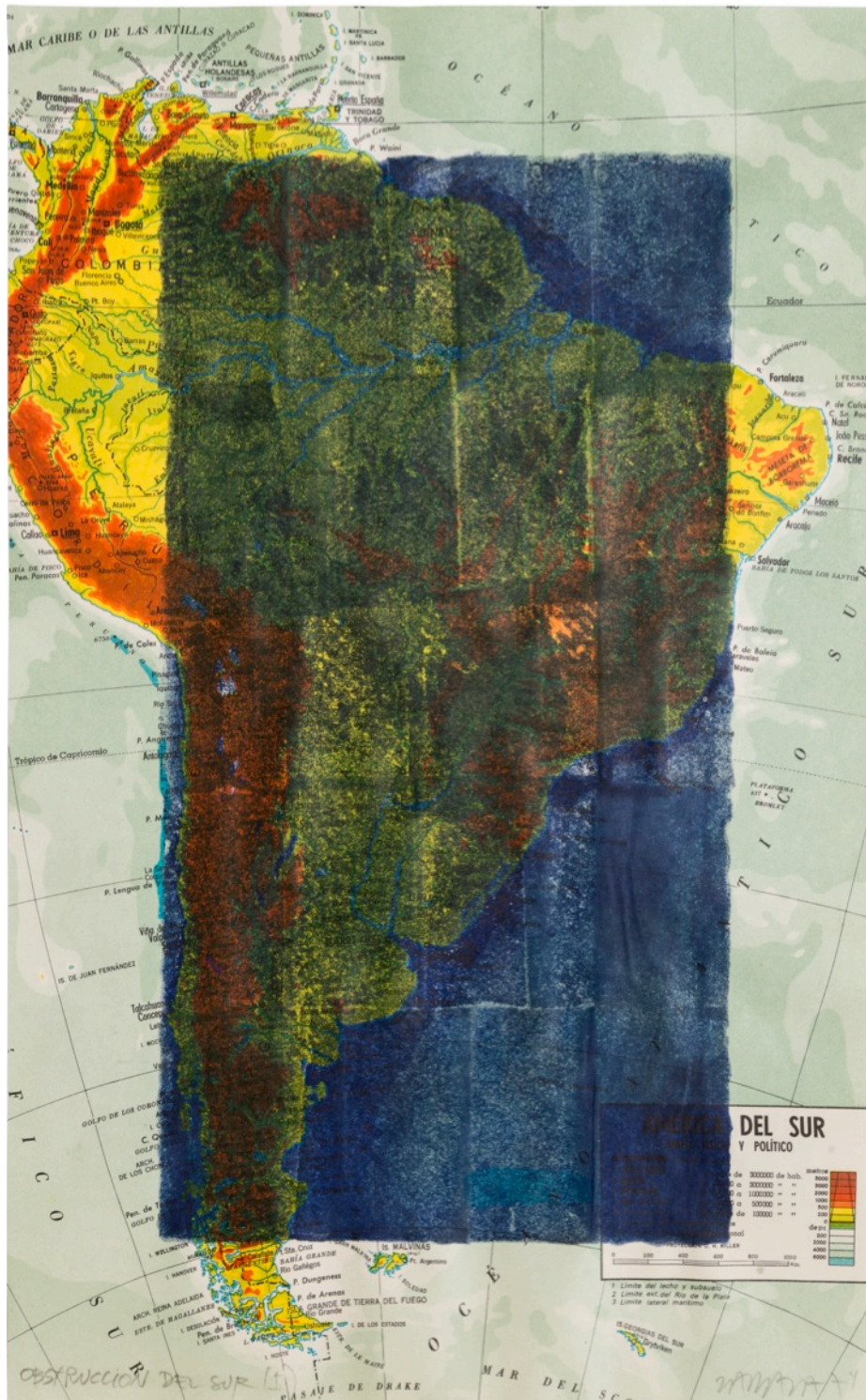
The history of America is filled with cries: the conqueror, as he first set eyes on firm land; the cry for independence -from Dolores to Yara-, or immigrants who at the beginning of the 20th century attempted to invoke with their voice the ordeal they had to endure. Despite all this, there are other ways of saying America, singular ways of evoking it, of experimenting with its name, cartography or past. Here, America is revealed as a construction, a strategic reminiscence to dismantle images that have been naturalized, challenging powers or confronting mechanisms of oppression.

The works featured in this exhibit show not only how the different problems in American agendas are repeated in the research carried out by contemporary artists, but also the way in which their strategies, political foundations, and intervention objectives were modified throughout time. However, it becomes necessary to look at the pieces once more, establishing new dialogues between artists and clarifying the contexts of circulation, to enable what appears to be a more urgent task: to destroy naturalized readings that define Latin American profiles in the current world of art.

Upon analyzing the different artistic research studies presented here, some artists chose to experiment with the name of the continent. **Emilia Azcárate**, for example, wrote the word "Amerika" using needles and gold threads and a made-up typography where the limits between the letters and between the words and the exterior is blurred. If the conquest was characterized by the process of acculturation and the ravaging of natural resources, here it is the graphemes of that language that are deprived of their lines, and the subtracted gold, here symbolized by the letter K as in karat, is symbolically returned by Azcárate, who sends it back from Spain to America.

Other artists choose instead to recover cartographic representations, depicting the yearning of a unified territory confronted with a common threat. The maps of **Nicolás García Uriburu** and *Amazonia 1976*, by **Jonier Marín**, for example, concur in that they set forth the shared ecological challenges of the countries in the region. Likewise, both the reference to Bolivarian vision proposed by the Argentine artist or the project developed by Marín, which features a tapestry made of fragments of cloth, and which intertwines all the territories south of the Rio Bravo, illustrate how these messages of unity permeated artistic researches throughout the 60s and 70s. This last map, furthermore, is connected with the interest shown by artists of the region for Andean textiles and pre-Columbian cultural productions, also represented extensively in **Alejandro Puente's** body of work.

# HENRIQUE FARIA | BUENOS AIRES



Horacio Zabala. *Obstrucción del Sur I*, 1974. Ink on printed map. 47,2 x 29,2 cm

## HENRIQUE FARIA | BUENOS AIRES

In turn, **Horacio Zabala** takes school maps of the South American territory and places geometric figures over them, or prints stamps on them, or burns the paper in different ways. With references to violence represented by fire combustion or by the word "CENSURA" (censorship), stamped repeatedly on the surface of the map, he overcomes the internal borders of the sub-continent and includes it in one same political situation. In this sense, the black squares used by Zabala -a modernist figure *par excellence*- become a reference to the *dark side* of Modernity, which at the time could be associated with the different crises of modernizing projects. By opposing new buildings with precarious constructions, or representing maps that transform or eat one another, the works of **Elda Cerrato** make a reference to that statement -the dream of having your own humble house-, associated with personal, national and Latin American dimensions.<sup>1</sup> A common crisis that can be summarized in the visual poetry of Uruguayan artist **Jorge Caraballo**, when he overlaps an "S.O.S", a cry for help, and the word "Sudamericano" (South American).



**Elda Cerrato.** *De la Realidad: Relevamientos para el sueño de la casita propia. Documentación II*, 1975. Graphite on paper. 56,7 x 77,7 cm

## HENRIQUE FARIA | BUENOS AIRES

In recent artistic practices, the border between the USA and Mexico has become a relevant object of exploration. **Emilio Chapela** does his research by confronting the fence dividing both countries in San Diego and Tijuana -which he explores virtually using Google Street View- and the audio of border town radios, featuring a mix of languages, of two cultures that this political division wishes to keep separated. **Paulo Bruscky** also explores these national delimitations, subverting the uses of the national postal service and establishing transnational networks that have characterized the postal art.



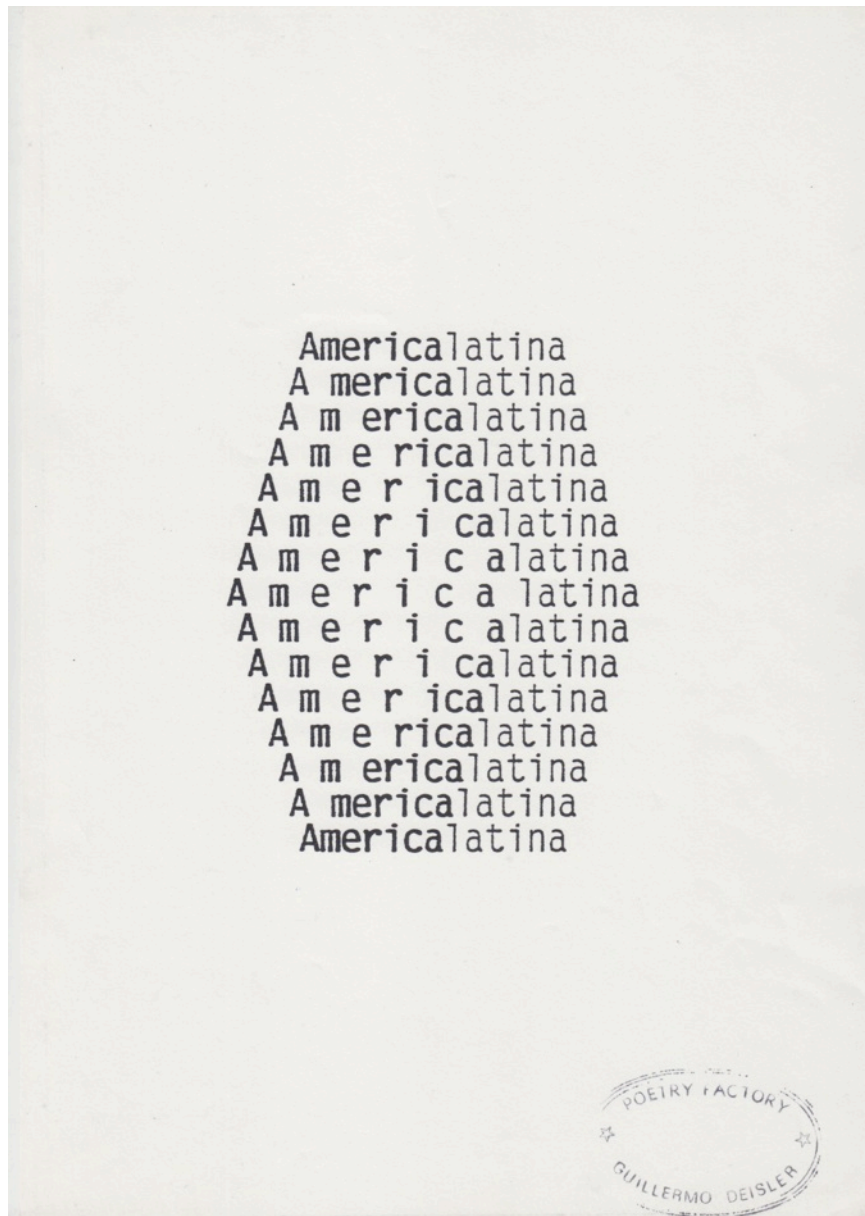
**Emilio Chapela.** *Radio Latina*, 2013. Video 16'02". Edition 2/3 + AP

In her video, *Mapas Elementares No. 3 (Elementary maps N° 3)*, **Anna Bella Geiger** draws on paper the semantic associations of the name Latin America and visual variations born from the map of South America. Reviews written on the piece point towards the correspondence between the words she writes - mulatto, crutch, amulet, which in Spanish sound phonetically alike- and the repeated stereotypes of Latin America -the cultural mix, the economic dependence, and the magical element-. However, Geiger not only draws and writes but also copies those topics and images using see-through paper, duplicating a model whose origin and authorship we fail to grasp. This mimetic procedure can be found in many Latin American artists, and is also seen in *Brasil nativo, Brasil alienígena (Native Brazil, Alien Brazil)*, one of the most paradigmatic pieces of Brazilian art in the 70s. Here, through repetition, Geiger

## HENRIQUE FARIA | BUENOS AIRES

dramatizes the staged postures of indigenous peoples as seen in tourist postcards of her country.

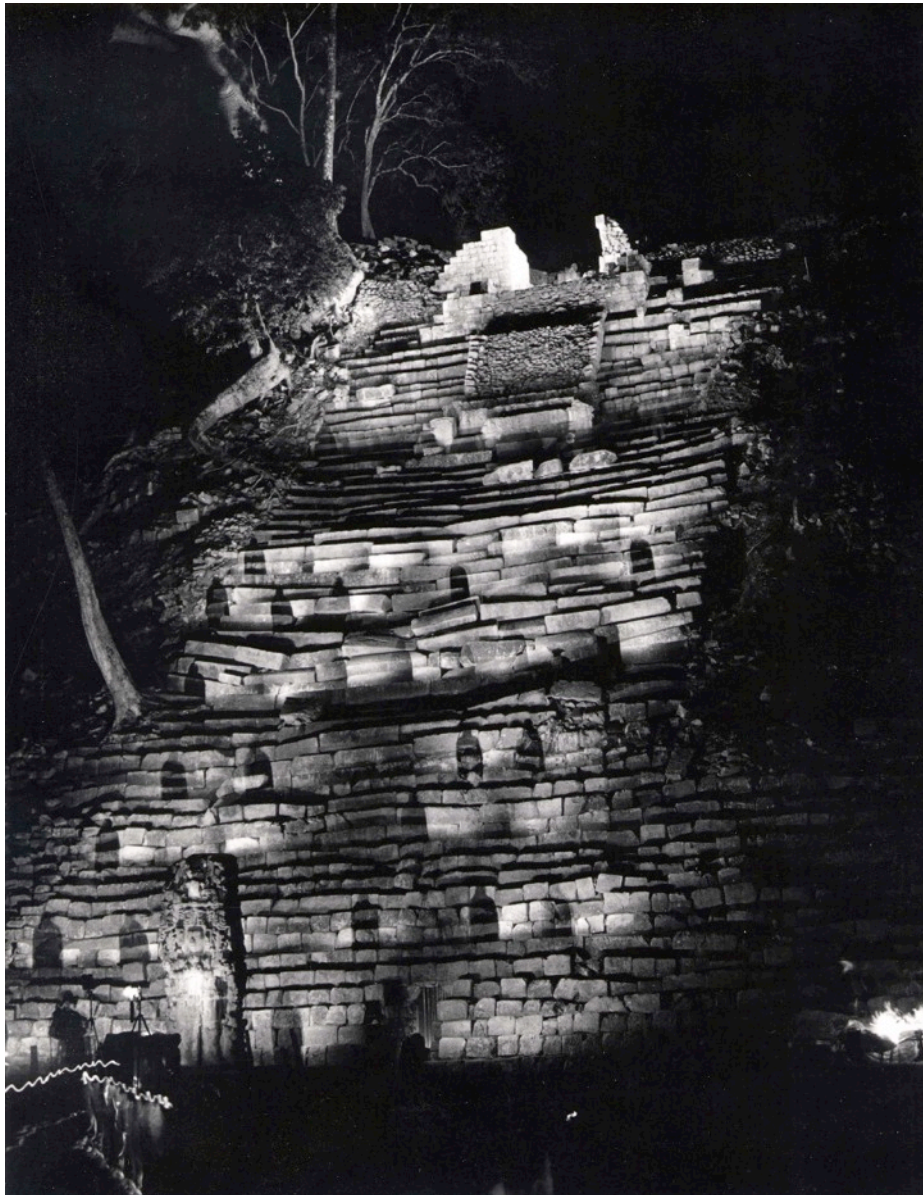
Is the conquest over? **Noemí Escandell** ponders this by superposing Dali's representation and Hitler's photograph, representing a still ongoing process in contemporary times. The works of **Fernando 'Coco' Bedoya** and **Carlos Zerpa** depict a coincidence based on a common reference to the mutation of the colonizing process all the way to economic dependence. This statement cannot be dissociated from transformation processes endured by South American economies at the end of the 80s and beginning of the 90s, when the pieces were developed.



**Guillermo Deisler.** *Sin título*, c. 1990. Screen print, stamp and ink on paper. 30 x 21 cm

## HENRIQUE FARIA | BUENOS AIRES

Using a different artistic approach, **Guillermo Deisler** refers to this relationship through collage, a position he summarizes by meticulously overlapping the image of the city of Santiago taken by indigenous reporter Guamán Poma and the photograph of Salvador Allende when the coup took place. From a different perspective, but also referring to the Spanish arrival in America, *Las Ciudades de Plata* (*The cities of the Plate region*) by **Jacques Bedel** asks the viewer to change their position in order to discover the silver sparkles on the surface. This, however, places them in an ambiguous position, repeating through their movements the search that led the conquerors towards America.



**Leandro Katz.** *Copán, Ritual para un Tiempo Transfigurado*, 1992. Gelatin silver print. 50,8 x 40,6 cm



*El Proyecto Catherwood* (The Catherwood project) by **Leandro Katz** and the series *Epopéya Silenciosa* (Silent Feat) by **Leonel Luna** procedurally revisit the contrast between the representations of travelers and explorers in America during the 19th century and current images. These pieces suggest something that has only been partially developed: a relationship with a broader context, with artistic interventions that analyze the specific types of temporality imposed by colonization in America. As pointed out by Walter Mignolo, these trips had not only one spatial dimension, but a different, temporal one in the context of the chronopolitical display of Modernity.<sup>2</sup>

Discovering a landscape or a national symbol as a codified language is also a way of denaturalizing and showing it as an expression of the power behind it. The hypothesis proposed by Natalia Majluf might be relevant in this case; she states that in the period immediately after independence, the new Republics replaced the representation of the King, mostly through impersonal symbols such as the flag or the shield, and not as one may think by the figure of the hero or the governor.<sup>3</sup> Aided by these theories of art history, a reading by **Juan José Olavarría** used this association as the basis to analyze the overlapping between patriotic emblems and chromatic codes developed by Spanish heraldry. **Oswaldo Romberg**, in turn, worked on decoding images from interests that have mixed in with an analytical study of art history.

The challenges posed by these pieces are far from being limited only to the perspectives set forth in this brief text. However, what is suggested -if only as a subtle mention- is the need to establish strategies that can be used to dismantle deeply embedded significances, which due to their repetition have cancelled out the critical power of the pieces. A return to those Americas is necessary, to discover profiles still unknown to us.

Agustín Díez Fischer

---

<sup>1</sup> Elda Cerrato; Bélgica Rodríguez... (et.al.) (2015) *La memoria en los bordes: archivos de Elda Cerrato*, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Editorial de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras Universidad de Buenos Aires.

<sup>2</sup> Mignolo, Walter D. (2011) *The Darker Side of Western Modernity. Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Durham & London: Duke University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Majluf, Natalia (2013) "De cómo reemplazar a un rey. Retrato, visualidad y poder en la crisis de la independencia (1808-1830)" en *Histórica*, Vol. 37, No 1, pp. 73-108.