

# Aesthetic Interventions into Urban Space: Art, Gender Violence, and Pandemic in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia

**Rubén D. Yepes Muñoz**  
**Department of Art**  
**Florida Atlantic University**  
[ryepes@fau.edu](mailto:ryepes@fau.edu)

This article examines how artists and feminist collectives in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia mobilized aesthetic interventions in urban space to confront the intensification of gender-based violence during the overlapping crises of the Covid 19 pandemic and widespread sociopolitical unrest (2019–2022). Focusing on the work of Nirvana Paz, Lorena Wolffer, Colectiva Hilos, LASTESIS, Brigada Laura Rodig, Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas, and Vale la pena ser callejeras, the article argues that these practices exceed conventional artistic frameworks and operate instead as forms of embodied, affective, and spatial intervention capable of reshaping the dynamics of crisis itself. Drawing on the cultural studies concept of intervention and expanding it through the notion of aesthetic intervention, the article conceptualizes these works as practices that act directly upon the social distribution of visibility, affect, and spatial experience. Through close readings, the article demonstrates how the artworks and practices disrupted the colonial patriarchal structures that naturalize violence against women and gender minorities. By mobilizing affect, generating counterarchives, and reclaiming public space, these practices not only made gender violence publicly perceptible but also fostered feminist collectivities capable of challenging state neglect, patriarchal domination, and necropatriarchal logics. Ultimately, the article argues that the significance of these works lies in their capacity to intervene in the material, affective, and political conditions of crisis, contributing to the reconfiguration of urban space and the possibilities of feminist agency in Latin America.

**Keywords:** aesthetic intervention, gender-based violence, feminist art, urban space, necropatriarchy, Latin American art

Este artículo examina cómo artistas y colectivos feministas en México, Chile y Colombia movilizaron intervenciones estéticas en espacios urbanos para afrontar la intensificación de la violencia de género durante las crisis superpuestas de la pandemia de Covid-19 y la agitación sociopolítica generalizada (2019–2022). Centrándose en el trabajo de Nirvana Paz, Lorena Wolffer, Colectiva Hilos, LASTESIS, Brigada Laura Rodig, Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas y Vale la pena ser callejeras, el artículo sostiene que estas prácticas superan los marcos artísticos convencionales y operan en cambio como formas de intervención encarnada, afectiva y espacial capaces de remodelar la dinámica misma de la crisis. Basándose en el concepto de los estudios culturales de la intervención y ampliándolo a través de la noción de la intervención estética, el artículo conceptualiza estas obras como prácticas que actúan directamente sobre la distribución social de la visibilidad, el afecto y la experiencia espacial. A través de lecturas detalladas, el artículo demuestra cómo las

obras y prácticas alteraron las estructuras coloniales patriarcales que naturalizan la violencia contra las mujeres y las minorías de género. Al movilizar el afecto, generar contra-archivos y reclamar el espacio público, estas prácticas no solo hicieron que la violencia de género fuera perceptible públicamente, sino que también fomentaron colectividades feministas capaces de desafiar el abandono estatal, la dominación patriarcal y las lógicas necropatriarcales. En última instancia, el artículo sostiene que la importancia de estas obras radica en su capacidad para intervenir en las condiciones materiales, afectivas y políticas de la crisis, contribuyendo a la reconfiguración del espacio urbano y a las posibilidades de la agencia feminista en América Latina.

**Palabras clave:** intervención estética, violencia de género, arte feminista, espacio urbano, necropatriarcado, arte latinoamericano

\* I declare that I have used the generative AI tools Claude and Copilot for copyediting and style refinement. No other use of Generative AI tools was involved.

From 2019 to 2022, Latin America experienced a series of crises. Like much of the world, the region was severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with several countries ranking among the hardest hit, not only in terms of deaths and critical illness but also in terms of deep social disruption and uncertainty. However, the health crisis was only one of several dimensions of the crisis wave that spread across the region. In addition to the public health challenges, several countries faced sociopolitical unrest, economic instability, and a sharp increase in gender-based violence. Lockdowns and quarantine measures trapped many women in domestic spaces with their abusers while simultaneously making it more difficult to seek help or escape violent situations. The pandemic functioned as a catalyst that intensified existing patterns of violence against women and other gender and sexual minorities, while also creating new conditions under which that violence could remain in impunity.

This paper focuses on three national contexts, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, where the gender violence crisis was particularly severe and where citizen and artistic responses constituted some of the most powerful interventions into the regional crisis. In Mexico, violence against women and other gender and sexual minorities during the pandemic was met with massive nationwide protests in 2020. In Chile, the state's brutal response to the 2019–20 *Estallido Social* (Social Outbreak) enabled the widespread use of sexual violence by the police. During Colombia's 2021 *Paro Nacional* (National Strike), sexual violence was also used by the police as a means of repression. Across these countries, the escalation in gender-based violence revealed deep-rooted patriarchal and colonial structures that have shaped gender dynamics for centuries.

Artists, curators, and other cultural actors responded to the gender violence crisis in various ways, with the contestation of urban space emerging as a particularly salient aspect of their work and of feminist agency generally. Artists intervened in metro stations,

highway interchanges, parks, and other public sites where colonial-patriarchal power inscribes itself into the city's infrastructure and where women's bodies are rendered vulnerable to violence. In some cases, artists used art to denounce gender-based violence and transform urban space into a site of collective mourning. In others, they sought to generate feminist communities of care and reclaim urban space as a place where women and other gender minorities could gather, create, and exercise freedom. In yet other cases, they challenged who has the authority to name places, occupy public space, and determine whose histories and struggles merit spatial presence and commemoration. Across these diverse approaches, artists recognized that aesthetic practice could intervene in the spatial, discursive, and affective structures and dynamics that sustain gender violence and colonial-patriarchal domination, with urban space serving as one of a key site of struggle.

## Aesthetic Intervention

In this paper, which is part of a larger research project examining the art created in response to the multidimensional contexts of crisis that developed across Latin America between 2019 and 2022, I argue that, in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, the urgency of the gender violence crisis spurred artists and curators to produce work whose significance extends beyond the institutional field of art, local art historical narratives, and conventional aesthetic evaluation.<sup>1</sup> Instead, its impact lies in its agency as *aesthetic intervention* into urban space within contexts of crisis. Drawing from on-site and online research and through a contextualized close reading of several works, I demonstrate that, rather than merely representing or documenting gender violence, these interventions actively influenced the dynamics of crisis by mobilizing affects, reshaping collective memory and narratives, fostering feminist communities of care and resistance, and countering state neglect, patriarchal violence, and the necropatriarchal structures that sustain gender oppression in Latin America. Further, I analyze the aesthetic strategies of these urban interventions, examining how the aesthetic elements deployed by them engaged with specific contexts of crisis. While some of the work in question may not align with conventional measures of artistic excellence, its relevance emerges from its capacity to impact specific contexts and to influence the development and outcome of crisis.

In saying “aesthetic intervention,” I am formulating a new dimension to one of cultural studies’ key contributions to contemporary theoretical-political imagination, the concept of intervention.<sup>2</sup> Derived from Gramsci’s notion of organic intellectual (Hall 2018, 76–

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<sup>1</sup> Other papers address aesthetic interventions into the health and sociopolitical crises. The archive of this research includes around seventy artworks and exhibitions. The project has a website: <https://www.artcovid19crisislatinamerica.com>

<sup>2</sup> Versions of this and the following paragraph appear in my recent articles on art responding to the health and gender violence crises in Latin America (2019–2022). I include them here as they are foundational to my analysis.

86), this concept refers to a politically committed praxis that is “theoretically oriented towards transformation” (Restrepo 2012, 163), seeking to modify the articulations, relations, and processes that constitute specific cultural and social contexts.<sup>3</sup> An intervention may consist in the interruption of configurations of common sense and collective imaginaries, the denaturalization of dominant meanings and discourses, or the creation of new representations and collective affects. While interventions often have an aesthetic dimension, in some cases the intervention itself is aesthetic, where the aesthetic constitutes both the form and domain of the intervention. Here, “aesthetic” should not be understood in the sense of matters of taste in art or of the correspondence between “form” and “content” but in the broad sense of embodied, affective experience.

Aesthetic interventions can help modify the regimes that control the social distribution of the visible and invisible, the audible and inaudible, the forms of affect that are publicly allowed and those that are disallowed—challenging, for instance, the systematic naturalizing of violence against women and other gender and sexual minorities while simultaneously rendering their experiences invisible. They can also influence the structures that organize embodied experience in private and public space, disrupting the spatial logics that confine women to domestic vulnerability while reserving public space for masculine dominance, and disrupting the affective economies through which fear, shame, and isolation are imposed on women and gender minorities, enabling instead the circulation of affects of solidarity, courage, and collective resistance.

Crucially, the agency of aesthetic intervention extends beyond aesthetic experience and into the social field because, as most recent theories of affect hold, affect is fundamentally linked to our capacity to act, that is, to agency (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, 1–6). Thus, the term aesthetic intervention refers to practices that are capable, through the aesthetic experience they enable, of resisting, subverting, deconstructing, and transforming the contexts within which they occur.

I approach urban space not simply as built environment but, following Doreen Massey (2005), as a dynamic social construct that is shaped by heterogeneous interrelations and processes. Urban space is both the physical environment of cities and the social, economic, and political dynamics that shape these spaces. Crucially, these interrelations and processes include the agency of both human and nonhuman entities—such as the Covid-19 virus, and also art. As Massey emphasizes, space, including urban space, is always in the process of becoming, a product of the intersecting and often conflicting flows of people, other living beings, nonliving beings, resources, and discourse. In this view, cities are continually reconfigured through heterogeneous local and translocal forces. The

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<sup>3</sup> I have written more extensively on the concept of intervention in my book *Estudios visuales desde América Latina* (2024).

irruption of nonhuman agents such as SARS-CoV-2 introduced unpredictability and instability into urban space, which, in many Latin American cities, took the form of crisis.

In what follows, I examine several artworks and projects created in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia that intervened in the gender-based violence crisis that took place around the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. The paper focuses specifically on how artists in these countries deployed various aesthetic strategies in urban space not only to counter gender violence but also to challenge the colonial-patriarchal structures of domination that sustain gender violence in these and other Latin American countries.

## **Feminist Protest, Collectivity, and Indictment of Colonial-Patriarchal Violence: Nirvana Paz, Lorena Wolffer, and Colectiva Hilos**

In Mexico, the pandemic coincided with an intensification of an already severe gender violence crisis. During this period, an average of ten women were murdered daily, most often by intimate partners or family members, as lockdown measures exacerbated conditions of domestic confinement, economic insecurity, and limited access to institutional support. According to the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (2021), hundreds of cases of gender-based violence were officially reported in 2020 alone, although activists and scholars consistently stressed that these figures underrepresent the scale of the crisis due to systemic underreporting and widespread impunity. Feminist organizations and human rights groups emphasized that femicide represented only the most visible and extreme expression of a broader continuum of gendered violence, including disappearances, sexual assault, harassment, and psychological abuse. The increase in gender-based violence during the pandemic underscored its structural nature, rooted in entrenched patriarchal norms and a long-standing normalization of gendered violence within Mexican society and state institutions.

This context of escalating violence catalyzed mass feminist mobilizations between March 7 and 10, 2020, in coordination with the International Women's Strike and International Women's Day. On March 8, more than 200,000 people took to the streets in Mexico City and other urban centers, demanding justice for victims of femicide, accountability for state negligence, and an end to impunity. The protests were marked by a confrontational repertoire of actions, including marches, interventions on public monuments, and the naming of victims, which sought to make gender violence visible in public space.

The following day, feminist collectives organized a nationwide women's strike, *Un día sin nosotras* (A Day Without Us), calling on women and other citizens to withdraw their

labor, consumption, and presence from public life to both denounce their systemic marginalization and demonstrate their importance to society. Together, these actions directly challenged President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's minimization of the crisis and framed gender violence not as an exceptional phenomenon, but as a vertebral part of patriarchy and inequality in Mexico.<sup>4</sup>

### **Nirvana Paz**

Many artists joined the protests, with some of them also contributing to them through their work. In Mexico City, Nirvana Paz, an artist who works on issues of self-identity, the body, and urban space, created the *Interfeminista* series in 2020. Perhaps the most compelling piece is *Interfeminista I (a Martha Rosler)*, a reactivation of Rosler's landmark feminist video performance, *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975).<sup>5</sup> During the quarantine, Paz projected a video of herself reenacting the performance through her apartment window. We see Paz in her kitchen, taking one utensil at a time and emphatically demonstrating its use before setting it aside.

Unlike Rosler, Paz, displaying a deadpan demeanor, does not pronounce the name of each utensil, and she performs the gestures more rapidly and aggressively than Rosler. Further, this is not Rosler's kitchen but a typical urban middle-class Mexican kitchen and Paz herself is ethnically Mexican rather than Caucasian. These differences signal the intertextuality and intersectionality of her piece, suggesting the weariness of women who, forty-five years after Rosler's performance, are still confined to domestic space, a confinement that became mandatory during the pandemic.

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<sup>4</sup> On the 2020 feminist protests in Mexico, see Abarca Reyes (2022) and Arteaga Botello and Cardona Acuña (2023).

<sup>5</sup> *Interfeminista II* documents the graffiti interventions of the Ángel de la Independencia monument, in Mexico City, which was an important antecedent to the March 2020 protests. *Interfeminista III* is, in the artist's words, a "shameless appropriation of the image of a famous film to recall the feminist phrase: 'We are one and we are many'" (Paz, in personal communication, June 2022; my translations throughout).



Figure 1. Nirvana Paz, *Interfeminista I* (still), 2020<sup>6</sup>

Although the reference to Rosler's video performance is explicit, we should not dismiss Paz's reenactment as a mere copy. While Rosler's performance operates within the context of 1970s second-wave North American feminism, Paz's reenactment—staged over four decades later by a Mexican woman artist in Latin America and projected into urban space rather than exhibited in museums and galleries—acquires distinct layers of meaning that must be read carefully.

By projecting from domestic space into urban space during the health and gender violence crisis, Paz disrupts the spatial logic that confines women's labor and suffering to the private sphere, rendering it invisible to public consciousness and political action in a way that is different and perhaps more context-specific than Rosler's piece, which has been presented in various art galleries and museums and is part of the MoMA collection. The projection transforms the apartment window from a boundary separating the private and public spheres into a permeable membrane through which feminist critique intervenes urban space, making audible and visible forms of domestic oppression that patriarchal structures strive to maintain silent and invisible.

The affective dimension of Paz's intervention is crucial to understanding its agency within the gender violence crisis. The accelerated, visceral, and repetitive gestures that she enacts upon kitchen implements are not a representation of anger and frustration; they are, in Paz's voice, "expressions of how I felt and feel as a woman."<sup>7</sup> If, as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987, 253–262) suggest, affects are "intensities," sensed modifications in the body's dynamic material assemblage that respond to external changes, we could

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<sup>6</sup> Screen capture, authorized by Paz.

<sup>7</sup> In personal communication, June 2022.

say that Paz's gestures are expressions of affective intensities that circulated through her own body, generating affects that circulate through the video itself.

Deleuze and Guattari insist that the precise character of affect is difficult to describe, at least from the outset, and indeed, we could say that the affects generated through the tension between her demeanor and her emphatic movements do not quite fit conventional descriptions of affects such as anger and frustration. This would leave the viewer in need of a discursive frame that could make sense of such affective intensities.

That frame was provided through the performances' (both Rolser's and Paz's) evocation of the violence inherent in the gendered distribution of labor under capitalism that feminism has long denounced, where unpaid feminized domestic work has been essential to capitalist economies while systematically denied value. By projecting this performance during the pandemic and in the context of the feminists' protests, Paz's intervention inserts feminist critique directly into the affectivity of crisis, contributing to the circulation of affects that, precisely because they move beyond conventional representations of exhaustion and rage, could signal the structural conditions of women's oppression while also energizing the feminist protests.

As the word "Interfeminist" in the title indicates, Paz is aware of the intersectional character of her video performance. While her reenactment maintains Rosler's indictment of the patriarchal confinement of women to invisible labor in the private sphere, it also acknowledges the persistent and distinct structures of oppression that Latin American women face, where, as decolonial feminists such as María Lugones (2007, 186–189), Ochy Curiel (2007, 94), and Yuderlys Espinosa Miñoso (2022, 143–147) sustain, gender oppression is inseparable from colonial, racial, and class hierarchies.

The deeply rooted patriarchal and machista culture of Mexican society is intertwined with class and racial discrimination of colonial origin, when the systematic devaluation of indigenous and Afro-Mexican women first took shape, establishing a racialized gender system that normalizes and even institutionalizes the domination of women's bodies, especially of racialized and poor women. Together with the title, Paz's rapid, aggressive gestures signal both the exhaustion of putting up with systemic violence against women and an awareness of how such violence functions, in Paz's words, as "a colonial-patriarchal form of control over bodies."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In personal communication, June 2022.

## Lorena Wolffer

Also in Mexico City, Lorena Wolffer, who is renowned for both her art and activist work, coordinated *Diarias/Comunidades de cuidado* (2020), *Diarias global* (2020–2022), and *Historias propias <desde casa>* (2020–present). These projects compound and render visible the experiences of cisgender and trans women, including during the pandemic and the gender violence crisis, with the goal of fostering communities of care.<sup>9</sup>

Participants were invited to share images and stories of the situations, spaces, challenges and relationships that determined their lives during the pandemic, including, for some of them, living in confinement with their aggressors and assuming even greater workloads and responsibilities as caregivers and managers of their households.<sup>10</sup>

Wolffer sees these projects as exercises “in collective enunciation, a constantly updated repository imagined from a global ‘us.’”<sup>11</sup> Instead of merely documenting the pandemic’s impact on women, these projects aimed to create a space for women to explore political strategies for securing their rights and freedom, even as the immediate demands of SARS-CoV-2 overshadowed women’s struggles.



Figure 2. Sandra Martí, *Desde casa 1.11.20* (detail), part of Lorena Woffler’s *Historias propias <desde casa>* project (2020–present)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See the project on the artist website: <https://lorenawolffer.net/2023/02/21/historias-proprias-desde-casa/>. See the project blog: <https://historiaspropriasdesdecasa.blogspot.com>.

<sup>10</sup> Woffler, in personal communication.

<sup>11</sup> Woffler, in personal communication.

<sup>12</sup> Website capture, authorized by Woffler.

Although the interventions of both Paz and Wolffer resist violence against women during the crisis, Wolffer's approach diverged from Paz's in several different ways. While Paz's video performance moves from domestic to public space and from individual action to collective presence, Wolffer used urban and virtual space to link individual experiences into horizontal networks of collective agency and care. The participatory structure of *Diarias/Comunidades de cuidado*, *Diarias global*, and *Historias propias <desde casa>* transformed isolated experiences of confinement into a "collective enunciation," refusing the isolation of women's experiences and the atomization of women's struggles under pandemic conditions.

By inviting participants to contribute images and narratives of their daily realities, Wolffer's projects did not merely make visible what has been hidden; they created and documented new forms of collective experience that operate outside institutional frameworks. In doing so, they generated a counterarchive of women's experiences that challenges official narratives of the pandemic, which in Mexico to a large degree have overlooked gender-based violence and the intensification of women's unpaid labor.

The affective work of these projects operates differently than Paz's visceral performance but is no less crucial to feminist mobilization during the crisis. While Paz's gestures channel affective intensities through her own body and gestuality, Wolffer's collaborative platforms facilitate the circulation of affects across bodies and subjectivities. As Jill Bennett writes, affect is "essentially mobile . . . conducted and amplified through media vectors" (2012, 22). Wolffer's platforms act as the key nodes in a network of affective vectors: participants' sharing of their stories of living with aggressors, managing escalating household responsibilities, and navigating pandemic restrictions while facing violence generates affective intensities that move between texts, images, voices, and documents.

These circulating affects, semantically framed by texts and images as fear, exhaustion, anger, but also resilience, solidarity, and care, work against the isolation that domestic confinement imposed and that patriarchal violence promotes and exploits. This affective circulation functions as a binding force, generating among participants a felt awareness that they are not alone: despite their differences, their experiences intersect through the various media that Wolffer proposes, constituting a matrix from which collective action can emerge. As living archives that accumulate affective force through constant updating, these repositories strengthen collective bonds and sustain feminist agency over time, even as the immediacy of the health and gender violence crises threatened to overwhelm feminist resistance.

Wolffer's framing of these projects as spaces for the exploration of agential strategies through which women could secure their rights and freedom reveals their orientation

toward social transformation. The inclusion of both cisgender and trans women from different social sectors configures an intersectional feminist praxis that recognizes how patriarchal structures of domination operate through the naturalization of binary gender identities. Further, Wolffer's networks fostered forms of mutual care and horizontal solidarity that emerged from and responded to the specific conditions of racial, class, and gender violence in Mexico and Latin America.

By moving beyond victimhood and promoting intersectional awareness and action, this work ascribes to decolonial feminism's imperative to resist the "coloniality of gender," the imposition of a binary gender system that serves persisting colonial-patriarchal structures of domination (Lugones 2007, 186), structures that arguably lie at the core of violence against women and gender minorities in Mexico and that the state has largely failed to acknowledge and intervene.

### **Colectiva Hilos**

In the city of Guadalajara, Mexico, Colectiva Hilos created *Sangre de mi sangre*, a collective performance that both denounces femicide and mourns the mortal victims of gender-based violence.<sup>13</sup> The project began in December 2019 at Parque Rojo, when the collective invited women from the community to weave red yarn into large fabrics. Over 150 persons responded, creating a series of enormous semitransparent red fabrics that spanned over 241 square meters. On March 7, 2020 (the day before International Women's Day), the fabrics were ceremoniously carried down Avenida Chapultepec and placed at the base of the public monument *Madre Patria* where, extended on the asphalt, they resembled pools of blood.

The following day, they were carried in silent procession to the Glorieta de los Desaparecidos, in a collective ritual of caring and healing offered to the relatives of those who have disappeared amid the recent wave of violence in Mexico. The act of weaving and carrying the fabrics across town created a powerful tension between denouncing violence against women, mourning the victims and performing a collective ritual of healing and mutual care.

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<sup>13</sup> The collective's founding members are: María Álvarez del Castillo, Laura Garza, Florencia Guillén, Mariana Jiménez, Maj Lindström, Isabel López Ribera, Eleonora Ramal, Alejandra Ruiz Rincón, Claudia Rodríguez, and Margarita Rodríguez.



Figure 3. Colectiva Hilos, *Sangre de mi sangre*. Guadalajara, Jalisco, 2020–present.  
Photographer: Álvaro Argüelles.<sup>14</sup>

The collective weaving and procession that constitute *Sangre de mi sangre* transform public space into a site where the invisible violence against women becomes materially and affectively present. The massive red fabrics render the blood of femicide victims into an unavoidable public presence, making the scale of gender-based violence impossible to ignore. By inviting the public to participate in the creation process, Colectiva Hilos disrupts the gendered distribution of space that confines women's grief and rage to private, domestic spaces. In its movement from Plaza de la República to the Glorieta de lxs Desaparecidxs, the performance transformed the urban landscape into a symbolic and affective space, countering the official narrative of crisis in which gender violence was downplayed.

This intervention into public space during the pandemic, when movement was restricted and when gender violence was escalating behind closed doors, asserts the collective right to occupy urban space for feminist mourning and denunciation, reclaiming the city as a site where women's suffering and resistance become publicly visible and politically significant.

The affective dimension of *Sangre de mi sangre* is central to its agency as intervention into the gender violence crisis. As Katja May (2023, 2–5) argues, textile crafts that have traditionally been framed as feminized labor and creation are frequently invested with affect and activist potential. Even if they are not explicitly framed as political action, they, in the language we have been using, function as vectors of collective affects that not only bring women and other minority subjects together but also constitute a seminal political subjectivity. Arguably, for at least some participants, the act of weaving generated

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<sup>14</sup> Image courtesy of Colectiva Hilos.

affective intensities that circulated through the collectivity. The repetitive, meditative labor of threading yarn in the company of other bodies generated a collective affective fabric that bound participants together into a common creative and political subject.

Indeed, so much is suggested by the willingness and commitment with which most participants engaged in the collective weaving and the ensuing action in urban space. As participants wove and then carried the massive red fabrics through the streets in silent procession, these collective affects also moved through urban space, creating an opportunity for other citizens to resonate with them. The ritual dimension of the act of weaving, the silent procession, and the offering of the fabrics to relatives of the disappeared configures the performance as an aesthetic intervention that amplified and disseminated affect through urban space, operating simultaneously as mourning, denunciation, and prefigurative political practice.

The performance counters violence against women as, to return to Paz's expression, colonial-patriarchal control over feminized bodies. By placing the fabric at the base of the *Madre Patria* ("Mother Land") monument, framing the performance as an offering to the relatives of victims of violence, and challenging the downplaying of gender violence in the government's narrative of the crisis, Colectiva Hilos's performance suggests that violence against women is inseparable from broader structures of state violence, systemic oppression, and the normalization of disposable lives under colonial-patriarchal logic.

Sayak Valencia (2019, 185) suggests that, in Latin American countries such as Mexico, the colonial-patriarchal structure of domination has taken the form of a "necro-patriarchy" that produces "necro-masculinities," a structure of male domination and subjectivity that naturalizes violence and death, or the threat of death, as an instrument of power. This violence and threat is itself an aspect of the "gore capitalism"—a variety of neoliberal capitalism that has emerged in economically precarious spaces and in which violence and criminal economies have become a significant component, even as they are relegated to the margins of official hegemonic political and economic discourse (Valencia 2018, 28).

In Mexico (and in Chile, Colombia, and other Latin American countries), this necrocolonial-patriarchal structure of male domination, in which the colonial logic of racial, ethnic, and class domination intersects with gender domination and violence as an instrument of power, includes the state itself, exacerbating the problem of femicide and gender violence. The act of weaving together and carrying the fabrics across the city from one monument to another not only denounces violence against women but also enacts forms of mutual care and horizontal solidarity that decry the state's failure to protect women and its alignment with the necropatriarchal structure of male domination, while contributing to the feminist solidarity, collectivity, resistance, and agency needed to dislodge this structure.

## **LASTESIS and Brigada Laura Rodig: *Parrhesia* and the Reclamation of Urban Space**

In Chile, the most significant civil protest movement of recent decades, the *Estallido social* (Social Outbreak), erupted in October 2019, several months before the onset of the pandemic, when waves of high school students began collectively evading fares by jumping the turnstiles at the Santiago metro. President Sebastián Piñera responded by deploying police forces to repress the protests and militarizing major cities under the guise of restoring public order. What initially appeared as a protest against a modest fare increase rapidly escalated into a nationwide uprising that exposed deep-seated discontent with structural inequality, the privatization and deterioration of public services, and the concentration of political and economic power (Labarca et al. 2019).

According to Human Rights Watch, state repression resulted in more than 5,500 victims of violence, including hundreds of ocular injuries, cases of torture, and sexual violence. At least 70 cases of sexual violence against protestors, mostly women, have been documented. This was compounded by a surge in gender violence during the quarantines, which, while not as severe as in other Latin American countries, marked a setback for women's rights and the protection of gender minorities.

In response, feminist collectives organized mass protests to reject gender violence and sexism across Chilean society. On March 8 2020 the largest civil mobilization in recent Chilean history took place, when, according to some estimates, around two million women and other citizens took to the streets, in addition to the thousands of citizens mobilizing in the context of the *Estallido*.<sup>15</sup> Although the mobilization was interrupted just days later by the arrival of Covid-19, as quarantines and curfews emptied the streets, it revealed the extent of the social discontent with decades of neoliberal restructuring initiated under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship and consolidated under democratic governments, government corruption, and ingrained patriarchy.<sup>16</sup>

### **LASTESIS**

LASTESIS is the feminist art collective that was most active during the Social Outbreak and its aftermath.<sup>17</sup> Their declared goal is to engage feminist theory (hence the name, "Theses") through art and to hold accountable state and social institutions that perpetuate patriarchy and gender violence.

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<sup>15</sup> See Palestro Contreras (2020), Arias España and D'Arrigo (2021), Ibañez Carrillo and Stang (2021).

<sup>16</sup> See Araujo (2019); Mayol (2019); Canales (2022).

<sup>17</sup> LASTESIS founding members are: Daffne Valdés Vargas, Paula Cometa Stange, Lea Cáceres Díaz, and Sibila Sotomayor Van Rysseghem.

*Un violador en tu camino* is a collective performance piece created with the purpose of protesting against violations of the rights of women and of individuals belonging to nonnormative sexual and gender identities in the context of the 2019 protests in Chile.<sup>18</sup> It was first performed on November 20, 2019, in Santiago, in Plaza Aníbal Pinto, Plaza Victoria, and in front of the headquarters of the Second Carabinieri Squadron.

In this performance, phrases such as “patriarchy is a judge who judges us for being born and our punishment is the violence you don’t see” and “the oppressive state is a rapist male” are accompanied by a pulsating electronic drumbeat projected from a loudspeaker and a simple yet effective choreography, which LASTESIS members and other protesters often performed blindfolded.

The performance went globally viral, with feminist collectives around the world translating the lyrics and adapting the performance to their own demonstrations, leading to its status as feminist anthem.



Figure 4. LASTESIS, *Un violador en tu camino*.  
Performed in Valparaíso, Chile, November 20, 2019.<sup>19</sup>

By creating a collective ritual that women and other gender minorities could enact together, LASTESIS generated a space of horizontal solidarity and mutual recognition that, like in Woffler’s work, articulates the feminist solidarity and collective agency necessary to challenge patriarchy. *Un violador* unapologetically calls out patriarchal violence and its collusion with the state, signaling collective awareness of the necropatriarchal structure of domination that underpins violence and oppression against

<sup>18</sup> Several videos of the performance are available online. One such video may be seen here: <https://youtu.be/aB7r6hdo3W4?si=eIWc3V8u27dKkgXu>

<sup>19</sup> Image courtesy of LASTESIS.

women and other gender minorities (Valencia 2019), not only in Chile but across Latin America.

Part of the performance's brilliance is that its format is both easily adaptable and consistently poignant, allowing for its quick appropriation and reenactment in different contexts. Although Valencia (2019) focuses on necropatriarchy in Mexico, the performance's extensive replication around the world suggests that this structure has a global reach or, at least, that there is a global awareness of its pervasiveness.

*Un violador en tu camino* intervenes in the gender violence crisis by speaking truth to the necropatriarchal structure that operates through state institutions and social relations in Latin America. What is perhaps the performance's most incisive indictment—"the oppressive state is a rapist male"—constitutes a form of *parrhesia* in Michel Foucault's (2001, 12–14) sense: a speaking of truth to power in which there is a power differential between speaker and target but also a moral duty to speak the truth, a practice that, as Foucault argues, was not only essential to Athenian democracy but is crucial for democracy in general.

We could add, beyond Foucault's observations, that, in the collective's work, courage is present not only as ethical principal but also as affect. Courage operates as a central affect for the collective, performed through their repeated acts of public defiance, which in turn transmit this affect to urban audiences who encounter their work. *Un violador* enacted a form of feminist *parrhesia* that condenses the courage, solidarity, and collective agency necessary to challenge and ultimately dismantle necropatriarchy. Although LASTESIS no longer performs the piece and its presence in feminist protests has waned, it would be difficult to deny its role in catalyzing feminist protest during the *Estallido* and around and beyond the pandemic.

To fully understand *Un violador en tu camino*'s unprecedented global resonance and its agency as aesthetic intervention we must delve into its affective dimension. The performance generates affect through the collective presence of bodies, the pulsating drumbeat, and the repetition of movement and text, creating a collective rhythm that binds participants together through shared embodied experience. As bodies move in unison as if animated by the same heartbeat, as they collectively call out patriarchal violence and state complicity, not only courage but also unqualified affects, affective intensities in Deleuze and Guattari's sense, circulate through the collective body and extend outward into the surrounding space and audience.

The performances are not representations of anger and resistance; rather, bodies, voices, drumbeats, and movements act as "affective vectors" (Bennett 2012, 22) that catalyze, disseminate, and amplify these intensities. This affective production is part of the

performance's inherent openness and adaptability: women and other citizens could, in different contexts and circumstances, positioned within different identities, frame this intensity as courage, rage, determination, hope, and other emotions.<sup>20</sup>

Videos and images of *Un violador* performed across cities, countries, and continents helped create a transnational affective energy that energized women's struggles against patriarchal violence in different contexts while also linking them in the shared awareness of the pervasiveness of systemic gender oppression. Through its combination of denunciation, collective ritual, affective circulation, and transnational replication, *Un violador en tu camino* demonstrates how aesthetic interventions can play not a supplementary but a central role in feminist resistance across multiple sites and scales, fostering the collectivity necessary to confront gender violence and patriarchal domination.

### **Brigada Laura Rodig**

LASTESIS was not the only feminist art group active during the *Estallido*. Brigada Laura Rodig emerged from Coordinadora Feminista 8M, a feminist collective that played a pivotal role in organizing the March 8<sup>th</sup> protest. Named after a feminist artist who is influential among radical feminist sectors, the collective, most of whose members identify as lesbians, formed through the shared interest in using art as a means of radical feminist intervention. Their interventions are reminiscent of several artistic interventions in the context of Pinochet's dictatorship that are key references of political art in Chile and Latin America.

Most notably, Brigada Laura Rodig follows in the tradition of muralists "brigades" like Brigada Ramona Parra, the muralist collective founded in 1968 that was active during the government of Salvador Allende and whose murals were whitewashed under Pinochet. Like Brigada Ramona Parra, whose name honored a young communist student militant killed by police in 1946, Brigada Laura Rodig's choice of namesake signals an explicit genealogy of resistance that links past and present struggles.

Brigada Laura Rodig interventions are also reminiscent of those of the Escena de Avanzada, the group of radical 1970s and 80s artists such as Lotty Rosenfeld, Carlos Leppe, Carlos Altamirano, Gonzalo Díaz Cuevas, and the CADA collective, who used a conceptualist approach to oppose the Pinochet dictatorship (Camnitzer 2007, 84–90). In one intervention, Brigada Laura Rodig appropriated the CADA collective's "No +" campaign (which reads "no more" in Spanish and the public could complete the phrase,

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<sup>20</sup> Brian Massumi (2002, 28), in his reading of Deleuze and Guattari, draws a distinction between "unqualified affect" (affect as intensity) and emotions, in which affect is qualified semantically ("courage," "anger," "hope," etc.). In this view, affect's inherent openness is what enables its political capture.

rendering graffiti such as “No + Pinochet”). They created banners and posters with messages like “No+ abusos,” “No+ sexismo en la educación,” and “No+ femicidios” (No more abuse, No more sexism in education, and No more femicides), which they handed out during the *Estallido*.

This intervention went beyond denouncing violence against women and indicting state violence. By endowing the claims, anger, and determination of protesters with a highly effective graphic form and by claiming lineage with key artists and artistic movements of twentieth-century Chilean political art, Brigada Laura Rodig’s intervention not only reminded the Chilean public of the violence and crimes committed against women and dissenters, both during the *Estallido* and in Chile’s recent history, but also served as vectors of both meaning and affect, enabling their circulation between and beyond the collective body of protest.



Figure 5. Brigada Laura Rodig, *Mónica Briones*, intervention in the Plaza de Armas metro station. Santiago, 2019.<sup>21</sup>

In another noteworthy intervention, Brigada Laura Rodig covered the signs of several Santiago metro stations with labels bearing the names of notable women from each station’s area or whose history subverts the meanings of the stations’ official names. For instance, *Escuela Militar* was renamed *Comandante Tamara*, the alias of Cecilia Magni Camino (1956–1988), a leader of Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, a 1980s guerrilla organization that fought against Augusto Pinochet’s military dictatorship. Similarly, the *Plaza de Armas* sign became *Mónica Briones* (1950–1984), a painter murdered during the Pinochet dictatorship, often recognized as the first lesbophobic hate crime victim in Chile.

<sup>21</sup> Image courtesy of Brigada Laura Rodig.

This renaming of metro stations constitutes a poignant intervention into urban space. The Santiago metro system, as a crucial infrastructure of urban mobility and everyday life, has been shaped by and embodies a particular spatial politics that naturalizes patriarchal and militaristic state power. Station names like *Escuela Militar* and *Plaza de Armas* inscribe masculine authority, colonial violence, and heteronormative order into the city's cartography, disseminating and naturalizing affects of pride and allegiance to military and state across the citizen body. This inscription produces urban space as a site that legitimizes colonial and patriarchal subjectivities and forms of power while other experiences are hidden or erased from public space.

By overlaying these official nameplates with the names of women resistance fighters, lesbian artists murdered by the state, and feminist militants, Brigada Laura Rodig disrupted the semantic and affective operation of colonial-patriarchal power. This disruption operates at several scales. At the micropolitical level, it challenges the politics of place naming by questioning who has the authority to inscribe meaning onto urban infrastructure and whose histories are deemed worthy of organizing citizens' everyday spatial experience. At the mesopolitical level of urban mobility, thousands of commuters encounter these feminist counterinscriptions in their daily transit through the city, experiencing a collision between official and insurgent narratives at the very sites where urban circulation is regulated and controlled.

At the macropolitical level of national memory, the intervention disputes which lives, struggles, and political actions merit public commemoration and spatial presence. Through the strategic reinscription of women's names and histories onto the city's infrastructure, Brigada Laura Rodig mobilized a feminist genealogy to unsettle the patriarchal logic embedded in urban space, transforming spaces of circulation into affective sites of memory, dissent, and feminist recognition.

### **Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas and Vale la pena ser callejeras: Reclaiming Dangerous Spaces, Enacting Feminist *Poiesis***

Like in Mexico, in Colombia violence against women and gender minorities is widely ingrained. It has been fueled by the country's patriarchal culture, gender inequality, the armed conflict, and the mafia culture that developed in the 1980s and 90s. The situation became worse between 2019 and 2021, when two interrelated crises, the pandemic and the *Paro Nacional* (National Strike), swept across the nation, causing widespread turmoil and suffering.

According to *Observatorio colombiano de las mujeres* (2021), in the first weeks of the pandemic quarantines, there was a 142% increase in domestic gender violence; toward the end of 2020, that figure had jumped to 230%. Calls to the national domestic violence

hotline increased by 91% during the quarantine period, revealing the scale of the crisis unfolding behind closed doors.

Worse still, femicide rates increased by 34% between March 2019 and March 2020 (Ortega Pacheco and Martínez Rudas 2021). Between March and August 2020 alone, 243 women were murdered on account of their gender. Feminist organizations and human rights groups consistently emphasized that these official figures underrepresented the true scale of the crisis. By the end of the pandemic, 93% of femicide cases from that year remained in impunity, revealing the state's systematic failure to protect women and the normalization of gender-based violence within state institutions and Colombian society.

Unlike Chile, where the *Estallido Social* was quelled by the pandemic, in Colombia the 2021 *Paro Nacional* gained strength because of the pandemic. The nationwide strike revamped the 2019–20 *Paro Nacional*, which had brought forward demands regarding health, education, employment, lack of opportunities, social exclusion, and violence against groups such as social leaders, peasants, Afrodescendants, and women.

The state's response to the 2021 *Paro*—the larger of the two protests—relied mainly on police repression, compounded by violence from civilian and paramilitary actors. This included sexual violence as a means of repression: the Public Defender's Office reported 106 cases of sexual violence against women and members of the LGBTI community in June 2021 alone (see Amnesty International 2021). These figures and the fact that, as feminist organizations emphasize, the figures are likely not representative of the actual situation reveal how the state deployed gendered violence as a tool of political control.

There was also a significant increase in cases of sexual harassment and violence in public spaces unrelated to the *Paro*, underscoring that the crisis extended beyond the context of the protest and its repression. Indeed, one could argue that, similar to Mexico, in Colombia the convergence of neoliberal governance, political violence, and transnational illegal economies was subtended by a necrocolonial-patriarchal structure that has targeted minorities, particularly racialized subjects and gender minorities.

### **Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas**

In November 2019, the intersection of 26th Street and 30th Avenue was deemed the most dangerous place for women in Bogotá by the District Observatory for Women and Gender Equality. The intersection, comprising a highway interchange, a plaza, and pedestrian tunnels, has been the site of a high number of sexual assaults, muggings, and murders.<sup>22</sup> To reclaim the site, the District organized an art contest, which was won by Colectiva de

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<sup>22</sup> I lived near the intersection during the two *Paros* and more than once witnessed muggings and the accosting of women.

Mujeres Muralistas. Since 2019, they have been painting graffiti murals and posting images on the walls of the interchange and tunnels, as well as organizing community meetings, film screenings and dance performances at the intersection, which they renamed Galería Feminista Siempre Vivas (Forever Alive Feminist Gallery).



Figure 6. Colectivo de Mujeres Muralistas, *Betsabé Espinal*. Bogota, 2021.<sup>23</sup>

The gallery murals depict women leaders, including indigenous leaders, union leaders, trans activists, and mythical goddesses. For instance, the image in Figure 6 represents Betsabé Espinal, a textile worker who in 1920 led the first women’s strike in Colombia. Her hand reaches forward offering a spider, as her other hand stretches open and her gaze is directly emphatically at the viewer while a colored, fabric-like spider web serves as background, in affirmation not only of her agency but also that of the other women textile workers who were successful in their claims for better compensation and working conditions.

The collective also painted a “violencemeter” and a “harmonymeter” on the interchange’s columns, recurrently marking the 1–10 scale painted on the column to track perceived levels of violence and “social harmony.”<sup>24</sup>

The gallery has become a hub for feminist collectives. Since 2022, it has been repeatedly vandalized with misogynistic graffiti, to which the collective’s response has been to create new murals condemning the vandalism, in an ongoing dispute of urban space.

<sup>23</sup> Photograph by the author.

<sup>24</sup> According to several members of Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas, in personal communications.



Figure 7. Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas, *Galería Feminista Siempre Vivas*. Bogotá, 2021.<sup>25</sup>

Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas's intervention operates through a sustained reclaiming and transformation of urban space that refuses the naturalization of violence against women and gender minorities. The depiction of women leaders whose experiences developed at the intersection of several forms of oppression, including colonial domination, racial hierarchy, and class oppression, materializes an intersectional feminist appropriation of urban space that challenges the necrocolonial-patriarchal spatial logic that renders certain bodies vulnerable to violence while perpetrators are absolved and even protected.

This dynamic reveals how the necropatriarchal structures that Sayak Valencia theorizes manifest not only through direct violence but also through the spatial and gendered distribution of safety and vulnerability, naturalizing certain areas as sites where women and other minorities remain perpetually at risk. The ongoing vandalism of the gallery and the collective's persistent response through new murals constitute a spatial contestation that makes visible the struggle over who has the right to inscribe meaning onto urban infrastructure and whose bodies are entitled to safe presence and passage through the city.

Through their sustained presence and refusal to abandon the site, Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas enacts a form of feminist intervention that transforms the intersection from a space marked by fear and threat into one organized around visibility, collective care, agency, and the assertion of women's right to urban space.

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<sup>25</sup> Photograph by the author.

Affectively, Galería Siempre Vivas operates not only through the murals' sustained presence, memorialization of women leaders, and affirmation of women's agency, but also through the community meetings and other activities that the collective organizes at the site. By creating an ongoing hub for feminist collectives, Siempre Vivas creates and promotes the forms of horizontal solidarity and mutual care necessary to challenge the colonial-patriarchal structures that produce and naturalize gender violence.

The importance of affect to these dynamics is suggested by the "violencemeter" and "harmonymeter," simple aesthetic devices that register and render visible the fluctuating affect of women as they occupy urban space. They signal both that the colonial-patriarchal regime operates through affective structures of fear and oppression and that women's claim to urban space requires dismantling these affective structures and replacing them with affects of safety, care, solidarity, and commonality.

The gallery functions as an affective laboratory where participants experiment with different forms of collective creation of affects capable of resisting the pervasive atmosphere of threat and violence that permeates women's experience in a city such as Bogota. This is not to imply that the site is exclusively dedicated to affective work but that this work is a crucial aspect of the participants' claim to urban space because, ultimately, it is this affective production that may sustain their reclamation of the city as a space where women's lives, histories, and agency are publicly visible, politically significant, and collectively defended.

### **Vale la pena ser callejeras**

Vale la pena ser callejeras is a street performance collective in Bogota that includes twelve women and nonbinary artists and activists.<sup>26</sup> During the pandemic, the collective initially moved their activities to the internet but, realizing its importance, they soon returned to public space. Defying the quarantines, they staged several street performances in which, rather than representing their personal or collective experiences as women and individuals from other gender minorities, they celebrated their existence and identities through dance and music.

Thus, they reclaimed the street not only as a space of artistic activity and a way of life but also as a site for the interruption of the colonial, patriarchal, and racist logic of society, while also reaffirming their identities as women and artists. Their intervention consists, as *Vale la pena* member Fer Bonilla argues, of their reclaiming of the street as a site of

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<sup>26</sup> The collective members are: Fer Sarmiento Rocío Ortiz, Ana Milena Hernández, Solkin Otálora, Camila Sánchez, Andrea Duarte, Rosario Vergara, Natalia Riveros, Clara Contreras, Natalia Ruiz, Rosalba Vásquez, and Cristina Alejandra Jiménez.

“feminist *poiesis*,” not just a space of self and collective affirmation but also of the creation of new ways of being a woman and new ways of living.<sup>27</sup>

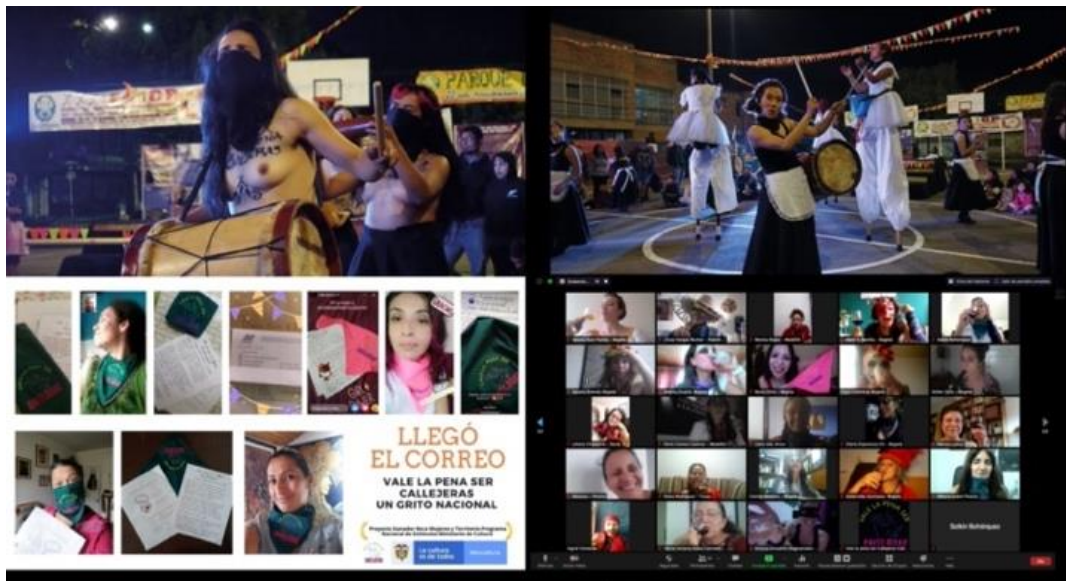


Figure 8. Vale la pena ser callejeras, images of various collective actions and events. Bogota, 2020–2021.<sup>28</sup>

The collective’s decision to return to the street despite quarantine restrictions intervenes in the spatial politics of the pandemic and the gender violence crisis. While the lockdowns ostensibly served public health purposes, they also intensified the confinement of women to domestic spaces where they faced escalating domestic violence and increased care work burdens. By defying these restrictions, the collective refused the spatial logic that rendered streets forbidding for women while simultaneously trapping them in domestic spaces that were sometimes even more dangerous.

Their street performances momentarily transformed urban space from a site of potential violence and state control into a site of feminist celebration and collective joy. The performances do not operate through denunciation or mourning, as in the cases of Colectiva Hilos and LASTESIS, but through affirmation—the dancers’ movements and music assert women’s right not merely to transit through urban space safely but to inhabit it joyfully, creatively, on their own terms.

This affirmative dimension of their intervention reveals a form of aesthetic resistance that moves beyond naming and condemning violence and oppression against women, articulating a collective agency that refuses and exceeds the subject positions that the necrocolonial-patriarchal structure assigns to women.

<sup>27</sup> In personal communication, July 2022. See also Vale la pena ser callejeras (2021).

<sup>28</sup> Images courtesy of Vale la pena ser callejeras.

Bonilla's notion of "feminist *poiesis*" captures the prefigurative dimension of their intervention. *Poiesis*, understood as creative bringing-into-being, suggests that these performances aim to generate new forms of feminist subjectivity and collective life. This is a radical gesture that implies the deconstruction of modern / colonial gender categories for which decolonial feminists have been calling in recent years. As Ochy Curiel (2013, 17–20) argues, Latin American countries have promoted an imaginary construction of the nation that includes a patriarchal heterosexual regime based on an ideology of innate sexual difference and its intersection with colonial, racial, and class hierarchies. This regime deploys different forms of oppression, including violence, to confine women and other gender and sexual minorities to predetermined subject positions marked by domesticity, vulnerability, and subordination to both state and men—and we might add, systemic violence.

By generating alternative modes of inhabiting the city and claiming urban space through a series of embodied practices of collective expression and self-creation, the collective not only refuses this regime but also frames the intersection of aesthetic practice and urban space as a site where new ways of being—as Bonilla notes, not just new ways of being a woman but also of productively mobilizing gender identity as "a practice of freedom"—are created and explored.<sup>29</sup> Through their embodied practice of freedom, *Vale la pena ser callejeras* not only resist necrocolonial-patriarchal order but also trace a horizon where new decolonial forms of feminine subjectivity become actionable.

## Conclusion

This paper has examined how artists in Mexico, Chile, and Colombia responded to the convergence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the gender violence crisis by intervening in urban space. In Mexico, Nirvana Paz disrupted the spatial logic that confines women's labor and suffering to the private sphere while energizing feminist protests. Lorena Wolffer created participatory platforms that transformed isolated experiences of pandemic confinement into networks of collective enunciation, facilitating the circulation of affects across bodies and subjectivities to sustain feminist agency during crisis. *Colectiva Hilos* invited community members to collectively weave red fabrics that were carried through Guadalajara's streets in silent procession, transforming urban space into a site where violence against women became materially and affectively present while enacting forms of mutual care and horizontal solidarity.

In Chile, *LASTESIS* created an iconic performance that enacted feminist parrhesia by speaking truth to necropatriarchal power, generating transnational affective circulation

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<sup>29</sup> In personal communication, July 2022.

that linked women's struggles across multiple contexts. Brigada Laura Rodig intervened Santiago's metro stations by overlaying official nameplates with the names of women resistance fighters and lesbian artists murdered by the state, disrupting the semantic and affective operation of colonial-patriarchal power inscribed into urban infrastructure.

In Colombia, Colectiva de Mujeres Muralistas transformed Bogotá's dangerous intersection into an artistic and cultural hub where feminist collectives experiment with alternative modes of inhabiting urban space through murals, community meetings, and other activities. Vale la pena ser callejeras defied the patriarchal logic of urban space to stage street performances that celebrated women's existence through dance and music, reclaiming the street as site of feminist *poiesis* where new decolonial forms of feminine subjectivity can emerge.

Together, they demonstrate that aesthetic practice can operate as a central rather than supplementary force in feminist resistance.

These diverse aesthetic strategies share an understanding of urban space as a contested site where colonial-patriarchal discourse inscribes itself into infrastructure, spatial practices, and collective experience. The artists examined here implicitly recognize that urban space is always in the process of becoming, produced through intersecting and often conflicting flows of material, symbolic, and affective forces, including the Covid-19 virus, state violence, patriarchal structures, and feminist resistance.

Their interventions sought to influence how space is constituted, experienced, claimed, and *felt*. They generated both affective intensities and qualified affects that circulated through bodies, urban space, and audiences. These affects functioned as forces that bound participants together, energized feminist mobilization, and challenged the affective economies through which fear, shame, and isolation are imposed on women and gender minorities by necrocolonial-patriarchal power.

By disrupting dominant affective regimes and enabling the circulation of alternative affects, these works contributed directly to the intervention of crisis contexts, helping generate the collective agency necessary to confront gender violence and patriarchal domination.

As we have seen, the significance of these interventions extends beyond the institutional field of art. Their relevance does not stem from their place within the contemporary art world or their alignment with mainstream discourses of contemporary art but from their capacity to affect specific contexts of crisis and shape specific outcomes. Their impact lies in their capacity to actively influence the dynamics of crisis and urban space, regardless of their amenability to conventional art intuition discourse.

Perhaps more than any other art movement, feminist art suggest that we need to produce more contextual readings that emphasize the affective production, ethical commitment, and transformative potential of art, readings that grasp how art operates across multidimensional contexts and within the broader field of cultural agency to produce ethical and political effects.

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**Rubén Yepes Muñoz** is an Assistant Professor of Art History in the Visual Art and Art History Department at Florida Atlantic University. He received his PhD in Visual and Cultural Studies from the University of Rochester in 2017, with a dissertation on the mediation of the Colombian armed conflict in contemporary visual art. He is the author of five books, including his recent *Affecting the Conflict: Mediations of the Colombian War in Contemporary Art and Film* (2025) and *Estudios visuales desde América Latina: un aporte a la consolidación del campo* (2024). He is also the author of over twenty articles and book chapters. His current research focuses on the art created in response to the multidimensional crises that emerged in Latin America between 2019 and 2022, and the genealogy of Latin American Visual Studies. Dr. Yepes has received several prestigious awards, including the National Prize for Scholarly Essay on Colombian Art (Colombia), a Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, and a Fulbright Scholarship.

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