

"WE WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW THE TRUTH"

Patchwork Pictures from Chile

October 26th 1977 - June 17th 1978

The first exhibition in Britain of Chilean art made since the military coup of 1973 and a remarkable expression of popular creativity and resistance under conditions of extreme hardship and repression.

The exhibition consisted of 52 patchworks made by women in the shanty-towns of Santiago, with photographs and explanatory captions. For the showing in London the exhibition was augmented by a programme of talks and events, films, an exhibition of work made by political prisoners in Chilean concentration camps, and a documentary exhibition on cultural resistance in Latin American history, and a 12 X 15 foot canvas Strip-banner made by John Dugger of the Banner Arts Project, the design based on patchwork No. 52 in the exhibition.

The exhibition was shown in the following places:

GLASGOW, Third Eye Centre, October 26th - November 20th 1977
BRIGHTON, Gardner Arts Centre University of Sussex, December 3rd - 31st 1977
BIRMINGHAM, Ikon Gallery, January 3rd - 11th 1978
CLEVELAND, Chapel Beck Gallery, January 14th - February 11th 1978
STIRLING, McRobert Centre University of Stirling, February 13th - March 4th 1978
LONDON, Air Gallery Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2, March 14th - April 1st 1978
EDINBURGH, Richard Demarco Gallery, April 14th - April 27th 1978
DUNDEE, Dudhope Arts Centre, May 1st - May 20th 1978
SHEFFIELD, Hays Art Gallery, May 27th - June 17th 1978

A film about the patchworks was made for BBC 2's ARENA: ART & DESIGN programme (directed by Diana Lashmore, script by Guy Brett) and transmitted on October 26th 1977. The exhibition has also been featured on Scottish Television, BBC World Service, Sussex University Campus Radio, Radio 4 London, regional television Birmingham and Sheffield local radio. A number of articles on the patchworks appeared in British newspaper and magazines.

An evening opening was held at each showing of the exhibition, with a public discussion about the patchworks, the Chilean situation and the role of art in resistance, with contributions from Chilean exiles living in that locality (most of these discussions were taped). The evening usually ended with music and song performed by Chileans in exile locally.

The exhibition received administrative and financial support from the Third Eye Centre in Glasgow (exhibitions director Bridget Brown), the Air Gallery London (director Moira Kelly), and from Oxfam. The programme of talks and events and other exhibits added to the exhibition in London was assisted financially by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

The exhibition also received great support and encouragement from those who lent patchworks: Museo de la Resistencia Salvador Allende, Roberto Matta, Cimade Paris, Chile Committee for Human Rights London; and also from the many Chileans who gave help in the interpretations of the images in the patchworks, contributed to the exhibition and events in London and helped in countless other ways.