Maeve Coudrelle

The Imprint of Hemispheric Exchange: The Bienal Americana de Grabado, 1963-1970

Abstract

Throughout the 1960s, Santiago, Chile hosted the Bienal Americana de Grabado (American Print Biennial), a recurring Pan-American printmaking exhibition that set the stage for a regional boom in graphic arts biennials. This article draws on archival research to contextualise the Santiago Bienal in relation to other major exhibitions in the region, including the Bienal de São Paulo (Brazil), the Bienal Americana de Arte (Argentina), and the Bienal de Arte Coltejer (Colombia), analysing its structure, audiences and objectives through a comparative lens, and exploring its unique contributions to the "second wave" of biennials in the Global South. Using the device of selection committees to engage influential institutions, curators and artists from across the Americas, and bringing a wide variety of techniques and styles into conversation, the Santiago Bienal sought to foster hemispheric cooperation amidst the Cold War period. Its organisers resisted binary alliances and geopolitical power imbalances in favour of a horizontal Pan-American network of exchange. Drawing on printmaking's affordability and accessibility, the biennial promoted a rhetoric of collaboration and generosity, while also foregrounding Latin American contributions and new experiments in the medium.

Keywords

Bienal Americana de Grabado, Printmaking, Biennials, Chile, Latin America

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The Imprint of Hemispheric Exchange: The Bienal Americana de Grabado, 1963-1970

Maeve Coudrelle

Beginning in the 1960s, Latin America experienced a regional surge in print-focused biennials, which seminal critic Marta Traba links to a concurrent "boom" in drawing and the graphic arts.[1] The first of these biennials, the Bienal Americana de Grabado (American Print Biennial) took place from 1963 through 1970 in Santiago, Chile. Hemispheric in focus, the exhibition was held at the Universidad de Chile's Museo de Arte Contemporáneo (MAC), and later the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (MNBA). It was subsequently followed by the Bienal Internacional de Grabado in Buenos Aires, Argentina (1968-1972), the Bienal Americana de Artes Gráficas in Cali, Colombia (1970-1986) and the Bienal de San Juan del Grabado Latinoamericano (1970-2001) in San Juan, Puerto Rico.[2] With a purview that included North, Central and South American countries as well as the Caribbean, the Santiago Bienal wove a network of collaboration across the continent, strategically engaging influential critics, curators and institutions. This article explores its role in the "second wave" of biennials in the Global South,[3] contextualising it in relation to other contemporaneous exhibitions in the region, notably the Bienal de São Paulo in Brazil (est. 1951), the Bienal Americana de Arte in Córdoba, Argentina (1962-1966) and the Bienal de Arte Coltejer in Medellín, Colombia (1968-1972, 1981). I argue that the Bienal Americana de Grabado's network was closely intertwined with those of São Paulo, Córdoba and Medellín, and clear parallels can be made in terms of funding infrastructure and reception. Its contribution lies in its dedication to engaging the Western hemisphere in a horizontal dialogue that bridged Cold War spheres of influence, championing print's long history of promoting exchange, generosity and accessibility.

Upon the inauguration of the first Bienal Americana de Grabado at the MAC in November 1963, the museum's then-director Nemesio Antúnez wrote of

1 Marta Traba, *Dos decadas vulnerables en las artes plásticas latinoamericanas 1950-1970* (Siglo XXI Argentina, 1973).

2 The San Juan biennial was later relaunched as the Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan, América Latina y el Caribe in 2004. Argentina also hosted the *Primer Certámen Latinoamericano de Xilografía República Argentina* at the Galería Plástica in Buenos Aires in 1960. Venezuela hosted the *Exposición Latinoamericana de Dibujo y Grabado* at the Universidad Central de Venezuela in Caracas in 1967. While these were not biennials, they were also large print exhibitions with a Latin American regional focus that emerged in the 1960s. Cities outside of Latin America that hosted print-focused biennials during this time included Ljubljana, Tokyo and Bradford.

3 Charles Green and Anthony Gardner, *Biennials, Triennials, and documenta: The Exhibitions that Created Contemporary Art* (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 10.

the organisers' effort to foster, "the embrace of Costa Rica with Uruguay and Cuba, Brazil with Canada and Paraguay, Colombia with Bolivia and Mexico, Canada with Peru and Cuba, Guatemala and Paraguay with Colombia, Argentina and the US with Brazil, Cuba with Peru and Nicaragua", ending with the phrase, "el grabado con

fig. 1
Catalogue cover. *III Bienal Americana de Grabado* (Santiago, Chile: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 1968). Photograph by author.

todos y todos con Chile" (printmaking with all and all with Chile).[4] [fig. 1] Tellingly, Antúnez used the adverb "americanamente" (Americanly) to characterise the tenor of the desired encounters among participating countries. These opening remarks reflect the executive committee's enthusiastic commitment to the ideal of Pan-American cooperation. Amidst the backdrop of the Cold War, Pan-Americanism was coloured by the power struggle among the United States, the Soviet Union and their allies, which played out through cultural and economic diplomacy, as well as overt and covert intervention. The Bienal's first edition came two years after the establishment of US President John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, which aimed to foster economic cooperation and development throughout the Americas to stave off the spread of pro-communist sentiment in the wake of the Cuban Revolution. Within this complex relational field, the Bienal organisers promoted regional interconnection from a place of agency and strategic understanding, building international recognition by securing participation from acclaimed institutions and figures, while also reaching across Cold War spheres of influence by, for example, cultivating relationships with both Cuban and US entities.

The Bienal Americana de Grabado spanned three Chilean presidential administrations, with the first edition occurring under right-wing independent

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Nemesio Antúnez, "Nace el Grabado", in *Primera Bienal Americana de Grabado* (Santiago: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Universidad de Chile, 1963), 3. Translation by the author. Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this paper are my own. This statement by Antúnez is also highlighted by Valerie Fraser in her article, "Encounters in New York, Printmaking in Chile", *American Art* 26, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 28-33.

Jorge Alessandri and the following three under Christian Democrat Eduardo Frei Montalva.[5] The Frei administration had the most direct and prolonged involvement with the Bienal, the nature of which will be addressed later in this article. The final Bienal overlapped with the election of the Marxist leader of the Unidad Popular coalition, Salvador Allende. The 1960s saw the beginnings of numerous transformations in the country, such as land redistribution, university and education reform and the nationalisation of the copper industry. In the cultural realm, the post-war economic boom brought profound changes to the arts and culture sector throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and Chile was no exception. Several important Chilean museums, art schools and artist workshops were founded in the late 1940s and 1950s, establishing a robust institutional backdrop to support activities in the following decade. In Santiago, the Universidad de Chile inaugurated the Instituto de Extensión de Artes Plásticas (IEAP) in 1945 and the MAC in 1947, to pursue the dual goals of promoting an awareness of Chilean art abroad and educating the general public at home. Other developments included the founding of the important print-making workshop Taller 99 in 1956 and the art school at the Universidad Católica in 1959. The creation of these institutions not only fostered a thriving print scene, but also encouraged a flourishing of exhibition activities both domestically and internationally. The 1960s featured strong Chilean participation in biennials such as the Bienal de São Paulo, Bienal Americana de Arte and Biennale de Paris.[6] In Santiago, major recurring contests and exhibitions came to the fore, with the MAC holding the Compañía Refinería de Azúcar de Viña del Mar (CRAV) competition for painting, the Compañía de Aceros de Pacífico (CAP) prize for artists under 35 and the sculpture focused Bienal de Escultura. The MAC also hosted international touring exhibitions, including the well-attended *De Cézanne a Miró* exhibition in 1968, on loan from the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).[7] Within this field, the Bienal drew upon a well-established exhibition infrastructure and growing international network to organise a large-scale hemispheric event, on a par with the exhibitions that Chilean artists participated in abroad.

When Antúnez took the helm as director of the MAC in 1962, he stated his intention to transform the museum from a storehouse of artworks to a Museo Vivo, or live museum, focused on making art accessible to the Chilean people by circulating shows throughout the country and serving as a space for debate and learning for all ages.[8] In order to accomplish these goals, Antúnez sought outside financing to bolster the MAC's insufficient budget, creating the Sociedad de Amigos del Museo (Society of Friends of the Museum), a private organisation charged with raising funds, obtaining artwork donations and connecting the museum to international art networks.[9] The Sociedad was composed of supporters of the arts from private industry, including its President Flavián Levine, then-head of the Chilean steel company, CAP. Throughout the Bienal's lifespan the Sociedad's group of directors consisted of industrialists, media moguls and diplomats, among them: José Klein, owner of the Santa Bárbara mine, Germán Picó Cañas, owner of Radical

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Jorge Alessandri, a former Finance minister (1947-50), was not affiliated with any political party. Nominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties, he served as President of Chile from 1958-64. Eduardo Frei Montalva, leader of the newly founded Christian Democrat party (PDC), served from 1964-70.

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Of particular note is Chilean sculptor Marta Colvín's acknowledgment at the 1965 Bienal de São Paulo, where she won the top prize.

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Milan Ivelic and Gaspar Galaz, *Chile Arte Actual* (Valparaíso: Ediciones Universitarias de Valparaíso, 1988), 98-115; Nemesio Antúnez, *Carta Aérea* (Santiago: Editorial Los Andes, 1988), 38; Nemesio Antúnez, "Una exposición para Chile", *El Mercurio*, May 23, 1968.

8
Antúnez, *Carta Aérea*, 38; Script of a dinner speech by Antúnez about his plans for the MAC, 1959, Folder 4B, "MAC", E661, Archivo Nemesio Antúnez, Santiago, Chile.

9
Script of dinner speech. *The Sociedad de Amigos del Museo* was later referred to as the *Sociedad de Arte Contemporáneo*, starting in 1968.

Party periodical *La Tercera de la Hora*, Agustín Edwards Eastman, right-wing head of *El Mercurio* newspaper, Gabriel Valdés Subercaseaux, Minister of Foreign Affairs under Frei and Sergio Larraín García-Moreno, dean of the architecture school at the Universidad Católica and later Frei's ambassador to Peru. The prominence of the figures involved and their array of affiliations indicates a high level of support for the MAC's activities across industries and the political spectrum.

In addition to supporting the MAC's larger mission, the Sociedad played a central role in the Bienal. The catalogues track the entity's progressive increase in responsibilities, naming it first as a "generous collaborator" in 1963, and later as the event's main organiser by 1970.[10] As part of this leadership role, figures from the Sociedad took part in an executive committee each year, tasked with coordinating the event's logistics alongside the host museums' staff and additional interlocutors. Antúnez served twice on the executive committees, in 1963 and 1970, playing a central role in establishing the Bienal, setting its tone and developing its connections with other institutions. As a dynamic figure who was at once a printmaker, an administrator and a diplomat, Antúnez was uniquely suited to shaping the event. From 1947 to 1952, he trained with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17 in Paris and New York, returning to Chile in 1953 to found Taller 99 shortly thereafter.[11] Between his stints as director of the MAC and then the MNBA, he was the Chilean cultural attaché under Frei, promoting Chilean and Latin American art in the US and forging connections with MoMA, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, each of which would eventually participate in the Bienal. Other figures involved in the executive committee include Brazilian poet and diplomat Thiago de Mello, who is credited with bringing the idea of the Bienal to Antúnez, Federico Assler, subsequent director of the MAC, mathematician and print enthusiast Emilio Ellena, and Pablo Llona Barros and Silvia Celis de Altamirano of the Sociedad.[12]

Funding for the Bienal came via the Sociedad, as well as private enterprises endowing many of the prizes for the winning artwork. Sponsors, some of which were linked to the Sociedad's directorship, included the periodicals *El Mercurio, Tercera de la Hora* and *Zig-Zag*, metals companies Minera Santa Bárbara, Armco, Madeco, Bethlehem and CAP, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Prizes were also awarded in the name of the IEAP, the University's fine arts department and the Ministry of External Relations. This mix of private and public funding indicates a certain confluence of priorities across industry, the Frei administration and arts entities during this period, with all three focused on bolstering Chile's hemispheric prominence and relationships through the device of cultural exchange.

Twenty countries participated in the Bienal over its lifetime, with the strongest showings from South and North America. Chile, as the host country, had (on average) the greatest number of works on display, followed by Brazil, the US, Argentina, Canada and Mexico. Central American countries, namely Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama and Nicaragua, were less well represented and did not consistently participate. Cuba and Haiti were the only Caribbean countries to take part, with Cuba contributing to three editions and Haiti to one. Archival correspondence indicates that the Bienal organisers reached out to more countries than those that ultimately signed on. Simultaneous outreach to diplomatic organisations and arts institutions led to some difficulties in securing participation due to confu-

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Antúnez, "Nace el Grabado", in *IV Bienal Americana de Grabado* (Santiago: Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1970).

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Antúnez, *Carta Aérea*, 47.

12
Emilio Ellena, "Sobre las Bienales Americanas de Grabado, Chile, 1963-1970", in Emilio Ellena, ed., *Sobre las Bienales Americanas de Grabado, Chile, 1963-1970* (Santiago: Centro Cultural de España, 2008), 43. MAC directors throughout the life of the BAG included Antúnez (1962-1964), Oyarzún (1964-1965), Assler (1965-1968) and Alberto Pérez (1968-1970). "Directores MAC", Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Facultad de Artes, Universidad de Chile, http://mac.uchile.cl/museo/directores, accessed May 2021.

sion about who was ultimately responsible for selecting participants.[13] Nevertheless, by its final edition the Bienal featured more than 700 prints on view from fifteen countries across the continent. Of those works, around half were from Chile and the US and a quarter from Argentina, Brazil and Mexico.

Participating artists from each country were selected through what the catalogue refers to as "national committees".[14] [fig. 2] These were usually comprised of a single person, often the director of a national or modern art museum, head of a university Fine Art department, or a diplomatic official from the ministries of culture or foreign relations. While these designees shifted over the life of the Bienal, recurring figures included: Hugo Parpagnoli of the Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Miguel Arroyo of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Caracas; Carmen Portinho of the Museo de Arte Moderno in Rio de Janeiro; Mariano Rodríguez of the Casa de las Americas in Havana; Juan Manuel Ugarte Eléspuru of the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes in Lima; Eugenio Barney Cabrera of the Escuela de Bellas Artes at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in Bogotá; José Luis Martínez Rodríguez of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes in Mexico City; and Kathleen Fenwick of the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. The US selector changed every year, starting with Argentine artist Mauricio Lasansky, head of the University of Iowa printmaking department, followed by William Lieberman, Director of the Department of Drawings and Prints at MoMA, then Una Johnson, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In 1965 and 1968, Antúnez was also listed as part of the US national committee, attesting to his importance in coordinating these partnerships. In 1970, the subsequent Chilean cultural attaché Luis Oyarzún Peña also took on this role. The periodic change in US partners points to the Bienal organisers' ongoing efforts to cultivate relationships across different institutions, but also suggests that there may have been some difficulties in securing long-term commitments from these entities.

The Bienal jury was typically composed of a Chilean critic, a representative from the host museum and one or more individuals from other parts of the hemisphere. Its configuration often overlapped with the executive and selection committees, signalling the importance of the Bienal organisers and their international partners not only to the event's coordination, but also its awarding decisions. This also demonstrates the intertwined nature of the Bienal's network, with individuals and institutions often playing multiple simultaneous roles in the event's administration. In 1963, Parpagnoli, Portinho and Uruguayan architect and critic Luis García Pardo served alongside Victor Carvacho, the representative of the Círculo de Críticos de Arte de Chile (Circle of Chilean Art Critics). Parpagnoli participated again as a jurist in 1965, joined by Ugarte Eléspuru, Oyarzún, and the important critic and historian of Chilean art, Antonio R. Romera. In the Bienal's final two editions, international participation in the jury moved from engaging several South American jurists to foregrounding US involvement. In 1968, joined by Romera, Assler and Ellena, Elaine Johnson, Associate Curator in the Department of Drawings and Prints at MoMA, served as president of the jury. Her 1964 MoMA exhibition, *Contemporary Painters and Sculptors as Printmakers*, was displayed at the MAC in 1966, with the catalogue translated into Spanish by Antúnez. In 1970, Una Johnson became the jury president, with Antúnez replacing Assler as the host museum representative, and otherwise the same jury composition. Una Johnson—not to be confused with

13
For example, Haiti, Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador were invited in 1965 but did not participate. Correspondence from Jorge Páez Vilaró indicates that he was assembling the Uruguayan selection when he learned that the Comisión Nacional de Bellas Artes also received an invitation and would be taking over the country's selection. Invitation letters from Pablo Llona Barros and Luis Oyarzún to art museum directors, heads of art schools and diplomatic officials, April-May 1965, Box 9 "COR 1965", Folder 3, Fondo de Archivo Institutional, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Facultad de Artes, Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile (FAIMAC). Letter from Jorge Páez Vilaró to Pablo Llona Barros, October 11, 1965, Box 9 "COR 1965", Folder 16, FAIMAC.

14
Primera Bienal Americana de Grabado, 8.

fig. 2
Eduardo Vilches. *Untitled*, woodcut, printed in *III Bienal Americana de Grabado* (Santiago, Chile: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 1968), 53. Photograph by author.

her predecessor on the jury, Elaine Johnson—previously served as the US selector in 1968. By the fourth Bienal, she had moved on from the Brooklyn Museum of Art to a new position as director of the Storm King Art Center. During her tenure in Brooklyn, she organised the National Print Exhibition from 1947 to 1968, along with important monographic and survey exhibitions on US printmaking, such as *The American Woodcut: 1670-1950*, and a book on French art dealer Ambroise Vollard's print publishing activities.[15]

The Bienal regulations established no specific restrictions for the prints on display, declaring: "There are no limitations in style or technique. The only criterion that takes precedence is the quality of the work and the professional seriousness of the artist".[16] Styles spanned from gestural abstraction, Expressionism and Surrealism to Op and Pop art. The large technical range included woodcut, etching, aquatint, drypoint, silkscreen and lithography, as well as mixed media experiments incorporating impressions of found objects, collage elements, and sculptural plaster reliefs and embossments. The selections featured established artists, many of whom were of international renown, as well as emerging artists who would later have notable careers.[17] Artists awarded prizes throughout the life of the Bienal include Rodolfo Abularach, Josef Albers, Eduardo Bonati, Roser Bru, José Luis Cuevas, Roberto De Lamónica, Pedro Millar, Louise Nevelson, Julio Le Parc, Liliana Porter,

15
Roberta Smith, "Una E. Johnson, 91, An Expert on Prints Who Led a Museum", *The New York Times*, May 5, 1997, https://www.nytimes.com/1997/05/05/nyregion/una-e-johnson-91-an-expert-on-prints-who-led-a-museum.html, accessed May 2021.

16
Primera Bienal Americana de Grabado, 5.

17
Ellena, "Sobre las Bienales", 44.

Robert Rauschenberg, Eduardo Vilches and Daniel Zelaya. While the catalogue's lack of extensive illustration and precise captioning makes identifying the specific winning prints difficult, the identities of the awardees show a range of nationalities, and the limited reproductions reflect stylistic tendencies from hyper-realism, to geometric abstraction, to explorations of colour theory. [fig. 3]

fig. 3
Santos Chávez. *Untitled* woodcut, printed in *III Bienal Americana de Grabado* (Santiago, Chile: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 1968), 59. Photograph by author.

By 1968, the Bienal became sufficiently established that a spate of additional programming sprung up around it, such as conferences, affiliated exhibitions and salas especiales (special rooms), which included displays at the host museum honouring previous grand prize winners alongside prominent figures in the history of Latin American printmaking. For the third edition, these activities consisted of two offerings with the president of the jury Elaine Johnson: a talk on the history of printmaking and a roundtable with Romera, Ellena, Vilches and Bonati, both at the Instituto Chileno-Norteamericano de Cultura (Chilean-North American Cultural Institute). Affiliated exhibitions included a Taller 99 retrospective, a student show from the Universidad Católica, and monographic exhibitions on the prints of Antonio Frasconi, Mario Toral, Zygmunt Grocholski, Fernando Krahn, Minna Citron and Santos Chávez. In addition, the MAC hosted a concert and a meet-and-greet with cultural attachés from across the continent. For the following edition in 1970, the inaugural salas especiales were dedicated to Albers, winner of the 1968 grand prize, José Guadalupe Posada, Rufino Tamayo, and a show of Chilean popular prints by early 20th century illustrators. At that edition, Una Johnson gave a talk on contemporary US printmaking and Ellena spoke about Joaquín Torres-García. The Instituto Chileno-Norteamericano de Cultura hosted a show on North American posters, and the nine monographic affiliated exhibitions were dedicated to Bru, Millar, Vilches, Zelaya, Carlos Hermosilla, Carlos González, Simone Chambelland, Miguel Bresciano and Juan Bernal Ponce.

Foremost among the Bienal's major goals was a desire to connect the Americas, advocating a spirit of collaboration and generous artistic interchange. Printmaking was seen as an ideal medium in pursuit of this objective, given its multiplicity and relative accessibility. This functioned as both a helpful conceptual framework for the Bienal, as well as an important practical element, given the medium's less expensive shipping, insurance and acquisition costs. In the introduction to the second catalogue in 1965, the organisers identify the central problem that they would set out to solve; namely, in their minds, that countries in the Americas could not unite in any lasting way without cultivating more intimate knowledge of one another, including in the cultural realm.[18] Oyarzún's essay for the following edition in 1968 explains why printmaking was chosen as the appropriate conduit through which to rectify this lack of continental interconnection. Since its origins, he explains, printmaking brought together individual pursuits with collective themes by operating simultaneously as a mode of mass communication and individual self-expression.[19] For Antúnez, printmaking was the most democratic of artistic media, due to its characteristic ability to be reproduced, allowing for the unlimited distribution of an original design at an affordable price point within reach for a larger portion of the population. Moreover, as founder of Taller 99, Antúnez lauded the space of the print workshop as one that embodied the ideals of collaboration and knowledge-sharing.[20] In this manner, the choice of printmaking as the Bienal's sole medium bolstered its rhetorical commitment to democratic exchange, unity and generosity of spirit. It also conveniently offered an inexpensive means of exposing Chilean artists to international trends and promoting local artists on a larger scale, both domestically and globally.[21]

Given its presence on a local and international stage, the Bienal received much praise, but along with it came some targeted criticism. At the 1968 opening ceremony, attended by Frei, Minister of Foreign Relations Valdés and Minister of Education Máximo Pacheco Gómez, Valdés affirmed the administration's support of the Bienal, which it viewed as an important player in the integration of the Americas and the creation of a shared cultural community.[22] That same year, Elaine Johnson, interviewed in *Ercilla*, asserted that the Santiago Bienal, alongside the print biennials in Tokyo and Ljubljana, was one of the most important in the world.[23] Una Johnson, in a 1970 article for the *Print Collector's Newsletter*, observed that contemporary printmaking was becoming increasingly experimental, incorporating new materials, venturing into three dimensions and embracing multimedia possibilities. She celebrated the Bienal's role in bringing these new developments to a broad audience, stating: "Large and extensive exhibitions, such as the Santiago Bienal, have brought to the 20th century print a large public exposure that has been possible in no other art medium".[24] She also reported that, despite the MNBA's ongoing renovations at the time, the galleries were crowded and teemed with

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Segunda Bienal Americana de Grabado (Santiago: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 1965), 33.
19
III Bienal Americana de Grabado (Santiago: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, 1968), 5-7.
20
Antúnez, *Carta Aérea*, 17.
21
Fraser, "Encounters", 30.
22
"Entrega de Premios en III Bienal de Grabado", *El Mercurio*, April 17, 1968.
23
"La señora presidenta", *Ercilla*, April 24, 1968, 55.
24
Una Johnson, "Bienal Americana de Grabado", *The Print Collector's Newsletter* 1, no. 4 (September–October, 1970): 84.
25
A critic for *El Siglo* was not so forgiving, complaining that the Bienal should have been located elsewhere, as the display suffered from being squeezed into a narrow space to avoid the construction area. "IV Bienal Americana de Grabado", *El Siglo*, August 21, 1970.

excitement.[25]

Local and international critics generally expressed enthusiasm for the Bienal, with Romera in 1963 affirming that it was one of the most acclaimed events of the year.[26] Peruvian critic Carlos Rodríguez Saavedra noted that the Bienal was part of an uptick in exhibitions devoted to Latin American art, and he championed the sense of regional unity these displays fostered, in addition to the international attention they garnered. He also observed more broadly that biennials on the one hand promoted exchange and exposure to new concepts, but on the other could lead to a certain artistic standardisation, although he did not single out Santiago in particular on this point.[27] In a cover story for *El Mercurio*'s *Revista del Domingo*, Graciela Romero wrote that the 1970 Bienal accomplished two commendable goals: elevating printmaking to the same level of legitimacy as painting, and creating a market for the work of previously-underappreciated Chilean printmakers.[28] The article, titled "Los demócratas del arte" (The democrats of art), featured a cover photo of the executive committee working around a round table, with the Bienal poster in the centre. This photo and caption choice reflect the collaborative and egalitarian ethos that the organisers attributed to printmaking. The poster in the photo, designed by Josef Albers, also showcased the exhibition's international reach by visually connecting local organisers with the German-born, US-based artist. In addition to highlighting the Bienal's emphasis on democratic dialogue and creation of influential hemispheric networks, the article quoted local gallerist Carmen Waugh, who affirmed the exhibition's positive impact on the Santiago print market: "People now buy [prints] even as wedding gifts", she stated, noting an uptick in business centred around the medium.[29]

Despite this praise, a shift in the political winds meant the next edition in 1970 was beset by protests, which played out in an anti-biennial exhibition of sorts. Five days after the Bienal's inauguration, a semi-oppositional display was mounted in a tent in the Parque Forestal outside the host museum, the MNBA. The exhibition of silkscreens by thirty artists was part of a larger effort entitled *El pueblo tiene arte con Allende*, a push by the Allende campaign to illustrate the Unidad Popular's platform and make it publicly accessible.[30] The exhibition was one of eighty displays mounted simultaneously, devoted to portraying Allende's Programa de Cuarenta Medidas—the forty measures that his government would implement once elected. By placing one of these temporary exhibitions outside the MNBA, the campaign created a juxtaposition between the enclosed and removed museum space and the open public space, making the former appear elitist by comparison. It also drew attention to the bifurcation between political printmaking—used for protest and information dissemination—and fine art printmaking, displayed within a seemingly depoliticised museum context. Silvia Dolinko notes, however, that several artists participated in both the *El pueblo tiene arte* display and the Bienal, indicating that the relationship between the two was somewhat ambiguous.[31] Ellena,

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Ivelic and Galaz, *Chile Arte Actual*, 103.

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Carlos Rodríguez Saavedra, "Dos Muestras Continentales", *Expreso*, July 8, 1963. Folder 4B, "MAC", E786, Archivo Nemesio Antúnez, Santiago, Chile.

28
Graciela Romero, "Los demócratas del arte", *Revista del Domingo, El Mercurio*, August 2, 1970.

29
Romero, "Los demócratas del arte".

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For more on the Unidad Popular's cultural program, see Rodrigo Baño, ed., *La Unidad Popular Treinta Años Después* (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2003).

31
Silvia Dolinko, *Arte plural: El grabado entre la tradición y la experimentación, 1955-1973* (Buenos Aires: Edhasa, 2012), 297.

looking back on this time, speculates that the political climate at the beginning of the 1970s became inhospitable to the Bienal's structure and funding apparatus.[32] Valerie Fraser, in an article examining the exhibition's impact, concurs, noting that it became unsustainable following the shift in power to the Unidad Popular. The main factors that garnered criticism were the Bienal's close ties to private industry, through its patron and organiser, the Sociedad, and the outsized influence of the US presence, through the latter's repeated representation on the jury and large share of works on view.[33] Archival documents also show internal strife between the Sociedad and the IEAP, indicating that the former had more power than its collaborators were comfortable with during the Bienal's first three editions at the MAC. Minutes from the April 23, 1968 meeting of the IEAP board of directors list a litany of complaints against the Sociedad, including discontent that it did not live up to its fundraising commitments and that, as a private entity, it exercised too much discretion in acting on behalf of the museum, establishing relationships with international organisations without first consulting the museum's leadership.[34]

While it was the first graphic arts biennial in the region, the Bienal Americana de Grabado was far from the only one operating in South America during this time, and its networks, objectives and reception closely intersected with those of the Bienal de São Paulo in Brazil, the Bienal Americana de Arte in Córdoba, Argentina and the Bienal de Arte Coltejer in Medellín, Colombia. [fig. 4] Across the board, these biennials pursued the dual goals of promoting their nation's artistic production on the world stage and exposing local artists and the domestic public to international art world trends. Like the Córdoba Bienal, whose purview was painting in the Americas, the Santiago Bienal was medium-specific and hemispheric in focus. Unlike its counterpart in Córdoba, Santiago featured a strong US and Canadian presence, not just in affiliated events, but also in the selected work.[35] Alongside the Ljubljana and Tokyo graphic biennials, the Córdoba Bienal's *Salón Latinoamericano de Grabado Universitario* may have offered a model for Santiago's print focus. Individuals on the Córdoba and Santiago selection committees and juries overlapped a fair amount, with Llona Barros, Romera, Ellena, Arroyo, Portinho and Parpagnoli serving as Córdoba selectors for their respective countries, and García Pardo, Romera and Ugarte Eléspuru as jurists.[36] Antúnez and Assler also appeared in Córdoba, with their artwork forming part of the Chilean contribution. Like the Santiago Bienal, the Córdoba and Medellín Bienales came to favour North American and Western European jurists. In Córdoba these included MoMA's Director of Collections (and former inaugural director) Alfred Barr, Jewish Museum director Sam Hunter, and documenta organiser Arnold Bode, and in Medellín, Guggenheim Museum director Lawrence Alloway and US-based critic Brian O'Doherty. To a lesser extent, the Santiago Bienal's individual and institutional collaborators also intersected with those of São Paulo. Oyarzún, who served as a jurist and selector in Santiago, organised the Chilean contribution in São Paulo in 1965.[37] MoMA played an important role across the region, through the efforts of Lieberman and Elaine Johnson in Santiago and Barr in Córdoba, which also hosted a MoMA print exhibition. Additionally, the New York museum prepared the US selection for

32
Ellena, "Sobre las bienales", 59.
33
Fraser, "Encounters", 32.
34
Minutes from a meeting of the IEAP Board of Directors, April 23, 1968, Box 15 "COR 1968", Folder 2, FAIMAC.
35
Andrea Giunta, "Strategies of Internationalization", in *Avant-Garde, Internationalism, and Politics: Argentine Art in the Sixties* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 189-241; María Cristina Rocca, *Arte, modernización y guerra fría: las bienales de Córdoba en los sesenta* (Córdoba: Editorial Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, 2009).
36
Rocca, *Arte, modernización y guerra fría*, 341-343.
37
Ivelic and Galaz, *Chile Arte Actual*, 108.

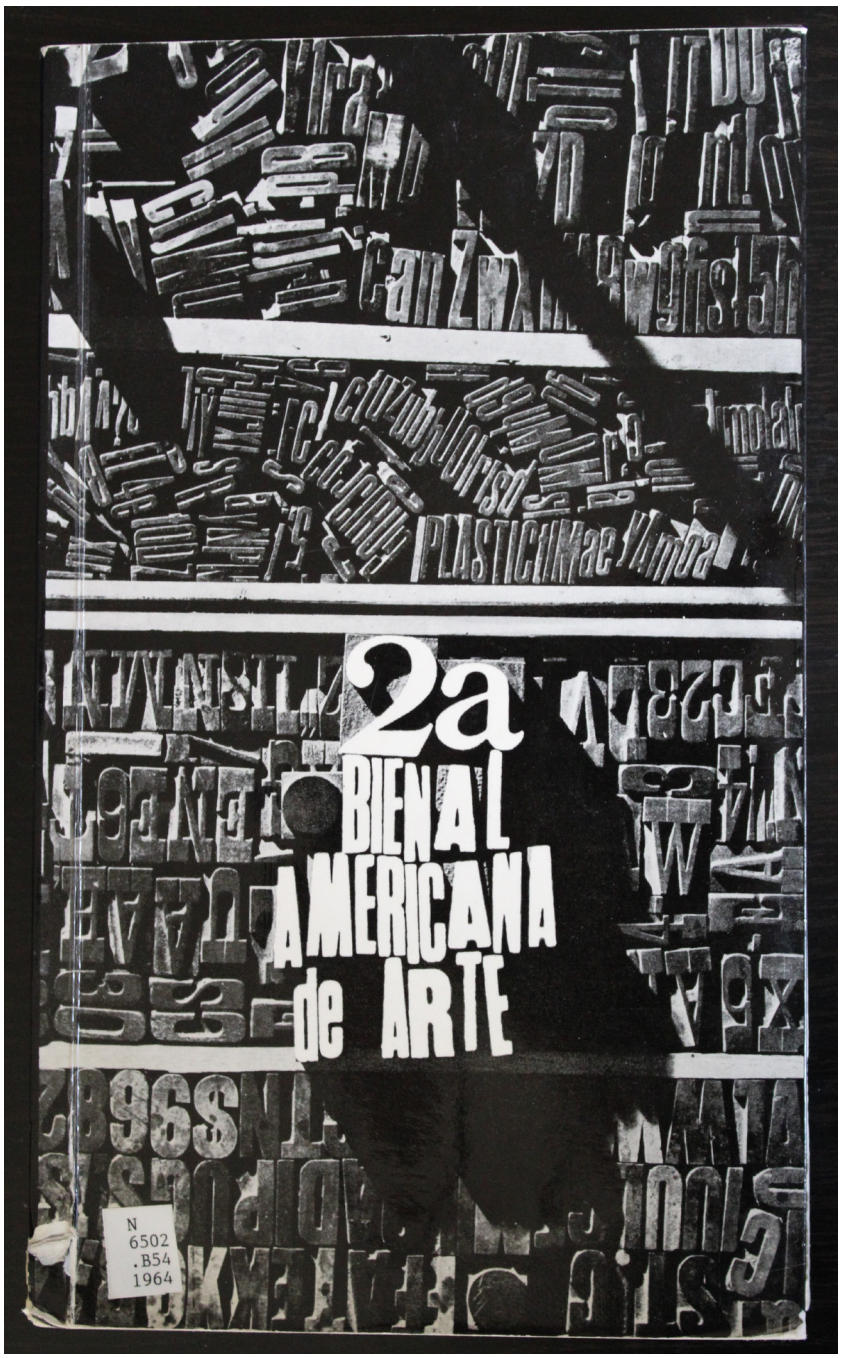

fig. 4
Catalogue cover. *Segunda Bienal Americana de Arte* (Córdoba, Argentina: Industrias Kaiser Argentina, 1964). Photograph by author.

several editions of the São Paulo biennial, as well as serving as the model for its host museum, the Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo.[38] The Visual Arts Section of the Organization of American States was another sought-after partner for the Latin American biennials, with its own designated space in São Paulo, and an invitation for a similar arrangement at the Santiago Bienal, which it appears never came to fruition.[39] The reappearance of a select roster of individuals and institutions in events

38
Giunta, "Strategies of Internationalization", 208-209. Adele Nelson, "Monumental & Ephemeral: The Early São Paulo Bienals", in Mary Kate O'Hare, ed., *Constructive Spirit: Abstract Art in South and North America, 1920s-1950s* (Newark [NJ]: Newark Museum, 2010), 134.

39
Invitation letter from Pablo Llona Barros and Luis Oyarzún Peña to José Gómez Sicre, Director of the Visual Arts Section, Organisation of American States, May 5, 1965, Box 9 "COR 1965", Folder 3, FAIMAC.

across the region indicates that an enduring network both shaped and was shaped by these biennials. It also demonstrates that, to an extent, a recognisable coterie of critics, curators and museums had an outsize impact on the artists included in and endorsed by these exhibitions.

All four biennials were sponsored by industrialists, who were often motivated by a perceived interconnection between economic development and cultural exchange. While the Santiago Bienal's funding was funnelled through the Sociedad, the São Paulo Bienal was initially financed by its founder, industrialist Francisco "Ciccillo" Matarazzo Sobrinho; the Córdoba Bienal by Industrias Kaiser Argentina (IKA), a subsidiary of the US-based automobile manufacturer Kaiser Industries; and the Coltejer Bienal by Colombian textile manufacturer Compañía Colombiana de Tejidos (Coltejer). For IKA, the biennial served as part of a public relations campaign that promoted cultural ventures alongside business interests, to grow the company's reputation for modernisation and contribute to the region's development.[40] Similarly, Coltejer's president, Rodrigo Uribe Echavarría, viewed industry as the driver not only of economic advancement, but also political, social and cultural wellbeing.[41] Internal documents from the Santiago Bienal show a related mentality on the part of one of its prize sponsors, the Inter-American Development Bank, which stated that artistic dialogue and cultural integration were fundamental to the creation of a common conscience across the hemisphere.[42] In this manner, economic developmentalism was intertwined with the promotion of cultural ventures and regional dialogue in the Americas. For IKA, the latter was also overtly tied to anti-communist efforts, with the company promoting Latin American unity in part to combat Soviet influence in the region.[43]

Like the Santiago Bienal, its counterparts also gave rise to protest displays. Córdoba experienced its own anti-biennial exhibition in 1966, the *Primer Festival Argentino de Formas Contemporáneas*, which included objects and happenings by David Lamelas, Marta Minujín, Rogelio Polesello and Roberto Jacoby, among others. The event was organised in response to the perceived conservatism of the biennial, notably the fact that it overlooked new experiments in contemporary art such as those exhibited at the Instituto di Tella.[44] The final year of the Córdoba Bienal also featured mounting student and labour protests, targeted both at the Onganía dictatorship and at IKA, amidst massive layoffs and a fight for better working conditions.[45] Three years later, the censorship and repression of the Brazilian military dictatorship led to an important boycott of the São Paulo biennial by international artists and intellectuals.[46] Latin American artists living in New York organised a *Contrabienal*, consisting of a publication with contributions from artists across the diaspora.[47] Across the board, these protest displays intersected with larger movements and political concerns, demonstrating that the biennials became

40
Giunta, "Strategies of Internationalization", 199.

41
Gina McDaniel Tarver, *The New Iconoclasts: From Art to New Reality to Conceptual Art in Colombia, 1961-1975* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2016), 84.

42
"Premio Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo," n.d., Box 10 "COR 1965", Folder 18, FAIMAC.

43
Giunta, "Strategies of Internationalization", 200.

44
Jorge Romero Brest, "L'art actual de l'Amerique Latine en Argentine", *Art international* VIII, no. 10 (December 1964): 26-30.

45
Giunta, "Strategies of Internationalization", 226.

46
On Chile's participation in the boycott, see Amalia Cross, "Boycott Histories: On the Causes and Consequences of Chile's Participation in the Boycott of the 10th Bienal de São Paulo, 1969", *ICAA Documents Project Working Papers* 7 (May 2021): 6-25. https://icaa.mfah.org/files/asset/8aa0c89e475df7247c22c96e439af8981bb9c619.pdf, accessed May 2021.

47
Aimé Iglesias Lukin, "Contrabienal: Latin American Art, Politics and Identity in New York, 1969-1971". *Artl@s Bulletin* 3, no. 2 (2014): 68-82.

powerful springboards for other platforms, including oppositional ones.

The biennials also provided a forum for affiliated events, offering exposure and crowds for local museums, galleries, theatres and universities. Like the Santiago Bienal, which was accompanied by more than twenty satellite events over its final two iterations, the Córdoba Bienal spurred talks and conferences, shows of contemporary painting and sculpture by local artists and an experimental music festival. In addition, the biennials promoted emerging artists at the outset of their careers. Bernardo Salcedo and Beatriz González, for example, first became known in part due to the Coltejer Bienal.[48] In Santiago, emerging artists who received recognition included all three members of the experimental printmaking collective New York Graphic Workshop—Porter, awarded the IEAP prize in 1965, and Luis Camnitzer and José Guillermo Castillo, both of whom received honourable mentions in 1963, one year before the collective's founding. The exhibitions had a lasting effect on local publics, from increasing print collecting in Santiago to creating an education programme that shaped university curricula in São Paulo.[49] On a regional level, Jorge Glusberg, director of the Centro de Arte y Comunicación, lauded the productive encounters that the Coltejer Bienal made possible between artists and critics from across Latin America.[50] Alloway asserted the same for Córdoba, which he viewed as unique largely because it promoted exchange "on a grand scale", specifically among Latin American artists.[51] The praise lavished on these biennials echoes Rodríguez Saavedra and the Frei administration's statements discussed earlier, exalting the Santiago Bienal's contribution to regional exchange, as well as its importance as an international player in the emerging graphic biennial scene.

Comparing the Santiago Bienal to concurrent South American biennials reveals that its goals, sponsorship and reception were not necessarily unique. Its distinctiveness lies in its truly hemispheric purview of highly intertwined networks, with strong contributions from across the continent, together with its dedication to print, which the organisers poetically tied to an ethos of accessibility, generosity and exchange. By building strong ties with US figures and institutions, while also promoting a regional network that included Cuba, the Santiago Bienal enabled dialogue across Cold War spheres of influence. In so doing it paralleled other landmark exhibitions that, as Anthony Gardner and Charles Green have argued, often aimed to foster regional solidarity in the Global South through horizontal exchange, troubling Cold War binaries and geopolitical power imbalances.[52] The Bienal also demonstrated an approach to Pan-Americanism that included the US as only one actor among many, in a larger hemispheric network that did not centre them. In this respect the Bienal starkly contrasted, for example, the numerous traveling exhibitions of works on paper that MoMA's International Council circulated across Latin America focused mainly on US and Western European artists. In Santiago, for example, MoMA installed *The Family of Man* in 1958, *The American Woodcut Today* in 1960, *Abstract Drawings and Watercolor*s in 1963, *Jacques Lipchitz: Bronze Sketches* in 1964, *Josef Albers: Homage to the Square* in 1965 and *Lettering by Modern Artists* in 1966.[53] While these traveling shows demonstrated the power of works on paper to move easily across the hemisphere, they did little to promote local artistic production or transnational dialogue. The Bienal, meanwhile, seized upon the ability of prints to reflect the latest artistic developments from across the continent, foregrounding the

48
Tarver, *The New Iconoclasts*, 88.
49
Ana G. Magalhães, "Education for Contemporary Art in the Context of the Bienal de São Paulo", in *Making Biennials in Contemporary Times. Essays from the World Biennial Forum* (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, ICCo, 2015), 138.
50
Jorge Glusberg, "II Bienal de Arte Coltejer de Medellín", *Goya* 97 (July–August 1970): 38-43.
51
Lawrence Alloway, "Latin America and International Art", *Art in America* 53, no. 3 (June 1965): 65-77.
52
Green and Gardner, *Biennials, Triennials, and documenta*, 85-93.
53
"Internationally Circulating Exhibitions", The Museum of Modern Art, https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/learn/icelist.pdf, accessed May 2021.

centrality of Latin American production within that narrative.

In addition to creating an internationally acclaimed space for printmaking, the Bienal Americana de Grabado's legacy lies in the series of later Latin American graphic biennials that it inspired. The 1960s witnessed a boom in biennials established in the hemispheric South, outside of Western centres. These amount to what Gardner and Green call the "semi-forgotten second wave of biennials of the South", stretching from the early 1950s through to the 1980s.[54] Print-focused biennials in Latin America form a subset of this wave, and the Santiago Bienal played a central role in establishing this phenomenon. The longest running of the ensuing graphic biennials, the Bienal de San Juan del Grabado Latinoamericano, continues to operate in the 21st century, reimagined in 2004 as the Trienal Poli/Gráfica de San Juan, América Latina y el Caribe. Attesting to Santiago's lasting impact and the deep interconnectedness of the exhibitions, Ellena served on San Juan's consulting committee early on and later juried for its second iteration.[55] These subsequent biennials presented an opportunity to promote the increasingly experimental nature of contemporary printmaking. Starting in the late 1960s, printmaking began to incorporate strategies of Conceptual art, elaborating upon the earlier innovations that Una Johnson noted, such as multimedia and three-dimensional elements.[56] Silvia Dolinko notes an instance wherein an early Conceptual work was exhibited in 1970 at both the Santiago and San Juan biennials—Camnitzer's *La Linea Ausente* (The Absent Line, 1969). In San Juan it was awarded a prize, while in Santiago it went unacknowledged.[57] An etching of the titular phrase with a colourless horizontal strike-through bisecting the text, the work is both a literal depiction of the title and a demonstration of it. The Santiago Bienal, which began in an earlier moment, was perhaps not ready to celebrate this new work. Going forward, prints engaging with Conceptual art would gain increasing recognition in Latin American graphic biennials, alongside continued attention to established master printmakers employing traditional techniques. The infrastructure first developed by the Santiago Bienal thus continued into the following decades, adapting to promote the ever-evolving development of the medium in the region. Combined with its horizontal approach to Pan-American exchange, the structures and networks that the Bienal Americana de Grabado set out, provided an enduring model for later print-focused exhibitions in the region to elaborate upon.

54
Green and Gardner, *Biennials, Triennials, and documenta*, 10. See also Caroline A. Jones, "Biennial Culture: A Longer History", in Elena Filipovic, Marieke Van Hal, and Solveig Øvstebø, eds., *The Biennial Reader* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2010), 66-87.

55
Dolinko, *Arte plural,* 294.

56
Johnson, "Bienal Americana de Grabado", 84.

57
Dolinko, *Arte plural,* 293-294.

Author's Biography

Maeve Coudrelle is a PhD candidate in Art History at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture, Temple University. Their specialty is modern and contemporary prints and exhibition history in the Americas and Europe, with a focus on Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s. Coudrelle has been awarded grants and fellowships by the Getty Foundation, the Smithsonian Latino Center, the Southeastern College Art Conference, and the Conservation Center at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. They have curated for the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection at Temple University, the New Wilmington Art Association and the University of California, Santa Barbara, Art, Design, and Architecture Museum. Coudrelle has assisted with curatorial projects at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania and the Delaware Art Museum.