

Sweden in Solidarity, Museums in Exile

**The Chilean International
Resistance Museum in Solidarity
with Salvador Allende and the
International Art Exhibition
for Palestine**

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Researchers

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Kristine Khouri
Independent researcher and curator

(Absent: Rasha Salti)
(Independent researcher and curator)

Assistants

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Director, Tensta Konsthall

Emily Fahlén
Mediator

In their capacity of the 1970s–1990s

Bitte Alling-Ode (*1940)

Artist, educated at the future Konstfack

Yvonne Fredriksson (*1952)

The Palestine groups, project co-ordinator

Lars Gösta Hellström (*1949)

The Palestine groups, author ¹

Sonja Martinson Uppman (*1941)

Journalist, cultural profile ²

Björn Springfeldt (*1941)

Exhibition curator (future director),

Moderna Museet

Eva Zetterberg (*1947)

Politician, activist living in Chile in the 1970s ³

1 Graduated in 1976 as hospital engineer from Royal Institute of Technology, later working at the Karolinska Institute.

2 Among other things working with Pontus Hultén while he was director at the Moderna Museum in Stockholm (1967–1973) and at the helm of the Centre Culturel Suédois in Paris.

3 Ambassador to Nicaragua (2003–2008), Chile and Peru (2009–2014), later president of the Swedish Chilean Institute of Culture, SCHIK.

Introduction

This *Witness seminar* deals with the Swedish network of solidarity groups formed during the struggle against Augusto Pinochet (1915–2006) and for Palestine liberation – the latter still ongoing, unfortunately – that caught the Swedish audiences during the 1970s. One half of the seminar focused on the Palestine groups, and the other on Chile. The year after Augusto Pinochet's *coup d'état* in 1973, the *Chilean International Resistance Museum in Solidarity with Salvador Allende* (Allende lived 1908–1973) was formed in Paris by an international group comprising intellectuals, artists, and critics.

A Swedish branch of the Chile committee organised a group show with works donated by artists living in Sweden, which opened at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and then toured across the country in several museums.

The *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*, on the other hand, was organised by the Unified Information Office, part of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). It consisted of some 200 artworks donated by artists like Roberto Matta (1911–2002), Antoni Tàpies (1923–2012) and Joan Miró (1893–1983) and opened at the Beirut Arab University in March 1978. Inspired by the *Chilean International Resistance Museum in Solidarity with Salvador Allende*, it aimed to collect artworks into a travelling art show that would settle in Palestine once it had been liberated. As has been mentioned, this has not yet happened. The museum should thus instead be understood as an art collection turned into a travelling exhibition. While its original purpose to be the foundation of a museum in a liberated Palestine has never been fulfilled, it remains one

of the most ambitious exhibitions to have been shown in the Arab world. Among other places, the exhibition travelled to Japan and Norway where some 100 works were featured. After the opening in Beirut, the Unified Information Office rented an apartment for storage of the pieces. Unfortunately, during the Israeli siege of 1982, persistent shelling destroyed the building where the artworks together with archives and documentation were stored.¹

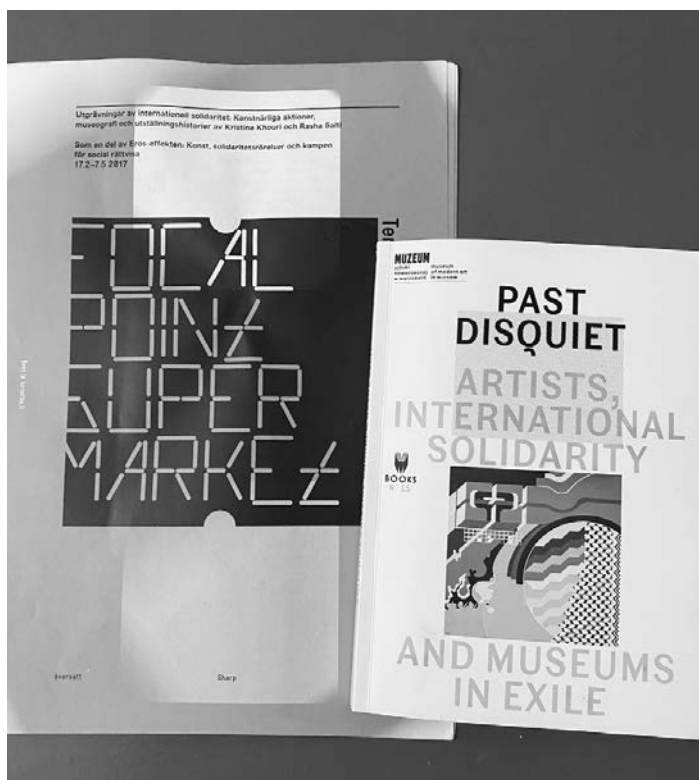
Kristine Khouri's and Rasha Salti's research project is embedded in a wider frame of the 1970s international solidarity movements, also comprising the solidarity movements against the war in Vietnam and the struggle to end Apartheid in South Africa. It is perhaps nothing strange that we find the same issues coming to the surface now again. In the case of Palestine, it is a tragedy that there still is need for solidarity while the Chilean troubles were solved with the democratic elections in the 1990s. As I write this, Chile is even turning into a democratic laboratory as the people are going to vote about replacing Pinochet's constitution (Henrik Brandão Jönsson, Dagens Nyheter, 15.5.2021). Another show came into being in 2020, when the curators at another Swedish Konsthall – this time in Södertälje – Sarah Guarino Florén, Joanna Sandell and Paola Zamora, made the Chile topic come alive once more. Sandell's and Zamora's exhibition brought up the memory of the *International Resistance Museum Salvador Allende* with its title, *Internationella motståndsmuseet 1978–2020*, a literal translation of the Chilean counterpart that opened in its proper space in Chile in 1991.² In an adjacent room, Sarah Guarino Florén had curated *ARPILLERAS – poder SUAVE/SOFT power*, a selection of *arpilleras*, i.e. textile works made from inexpensive fabric in application technique, by Cecilia Valdés (*1941). Valdés is a Chilean exile who arrived in Sweden in 1976. Once arrived, she called in other Chilean women to form a local Salvador Allende Committee Workshop in Södertälje.

Admittedly, their *arpilleras* were soft – but charged with social and political content.

But there have been other efforts to cover the history of Swedish expressions of solidarity, outside the history of art and exhibitions. E.g. in 2016, Yulia Gradsanova and Monica Quirico published *Solidariteten med Chile 1973–1989* (Samtidshistoriska frågor 34) [*The Solidarity with Chile 1973–1989*] where they collected the testimonies of Jan Hammarlund, Carlos Nuñez, Anna Rydmark Venegas and Stefan de Vylder. While that Witness seminar was held at Södertörn University and introduced by Håkan Blomqvist, this one was held at Tensta Konsthall in 2017. I remember seeing Yulia Gradsanova in the audience. I should add this is a much – four years – later publication and its focus is broader. But I hope that readers of this booklet as well as those who found the one by Gradsanova and Quirico will also find the other in the series *Samtidshistoriska frågor*.

Charlotte Bydler

- 1 Kristine Khouri & Rasha Salti (eds.), *Past Disquiet: Artists, International Solidarity, and Museums in Exile, The Museum Under Construction Book Series No. 15*, Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (2018).
- 2 Sarah Guarino Florén, Joanna Sandell & Paola Zamora (eds.), *Internationella motståndsmuseer 1978–2020*, exhib. catalogue, 2 October–2 February 2020, Södertälje: Södertälje konsthall (2020).



The brochure from Tensta Konsthall building on the publication by Kristine Khouri & Rasha Salti (eds.), *Past Disquiet: Artists, International Solidarity and Museums in Exile*, *The Museum Under Construction Book Series No. 15*, Warsaw: Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw (2018).

Opposite page:

Yulia Gradskova & Monica Quirico (eds.), *Solidariteten med Chile 1973–1989*, Samtidshistoriska frågor 34, Samtidshistoriska institutet, Södertörn University, Stockholm: Södertörn University (2016).

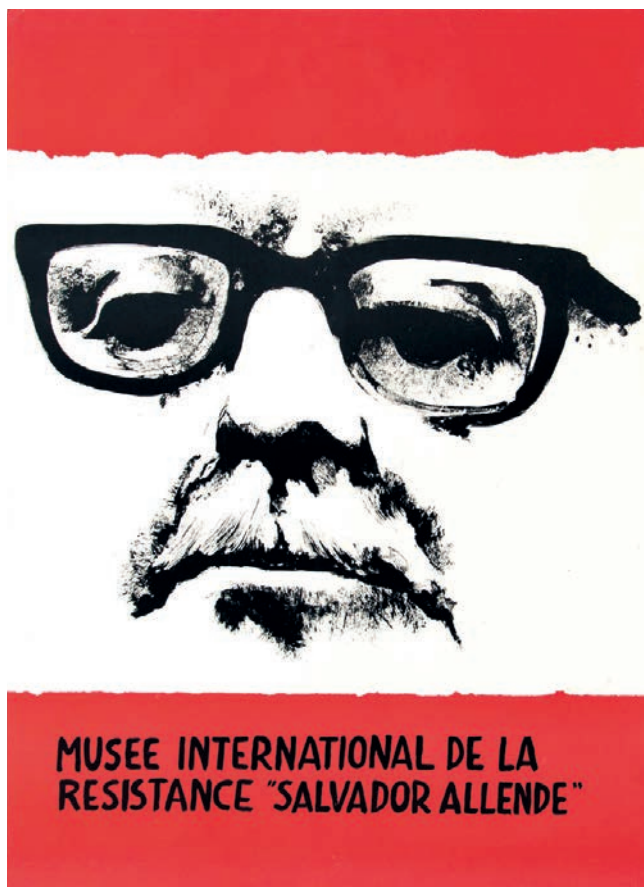
Joanna Sandell & Paola Zamora (eds.), *Internationella motståndsmuseet 1978–2020*, incl. Sara Guarino Florén, *ARPILLERAS – poder SUAVE/SOFT power*, *Salvador Allendekommitténs ateljé i Södertälje*, exhib. catalogue, 2 October–2 February 2020, Södertälje: Södertälje Konsthall (2020).



Other works that should be mentioned include:

Att minnas det som är: Chiles närhistoria i film och konst [Remembering what is: Chile's Recent History in Film and Art] an exhibition with sixteen participants, curated by Hans Carlsson, exhib. catalogue, 26 January–24 March 2019, Lund: Lunds konsthall (2019).

Le Musée de la Solidarité Salvador Allende, de l'Unité Populaire au retour d'exil (1971–1991), Seminar with Élodie Lebeau, 8 October 2020, organised within the project *Ré.Part – Résistance(s) Partisane(s): Culture visuelle, imaginaires collectifs et mémoire révolutionnaire*, supported by the Laboratoire de Recherche Historique Rhône-Alpes and l'Université Grenoble Alpes, as well as *I+D+I MoDe(s) – Modernidad(es) Descentralizad(as): arte, política y contrecultura en el eje transatlántico durante la Guerra Fría*.



A poster announcing the first exhibition of the collection called it plainly “museo de la solidaridad chile [sic]” (Khouri & Salti [eds.], 2018, p. 305). But in 1972–1973, the period when Unidad Popular-led government with Salvador Allende as president ruled Chile, he was challenged by right-wing politicians in his government. As a solution, he took the advice from Brazilian art critic Mário Pedrosa and started a fund-raising in order to make him more popular through founding an art museum. Its name became the *Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende* (Yasky & Zaldívar, Ibid., p. 299–311). Then, at the time of Augusto Pinochet’s *coup*, the Junta saw to it that the collection was shattered. Late in 1975, the museum was reconstituted from abroad, as the *Museo Internacional de la Resistencia Salvador Allende* (MIRSA) (Yasky & Zaldívar, Ibid., p. 313–315). Since 1991 its name is *Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende* [*Solidarity Museum Salvador Allende*, *MSSA*], and it is led by Claudia Zaldívar. Poster: Jacques Leenhardt.

المعرض التشكيلي العالمي من أجل فلسطين

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION FOR PALESTINE

Arabic University of Beirut 21 March to 5 April 1978 ٢١ آذار - ٥ نيسان ١٩٧٨ جامعة بيروت العربية



Poster: Dia al Azzawi. Courtesy Samir Salameh.

Witness seminar (Tensta Konsthall, 19 February 2017)

Maria Lind

Hello, everybody; warmly welcome to today's *Witness seminar*! I am extremely happy that this is happening as part of a project about the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* which has been researched and activated by Kristine Khouri who is here and Rasha Salti who unfortunately is not here due to the flu, which is affecting many people across Europe. This research process has been going on since 2008. At Tensta Konsthall we have been involved for about three years, and it is fantastic to have some of the material on the two screens here [directs the attention to the walls that are covered by pictures, mostly photographs] and also on the two flat screens next to them.

This project is part of an ongoing series that we have been running at Tensta Konsthall since a year and a half [i.e. since 2015], called *The Eros Effect – Art, solidarity movements and the quest for social justice*, which tries to look at the notion of solidarity historically speaking and today through the work of artists. It is important to know that this did not grow out of just our own interest in solidarity, but very much triggered by the fact that so many artists since the 1990s have taken upon themselves to research moments in history when solidarity has been at play in different ways. Often it has had to do with liberation movements, postcolonial struggles of different kinds, and some of them are involved in our series which has taken the form of a symposium, of commissions, of new art works, of film



Charlotte Bydler and Kristine Khouri. Photo courtesy Andreas Gedin.



Sonja Martinson Uppman, Eva Zetterberg, Björn Springfeldt.
In the background: Lars Kleen, Emily Fahlén, and Maria Lind (fuzzy).
Photo courtesy Andreas Gedin.

screenings, of discussions. The exhibition that you walked through to come in here, by Naeem Mohaiemen (*1969) entitled *It's Not Necessary To Understand Everything* (2011), is part of the very same series – *The Eros Effect*.

The Eros Effect itself is a notion coined by a US-based academic and activist called George Katsiaficas in a 1989 essay,¹ trying to explain some of the positive energy that goes into people coming together trying to change conditions of different kinds. You can read more about that in our hand-out which also contains a very interesting conversation between Kristine Khouri, Rasha Salti and Emily Fahlén meeting at Tensta Konsthall – a seminal event in this project. So, you can refer to that.²

Today, we are having a *Witness seminar*. It aims at making material that was previously difficult to research, because of lack of material. Bringing people together and asking them to give accounts as witnesses – such as we do here – recording it, transcribing it and often also printing it, you have something to research, you have material to start from. And this is something that has been practised particularly in relation to those parts of history which have been overlooked by mainstream historiography; such as workers' history, women's history, etcetera. And we're very happy to collaborate on this Witness seminar with the Institute of Contemporary History at Södertörn University and I would also like to acknowledge that within the project we collaborated with the Stockholm University Art History Department through the Curating Programme as well as the Film Studies Department of the Stockholm University and the Royal Institute of Art. Now, it is my pleasure to introduce Charlotte Bydler who represents a double affiliation – partly the [Institute of Contemporary History], partly the Department of Art History – at Södertörn University and I wish all of us a great day. Thank you.

Charlotte Bydler

So, I will start with saying some words in Swedish.

Vi är alltså här för att producera källor för historisk forskning. Och för att det ska fungera som ett vetenskapligt vittnesseminarium, till skillnad från ett allmänt historiskt seminarium, så måste det finnas någon typ av frågeställning och problematik och då ska vittnena ha varit informerade om detta på förhand. Och i det här fallet så är det alltså två separata händelser.

Dels så handlar det om solidaritetsarbetet med Palestina och dels med Chile. Och de utgår förnämligt nog då från arbetet med en utställning som personen här, som heter Kristine Khouri, har forskat kring. Och det är utställningen *the International Art Exhibition In Solidarity with Palestine* och det är samma [typ av] utställning som hette *Museo Internacional de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende* [*Internationella Solidaritetsmuseet Salvador Allende*] när den tog plats i Santiago, i Chile.

Meningen med ett vittnesseminarium är inte att få fram sanningen med stort S, utan det är att få fram personliga vittnesmål och det får man bara genom subjektiva erfarenheter. Den historiska processen ska belysas med olika deltagarperspektiv. Så på så sätt skapar vi ett källmaterial och uppslag och frågor för ny forskning.

Och vittnena har på förhand fått ett antal frågor att tänka igenom. De ska svara på i vilket sammanhang de själva deltog i processen, vilken position de hade, var de befann sig och vad de gjorde. Alltså: Var befann du dig? Vad gjorde du? Vad var din roll, yrke, position, etcetera, under den här perioden vi nu ska belysa ... Och vilken process är här aktuell att undersöka, hur kom du i kontakt med händelserna? Hur såg du på din fråga, ditt problem och de uppgifter du ställdes inför? Och vilka svårigheter upplevde du; hur förberedd var du? Och sen vittnets perspektiv; hur uppfattar du det som du var med om? Hur tolkade du det som skedde? Vilka ställningstaganden

innebar det och vilka slutsatser drog du?

Så vi kommer att göra den här rundan under tio minuter per person och jag kommer vara oerhört strikt med tiden. Så det blir alltså en halvtimme för Palestinagrupperna först och sedan en halvtimme för Chilegrupperna. Och så tar vi paus för lunch och sedan återsamlas vi här och då kommer vi få gå igenom de här fördjupande frågorna. Så först så ska våra vittnen här i dag ge en kort presentation av sitt engagemang.

Jag lämnar därmed över ordet till Kristine Khouri.

So, we're here to produce historical sources for further research. And for it to be a proper scientific "Witness seminar," in distinction from a general seminar in history, there must be a clearly defined question or event with borders that everybody easily sees; of which the witnesses have been informed beforehand. And in this case, there are thus two separate events.

It deals partly with the solidarity work on the one hand with Palestine and and on the other with Chile. And they also expand from the research done by the person by my side, Kristine Khouri. It is the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*; the same exhibition that got the name *Museo Internacional de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende* [*International Resistance Museum for Salvador Allende*] in Santiago, Chile.

The purpose of a Witness seminar is not to get to the truth with a capital T, but it is to produce personal testimonies, which you can only get through subjective experiences. The historical process should be enlightened by each participant's perspective. In this way, we create a whole new source material, complete with ideas and questions for further research.

The witnesses got some questions to think through in advance. They are supposed to account for the context of their own participation, their own position in the process, where they were and what they did. Thus: Where were

you? What did you do? What was your role, job, position, etcetera, during the time we are going to scrutinize? And which processes should be looked at as a context to your partaking in these events? How did you look at your questions, your problems, and the tasks you were set to handle?

And then, the witness perspective: Today, how do you look at your experiences? How did you interpret the events, back then? What positions did it imply and what conclusions did you draw?

We are going to make this round for ten minutes per person, and I am going to be very strict with time. First, we'll have one half-hour for the Palestine groups and then we'll have the Chile groups. Then we take a break for lunch, and proceed with the deeper questions. First, thus, we'll listen to the brief testimonies from our witnesses regarding their engagement.

I thereby leave the word to Kristine Khouri.

Kristine Khouri

Thank you, Charlotte. First, I'd like to thank everyone at the Tensta Konsthall for inviting myself and Rasha [Salti] to engage with our research and present our research here, and to have had the opportunity to visit Stockholm twice before to do research for this project. To give a quick background so you understand where our research project is coming from, and how it relates to today: myself and Rasha had encountered a copy of a catalogue for the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*. Behind us you see a video paging through that catalogue. And this was an exhibition that took place in Beirut, Lebanon in 1978. It was organised by the Palestine Liberation Organisation [the PLO], by a section called the Plastic Arts Section. It was an exhibition of remarkable scale and scope that happened in the midst of civil war in Lebanon, opening only two weeks after the Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon. So, it was a moment where to imagine an exhibition open-

ing and something of this scale in that context is, or was, pretty unbelievable to us.

And we are really interested in trying to understand what this exhibition was, where the idea came from for this, for this exhibition and who the people were that were involved in this project. It was clearly a labour of many people and so our project set out at the beginning using sort of this catalogue as a guide to trace, to track these people down that were part of this project and record their stories. And the reason we went to people is because the offices where the archives for this exhibition or this section would have been in Beirut was bombed in 1982. So, we began with a lack of a coherent archive, so the process or methodology for research really relied on people, their stories, their memories and their generosity in sharing this history with us.

We started this research in 2008 and over time met different individuals who really opened up the project for us. What we had realised from the catalogue was that it was not in fact only an exhibition, a large exhibition, but it was intended to be the beginning or the seat of a collection for the future museum in solidarity with Palestine. So, it was an exhibition but in fact the artists who contributed – around 200 artists from 30 countries – gave an artwork. They donated their artwork in support of the Palestinian cause, to become the beginning of a future museum for Palestine. So, it had been referred to as “a museum-in-exile” and we wanted to understand where this idea came from. It was very curious to us as to, you know, understanding what the genesis was. And through a meeting with the French artist, Claude Lazar (*1947), who had come to Beirut for this exhibition, we understood that, in many ways, its genesis had been in Paris. Through the interaction of artists, who were there and at the time very involved with, initiated and participated in, this project called the *International Resistance Museum*

in Solidarity with Salvador Allende. This initiative came after the *coup* in Chile, where committees had been formed in Europe and elsewhere in six different cities to build a sort of a second call for artists to donate artwork in support of Salvador Allende. In 1972, a museum had opened in Chile with a collection of around 600 works by artists that had donated it after a call from Allende in support of his cause. So, this sort of “museum-in-exile” project, the Chile story is really the core, or the mother, of many other museums-in-exile.

So, our research ended up expanding beyond Palestine, this one exhibition, and what these museums-in-exile – including the initiative for Chile – we understood that there were two other projects, two other museums-in-exile – one in support of the people of Nicaragua, and an anti-Apartheid collection – that were built. What we came to understand, after much time, was that many of the artists who donated to the exhibition in Beirut had donated to these other exhibitions. And so, what emerged was this unbelievable network of artists engaged in multiple international struggles against injustice, Apartheid, occupation; all these sort of particularities. But what also emerged was the story of these artists, and these [exhibition] histories, that had not been properly written into our history.

So, our project very much starts in Beirut but ends up in the rest of the world. And here in Stockholm we have had the opportunity to ask a few questions about why, for example, we didn’t find any Swedish artists in this exhibition in Beirut. We knew that there was a very strong commitment in Sweden to the Palestinian cause. So, we had the opportunity to meet with some artists and activists and actors who are part of these solidarity movements.

And today, the focus is two-fold: we will be looking at both Chile and Palestine. With Palestine, we have a few individuals who have been involved in this solidarity movement and will speak about the different forms

of engagement, whether it was through their production of work through art, film making, activism and volunteer work on many levels. And, on the other hand, we also will be looking at the story of the *International Resistance Museum* here in Stockholm with actors who were part of that project or had been engaged both in the solidarity movement on a different level; and had a different sort of connections to this collection in one way or another. So, although the topics seem different, it really is about how people have engaged in solidarity for different causes. Whether that's through the production of an exhibition, through the production of an artwork, or through their engagement in producing a publication, volunteer work, in different sorts of ways – in support of a cause that matters to them. So, what really brings everyone together at this table, and I think in this room, is to think about this time-period and to think about today and the work that has been done. These networks that emerged in Sweden, there are surely connections, there are maybe some missed connections as well. That is just a quick introduction and we're really excited to have everyone here today. It's such a dream to be able to be in Stockholm, having a number of you in the room together, to hear your story, to have other people hear your story. And to hopefully have a discussion after lunch; because ten minutes is never enough time.

Charlotte Bydler

And please, do speak in the language that you are most comfortable with. So, I invite Bitte to start.

Bitte Alling-Ode

Då tänker jag prata svenska om det är okej. Then, I am going to speak Swedish, if it is OK.

Charlotte Bydler

Ja. Yes.

Bitte Alling-Ode

Jag heter Bitte Alling-Ode. Jag är född 1940 i Malmö och är alltså krigsbarn och har det i kroppen. 1968 började jag på Konstfack och gick där fyra år, utbildade mig som lärare. Och då mötte jag en annorlunda utbildning än vad den hade varit innan 1968. Studenterna krävde att Konstfack skulle öppna dörrarna mot världen, man skulle ta in världen, och det som hände då var att jag hamnade i en studiecirkel som handlade om Palestina. Och den studiecirkeln koncentrerade sig på tre byar, det var Emmaus, Yalo och Beit Nuba, och dessa tre byar skövlades 1967. Det gjorde att vi blev så chockade, vi studenter som var ganska bortskämda, men handlingen blev att vi demonstrerade i, på Stockholms gator 1970.

Och det första bildminne jag har av den tiden det är att vi stod och tryckte fruktansvärda stenciler utav sån här stark sprit som vi vevade fram i källaren på Konstfack. Och det jag minns är att jag hade en lärare som hette Hanns Karlewski (*1937), som jag hittade här i en katalog för Chile, och jag kände igen hans egna bilder. Vi tog friskt bilderna från palestinska konstnärer och vi såg till att dessa bilder såldes överallt så alla som var solidariska med palestinierna hade dessa bilder med en kvinna med frukt i famnen, en man som bar Jerusalem på sitt huvud, en del av er nickar och känner igen det, och du har till och med den bilden hemma. Och det var grunden.

Sen följde det sig så att i slutet av 1970-talet så följde jag med dokumentärfilmare till Jerusalem och gjorde den första dokumentärfilmen om folkmordet som skedde i dessa byar för alla fick ju lämna byarna, vandra över bergen och de hamnade så småningom i Bethunia i Ramallah-området. Jag mötte en kvinna i Dar Al TIFL, alltså Barnens Hus, i Jerusalem, och jag fotograferade hennes

folkdräkt, och alla andras folkdräkter. Och jag gjorde paralleller med svenska folkdräkter, för att ha som ett bevis på var man hade bott överallt. Att det fanns en lokal kultur. Efter detta så växte mitt engagemang med filmen och fotograferandet. Jag är sannerligen ingen stor fotograf, men dokumentera kan jag ju. Och då började jag arbeta med en utställning som hette *Nästa vår Emmaus* och då arbetade jag efter en engelsk metod, *Oral History*, alla fick berätta om sina familjer, inte bara sig själv, utan också ledet bakåt i tiden.

Och under årens lopp så har det blivit mer och mer att jag har kommit tillbaka. För det är nämligen så, när man tar en palestinsk kvinna som har vuxit upp på ett barnhem i Dar Al TIFL i Jerusalem, då släpper man ju inte direkt. Och de ser ju också till att vi har kontakt. Så att de har ringt till mig, eller skrivit, och sagt: "Nu är det dags att komma tillbaka, nu har vi Intifada, nu får du dokumentera detta. Och nu händer nästa, kom hit!" Och på det viset har jag under årens gång byggt ut min utställning som har vandrat runt i Sverige på olika museum, och studiegupper, och så vidare. Den sista utställningen hette *Vattenkvinnor*. Det var nödvändigt att beskriva den genom kvinnors ögon, berättade de för mig – det var inte bara att bygga en mur. Utan muren byggdes slugt så att den följde alla vattenkällor, och det var också första orsaken till att Emmaus skulle erövras. Den ligger nämligen på en jättelik källa av vatten. Och fortfarande idag så grönskar det friskt. Men det går rör till israeliska myndigheter där man stjal allt detta källvatten. Ja, det var en bakgrund. Räcker det här? My name is Bitte Alling-Ode. I was born 1940 in Malmö, so I am a war child and have it in my bones. In 1968, I started at Konstfackskolan [Bildlärarinstitutet/the Institute for art education] and graduated as an art teacher. And then I encountered a totally different education than what had been before 1968. Students demanded that Konstfack should open to the world outside; and what

happened next was that I got involved in a “studiecirkel”, a group that focused on studying Palestine. The group concentrated its work on three villages of Emmaus, Yalo and Beit Nuba, that were razed to the ground in 1967. It made us so shocked – we students were rather spoilt – but as an effect, we demonstrated in the streets of Stockholm in the 1970s.

And the earliest image-memory that I have from that time is how we produced stencils from this strong-smelling liquid and cranked them out in Konstfack’s basement. And I remember that I had a teacher called Hanns Karlewski (*1937), whom I found again today in an exhibition catalogue for Chile, and I also recognized his own pictures. We all took pictures made by Palestine artists and saw to it that these images were sold everywhere so that all who felt solidarity with the Palestinians had these pictures of a woman holding fruit; or a man carrying Jerusalem on his head – I can see some of you nodding in recognition. These were the founding stones.

Later towards the end of the 1970s, I followed some documentary film-makers to Jerusalem and produced the first documentary film on the genocide in the three villages. Everybody were forced out of the villages, to wander across the mountains, to finally end up in Bethunia in the Ramallah area. I met a woman in Dar Al TIFL, that is the House of the Children in Jerusalem, and I took a photo of her traditional folk costume; and everybody’s folk costumes. And I made a parallel with Swedish folk costumes, as a proof that there had been people everywhere. That there was a local culture. After this, my commitment grew together with the filming and photographing. I am truly no great photographer, but I do know how to shoot documentaries. And then I started working on an exhibition that I called *Nästa vår Emmaus [Next Springtime Emmaus]* where I worked according to a method from the UK, Oral History, which was about making everybody talk about

their families, not only themselves, but also the generation before.

And during the years that have passed, it has become more and more like I've come back. Because it is like that, once you get hold of a Palestine woman who have been raised at a children's home in Dar Al TIFL, you never really let go. And they, too, see to us keeping in touch. So, I've had them calling me on the phone, or written letters, saying: "Now it is time to come back, now we have the Intifada, now you can document this. And now the next one, come over here!" In that way, I have been building up my exhibition, like a travelling exhibition touring Sweden in different museums, study groups, and so on. The last exhibition was called *Vattenkvinnor [Waterwomen]*. It was necessary to describe it through the eyes of the women, they told me – it was not only a wall that had been built. The wall was so cunningly constructed as to follow all water sources, and that was the first of the reasons why Emmaus should be conquered. It sits on a huge cold spring. Still today it is a lush place. But there are underground pipes draining all the water to Israeli authorities. Well, that was a background. Is this enough?

Charlotte Bydler

Tack! Ja, det gör det. Då tar vi och flyttar mikrofonen till Yvonne Fredriksson, ordförande för Palestinagrupperna. Thank you! Yes, that is enough. Now we'll take the microphone and move it to Yvonne Fredriksson, chairperson of the Palestine Groups.

Yvonne Fredriksson

I'll try to speak in English.

Charlotte Bydler

Yes.

Yvonne Fredriksson

In the 1970s, I was a little bit engaged in the Vietnam movement, not very much but I went to demonstration and sometimes I collected money. But then after 1975 my older brother, who was very political engaged, he invited me to, to attend a study circle for Palestine and so I attended. And then after 1976, I became a member of the organisation. And at that time, I lived in Helsingborg, a town in the south of Sweden. And what we did mostly was activism being out on the street, selling the newspaper, the magazine, *Palestinsk Front* [*Palestinian Front*] and collecting money for *Palestinainsamlingen* [*the Palestine Funds*]. And then also we went around all over to, to the houses in the town, to put leaflets in their briefcases. Do you say briefcases?

Charlotte Bydler

Mailboxes?

Yvonne Fredriksson

Mailboxes. So, that's what we did mainly. We had, once, when I was there, a theatre group coming and they had a player from Ghassan Kanafani. But then the war came in Lebanon 1975, and PGS [*Palestinagrupperna i Sverige*/the Palestine groups in Sweden] has sent medical teams to Lebanon since 1976. It was decided by the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organisation) to work together with Palestinian Red Crescent Society and it was decided that the Swedish teams should work in the south of Lebanon in Rashediye refugee camp. And I was asked, as a nurse, to go and join one group, and I accepted and I went to Lebanon in November, I think 1978, and stayed for three months. We were always two nurses and one [physician]. We worked together with a Palestinian team at a clinic and we had one translator who helped us. And... I think it was a tough time, but I learned a lot there. To see how people

were living, the difficult circumstances, the bombings that occurred on a regular basis and ... But also it, it, made me be very committed; when I came home I became very active and I am together with a lot of people still active in the organisation. Mostly of the most active people have been to Lebanon in 1978 or after 1982 when we moved to the north of Lebanon first to Beirut and then to the North. And at that time the only money that were funding the project it was money that was collected in the streets in Sweden. So PGS they paid for insurance, thanks God for that; and then air tickets and, and then ... we had to pay the rest by ourselves, and PLO gave us some food and housing. And I was also travelling with a lot of money cash, and because we couldn't have a bank account, and I had I don't know how much dollar I had in my bag all the time to provide medicine and other things that we needed for the clinic. So, I slept with it in my sleeping bag and that was very important. And, and, the goal of our work was not to make very big medical treatments. I think we made a good work but the most important was to come back to Sweden and to inform the Swedish public about what we had seen and our experiences.

And ... and then when it comes to culture, I became very active. And then I moved to Stockholm in 1979, and I can see that in our newspapers there has been all the time poetry and there had been people invited to come to Sweden to take part in different actions for Palestine. Of course, it was not in 1978, but it was an exhibition about dresses from Palestine and their culture, who went around Sweden in the late 1970s. And in 1978, the PLO's dance troupe from Beirut came to Sweden, and they made great success here in Stockholm, and in other cities in Sweden. And there was a Lebanese singer Hada M'laa (?) who came to Sweden in 1978. He was very supportive of the Palestinian struggle and ... And then other things happened. We have had concerts and photo exhibitions. *Gaza Graf-*

fiti – but that's very much later – and also *Palestine and the Land*. Both of those exhibitions was shown in Sweden but also inside Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza and we have had also a lot of, we received money to bring different *yrkesgrupper*, professional people; and I went in 2004 with the Writers' Union to meet with Mahmoud Darwish (1941–2008) and other people so I think we have been involved in some way or another at least with rather many artistic things but not... And, I think I'm very proud to say that mostly of everything we have done has nearly been done by people who are volunteer.

Charlotte Bydler

Have you finished?

Yvonne Fredriksson

Yes.

Charlotte Bydler

May I ask Bitte to hand over the microphone to Gösta – thank you.

Lars Gösta Hellström

OK. I'm Gösta Hellström, or Lars Gösta Hellström and I, I am an engineer and lecturer at the university; but to make my presentation add up we must go back 50 years, we have probably to remember, and materialise everything ... I was a student then, and that was typical for the persons who were engaged in the solidarity activities at that time. I started actually as ... going to a kibbutz, staying in a kibbutz in 1968, and I was maybe one of the first that made something that related to the slogan 'go to Israel and discover Palestine'. That was what I did.

And I, I was interested in it, in international questions, some of that. Vietnam was a major issue at these years, and I was interested in North Ireland some, and Africa.

But because of this background [taking an interest in the contemporary international political scene] maybe I, in the end, I were more engaged in Palestine. I didn't really enrol in the group in the beginning, until 1973 and in the connection with the October war.³ Then, I was, became a member but later, between 1975 and 1981, I was the editor of this magazine *Palestinsk Front* and I was also editor of two books *Palestina – en bakgrund till Mellanösternkonflikten* [*Palestine, a background to the Middle East conflict*] published by Ordfront in 1980 and 1983. The most important was this book that we used as a study material for our members and activists, and I noticed that this they had probably read it in, in a study circle. The networks of Palestine groups in Stockholm was a small group. It was about, maybe, 50 persons, but all of them were very active and the activities there was as they have mentioned demonstrations, meetings, debates and selling newspapers, collecting money.

And I took, I wanted to show this picture, and those of you who are close can see this is a stencil duplicat[ion machine], that was the working [technology]... in these organisations. Producing information and distribution, distributing information. I was mainly engaged in the magazine. I had some journalist experiences before. The, the editorial committee was maybe less than ten people. We were ... sometimes we had ... I remember feeling as if the atmosphere at the editorial desk was less dogmatic than the more Marxist-oriented organisations that were common in those days. I think we were more academic maybe, more intellectual than the normal average activist; and, and our challenge was to give information to these young people because the situation in, in, in Sweden was more difficult with Palestine than with for instance South Africa. It was, a majority opinion was pro-Israel and very much against the Arab side, because the Arab side was, was considered as aggressive and militant and, and terror-

istic. So, we focused very much on the information, production of information. Came out with maybe six issues a year. Not a big circulation, maybe 2.000, at the most; during the Lebanese war, maybe 6.000 or 7.000 copies per issue. The magazines were distributed through our own organisation. We had local commissioners, activists, who sold the paper all over Sweden so I think we had a significant impact on the society. Probably 20.000 persons reading every number of this magazine. We were ... maybe that was a problem because but that was something difficult for, for the environment. Most of our members came from the Vietnam movement. The Vietnam movement was considered leftist, extremely left sometimes. Many of the persons were drawn into the pro-Chinese fraction of the left. It was a problem convince others. We had as an organisation. We had contacts with other solidarity committees in Norway and Denmark, other countries. We had good relations with other fractions of course, and with other fractions of among the Palestinians.

Charlotte Bydler

Perhaps we can move on?

Lars Gösta Hellström

Yes. I have a few minutes now ...?

Charlotte Bydler

Yes.

Lars Gösta Hellström

We can come back.

Charlotte Bydler

We can return to your story later. Thank you very much, and please, send the microphone to Sonja.

Sonja Martinson Uppman

Tack för det. My name is Sonja Martinson Uppman. I've been presented here as a journalist. I'm not a journalist, really. I was a freelance journalist in Chile for some time. I will tell you all about that. My last post was as the head of the Swedish Culture Centre in Paris where I was also cultural counsellor of the embassy. And I still live in Paris. I am here to bear witness about the experience and the, I mean the backgrounds mainly, and the initiative and the origin of the Swedish connection to the Salvador Allende Museum which is now in Santiago de Chile. Sometimes I have the feeling that I have been living several lives. That age I suppose. One of these lives I was living in Chile and before that, I was in five years in Moderna Museet working with Pontus Hultén (1924–2006) and Björn Springfeldt; I will tell more about that part but that, that's where art comes in.

When I moved to Chile in April 1972, I actually moved to Chile at that time ... [there] was a lot of optimistic expectations. Santiago was really in a state of euphoria, because the recently elected president was Salvador Allende, who was the first Socialist president in Latin America. And many people from other Latin American countries came to Chile to join that experience. [There] was a lot of hope and a lot of euphoria, but it was also many threats and very dramatic situation. And artists and workers and students gathered and made brigade paintings on walls of Santiago. They, they were working intensely to support the process, and they were very worried. And an art critic from Europe came over and he was very euphoric and very worried, too, and he went back to Europe and started to assemble sympathy from European and other artists and there was a collection, the *Solidarity Museum of Salvador Allende*, who was, which was sent to Chile at that time. And there were collections from France, from Italy, from Spain, from Colombia, Mexico and so on. Of

course, from Cuba. That's that.

After the *coup* on the 11th September 1973 these works which were in Chile were destroyed, partly; the ones which had a political content were destroyed. And those [left] were distributed among the military of the Junta and other people who were in the in their neighbourhood. I was in Chile at that time and two days after the *coup* the ambassador of Sweden, Harald Edelstam (1913–1989), called me and told me: “If you want to stay in Chile you have to work for me, otherwise you have to leave.” “Of course, Harald, I will work for you,” and that's how I started my, my work as a diplomat. Because he made me a diplomat in Chile. Sweden at that time Harald Edelstam was [ambassador], he had this residence close to the Cuban embassy and the Cubans were declared immediately enemies of the Junta and they had ten hours to leave and that's where Harald Edelstam went into the Cuban offices, embassy and [raised] the Swedish flag and he said this is Swedish territory and he put me there. And I had my office and work in the Cuban embassy.

And in that embassy, we had a lot of refugees. The Swedish embassy had several houses where they received refugees which, who were many at that time. There were lot of professional revolutionaries that were ministers from, from the Chilean ... from the Allende government, there were people in danger in general and they were all seeking refuge and many of them at the Swedish embassy. And I had 75 people in my Cuban residence and Cuban embassy. And in, among these people were ministers and revolutionaries and so on and there were Miria Contreras (1927–2002) also called la “Payita.” And we made friends and we spent ten months discussing in the embassy what to do to support the continuation of this, the, Cuban, the Chilean socialist idea. And we, I, in the meantime, I and several people from the embassy were seeking safe conduct for all these people. And I left with the last refugees

after ten months, and la Payita, Miria Contreras, left for Cuba. I left with the last refugees for Sweden and then I have also moved to Cuba where I was working for three and a half years in the Cuban radio. And I was very much friends with Miria Contreras. We lived in the same house. We were discussing how to continue the process and we, and in the meantime many solidarity expressions from artists from all over the world came to, to Cuba or gathered in Havana. And next.

Charlotte Bydler

Maybe we all can ... ?

Sonja Martinson Uppman

Yes, we can do that later – yes, we can.

Charlotte Bydler

Thank you very much. And we will continue with Björn Springfieldt here.

Björn Springfieldt

My name is Björn Springfieldt. I'm born 1941. I came to Moderna Museet in July 1968 and got to know Sonja. And when Sonja told how she moved to Chile to be, to, to be in the process when, when a Socialist government came through democratic election to power. And then we were living in a Social democratic society and we had big hopes for, for, for that. And then when the *coup* came and the awful oppression. Pablo Neruda's (1904–1973) house was destroyed, his library was put on fire, and the, the liquidation of the people, it was so horrendous.

So, when the, when the question came to Sweden, if we could do, do a new effort from the side of the Swedish artists to instead for the collection that Sonja has described, became destroyed we should do something new. And when, when I look back to that with these 40 years'

time that, I see nothing before and nothing after that has, that has been of that magnitude as what these Swedish artists done in the solidarity of a free Chile. It was very beautifully done. It was created an umbrella organisation with the Royal Academy, the Swedish Artists' Union, the Swedish Section of International Art Critics' Association and Moderna Museet to see to that this happened. And then the Chilean side, they gave us a list. We would, we hoped that these artists would like to participate. And the director of the museum then was very well known and prestigious artist Philip von Schantz (1928–1998), a painter. I was the senior curator and I was given the task to see to that this became reality. And we in Sweden we also worked together with the Chilean refugees here made a Salvador Allende Committee. And when I thought about what, what made it so successful, this effort? I think it was also because the Chilean side said: "This is a political and poetical effort". So, culture was, was with it from the beginning and it opened for artists that could have any kind of political standpoint to support. So. And Chile was for us, thanks to Pablo Neruda, the, the greatest poet of the 20th century, and Roberto Matta, the painter that already in 1959 had had an exhibition in Moderna Museet in the same hall as 1956 [Pablo] Picasso's (1881–1973) *Guernica* had been shown in Stockholm ... So, 55 artists donated works and it was not small works. It was the, the most ambitious works they had at the time. And. So, the donations, the 55 artists donated 80 works. And the collection was exhibited at Moderna Museet on March 4th to April 16th in 1978. And it was opened to the public every day from eleven to nine o'clock in the evening. And it was a great attention. People came in masses. And José Balmes (1927–2016), Chilean artist, lived in Paris, and we asked him to come to Stockholm to work together with five Swedish artists to make an enormous mural – a brigade painting. They worked, they were working together

in the museum in front of the public for five days and they made a, a masterpiece I must say. You could find it on, on the screen up there [indicates with his hand]. And it was put, it was put on a scaffold outside the museum over the entrance to the museum. And if you think of this scaffold, it is something you use when you build a house and when, in order to build the house, you must believe in the future. So, the whole thing was infused with, with, with poetic element. And then, it was also a lot of music, debates, and that kind of thing.

And after the Moderna Museet, the collection was shown in Helsinki, and then, then it was touring, to around twenty different museums in Sweden. And the artists then were making works on paper, graphics, etcetera, they also donated works for a touring exhibition that went to a lot of schools in the whole of Sweden. And then in 1980, we stopped that activity with the collection because that it showed that we'd worn out ...

And then formally we also donated it to Chile. And, and then this umbrella committee was closed in December 1980. And waiting for the, for Chile to be able to, to take the collection, it was waiting its time in a Social democratic conference facility in the outskirt of Stockholm our prime minister Olof Palme (1927–1986) came and held a very, very beautiful speech about, about Chile, about the solidarity. And when Chile finally won its democratic freedom the collection was moved to, to Santiago and the Swedish Sida [Sweden's government agency for development cooperation], hired a person, Henrik Orrje (*1965), to work in Chile for one year to, to learn the, the museum building there how, what the collection meant, etcetera. And for me, it's fantastic that all of the necessary funding for, for the whole project was taken by the official side.

Charlotte Bydler

Thank you very much, Björn. So, Eva, the last, but not least.

Eva Zetterberg

So, my name is Eva Zetterberg. First of all, I want to express my gratitude to Tensta Konsthall and to the Södertörn University and Kristine and Rasha for taking this initiative. I think this is great.

As for my testimony, I can tell you I stand on three legs, because my first role was as an activist in the Chile solidarity movement during the whole decade of the 1970s. It all started with a first trip, as a young student to Chile in 1971, when I was so impressed by what was happening politically in Chile. All enthusiastic and everything was fantastic, and I thought it had a great future. And, well, Chile had a great future, but it stopped in 1973 with the military *coup*. We directly supported the special friendship organisation with Salvador Allende, the Unidad Popular. But it was very quickly converted into a solidarity movement, *Chilekommittén* [*the Chilean Committee*] in 1973 just a day after the military *coup* when we mobilised in Stockholm. You may be aware that during that time there were two major Chilean forces for solidarity. We had the *Chilekommittén*, mainly leftists, but also a lot of people who were engaged from the churches, from the sports movements, etcetera, so it was not a completely leftist organisation.

And then we had the Salvador Allende Committee which was composed by the political parties from the Salvador Allende-dominated government and their representatives in Stockholm. Those worked very closely with the Social democrats but also with the *Chilekommittén*. And at that time, we organised a lot of activities; and it was a fantastic time with more than one hundred local committees all over Sweden. And we used a lot of art in our manifestation. One of them was, for example, Kjartan Slettemark (1932–2008). He had made a poster for the protest that we organised for the tennis match in Båstad in 1975. So, it was a very useful and close connection with art. I can also

say that we were not ourselves involved in all the fantastic work that was done with the collection that was collected in Sweden and later transferred to Chile. It was sort of separate tracks but we were all aware of it. We were also very supportive and we admired what was being done and I think was very important what work that was done by Moderna Museet and a lot of other people involved.

So, my second leg that is that during the years 2009–2014, I was the Swedish ambassador to Chile and of course I had some memories of this collection that was donated to Chile in 1991. But it was not too close to me. Then I was invited to the *Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende* and I was so impressed ... Has anyone else visited this museum? You have never seen it? I recommend all of you to go there, it's the richest museum in Chile as to the pieces of art and also the value of the works that are there. There are 110 Swedish pieces of art and all of them I should say at a very high artistic level. I kept a small catalogue about the work, the Swedish work, we can circulate it around here if you want to have a look. And for a long time, we had a discussion. Claudia Zaldívar (*1968) who is the director of the museum today about the possibility of making a new tour by bringing them back for a short visit to Europe because not only are there outstanding Swedish artists, there are [Joan] Miró paintings and there are a lot of other pieces of art that are famous and worth enormous money today. I still hope it will be possible, because some of these pieces have never been seen in Europe. They were almost immediately sent back to Chile in 1991. So, I still think that it's a great idea. We didn't have time to finish it and I don't know if it can be in the future, but it would be great!

I also want to make another remark. You talked about the idea of the museum in Managua, in Nicaragua. Before Chile, I was ambassador of Sweden to Nicaragua. And when Kristine told me about that [Managuan] museum, I said: "How come?" I never saw it, I never knew of it

and I asked my Nicaraguan-Swedish friend Magda [Brättemark (*1965)]. Nobody knows exactly where it is and what remains of it today. So, you can see you have to keep up the cultural heritage of a country, and that is not always being done. But in the case of *Museo Solidaridad Salvador Allende*, it is fantastic. It is still there.

But I also want to tell you that my third leg is today when I retired I am the president of the newly created Swedish-Chilean Institute of Culture; and we are working a lot with different expressions to art, music, literature, theatre, etcetera, and working together without organisations or institutions in Sweden. We are still a small organisation so not much at all; but I want to show two examples and those of you who are interested in getting into contact with us, please tell me during the break. Last year we made a book. The embassy of Sweden Chile made a collection with testimonies from people saved by Harald Edelstam, the Swedish ambassador in Chile 1973. A little bit, some other contributions, and some were taken away so please have a look. And we sell it very cheaply. And the second thing is that we recently finished an art exhibition in Santiago in Chile by Swedish artist called Eva Ek Schaeffer (*1941) and it just finished in Chile. It was a great success and there was fantastic response in Chile for it. And I can tell those of you who are interested, that next Saturday she and some other artists are exposing in [Edsviks] Konsthall. So, next Saturday you are kindly invited. I can send that around and text in Spanish and English. And that is something else that could be of interest. And I think it is very important that, to keep these witnesses and testimonies, and I really want to express my great hope that you will succeed and I think it is important and very often you see ideas like this when you were working with this collection to send to Chile I think many of us thought in the 1980s, when will it ever come to Chile? Will this happen, we said. Well, we have to fight for it. And you see

the result, it is there. So, I don't think it's a lost cause. I think you have everything to win to go on. Thank you.

Charlotte Bydler

Thank you very much, all of you. I will also announce that Eva needs to go at three so if there is anyone before the break or during the break who wishes to speak or talk about something, ask her right away.

Maria Lind

Can I suggest something? That maybe if we can meet here a quarter to three, then there will be time to see the exhibition.

Charlotte Bydler

Good. So, with that I invite everyone to go to the cafeteria.

BREAK**Charlotte Bydler**

Welcome back everyone. Let's resume. I will start with asking if there are any questions for Eva Zetterberg? Or if you had something to add?

Eva Zetterberg

Yes, I'm open for questions of course but I forgot to add something which I consider very important for the connection between Chile and Palestine. Very few people know that the biggest community of Palestinians outside the Arab world lives in Chile. There are over 300.000 Palestinian-Chileans and they are very well integrated in Chilean society who are Palestinians to start with.

And most of them maintain their own identity as Palestinians and the fantastic thing is that there are no conflicts what I've heard about between Jews and Palestinians in Chile and to make the story even better, Palestine was

acknowledged, recognised, as a state by a conservative Chilean president and government in 2010. I think it was one of the first things that the Chilean president Sebastián Piñera (*1949), we can have a lot of opinions about his presidency in other ways, but I think it is fantastic and in Sweden when Swedish government was accused of recognising the Palestine state there's very seldom mentioned that there are other countries outside Europe that have done it and no problems what so ever. Chilean government, the conservative government, made a visit to Israel and Palestine. It was one of the first international trips that Chile made during his presidency and that was to those areas and he brought Chilean parliamentarians who had Palestine identity on his trip so I think this is good story to let the world know about the land connections, I think we can use it in some ways.

Charlotte Bydler

I think we have to go back to the protocol here and I'll send around the occasion to ask questions for Eva, of course, but also to let everybody speak between each other across the table here. And then, I will let the audience in for the rest of the witnesses here. But if there are anyone in the audience now with a question to Eva?

Kristine Khouri

And maybe introduce yourself first?

Hala Husni Fariz

My name is Hala [Husni] Fariz (*1955), I'm the ambassador of Palestine. Thank you for what you just added, because I was about to touch on this, but my question would be regarding the connection between this solidarity group working for Chile and the solidarity group working for Palestine in the 1970s and 1980s. Was there any?

Eva Zetterberg

Yes. There was a connection and there was some collaboration but it was not very strong connection I think. We worked very much one of its own. But in some demonstrations for example, May 1st and some others, we could combine forces. But I think the Vietnam movement and FNL [Front National de Libération] groups and Palestinians, South Africans and the Apartheid and Chile, we were so occupied each of us with our own cause so I think there wasn't too close collaboration, but there were no hard feelings anyway. I mean, it was totally possible working together but we directed our forces to different groups, I think. And Chile ... you have at that time, the Latin American community wasn't that big, it became after the military coup. But still there was not sort of very, well we can ask you, maybe you know some examples of making some very concrete actions together? I can't really remember that. Thank you. She seems to remember something.

Bitte Alling-Ode

But if you start like Vietnam movement and you understand what's happened there, then it's easier to support what's happen in Chile. Because when I work as art-teacher my young boys and girls in the school they asked me about what's happened? Can you please tell us? And we made a picture show in the morning and singing about Víctor Jara (1932–1973) and it was kids fourteen, fifteen years old. And they have never had a support from me, if I not know the issue like Palestine because it's a story about solidarity.

Eva Zetterberg

Yes.

Bitte Alling-Ode

And not accept dirty killing people and so on. Excuse my bad English.

Person on the panel

But we understand what that means.

Lars Gösta Hellström

I can add something, maybe. We had a problem in Sweden, probably in any countries, with fragmentisation of the left. That there were different parties, different organisations made, they wanted to have control of these groups so if you wanted to keep your group, your solidarity movement together, you had to be very careful with what political issues you talked about. At least in the Palestine group we solved it by saying we concentrate on our problem in Palestine and the Middle East but we are careful about having opinions about other issues. And still we fight with this problem inside our own movement with different political attitudes between Communists, Social democrats, Liberals, Christians whatsoever. They were all there but we had, this was a problem that was greater than our own organisation.

Kristine Khouri

People want to add, I mean the speakers want to add, continue what they want to say, and then we can ... ?

Charlotte Bydler

Yes.

Kristine Khouri

So, I was just proposing that if the Witnesses would like to add something specific that they didn't have a chance to speak about. Eva, you have a chance here if there is anything else you would like to say?

Eva Zetterberg

No, no, no.

Kristine Khouri

Feel free. Go this way. That's okay. And that's Yvonne, and you want to talk about it; please go ahead.

Yvonne Fredriksson

No, but I'm thinking about the work with Palestine; I think it has been much more difficult than to work with solidarity with other countries and other people's struggles. I remember many times when we were out in the street, collecting money, and people were spitting at you, shouting at you, and really bad behaviour, so you had to be really tough and don't care about what they were doing. And I think the turn came a little bit after the Israeli invasion in Lebanon, 1982, the people on the streets started to change. But we were all of us, at least we who were very active, we were registered, we were seen as possible terrorists and so it has all the time been very difficult to work with Palestine. You are "anti-Semitic," and you can still see it today. There was a big scandal in the Book Fair in Gothenburg this year, where the Israeli ambassador came in and destroyed the whole speech of our chairman. And it's continued, also today if, for instance, our organisation work with support of the BDS [Boycot, Divestment and Sanctions] movement. Now we don't know what will happen in the near future. If we are even able to come to Palestine to be allowed to enter because you enter through the Israeli borders. At the Jordanians' side of the border it is not Israel, it is the West Bank/Palestine, but Israel has full control of it. So, it has been really hard for people to take a stand for Palestine if you compare with other questions.

Charlotte Bydler

Is there anyone else?

Björn Springfeldt

I could just add that when it came to, I can add that when it came to the solidarity with Chile; it was a political and poetical thing. With Palestine, it's political and religious thing. And if we talk about mankind history tells that more lives has been taken to conflicts caused by different religions than from any other cause in the history of mankind. So, it's quite, quite different dimension in this. And I hope that it will be solved.

Eva Zetterberg

I think, Yvonne, you're very right about the differences between the struggle for a democratic Chile and what you have been struggling for in Palestine. Because we have also compared to the other solidarity movements, with Vietnam, you have against Apartheid in South Africa and other African countries; and we have Chile where we can also see that the struggle has been successful as now. The dictatorship lasted like more than seventeen years. And Vietnam, some more years, Apartheid for so many years, and still at the end of sort of a few crucial years at the end, while the struggle came to an end – a successful end – of Apartheid. Other problems arose, of course.

But I mean you have, in the case of Palestine, the injustices, the occupation and so forth has been going on for so many more years and as you said we never met that kind of reaction on the streets when we out, when we were out collect money for Chile. There were mostly, there were differences as you would say, there were some discrepancies inside the left parties and a wish to control all the rest of it. And there were division between Social democrats and the rest of the left supporting Chile, but still we could do things together and it was not a sharp division and we were not enemies and we would not look upon each other in the way you can describe and I'm so sorry that it still is that way with Palestine. So, it makes it

more difficult, but I mean as I said, that is something of the challenge we have to, to see and ...

Sonja Martinson Uppman

Yes, I would like to add that I think the solidarity with Chile in the 1970s in Sweden was something so unique. It was not discussed whether to support or not support. It was massive. And the collection of the Swedish art from that period I mean, this is the best collection of Swedish 1970, art from the 1970s that exists in or around Sweden, I mean it's, it's really amazing. And the artists did not look at the wardrobe for some lost graphic piece or I mean, they gave from their hearts really the best they had. I mean you have Lars Kleen (*1941), he's here?

People on the panel

He is here.

Sonja Martinson Uppman

He's present here. His donation is, I mean, would practically fill this room. It's a shipwreck. That it's, I mean, tell us yourself. And other artists like Janne Håfström (*1937) for instance. He donated the six-metre long painting which was the coast, the silhouette of Chile, which was also the bed where Christ was laying in that painting.⁴ It was a major piece of art and I mean Peter Tillberg (1946–2016), Ola Billgren (1940–2001), our best artists donated the best they could do. It was really very touching.

Woman in the audience

I have another question regarding the collection and it's the right moment to ask on that. Looking at the list of names there are not that many women.

Person on the panel

That's right.

Same woman in the audience

Is there an explanation to that?

Björn Springfeldt

When I was new in Moderna Museet as director in 1992 I heard the steps outside my working room and in came Guerrilla Girls, and gave me a diploma as “the Male Chauvinist Pig of the Art world.” And I said: “Don’t worry, that will solve itself”, and to me it very much [has] today, you have the level of art – [it] is good or bad, it’s ... But it has taken some time.

Same woman in the audience

But back in the day it was not like that.

Björn Springfeldt

No, of course not.

Person on the panel

Nowhere.

Björn Springfeldt

Nowhere.

Charlotte Bydler

Is there still time Eva, to ... ?

Bitte Alling-Ode

I might say something about this question. Okay? Women and the men who make art. It’s very important if you really want to make art about foreign people because if you talk with women you get one story and men another and I remember when I started with Emmaus, *Next Year Emmaus*, that it was one family Abu Ghoch who took care of me and go around to every refugee house because I need to have that help. But the man he translated what he

thought I would like to hear. So, I must ask a culture centre close to my residence: “Do you have any girl who can translate for me?” So, they help me with a girl who was an actor and she translate really from the heart and with the hands and I get another story. So, it’s important if you think about that. In museum and the leadership that it’s good to have women, too, in art work.

Charlotte Bydler

So, should we proceed to next stage and say goodbye to Eva Zetterberg. Thank you very much!

So, I have a list of what to do now and I get back to the questions that I wanted to ... If there is anyone who would like to ask about context? And the position and the, back in the days? Is there anyone who would like to add a position or ask about or add something according to your position as witnesses?

Kristine Khouri

I also, maybe, before that, I wonder Sonja, if you could tell us a little bit more about on the practical level what it was like for this exhibition to happen here and just maybe a couple of minutes if you don’t mind speaking about the exhibition itself, your memories of it, and how it kind of was able to happen, because you sort of got cut off, at your ten-minute mark.

Sonja Martinson Uppman

Yes. I would like to stress the importance of Miria Contreras in this context. As I said she was the private secretary of Salvador Allende and she was also his companion. And she lost everything by the *coup*. She lost her love. She lost her eldest son. She and her, the rest of her family, had to go in exile and she worked from the beginning till the end with solidarity work for Chile. She was, she was in Havana, worked in the *Casa de las Américas* and she also

was the one who looked into Swedish catalogues of artists, artworks, to select the names for the Swedish collection which was then continued by Moderna Museet and we went together. La Payita and I went together to Stockholm in 1978, made up the whole thing with the committee, was diplomatically created by Björn. And that's how it all started.⁵

Kristine Khouri

Could I ask one question? German Perroti, is he here?

Sonja Martinson Uppman

Yes – is here? No? Where is he? Can anybody tell where he is?

Kristine Khouri

I don't know. Maybe we should have asked Eva before she left. But could you tell us a bit about him so we could kind of have it on record if you knew him; what, what his role was.

Sonja Martinson Uppman

He was a very active Chilean refugee who was an architect, and he was gathering the Chileans in exile. I don't know in detail what he did, but I know that he was working constantly for years. He should be here himself. I'm so sorry I can't get into details.

Barbro Hedström

Jag har en fråga. I can speak with a loud voice. I have a question. Jag kan prata högt.

Maria Lind

Vi spelar in så det är jätteviktigt med mikrofonen. We are recording, so it's really important with the microphone.

Barbro Hedström

Ja, okej. Jag skulle vilja veta lite mer. Yes, okay. I'd like to know some more.

Charlotte Bydler

Your name?

Barbro Hedström

My name is Barbro Hedström, and I'm a sculptor. And I'm actually one of the group who brought German Perroti to Stockholm. I wanted to ask you, Sonja, about the situation; I mean you're suddenly a diplomat, you're suddenly in the next door-embassy and you have 76 inhabitants with you. I mean please tell us, must be horrendous stories?

Sonja Martinson Uppman

It was a very dramatic time in my life. And we were ... 75 people who should be fed and content and working in a way not to be too depressed. It's extremely important to have an idea of what you want with all this and to really work for, for their safe conduct out of Chile and, I mean, the Cuban embassy itself was a target of any aggression you can imagine. They were standing on the walls around the embassy pointing at us. All people in there with their guns. At one occasion I was talking to the minister of agriculture Orlando Calderon in the patio of the embassy and suddenly he was shot in his head. Dropped down in front of me and I thought he was dead. It was a terrible, terrible moment; and a terrible accident. Fortunately, he survived. He lost his eye sight on one eye but he, he survived; and I met him years later in the cathedral of Santiago when the official funerals of Salvador Allende took place, I think it was in 1991.

Other incidents of the same kind were a fact. There were problems. There were children sick and so on, and

when these people were taken to the hospital the Junta was there to kidnap them and to torture them, and I mean, there was one incident before Harald Edelstam was declared *persona non grata* in Santiago in December already in 1973. Three or four of the employees of the embassy had to protect one of our refugees, a woman, in the hospital with their own bodies not to have her kidnapped. I mean these people, I mean these, they were real, they were real diplomats and they played their lives in this, in that moment and there were so many incidents of that kind. We had ABAB guards from Stockholm coming to protect us. They had dogs with them. The dogs were poisoned, etcetera. May 1st, there were aggression during ten months and we, afterwards all people who had been working with this were of war damaged after that but nobody ever spoke about this. That's what happened.

Charlotte Bydler

You had a question before? In the back row? Yes.

Valdemar

Tack. Jag heter Valdemar. Jag vill bara flika in en sak att ... när Eva berättade om museet. Thank you. My name is Valdemar. I just want to insert that ... when Eva spoke about the museum.

Woman in the audience

Engelska? In English?

Charlotte Bydler

Nej, det går bra med, det går bra med svenska. No, it's fine with, it's fine with Swedish.

Valdemar

Vad fint. Då fortsätter jag. Tack. Jo. Att för några år sedan såg jag en film på YouTube om Allende-museet så man

måste inte åka själv ... det finns en film på YouTube man kan titta på. Tack. That's fine. Then I'll continue. Thank you. Yes. That a couple of years ago I saw a film clip on YouTube on the Allende museum, thus one doesn't have to go there ... there is a film on YouTube that one may watch. Thank you.

Kristine Khouri

Was it, can I ask, can I ask a question in English to you?

Valdemar

Yes.

Kristine Khouri

Was it Julio Cortázar (1914–1984) standing in front of a painting? Do you remember if there was a person speaking about ... ?

Valdemar

Yes, that's correct. And I think there were some Olof Sandahl (*1938) works in the background, maybe. I'm not sure, but ...

Kristine Khouri

Ok. We should find it. So, one video which was in YouTube, it was from the French archives of Julio Cortázar, the Argentinian writer who was very involved in the *International Resistance Museum Salvador Allende* in France speaking about the initiative and how it is a museum in exile. He is standing in front of a work by Roberto Matta, talking about what it meant to build a collection in support of Allende and the initiatives in France so this was, there is one video that I've seen, this video circulated. I don't think I've seen that, the one you mentioned but we should try to find it.

Charlotte Bydler

Om vi skulle röra oss mot processen från vittnets ståndpunkt. Är det någonting ... Alltså hur kom du i kontakt med de här händelserna, om vi inte har berört det tidigare? Vilka frågor och problem och uppgifter ställdes du inför? Hur förberedd var du? What if we move on to the process from the witness point of view. Is there anything ... How did you come in contact with these events, if we haven't touched on that before? What were the questions and problems and issues you confronted? How prepared were you?

Kristine Khouri

I think Yvonne has also spoken to the challenges of doing this kind of work, but if ...

Yvonne Fredriksson

Before I went to Lebanon, we were prepared by a group of people who were talking about how it was to be in Lebanon – but of course it was impossible to really know how it would be. I remember we went from Stockholm to Warsaw, and then landing Beirut and then we came out of the airport and there were lots of tanks, weapons and soldiers. I had never seen anything like [that] in my life. And in Rashediye we experienced how to live with bombardments and to be scared and to see those bombs, splitter bombs, on the court yard in the morning and airplanes bombing outside the camp. It was terrifying, and of course you cannot be prepared for that.

But I say thanks God to the Palestinians, a group of people who were responsible for us, 'cause if you should listen to every person in that camp then you would have left immediately. So, that was rather difficult, because you never imagine what could happen when you went to work in the morning ... And then when coming home, I was lucky when we came home because I continued working

in the organisation and we could speak to people about it, because other people get tired immediately. "What have you done? Was it good?" And then when you say: "Yes," then it's over. And I think many people who have this worked abroad had this experience that no one is really interested, so people in our organisation who care about you listen and understand what you talk about, things that you have been through.

Kristine Khouri

I have one question. Can I ask it? I'm curious to hear a bit more about these study groups and the role of these study groups which [Gösta] spoke about a little bit, and what sort of, what that meant, what it meant to be part of that, produce material for that, both in the context of Palestine, Chile, Vietnam, sort of any of you having experience with these, with these groups you could talk a little bit more about them, that would be great.

Lars Gösta Hellström

OK. I can start, maybe. But I'd like to continue the discussion from Yvonne's point of view and I believe the Palestine solidarity movement rested on two legs. The first leg is information, and that is also including study circles, producing magazines and so on. And maybe I represent this part. Yvonne represents [the second leg, with practical] help support with the Palestinians. [I was] staying home in Stockholm while these nurses and doctors were in the Lebanese conquest civil war ...

It was a challenge, of course it was many too high risks. The first team was sent in 1976, I think, and they were smuggled into Lebanon in a small boat from Cyprus. And it was very scary, and they thought that they would be caught not by any Lebanese but by Israeli; and then it continued, this bombardment of refugee camps. When we started sending nurses during the Lebanese Civil War, the

interest in us Swedes grew in the press. Thereby, the interest in our solidarity work for the Palestinians also grew. Especially as a refugee camp was shelled; Tel al-Zaatar and the nurse Eva Ståhl got huge attention, as well as the clinic in Rashediye in south Lebanon.

We could not think simply that this was due to the press we got from this which obviously was important for the solidarity and support. Before that, we had problems with the public opinion and the public climate that was mainly pro-Israeli, especially in the 1960s. But it changed in the 1970s.

We had to educate our people, that was important for us. So, we spent a lot of effort producing study material starting in the beginning, in the first years in the 1970s, producing more simple materials, and then after using this material in the organisation finally made this book which I brought with me here which is the major study material that we used. It came out in 1980. And it is really compact information, and dense material. But we thought it was necessary to have all the facts to keep our mandate as activist the possibility to change and to have arguments when they met people who were against the ... So, I would say that these two legs, information and solidarity help, were the main reasons ...

Charlotte Bydler

Is there any question in the audience related to this? Kristine, do you have any questions related to solidarity and to, to study groups more?

Kristine Khouri

I think that's OK. Has anyone in the audience, did anyone participate in any of these study circles?

Female in the audience

Yes.

Kristine Khouri

Yes? Do you, would you like to tell us a little bit what you remember?

Same female in the audience

I think I went to every study circle that existed in Stockholm at that time. It was the guys talking and the girls cooking and I couldn't stand it. Because if you tried to open your mouth you were immediately pushed back, because that was how it was then. And so, I joined another group, a women's group. So, that's how it went.

Charlotte Bydler

Thank you.

Same female in the audience

But I worked for different causes and collected money, but I couldn't stand the basic groups, the Marxism and Leninism because they were all lead by guys who kept the mic for themselves.

Charlotte Bydler

Bitte. And then Macarena [Dusant].

Bitte Alling-Ode

I think the school, the university, our school for being teacher in art, had a different way in these things, work up solidarity because we trained from the beginning to analyse picture and the meaning of the rhetoric in this world. And that made all equal if you were a girl or a boy who made one or the other things. It was very democratic way, this education, so we had not a problem. I'm very happy that I was in that time in the school.

Charlotte Bydler

Thank you.

Macarena Dusan

My name is Macarena and I have a question for you. Gösta Hellström?

Person i panelen

Can you talk a little louder?

Macarena Dusan

Förlåt. Gösta Hellström. Sorry. Gösta Hellström.

Lars Gösta Hellström

Hej. Hi.

Macarena Dusan

Jo, jag tänkte på de här studiecirkelarna och du pratade om att "we have to educate our people." Till din kommentar att det var liksom mest män som pratade och kvinnor kokade kaffe och ... jag undrar vilka, vilka som hade studiecirkelarna och liksom till exempel exilchilenare eller exilpalestinare också höll i studiecirkelarna eller om det var svenskar som solidariserade sig med rörelsen höll studiecirkelarna. Så jag vill fråga vilka som höll i studiecirkelarna helt enkelt? Well, I thought about these study circles, and you said that "we have to educate our people." To your remark that it was kind of mostly men that did the talking and women making coffee and ... I wonder who, who arranged these study circles and kind of, for example exiled Chileans or Palestinians in exile, too, did they hold study circles or was it Swedes in solidarity with the movement that held these study circles. So, I want to ask quite simply, who held these study circles?

Female in the audience

I mitt fall var det bara män, men det var bara Chile. In my case it was only males, but it was only Chile.

Barbro Hedström

Det var de olika studieförbunden, politiska förbunden, det var många som arrangerade. There were various study circles with political affiliations, many arranged these.

Lars Gösta Hellström

Okay. In answer to this about boys and girls in the study circles, when it comes to the Palestine groups, I would say it was definitely mainly boys. I'm sorry to admit that. But that's 40 years ago, and would have been different today and they were mainly young male white persons. We had good relations with the Arabs, the Palestinians already from the beginning, and they were partly in our organisation as members and some few of them were very important for our understanding of the situation in this, and so on. Sometimes for translations. But they, they, the Palestinian activity was mainly in their own organisations. It was the Palestine workers' organisation [trade union], the PAF, as well as the Palestine Student Association, and the Arab Society. The Palestine party organisations (Fatah, PFLP [Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine], DFLP [Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine], etcetera) held a much lower profile due to security reasons and their being branded as terrorists. Many Palestinians were active in several different associations, including the Palestine groups ... there were, let's say five, ten per cent Arabs in the Swedish organisation.

Charlotte Bydler

Here is a question?

Charlotte Tegnér

Jag vill också svara på din fråga om ... I would like to answer to your question on ...

Charlotte Bydler

Name please?

Charlotte Tegnér

Mitt namn är Charlotte Tegnér och jag deltog i studiecirkel i Jönköping och var då gymnasiestudent. Och vi var inte bara män utan det var många kvinnor. Och det var även aktiviteter utanför Jönköpings kommun där bland annat man bjöd in chilenare. Det var ju, vi var svenskar vi som deltog och det var samma sak i Göteborg dit jag flyttade sedan. Det var mest svenskar men då hade det också kommit chilenare, flyktingar men det är en fråga som vi inte verkar ska beröra idag för det var det stora problemet som jag upplevde att kunna ta emot flyktingar som var, hade varit torterade, och som inte talade svenska. Och där kunde vi brista. Vi var unga och vi hade inte, vi hade inte träning att ta emot människor. My name is Charlotte Tegnér and I took part in a study circle in Jönköping at the time I went to a gymnasium in the city. And there were not just men but also many women. And there were also activities outside Jönköping municipality to which Chileans were invited. It was, we were mostly Swedes who gathered; and it was the same in Gothenburg where I came to live later. It was mostly Swedes, but by then Chilean refugees had started to arrive but that is a topic that we seem not to touch upon; these had evidently been tortured, and did not speak Swedish. Because I felt that we failed them. We were young and did not have, did not have training to take care of people.

Female on the panel

En fråga här. A question here.

Anna Nordell

My name is Anna Nordell and I want to highlight some of the strong points from the Palestinian Solidarity As-

sociation and I think Yvonne can talk more about it as in one strategy that was very successful was that the association involved different NGO's going to Palestine. If you haven't been on the ground, you can't really understand the situation for people in Palestine. So the association invited and organised different trips from trade unions and different NGO's, and there were spin-offs from these visits that the Trade Union for theatre workers, for journalists, or whatever, they started to connect with the Palestinian counterparts and making their own projects at the theatre up in Jenin and education for journalists, and all you can hope really, and I am a midwife, and I was there for the Swedish Association of Midwives, so we had, continued to have projects with our partners.

Charlotte Bydler

Can I ask was there a similar gender division between the Chilean solidarity movement?

Female in the audience

The Chilean solidarity movement här i *Estocolmo*?

Charlotte Bydler

Ja. Yes.

Same female in the audience

Jag är chilensare. I am a Chilean.

Charlotte Bydler

Ja. Yes.

Same female in the audience

Jag kunde ha varit här kanske 1974 när jag i mitt arbete sa till mig de kommer att hjälpa dig. Jag kunde ha åkt från Santiago, hoppar över en grind och få asyl. Men jag fick tänka mig för ... den 11 september 1973. Jag hade en mor.

Jag hjälpte min brors familj, min mor och jag, vi var lärarinnor i en akademi. Efter en ... tillbaka, en annan plats så jag stannade i Chile. Så jag blev också, jag visste vad hon berättade [gör rörelser mot Sonja Martinson Uppman]. Lite om den där svenska ambassadör, vad de skriver i tidningen, vad han gjorde, och *persona non grata*. Jag kom hit 28 januari men jag gissade att de skulle ... en gång till. Och jag tänker: "Nej, då hamnar jag i en psykiatrisk klinik". Då flydde jag hit.

Jag kom till Sverige och jag såg att det fanns något som hette Chilekommittén. Det arbetade tillsammans svenskarna och chilennare. De gjorde protester, de gjorde allt. För Chile kamp. Jag också delta i Argentina, Palestinian men blev medlem i en svensk klubb som arbetade mot Apartheid i Afrika. Så jag gick samlade pengar ... Och det fanns mycket konstnär chilenska i allt. Författare, de som målar. De enades och gjorde en utställning. Så jag var mycket tacksam för detta hjälp som vi fick här i Sverige och från det svenska folket.

Jag blir lite rörd, rörd ...

Och men jag skulle säga att de som har pratat här om sina erfarenhet, om Chile och Palestina. De var mycket unga när de gjorde detta. Jag var också ung kvinna när kuppen i Chile och jag säger att när man åker till ett land som Chile för att göra solidaritet mot ... och man kände ... man har hjälp från sitt hemland. Alla som har åkt till olika länder från Sverige ... Sverige hjälper folk. Denna ... hjälper med människor som bor i dessa länder som i Chile och Palestina. När ... till dem som kämpade också i sina hemländer, vem hjälper dem? I could have been here perhaps 1974 when I in my work they will help you. I could have left Santiago, jump over a gate and get asylum. But I had to rethink ... the 11th of September 1973. I had a mother. I helped my brother's family, my mother and I, we were teachers at an academy. After one ... back, in another place so I stayed in Chile. So I was also, I knew what she

[makes gestures toward Sonja Martinson Uppman] spoke about. A little about that Swedish ambassador, what they wrote in the papers, what he did, and *persona non grata*. I came here January 28 but I guessed that they would ... once more. And I think: "No, then I'll go straight into a psychiatric ward." Then I fled and ended up here.

I came to Sweden and I saw that there was something called Chile Committee. It was working together the Swedish people and the Chileans. They protested, they did everything. For Chile fight. I, too, participated in Argentina, Palestinian but became a member of a Swedish society that worked against Apartheid in Africa. So, I went and collected money ... And there were many things Chilean, artistic. Authors, those who paint. They united and made an exhibition. So I was very grateful for all this help that we got in Sweden and from the Swedish people.

I get a little emotional, emotional ...

And but I would say, that those who have spoken here about their experience, on Chile and Palestine. They were very young when they did this. I, too, was very young when happened the coup in Chile, and I say to you if you go to a country like Chile to act in solidarity towards ... and one felt ... one has the support of one's homeland. Everybody who went to various countries from Sweden ... Sweden helps people. This ... helps with people who live in countries like Chile and Palestine. When ... to those who also fought in their homelands, who will help them?

Charlotte Bydler

Yvonne?

Yvonne Fredriksson

I think by what we have been doing in and being connected to Palestine all the time and have been coming there regularly is very important for people. One of the most important things people say to us when we visit Pal-

estine is that we give them strength and hope to continue their struggle for liberation. And I think that it is very important and we always hear that we know the difference between your organisation and others, because you're a solidarity organisation and you also work with information and political work in Sweden. Many organisations are only working with aid and has no connection to the political work and do not connect those two together.

I think it's very important with solidarity even if that word is not so fashionable today.

Charlotte Bydler

That is in fact something, something, that I would like you to talk about. Why you think that is so?

Kristine Khouri

Maybe I'll add one note to the research 'cause in one of the newspaper articles here that's on this wall from this round table that took place at the exhibition in Beirut, the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*. There was a fighter who walked into, he was looking at the exhibition, a Palestinian fighter and the moderator sort of, the journalist who is doing a round table of three artists. French and Italian artists who came from abroad for this exhibition, decided to ask the fighter what he thought and why he was there. And he said: "I was, I came from Nablus, I was training in Rashediye, and I heard that there are international artists who came here to support us, that show their support, and also to show that to be here and to, to have an exhibition meant that we were civilised, that we weren't barbaric and to know that there are people in the world that support us is meaningful to us."

And so, I think this is something in what solidarity is. That there are people around the world who believe in you and believe in your causes for you and participate, engage in different ways. Whether it's through the dona-

tion made active giving an art work, through volunteering in camps, through organising exhibitions elsewhere. There are many different ways in which solidarity is being expressed and so, yes, make a note on that.

As we'll also see, since we have one of the artists from the exhibition here in Stockholm: Lars Kleen. I want to let him know, if he feels comfortable, if he wants to say any words about his memory about the work that he made, and this exhibition, no pressure but it would be lovely to have a voice of an artist.

Lars Kleen

Jag tar det på svenska. Jag har inte mycket att säga men man fick förfrågan om att donera det bästa jag kunde och det tycker jag att jag gjorde. Jag var faktiskt i Chile Santiago för fem, tio år sedan med Elisabet Haglund (*1945) och tittade på den svenska samlingen och det var Statens konstråd [the Swedish Art Agency] som hade arrangerat det. Det hade varit termitangrepp, och det var väl tråkigt i och för sig; men det som jag tyckte var problemet om man ser ganska tekniskt på museet var fukten. Speciellt kommer jag ihåg jag gick på spanska samlingen som var ... ja. Som filter. Museet var ju jättefint annars, och det fattades som jag tyckte eller jag förstod medel, helt enkelt, att underhålla de här konstverken. Men jag blev väldigt smickrad att jag över huvud taget blev ombedd att skänka till det här museet. Jag har inte så mycket mer att säga. I choose to tell it in Swedish. I don't have much to say, but I was suggested to donate the best piece I had and I think that I did that. In fact, I was in Chile Santiago five, ten years ago with Elisabet Haglund (*1945) and looked at the Swedish collection, and it was the Swedish Art Agency that had arranged the visit. There had been a termite attack, but what I found was the real problem if one looked at the museum rather technically, was that it was so damp. Especially, I remember the Spanish collection that was

... well. Like blankets. Otherwise, the museum was really nice, and there was a lack of funding as I thought or I understood, simply, to keep these artworks in condition. But I was very flattered by being asked to contribute to this museum. I don't have much more to say.

Charlotte Bydler

Vem frågade dig om du ville bidra till utställningen? Who asked you to participate in the show?

Lars Kleen

Jag kommer inte ihåg. Det var Moderna [Museet] antar jag. I don't remember. It was the Moderna [Museum] I suppose.

Charlotte Bydler

Well.

Björn Springfieldt

Det finns ett underbart fotografi av Lasse, det finns ett underbart fotografi av Lasse från Hanoi. Och han står i en park i Hanoi och har en liten gammal man vid sin sida. Det var den här generalen som krossade amerikanarnas försök att ta Hanoi. Så det Lasse gör det är helt fantastiskt ... och det ni kan göra, besök honom i ateljén titta, titta på vad han gör. Makalöst. Ligger ute i Nacka. Jag tror att det bara är att slå en signal till Lasse och komma ut och titta. There is a wonderful photo of Lasse, there is a wonderful photo of Lasse from Hanoi. And he stands in a park in Hanoi and has this little old man by his side. It was this general who crushed the US soldiers' effort to take Hanoi. So what Lasse does is absolutely fantastic ... and what you can do is just, visit him in the studio and look, look at what he's doing. Amazing. Out in Nacka. I think it is just to call Lasse and get out and have a look.

Leonard Sandoval

I'm Leonard Sandoval. I want to ask about the part of ... of an art work, to art exhibition, and practice solidarity to, in this way because like ... it seems like today it's more important maybe to create archives and recording conversations as we are doing now and recording parts, and what we are still, what is it, it, it still a habit to create a, a collection. Why would that be important instead of making just archives? An art collection, I mean.

Charlotte Bydler

Who would like to answer that question?

Kristine Khouri

Maybe I'll answer. That's kind of been what's, what's one of the core question of this research is why this period of the 1970s, why was the model of building a collection in support of a cause. And make it into the art. Why is that so prevalent? In the case of Palestine, Chile, South Africa and Nicaragua. What did, what did museums mean at that time? What did, what was the value of a "museum for the future", right? For either if someone was waiting or was hoping to be liberated and free, or to be free from occupation, free from dictatorship and, and you know; thinking about artistic practices today and how artists show solidarity you know how is, is the artists or art critics or other individuals think about the value of collections, maybe not valued collections, what it means to at that time to claim to want to build a museum in a place where it's seemingly impossible to build a new museum, right? And that it would exist, in a way, for the world until it could return to the people. So these museums, this exhibition in Stockholm did not just happen here. This collection travelled so these were itinerant museums, museums-in-exile without a home until they could return to a home. And I think what's important to notice in Chile these works

were able to return home. They're in a museum.

In Nicaragua, these works didn't return there. There was a museum, it is in flux there, it's unclear what sort of happened with that. In the case of South Africa, with the Artists of the World Against Apartheid Committee, and the sort of collection, the works returned. But there is not a museum that is not properly desegregated so they didn't return to a museum. They returned and actually they were first shown in the parliament building for the first, you know the first section of parliament after the end of Apartheid, of Apartheid. So, these works were shown within a very politicised space. And they're actually held as a collection at the Mayibuyi Centre in the University of Western Cape, so they are not currently in a museum.

Palestine is still a fight that is being fought, right. There is not, these works, what happened to the works is many of them had been destroyed, some had been, sort of, safe-guarded. There is some work that's going on by both officials and artists who are part of this project, who are trying to sort of figure out what to do with the works that remain and I think it's important to know that on a separate, separately, there is a museum, there are many museums in Palestine. Sometimes they are personal home-museums, but there are 66 or 69 museums at Lebanon and Palestine. They're not what we all imagine as big large sort of monuments, but there is a bit of important ritual memorialisation there. But there is a museum that just opened last year, called the Palestinian Museum in Bir Seit, right by the University. And it's interesting, because the museum opened, and they don't have a collection, they are not an art museum specifically, they are sort of a cultural heritage museum. And the way, from what I understand, the way they've been working is not to build a physical collection but to try and see how they could exist not only in Palestine but also in the diaspora. So that it is built not only for the people who happen to live there, but

for the community around the world and so to imagine, in a way maybe it's a "museum-in-exile," right. They have a base in Palestine and they operate all over the world, that was sort of the intention, that was the idea behind it.

But to build a monument, I mean there are many questions why would you put so much money into building a museum in a place where very few people would have access to it. And it's a position. I mean many nations' leaders build monuments to show that they can, to show their power, to express their power. I think it's a political act to build a museum, to have done that. So, I just wanted to note that few examples.

Maria Lind

I would just like to throw in something there in relation to contemporary art more recent acts of solidarity. One that was brought up yesterday as well, which is a biennale in South Korea, in the city of Gwangju which in 1980 experienced a very bloody attack by the paratroopers instigated by the dictatorship of the time against protesting students, who were demonstrating against martial laws, and for democracy. It was a terrible bloodshed, but the citizens of Gwangju held the city for a week, a little bit like the Paris Commune. And eventually when democracy in South Korea the municipality, or some people in the municipality, decided to that there had to be a monument of some kind. But luckily, they did not go for a physical monument, but for this biennale instead so since 1995 they have a big ambitious cultural event happening in this minor city – compared so Seoul and Busan and the other big cities of the country – to sort of continuously be able to practice contemporary art in this case. So, I think one way of thinking about keep certain solidarity and legacy alive, and yet very much part of the time.

Another case is to do with infrastructure, which is also a recurring topic in your research Kristine, and that's

the so-called Gulf Labour Network. It's primarily artists living in New York but they come from many places in the world and when Guggenheim, the museum, decided to build a museum in Abu Dhabi using a lot of guest workers whose working conditions are absolutely appalling. Living in tents and being indebted in a way which means that they have a hard time ever finishing working in these jobs. They have [done] lovely works these artists. With the argument that the Guggenheim museum – if we're living in New York – is our sort of home museum, belongs to our context and therefore, we need to be engaged in what is going on in our names, so to speak. So, they spent years trying to lobby not only the Guggenheim board but also organisations and institutions in the United Arab Emirates. Not to great success, but it's an ambitious multi-year project that in a way makes me think of what you did in the 1970s in terms of continuous work. It's not just signing a petition, it's not just donating work. It's actually about week after week, working for better world.

Charlotte Bydler

You first.

Cristian Quinteros Soto

Hi. My name is Cristian Quinteros Soto. And it's about the question of [idealism]. But first of all, thank you for your stories and your commitment to this work, and all of you who's here. My question is: Do you think that it could be, it could happen like a long term work, solidarity work today, if it could happen, and as it has because this is like, for decades, and also how do you feel about new, new solidarity work, like going through internet and signing petitions and the more faster and loosely based projects? How do you feel about that, as like we all have experienced that kind ...

Björn Springfieldt

It's a tremendous difference between the time when we made the Allende museum. At that time a work of art was a carrier of ideas and feelings. Today it's a carrier of money, money, money. The artworks were extremely controversial, so in order to do this work I think you are quite right, you have to find new ways of doing it. And the, to connect people around, for, a cause.

Bitte Alling-Ode

Okay. But times change and how to make art changes of course, too, in this context. So for me, it is like young people can phone me and say "we have a meeting in our town," and it, I, I, and there in the place as [baby boomer generation] I come in very good time – alone. At two minutes before it should happen, then, straight then, they are coming all the young people in the town, around 60 persons to meet like that. It's no surprise but it's another way of make action today. So is too with that. On *Ship to Gaza*, now I am talking of today. *Ship to Gaza* started from Sweden to Gaza try to help them. The newspaper didn't like to write about it in our town Örebro. So, we send away, with internet and mail and so, we said: "Come to the centre of town in Örebro," that we have a castle and water around and everyone make small boats so it was hundreds of Gaza ships around the castle in Örebro. And the newspaper must write about it, because we make a film that we had connection with television, and a year back my husband, he made manipulated picture that the wall when it comes before when they like build it, we would discuss how shall we make people understand what's happened? So in centre of Örebro we have a sculpture. It's a freedom man standing like that [makes gestures] so we make it correctly in metre and building up slowly, slowly, so he was not there anymore. And it was sending in Swedish Television in the best time in Örebro. And it was together with

a man who sit here back, Donald Lundström. He come to Örebro and have a big exhibition about what's happened there. So, we even had discuss[ions] in the little cinema, the local cinema, we had a this – it was the whole town was filled up. So that I think it's that you must make installation in your place in the town where you are. Not in the big buildings, because the time is now.

Charlotte Bydler

Yvonne, do you want to add something?

Yvonne Fredriksson

I think all of us activist people have done “artistic installations.” “The Wall” has been built around all around Sweden by activists. We have had “check points”, we dressed like “soldiers” who stopped people at the University of Stockholm, it has been “art shows” with the “latest Israeli military fashion,” etcetera. But I want to mention that even if it's very little Sweden has given since 1993, through Sida, the Swedish International Development Agency, it has done a lot for support the art in Palestine. They are supporting theatre groups and dance groups, we got the famous El-Fonun to Sweden in 1996, they were for a week in a folklore festival and after that they got connected with support from Sweden. And Sida also supports film in Palestine and journalist education and I know that artists from the art school in Palestine very often are invited to Norway to continue higher education.

So, I think this shows how important it is to support culture in a country who are working for liberation – and also in other countries, to strengthen the identity of the people. And ... yes.

Emily Fahlén

I have a question, if that's alright? I would be interested in returning to the *Salvador Allende Resistance Museum*. My

name is Emily Fahlén, I work at Tensta Konsthall. There were, there was obviously a quite strong idea that the future for this exhibition, that it was going to be returned to Chile in the future. But I would be curious as to learn more about your vision, about what kind of platform the exhibition could create at Moderna Museet because we learned from the Friday seminar, and also some of Kristine Khouri's research at the archives, that there were for instance a very rich program around the exhibition. So, I would be curious to learn about more about your vision with the exhibition or what kind of platform it was creating – or could create.

Björn Springfieldt

I don't, it's a long time ago, so I don't remember all the various things happening around the exhibition but as I said before it was music, it was theatre groups, it was films, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera, so the hope we had with the thing it was of course that people should start to talk with each other to discuss what is happening in Chile, what could we do? So that, that was the hope.

Charlotte Bydler

We're running on overtime now, and ... please bear with us.

Alba Baeza, Curating Art Master Programme, Department of Culture and Aesthetics at Stockholm University

Hello, my name is Alba and I would like to ask you a bit about a question that just came up in Yvonne's intervention and we're preparing together with some students from Stockholm University a kind of follow up to this symposium, to Kristine and Rasha's research that will address more specifically the question of film and the Palestinians, etcetera. So, I would like to know if you, what,

if you would like to share any experiences, if you saw Palestinian film-makers' work at the time, if there were also specific screenings here in Sweden or what relations were ... and culture.

Yvonne Fredriksson

I don't know very much about the 1970s and the 1980s, but of course we can connect you with people who have been involved with film making at that time and also to help you to connect with people who are working today. There are very good woman who take care of film in Palestine so if you want we can help you to get connected to the right people. No problem.

Alba Baeza

Fantastic. Thank you.

Hala Husni Fariz

Just to add briefly to what Yvonne was saying. Actually, in the 1960s and the 1970s, there was a very good movement also regarding the film. The PLO, just as they paid a lot of attention to plastic art and all of that. There was also a special division that was involved in film-making, and what happened to the artwork and the exhibition of 1978 also happened to the archives of our film industry if you like. And it's maybe interesting for you to know that film industry was very developed in Palestine before 1948 and that also was lost together with so, so much of our cultural heritage after the establishment of the Israeli in 1948. So, we got again another, a huge loss, that was lost.

There was an attempt, maybe in the, I would say, late 1990s, to start collecting. Also look for some private archives whoever had access to; look at also our embassies all over and the PLO offices who still has those films, etcetera. And it's an ongoing thing and in, also in addition to what Yvonne mentioned, that there is a lot; and there

are many, by the way, women directors and producers working in the film. Thank you.

Kristine Khouri

And a quick note to add, is while there were Palestinian film makers and other Arab film makers who were working around the Palestinian cause, there also were a number of film-makers from the rest of the world who also travelled worked with the PLO to make, to produce films. This is separate from TV-work, for example. Separate from, sort of, official journalism, so that's another sort of way that you see solidarity come through, through, the practice of many films that were made in collaboration with sort of foreign filmmakers, directors, etcetera.

Charlotte Bydler

It's about time that we round up and I am really impressed with all your patience and the good spirit. I just want to make one last round of, to see if there is something that you wish to add or say even.

Kristine Khouri

Final thoughts.

Bitte Alling-Ode

Around 1997 it was hope that you feel like if you really fight for things you get it, you get it better. But with Palestine every ten year I go down. It's worse, and worse, and worse. It's awful today. Even as a tourist, an old little lady coming there, it's hard time to go down. But I remember when I show the exhibition in Stockholm in the year 1993 on Folkens Museum, Yasser Arafat promised me, he came there.

Charlotte Bydler

Yes.

Bitte Alling-Ode

And they stopped the whole town and he came to have a discussion about Jerusalem.

Charlotte Bydler

In Stockholm?

Bitte Alling-Ode

In Stockholm. And he said that day: "Bitte Alling, we get back to come and really have a good life in Palestine. I shall build up your exhibition on Emmaus old land again." And he's not living, but it shows the strong feeling that the Intifada never is down, it's always waiting there to, and with all the rights of the Palestine. What this time [taught] me is that it's open my view to look at the world and get something and not only give. It's fantastic to see world in different way through the women's eyes and that is why I made the exhibition as I did. I make documentary stories very hard but the sculptures are the dream of what they want in life. Thank you.

Lars Gösta Hellström

When I joined the Palestine movement in the 1970s you can say that the problem was already old. It actually started in 1948. And there was one member, he wasn't a member from the beginning, but became member. It was Bertil Fastman, a very old man and he had been a supporter of the Palestinian rights since 1948. And it was pretty amazing for me to think that so many years, he has been a supporter for so many years, and I thought: "I will not be that. I will not be in his situation. I will not be 'the old man' saying that eventually they will have their rights, but we have a problem with time." Time has been running very long now, and that is the maybe the most strange thing with the Palestinian movement. Because when I was young in the 1970s, we were more confident that the

cause was right. The problem is not a strange problem, since it is just a matter of human rights. It's, it can be difficult to explain if you are in a very pro-Israeli environment but otherwise it's not strange. And I cannot say anything more now. I'm sorry.

Yvonne Fredriksson

Many of us are getting older and this terrible situation created by the United Nations who are not able enough to solve the problem after so long time. For me that is sometimes I feel that why do we have this establishment who created one of the longest occupations and one of the longest refugee problems in the world and it's not solved. But at the same time, when I meet people who live in Palestine, when I go to Gaza and I go places in Palestine; people give you hope and I think it's a very strong population.

And there is a private person who open Gaza Museum and they try to, to uncover the old city of Gaza but it's nearly impossible, because the refugee camp is [situated] over it, and they have to stop digging everywhere. But he opened a museum and he paid by his own money, the fisherman who found things in the sea, and they find things in the sand. So, he opened his museum and his whole family is involved when school children are coming and they tell them the about Gaza's history. And I think that gives you hope that there are people who even in very difficult situation is doing things for their country and for the people around the ... So, I think that gives hope for the future even if it's a difficult future.

Charlotte Bydler

Sonja, would you ... ? Thank you so very much.

Maria Lind

So, on behalf of Tensta Konsthall I would like to thank

everybody who's contributed today, especially Charlotte Bydler and Kristine Khouri and the hope is that this is just the beginning of things that some of us will pick up threads and we will continue weaving something out of this.

And I think it's important that art is at the centre of what we do at Tensta Konsthall. It's also the background why this symposium happens in the first place. If we look at the list of participants of the Salvador Allende exhibition, a number of the artists is either in the middle of the screen over there, many of the artists had worked for the Stockholm underground system, so just to also remember that things are close even though we heard that it's a long time ago we can all on our way back to the city centre if that's where we're going taking the underground pay attention to Lars Kleen's work at Sundbybergs subway station so it's there around us. Maybe we don't always remember, but it's actually there.

- 1 See also George N. Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968*, Boston: South End Press (1987).
- 2 See Appendix at the end of this booklet.
- 3 The October war, also known as the Yom Kippur war or Ramadan war, was an armed conflict where Israel fought to prevent the Arab coalition, led by Syria and Egypt, from taking back the territory Israel had seized during the Six Days' War (1967).
- 4 Refers to a painting by Hans Holbein the younger, *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* (1521).
- 5 Sonja Martinson Uppman, who worked at the Moderna Museet between 1967 and 1973, had very good relations with the artists who were considered to be the best of the 1970s. It was of course no one-person-achievement, but her network, the enthusiasm of Miria Contreras, and the institutional security of Björn Springfeldt that managed to set the whole collective exhibition off. Thus it was a collective enterprise. (Sonja Martinson Uppman in telephone conversation with Charlotte Bydler, 2021.12.09.).

Appendix

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Excavating International Solidarity:
Artistic Actions, Museography and Exhibitions
by Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti

(...)

FOCAL POINT SUPER MARKET / Tensta konsthall

(...)

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Symposium 17–19.2

Research material in The Classroom

17.2–7.5 2017

The *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* was inaugurated in Beirut, in March 1978 and was intended as the seed collection for a museum in exile. Inspired by the *International Resistance Museum* [...] *Salvador Allende* in Chile, the museum took on the form of an itinerant exhibition that was meant to tour until it could ‘repatriate’ to Palestine. Organised by the Plastic Arts Section of the Palestine Liberation Organisation’s Unified Information Office, comprising almost 200 works, donated by [200 artists] from almost 30 countries, it remains one of the most ambitious, in scale and scope, to have ever been showcased in the Arab world until this day. After the exhibition’s unhangng, the Unified Information Office rented an apartment to store the artworks and became invested in organizing the exhibition’s international touring showcase. One hundred artworks were exhibited in Japan, another selection in Norway and yet another in Iran. Tragically, during the Israeli army’s siege of Beirut in 1982,

sustained shelling destroyed the building where the works were stored as well as the exhibition's archival and documentary traces.

(...)

The workshops engage students at the International Curating Management Education, Stockholm University, the Royal Institute of Fine Arts, and Cinema Studies, department of Film Studies, Stockholm University. The Witness seminar is arranged together with the Institute of Contemporary History [and the School of Culture and Education] at Södertörn University.

The research by Rasha Salti and Kristine Khouri, to reconstruct *the International Exhibition for Palestine* began with a copy of the catalogue that lists artists, reproduced images of artworks and acknowledges people and institutions, whose contributions and support, made it possible. The research delved into a recent but little-known past of politically engaged artistic practice and curatorial diplomacy embedded in the international anti-imperialist left during the 1970s, mobilised around the struggle against the war in Vietnam, the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, the Apartheid in South Africa and in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

Even though the past that Khouri and Salti were exploring is recent (the 1970s and 1980s), and a number of the protagonists are still alive, for the most part, they were dealing with a barely documented chapter in the history of contemporary art.

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This chapter deals with the role of artists in moments of political change, and where art was deemed as central to social and political struggles. Khouri's and Salti's methodology is not unlike a detective work, replete with fortuitous meetings, providential accidents, surprising coincidences and epiphanies.

The research uncovered forgotten networks of mili-

tants, artists, curators and actions in public places. Using recorded testimonies and documents culled from private and institutional archives, Khouri and Salti mapped the myriad collaborations, collections and exhibitions, mobilised around the impassioned defense of causes that linked militant artists across the world in the context of the Cold War. These cartographies interrogate exhibition history and the canons of museographic practice. And last but not least, it also explores the significance of political engagement in the decade of the 1970s, specifically in universes neither deemed vanguard nor mainstream, and thus rarely studied in prevailing contemporary historical narratives.

(...)

Together, Khouri and Salti are co-founders of the History of Arab Modernities in the Visual Arts Study Group, a research platform focused around the social history of art in the Arab world. Their current research is focused on the history of the exhibition of the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* that was opened in Beirut in 1978. The research around the exhibition was transformed into an exhibition, *Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts of the International Art Exhibition for Palestine, 1978* that was first shown at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in 2015. It has also [been] presented at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin in 2016.

(...)

[...] *The Eros Effect* project borrows its title from the researcher and activist George N. Katsiaficas's essay by the same name from 1989. [...] With his notion the Eros Effect, Katsiaficas suggests that social movements always constitute both [emotional outbursts and exclusively rational efforts] and that the struggle for liberation are equally an "erotic" act and a rational desire

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to break free from structural and psychological barriers.

Fran[t]z Fanon made similar observations when he stated that resistance towards colonialism causes positive effects on the emotional life of individuals.

(...)

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A conversation between Emily Fahlén, Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti

Emily Fahlén

How did your interest in the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* begin?

Kristine Khouri + Rasha Salti

We found the exhibition catalogue at an art gallery in Beirut by pure coincidence. At that time, we had been researching the Lebanese art scene in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and the 1980s, for close to two years. We were interviewing art critics, gallerists and art historians, so when we fell on the catalogue we were a little arrested. In spite of its scope and scale, that exhibition had neither come up in any of the conversations, nor in the various texts we had collected. With 197 artists from 30 countries (some of whom very famous, then and now) credited in the catalogue to have donated works, no exhibition of such tenor had ever been organised in Beirut by then, and as a matter of fact, not even until this present moment. Furthermore, the exhibition was inaugurated less than two weeks after the Israeli army had invaded south Lebanon and UN peacekeeping forces had been deployed to “observe” cessation of violence.

We were, to say the least, intrigued, and decided to investigate further how and why it had become a blind spot. Its association with the traumatic legacy of the Civil War might have pushed it into forgetting, but other exhibitions, far smaller not as “international” that took place during that period, had come up in several of the inter-

views we had conducted, some were even deemed seminal. What was it about the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* that made it lapse from narratives?

EF

And the PLO organised the exhibition.

KK + RS

Yes by the Plastic Arts Section of the PLO's Unified Information Office. The *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* was shown in the basement hall of The Beirut Arab University. That space was not quite a "seminal" art space, but it had hosted exhibitions and events prior. Moreover, the Beirut Arab University was in the heart of an area of the city known at the time as a PLO "stronghold". In other words, the PLO had most of its offices around there, and two major refugee camps (namely, Sabra and Shatila, and the Borj al-Barajneh camps respectively) are in the immediate and close vicinity of the university. In addition to art critics and artists, we decided to speak to figures from the Palestine intelligentsia that were likely to have been interested in the exhibition. Most of them had vague recollections, they remembered the fact of the exhibition taking place and some remembered even attending the opening, but rarely did the art works stand out, nor did they remember meeting artists. The PLO saw their struggle as an anti-imperialist war of liberation, and they represented it in this manner, in the bi-polarity of the Cold War, these mechanisms were radically different between "east" and "west". The catalogue indicated that the exhibition was destined to lay the foundation for a museum for Palestine: the collection was its seed, and its itinerant showcase was the embodiment of "a museum in exile". Ultimately, it was intended to repatriate to a liberated and democratic Palestine.

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[...] It seems that some of the works were “rescued” prior to complete destruction of the building, and were stored for safekeeping in peoples’ homes in Beirut. As recently as a few months ago, we learned that the artworks that were exhibited in Tehran had remained there because the Beirut airport was shut down when they were meant to be sent back. In fact, they were kept in storage at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, where they remain until today. The paper trail and documentary archives pertaining to the exhibition and its travels were however destroyed.

EF

Yes, I have seen this much after having followed your project for two years. [...] Can you describe your research methods and politics; how have you been approaching the narratives of the exhibition?

KK + RS

[...] Three basic questions became our driving “motives”. The first was: Where did the idea of a museum come from? The second: How can the list of artists who donated works be explained? What are the networks that lie beneath it? The third: [W]ho are the people thanked in the list of acknowledgements and what was their contribution to the exhibition? We began with checking the names of artists and those thanked, to find out who was still alive, and whether there was a way we could contact them. This was very close to detective work because, as we quickly learned, a significant number of the artists we[re] not part of the ‘canon’. [...] As soon as we secured some funding, we traveled to Paris to interview Claude Lazar, a French artist who donated work and seemed to have traveled to Beirut for the installation of the exhibition and opening. [...]

In trying to understand where the idea for the exhibi-

tion came from, we collected several versions of the 'genesis' story, and we understood they were likely all true. In other words, there were not one single narrative. [...]

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EF

The exhibition obviously was a big machinery with many different people involved organizing this international project. [...]

KK + RS

The exhibition did not have a curator per se but Mona Saudi, who was the head of the PLO's Plastic Arts Section at the time (and an artist herself), was the custodian of the exhibition. The art works were selected and donated by the artists themselves. In a few rare cases, such as with Jamil Molaeb, a Lebanese artist living and working in Beirut, did Saudi make a studio visit and ask him to donate a work that she selected, rather than the work he had offered. [...] We have a few photographs from the opening, and some from the hanging, and we know that there were paintings, lithographs, etchings, drawings and sculptures. But [...] the collection incarnated almost all the styles or genres: primitive or naïve art, abstract art, figurative, optical art, neo-realism, social realism, and critical figuration. At the time, the radical left in the (former) western Europe regarded abstraction as a bourgeois art, sometimes merely decorative and contingent on 'cultural capital', while the subversive, counter-cultural vanguard in Morocco defended abstraction because the post-independence élite deemed naïve and landscape painting as the only 'authentic' modern Moroccan art. On the other hand, the 'Soviet' artists conformed to the ideologically orthodox, state-sponsored social[ist] realism. In other words, the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* is a compelling incarnation of the coexistence of the multiplicity or plurality of art practices in the 1970s, it embod-

ied a polyphonic contemporaneity that transgressed the 'west vs. east' bipolarity of the Cold War, and certainly the latter 'north vs[.] south' antagonism of postmodernism.

EF

[...] This leads us the Swedish connections. You have made two research trips to Stockholm and since there was no direct involvement in [t]he *International Art Exhibition for Palestine* from Sweden's side, the focus on your meetings and research here has mainly involved things

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related to another solidarity museum in exile, namely [*Chilean International Resistance Museum in Solidarity with Salvador Allende*]. Among others, you met with Sonja Martinson, Björn Springfeldt, Pierre Schori as well as the Palestinian ambassador Hala Husni Fariz. What new material, thoughts and lead-ins have this brought to the project?

KK + RS

Our research in Sweden was crucial to elucidate two very important questions. The first pertained to the striking absence of Swedish artists in the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*. In Palestinian circles in Beirut, Sweden was one of the first European countries to have expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle and with the PLO. Swedish volunteers and NGOs were numerous from the 1960s until the 1990s in Lebanon, especially in the medical fields. The lack of participation of Swedish artists intrigued us.

The research in Stockholm helped us finding an answer to the question; we learned that the PLO representative in Sweden at the time (i.e. in the 1970s) was not as keen on mobilizing the Swedish art scene or intellectual élites. His approach to galvanizing solidarity was more 'pragmatic' and conventional. Gras[sr]oots solidar-

ity groups emerged from various circles of the Swedish left in the late 1960s, gravitating around journalists who had traveled to Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon, and visited refugee camps. After a few visits, the Swedish activists decided that they would dedicate resources, donations and support in the medical fields. They established direct contacts with the PLO in Lebanon to channel aid, organize the travel of volunteers, etc[etera]. In 1976 different grassroots groups in Sweden federated to form the *Pal-estinagrupperna*. None included artists, and so contacts with the art scene were never quite established. This said, and regardless of our research into connections between solidarity in Sweden and the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*, we also met two Swedish artists, who belonged to different generations, and who are strongly invested in supporting the Palestinian struggle.

The second question we wanted to investigate was in relation to the *International Resistance Museum for Salvador Allende* in which Swedish artists and the Moderna Museet seem to have played a significant role. There was a Stockholm committee for the [*Chilean International Resistance Museum in Solidarity with Salvador Allende*], and for one and a half month in 1978, an exhibition of artworks, donated by 57 Swedish artists, was displayed at the Moderna Museet, in addition to a collective artwork (Brigadmåleri) that was completed onsite by Chilean artist José Balmes, as well as five Swedish artists, and was displayed outside the museum. The show toured to different cities in Sweden and traveled to Paris as well, hosted at the Swedish Cultural Center, in May of 1969 where donations by French artists were also added, totaling nearly 150 works. All the works were “re-patriated” to Chile at the end of the Pinochet dictatorship and are now part of the *Museo Solidaridad Salvador Allende*. The archives of the Moderna Museet are well furnished and accessible. Björn Springfeldt, director of the Moderna Museet at the time, led the

call for donations, as well as Sonja Martinson, a journalist¹ who had witnessed the *coup d'état* against Allende in Chile. The Chilean socialist movements, culminating with the

(p. 9)

election of Allende, had captivated the Swedish left (in all its palette of colors) in the late 1960s and 1970s. Mobilising artists to donate work did not require much convincing.

EF

You have presented your research in the format of an exhibition at MACBA in Barcelona and at HKW in Berlin, in Tensta you proposed a symposium to make your project public instead. [...]

KK + RS

At heart, *Past Disquiet* is an exhibition of stories, the reconstruction of a massive investigation by two researchers who followed threads, large and small, and ended up with a tapestry of narratives, testimonies, forgotten histories. The symposium, or discursive framework, for engaging with the outcome of our research is the most obvious and natural. The exhibition format is in reality far more challenging. [...] In the discursive framework of the symposium, there is a wonderful freedom, as well as the possibility of a direct dialogue with our audience. In addition, the opportunity to initiate a [W]itness seminar was key, namely, to invite those who were engaged with the struggle for Palestine, Chile and the *Resistance Museum*, respectively, to record their stories, is very meaningful, especially that the setting is public, and not confined in the privacy of a one on one interview. [...]

(p. 12)

Excavating International Solidarity: Artist Actions, Museography and Exhibition Stories is organised by Kristine Khouri and Rasha Salti. Originally this project was con-

ceived and presented as *Past Disquiet: Narratives and Ghosts from the International Art Exhibition for Palestine*, 1978 by the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) in 2015. Its Berlin iteration in 2016 was exhibited at and co-produced with Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW).

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Staff at Tensta konsthall: Fahyma Alnablsi, reception and teaching; Emily Fahlén, mediation; Asrin Haidari, communication and press; Maria Lind, director; Hedvig Wiesel, mediation and infrastructure; Didem Yildirim, assistance. Internship: Asha Mohammed. Hosts: Arazo Arif, Makda Embaie, Minna Magnusson, Isabella Tjäder. Technique and installation: Carl-Oskar Linné, Johan Wahlgren.

1 See Sonja Martinson Uppman for closer details on this information, in endnote 5 of the Witness seminar.

Samtidshistoriska frågor

This series is published by The Institute of Contemporary History (Samtidshistoriska institutet). The series summarizes and discusses important historical events and contemporary issues. Edited transcripts from witness seminars, new research from the university's academic staff as well as conference reports are published as part of the series. Information about the series:

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Most of the titles in the series can be downloaded in full text, free of charge, from the Digital Science Archive, DiVA, <http://www.diva-portal.se>.

Some of the titles in the series have been published in collaboration with CBEES (Center for Baltic and Eastern European Studies) at Södertörn University. Responsible for the work with the publication series is Associate Professor Carl Marklund, carl.marklund@sh.se.

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Invitation card for the opening of the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*, Beirut, 21 March–5 April 1978.

المعرض التشكيلي العالمي من أجل فلسطين

INTERNATIONAL ART EXHIBITION
FOR PALESTINE

*EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE D'ARTS
PLASTIQUES POUR LA PALESTINE*

INTERNATIONALE KUNSTAUSSTELLUNG
FÜR PALÄSTINA

パレスチナ斗争を第-国際プラスチック・アート展

بيروت من ٢١ آذار إلى ٥ نيسان ١٩٧٨

Beirut - 21 March - 5 April 1978



Jamil Shammout and Michel Najjar creating banner
at the Beirut exhibition. Photo courtesy Claude Lazar.

Chile's democratically elected Socialist president Salvador Allende came to power in 1970. Then came the dictatorship that began with Augusto Pinochet's *coup d'état* in 1973. It was perhaps logical that the European art world came to the aid of its Chilean colleagues in a great wave of solidarity.

The long 1970s has been connected to solidarity movements. Vietnam, Chile, South Africa, Palestine were among the countries supported by solidarity activists. Several so-called museums-in-exile were created. In particular, one source of inspiration was the *Museo de la Resistencia Salvador Allende in Chile*. This became a model also for the much older Palestinian Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Unified Information Office that organised the *International Art Exhibition for Palestine*.

This booklet documents the *Witness seminar* that was held 19 February 2017 at Tensta Konsthall, where people met to discuss their involvement in the solidarity movements for Chile and Palestine.



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