

Artists for Democracy (AFD) formed in London in 1974 with the aim of giving “material and cultural support to liberation movements worldwide.”¹ They chose to do this through a festival, the Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile, which took place later that same year—a two-week gathering of performance, exhibition, and discussion that emerged as “a space of conversation and mutual apprenticeship ... that brought together artists from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas in a multifaceted conglomerate.”² The founding group broke apart after the Chile festival, and AFD was reconstructed, subsequently finding new allies and continuing until 1977.

AFD’s story is abundant with contradictions. As an initiative of numerous individuals that took different forms over time, the tools of art history are not well suited to it. Guy Brett, John Dugger, David Medalla, and Cecilia Vicuña, the co-founders of the group, each have significant trajectories to account for, as do many others of its members, and there are significant differences between the various participants’ perspectives on the group. Moreover, to focus on individual members risks obscuring the multiple overlapping agencies and conditions of possibility—artistic, social, political, historical, geographic—that came together in AFD, and the question of how its tensions and solidarities may be opened up to the present.

I will try to follow some of the contradictions in the story via a particular moment in the group’s existence, immediately after the first split. My focus

Die Gruppe Artists for Democracy (AFD) gründete sich 1974 in London mit dem Ziel, „Befreiungsbewegungen auf der ganzen Welt materielle wie kulturelle Unterstützung“ zu bieten.¹ Das Mittel der Wahl war ein Festival, nämlich das *Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile*, das später im selben Jahr stattfand – ein zweiwöchiges Treffen mit Performances, Ausstellungen und Diskussionen, aus dem ein „Raum für Gespräche und gegenseitiges Lernen [entstand], der Künstler:innen aus Afrika, Asien, Europa und Nord- und Südamerika in einer bunten Versammlung zusammenführte“.² Nach dem Chile-Festival zerbrach die Gründungsgruppe, und AFD formierten sich neu, fanden später weitere Verbündete und bestanden bis 1977.

Die Geschichte von AFD ist voller Widersprüche. Für eine Initiative aus zahlreichen Individuen, die im Laufe der Zeit verschiedene Formen annahm, sind die Werkzeuge der Kunstgeschichte nur wenig geeignet. Guy Brett, John Dugger, David Medalla und Cecilia Vicuña, die Mitbegründer:innen der Gruppe, haben ebenso wie viele andere Mitglieder je eigene Entwicklungen durchlaufen, die zu berücksichtigen wären und die Perspektiven der verschiedenen Mitglieder auf die Gruppe unterscheiden sich signifikant. Darüber hinaus würde der Fokus auf Einzelne die Gefahr beinhalten, die zahlreichen sich überlagernden Handlungsfähigkeiten und Möglichkeitsbedingungen – künstlerische, soziale, politische, historische, geografische –, die bei AFD zusammenkamen, zu verstellen, ebenso wie

Artists for Democracy (AFD) nacque a Londra nel 1974 allo scopo di dare “sostegno materiale e culturale ai movimenti di liberazione di tutto il mondo”¹. Scelse di agire in questo senso tramite un festival, l'Arts Festival for Democracy, che si svolse quello stesso anno in Cile – due settimane di performance, mostre e discussioni che rappresentarono “uno spazio di conversazione e mutuo apprendistato che mise insieme un conglomerato sfaccettato di artiste e artisti provenienti dall'Africa, dall'Asia, dall'Europa e dalle Americhe”². Il gruppo fondatore si sciolse dopo il festival cileno e AFD si riformò, trovò in seguito nuovi alleati e continuò le sue attività fino al 1977.

La storia di AFD è ricca di contraddizioni. Trattandosi di un’iniziativa intrapresa da un nutrito gruppo di individui che nel corso del tempo ha assunto forme diverse, gli strumenti della storia dell’arte non sono i più adatti a descriverla. Le persone che fondarono il gruppo – Guy Brett, John Dugger, David Medalla e Cecilia Vicuña – hanno avuto un percorso personale significativo, come molti altri membri di AFD, ed esistono significative differenze nell’approccio al gruppo da parte delle diverse e dei diversi partecipanti. Inoltre, concentrarsi sui singoli membri rischia di mettere in ombra gli operati multipli e sovrapposti e le condizioni di possibilità – artistiche, sociali, politiche, storiche, geografiche – che si ritrovarono all’interno di AFD, e la questione di come le tensioni e le solidarietà all’interno del gruppo potessero aprirsi al presente.

is on festival as form and practice, considered via AFD's 1975 festival and collective exhibition for Vietnam. Splits were not unusual in the plurality of political groupings at the time. For founding members Vicuña and Dugger, AFD effectively ended after a dramatic falling-out with Medalla at the end of the Chile festival.³ The Vietnam festival thus marks a second phase of AFD, and the group subsequently split again after it, with a number of members leaving to devote their energies to other groups, such as the Poster Film Collective in nearby Tolmers Square. While Vicuña's reflection does not concern the latter phases of AFD, it offers a reminder that failures are worth paying attention to: "The failure of the original AFD is its greatest beauty, as failure seeds the birthing of new forms."⁴

In a conversation for *Black Phoenix*, published in 1979, Rasheed Araeen (himself a former AFD member) and Medalla discuss what they see as the failure of the group.⁵ In Araeen's analysis, this failure lay in its inability to deal with cultural imperialism, particularly at the level of artistic practice. For Medalla, it was instead to be found in the disconnect between cultural workers, who had little knowledge of politics but saw it as an opportunity to exhibit, and political radicals, who had little or no interest in art or poetry. From my research and discussions with AFD members, there seems to be a more complex middle ground between these positions, perhaps most in evidence in the festivals the group organized.

die Frage, wie sich ihre Spannungen und Gemeinsamkeiten auf die Gegenwart hin öffnen ließen.

Ich werde versuchen, einige der Widersprüche in dieser Geschichte nachzuzeichnen, indem ich einen bestimmten Moment in deren Bestehen betrachte, nämlich den Zeitpunkt unmittelbar nach ihrer ersten Auflösung. Dabei konzentriere ich mich auf das Festival als Form und Praxis am Beispiel des AFD-Festivals und der kollektiven Ausstellung für Vietnam im Jahr 1975. Aufspaltungen waren für die Mehrzahl der politischen Gruppierungen jener Zeit nicht unüblich. Für die Gründungsmitglieder Vicuña und Dugger endete die Gruppe AFD im Wesentlichen nach einem dramatischen Streit mit Medalla zum Abschluss des Chile-Festivals.³ Das Vietnam-Festival markiert somit eine zweite Phase von AFD, und die Gemeinschaft trennte sich später ein weiteres Mal, wobei einige der ehemaligen Mitglieder sich anderen Gruppen anschlossen, wie etwa dem Poster Film Collective im nahe gelegenen Tolmers Square. Während Vicuña's Reflexionen die späteren Phasen von AFD unberücksichtigt lassen, erinnern sie uns daran, dass auch das Scheitern eine Betrachtung wert ist: „Im Scheitern der ursprünglichen AFD liegt deren größte Schönheit, denn das Scheitern birgt in sich die Geburt neuer Formen.“⁴

In einem Gespräch für die Zeitschrift *Black Phoenix*, das 1979 veröffentlicht wurde, diskutieren Rasheed Araeen (selbst ehemaliges AFD-

Cercherò di seguire alcune contraddizioni di questa storia occupandomi di un momento particolare dell'esistenza del gruppo, immediatamente successivo al suo primo scioglimento. Mi concentrerò sul festival come forma e pratica, prendendo in considerazione quello di AFD del 1975 e la loro mostra collettiva per il Vietnam. Gli scioglimenti non erano inusuali, nella pluralità dei gruppi politici dell'epoca. Per Vicuña e Dugger, membri fondatori, la vera fine di AFD si verificò dopo una loro drammatica rottura con Medalla alla fine del festival cileno³. Il festival per il Vietnam segna quindi una seconda fase per AFD; in seguito il gruppo si sciolse ancora e diversi componenti se ne andarono per dedicare le proprie energie ad altri gruppi, come il Poster-Film Collective che aveva sede nella vicina Tolmers Square. Pur non riguardando le ultime fasi di AFD, le riflessioni di Vicuña ci ricordano che i fallimenti sono sempre un elemento a cui prestare attenzione: "Il fallimento del primo AFD è la sua più grande bellezza, perché il fallimento semina la nascita di nuove forme"⁴.

In una conversazione per "Black Phoenix", pubblicata nel 1979, Rasheed Araeen (ex membro di AFD) e Medalla discutono di quello che loro considerano il fallimento del gruppo⁵. Nell'analisi di Araeen, il fallimento del gruppo nacque dalla sua incapacità di affrontare l'imperialismo culturale, soprattutto a livello di pratiche artistiche. Per Medalla, invece, andava ricercato nella disconnessione tra operatrici e operatori culturali, che

Compared to the Chile festival, the festival for Vietnam is relatively little known. A squatted building at 143 Whitfield Street became the headquarters for the reconstitution of AFD, with Medalla living on the upper floors alongside Virgil Calaguian and Jun Terra and the lower floors hosting events and exhibitions. The festival opened with a reading of poetry from Cuba, Mozambique, Sudan, Syria, China, Britain, Yemen, the Philippines, and the United States; a reading of contemporary Vietnamese poetry; a talk by Le Chan, a representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, on the problems of postwar reconstruction; and a drama titled *Vietnam Victorious!*, devised by Medalla, Terra, Calaguian, and the International Committee for Freedom in the Philippines, which included kinetic sculptures, light works, songs, and poetry.

The space itself consisted of a "series of environments made of simple, often waste, materials."⁶ The exhibition included artworks, films, performances, poetry readings, and theatre, alongside installations "on the life and work of Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnam Workers' Party [and] the role of women in Vietnam," which were described as displaying "a kind of knowing *faux naïvete*."⁷ The exhibition was planned to be easily mobile in the hope that it would travel. One of the very few photographs available shows a single work, Araeen's early installation *Holes in the Earth* (1975). Not documented are the many meals that Araeen cooked for the Sunday meetings at AFD, which

Mitglied) und Medalla darüber, was sie als das Scheitern der Gruppe ansehen.⁵ Araeen's Analyse zufolge bestand es in der Unfähigkeit, sich mit dem kulturellen Imperialismus auseinanderzusetzen, insbesondere auf der Ebene der künstlerischen Praxis. Für Medalla hingegen fand es sich in der Spannung zwischen den Kulturarbeiter:innen, die nur wenig politisches Wissen besaßen, sondern vorrangig eine Möglichkeit zum Ausstellen sahen und den politisch Radikalen, die sich nur wenig oder gar nicht für Kunst oder Poesie interessierten. Meinen Recherchen und den Diskussionen mit AFD-Mitgliedern zufolge scheint zwischen diesen beiden Positionen ein komplexeres Mittelfeld existiert zu haben, das sich vielleicht am deutlichsten in den von der Gruppe organisierten Festivals zeigt.

Gegenüber dem Chile-Festival ist dasjenige für Vietnam nur relativ wenig bekannt. Ein besetztes Haus in der Whitfield Street 143 wurde zum Hauptquartier für die Neugründung von AFD, wobei Medalla, Virgil Calaguian und Jun Terra in den oberen Stockwerken wohnten, während die unteren Etagen Platz für Veranstaltungen und Ausstellungen boten. Das Festival eröffnete mit einer Lesung von Gedichten aus Kuba, Mosambik, dem Sudan, Syrien, China, Großbritannien, dem Jemen, den Philippinen und den USA; einer Lesung zeitgenössischer vietnamesischer Gedichte; einem Vortrag von Le Chan, einer Repräsentantin der Demokratischen Republik Vietnam, über die Probleme des Wiederaufbaus nach dem Krieg;

avevano scarse conoscenze di politica ma la vedevano come un'opportunità per esporre i loro lavori, e militanti politici, che provavano scarso interesse per l'arte o la poesia, o non ne provavano affatto. Dalle mie ricerche e discussioni con i membri di AFD, sembra che tra queste due posizioni esistesse un territorio intermedio più complesso, forse più evidente nei festival organizzati dal gruppo.

Rispetto al festival in Cile, quello per il Vietnam è relativamente poco conosciuto. Un edificio occupato al numero 143 di Whitfield Street diventò il quartier generale della rinascita di AFD; Medalla abitava ai piani superiori insieme a Virgil Calaguian e Jun Terra, mentre i piani inferiori ospitavano eventi e mostre. Il festival si aprì con un reading di poesia con autrici e autori provenienti da Cuba, Mozambico, Sudan, Siria, Cina, Gran Bretagna, Yemen, Filippine e Stati Uniti; un reading di poesia vietnamita contemporanea; una conferenza di Le Chan, rappresentante della Repubblica Democratica del Vietnam, sui problemi della ricostruzione postbellica, e un dramma intitolato *Vietnam Victorious!*, ideato da Medalla, Terra, Calaguian e dall'International Committee for Freedom in the Philippines, che comprendeva sculture cinetiche, opere di luce, canti e poesie.

Lo spazio era composto da "una serie di ambienti costruiti con materiali semplici, spesso di recupero"⁶. La mostra comprendeva opere d'arte, film, performance, reading di poesia e teatro, insieme a installazioni "sulla vita

are fondly remembered, and which find continuity in his recent work and restaurant *Shamiyaana*.⁸

AFD took form at an intersection of internationalist agendas—the artistic internationalism advanced by Signals gallery and *Newsbulletin* during the 1960s, and the internationalisms of contemporary movements for political solidarity and anti-imperialism, which intersected with trade unionism and local campaigns for healthcare and housing. Participants describe the intensity of life in Britain at this time—the atmosphere of racism and violence, as well as the sense of possibility. The Vietnam festival's program of “women's events” shows the range of practices and concerns gathered under the rubric of anti-imperialism: a presentation by the Women in Indochina group; a show by Broadside Mobile Theatre Group addressing issues such as childcare and abortion; and a site-specific performance on the street outside the gallery by the experimental performance group Limited Theatre Company, led by Sally Potter, Jacky Lansley, and Rose English, which was directed toward Ireland rather than Vietnam.

AFD's activities also invite a different set of understandings of “art” and “exhibition.” For instance, one of the most heavily circulated images of AFD's work—John Dugger's monumental strip banner *Chile Vencera*—was produced for a rally in support of the Chilean resistance on September 15, 1974. Its primary exhibition context was not the Chile festival-exhibition

sowie einem Theaterstück mit dem Titel *Vietnam Victorious!*, das von Medalla, Terra, Calaguian und dem International Committee for Freedom in the Philippines konzipiert worden war und auch kinetische Skulpturen, Lichtarbeiten, Lieder und Gedichte mit einschloss.

Der Raum selbst bestand aus einer „Reihe von Environments aus einfachen Materialien, oft Abfall“. Die Ausstellung umfasste Kunstwerke, Filme, Performances, Dichterlesungen und Theateraufführungen sowie Installationen „über das Leben und Werk von Ho Chi Minh, die Partei der Werktätigen Vietnams [und] die Rolle der Frau in Vietnam“, die der Beschreibung nach „eine Art wissender *faux naïveté*“ demonstrierten.⁷ Die Ausstellung sollte transportabel sein, da man hoffte, dass sie zu weiteren Stationen reisen würde. Eine der sehr wenigen verfügbaren Fotografien zeigt eine einzelne Arbeit, Araeens frühe Installation *Holes in the Earth* (1975). Nicht dokumentiert wurden die zahlreichen Mahlzeiten, die Araeen für die sonntäglichen Treffen von AFD kochte, die in guter Erinnerung sind und ihre Fortführung in Araeens jüngerer Arbeit, dem Zeltrestaurant *Shamiyaana*, finden.⁸

AFD bildeten sich an der Schnittstelle internationalistischer Programme – des künstlerischen Internationalismus, wie er in den 1960er-Jahren von der Galerie Signals und deren experimenteller Publikation *Newsbulletin* vorangetrieben wurde, und des Internationalismus zeitgenössischer

e le opere di Ho Chi Minh, il Partito dei lavoratori vietnamiti [e] il ruolo delle donne in Vietnam”, che furono descritti come pervasi da “una specie di consapevole *faux naïveté*”. La mostra era stata pensata per essere facilmente trasportabile, nella speranza che potesse viaggiare. Una delle pochissime fotografie rimaste ritrae un'opera, una delle prime installazioni di Araeen intitolata *Holes in the Earth* (1975). Non sono però stati documentati i numerosi pasti che Araeen cucinò per le riunioni della domenica di AFD, che tutti ricordano con affetto e che trovano continuità nelle sue opere più recenti e nel suo ristorante *Shamiyaana*.⁸

AFD prese forma nel punto d'incontro tra diversi obiettivi internazionalisti – l'internazionalismo artistico portato avanti dalla galleria Signals e dal “*Newsbulletin*” negli anni sessanta e l'internazionalismo dei movimenti contemporanei per la solidarietà politica e l'antimperialismo, che intersecavano l'attività dei sindacati e le campagne locali per l'assistenza sanitaria e la politica abitativa. I membri del gruppo hanno raccontato come fosse intensa la vita in Gran Bretagna all'epoca – l'atmosfera di razzismo e violenza, ma anche il senso di possibilità. Gli “eventi dedicati alle donne” contenuti nel programma del festival per il Vietnam sono la prova della gamma di pratiche e preoccupazioni riunite sotto l'etichetta dell'anti-imperialismo: una presentazione del gruppo Women in Indochina; uno spettacolo del Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre Group che toccava

John Dugger, Chile Vencera Banner, 1974, mixed media strip banner

John Dugger, Chile Vencera Banner, 1974, Mixed Media Strips-Banner

John Dugger, Chile Vencera Banner, 1974, banner a strisce di materiali diversi



David Medalla, chairman,
Cecilia Vicuña and John Dugger, festival coordinators,
Guy Brett, secretary, and all the members of
ARTISTS FOR DEMOCRACY
warmly invite

.....
and friends
to the opening night of the
ARTS FESTIVAL FOR DEMOCRACY IN CHILE
on Monday 14 October 1974 at 6.30 pm
at The Hall of the Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2EU
RSVP BM-Artists for Democracy, London WC1V 6XX

OPENING NIGHT PROGRAMME

Invocation on conga drums by Caboo of Trinidad

1. Mavis Penn will introduce David Medalla who will speak on behalf of Artists for Democracy.
2. Colin Grigg will introduce Cecilia Vicuña who will read a declaration by Chilean cultural workers.
3. Guy Brett will introduce Professor Alvaro Bunster who will speak on behalf of the London Committee for Human Rights in Chile.
4. Steve Sprung will introduce Brian Nicholson, chairman of the Chile Solidarity Campaign, who will speak on the British working people's solidarity with the Chilean people.
5. Ann Hodges will introduce Peter Blackman who will read selections from his poem *Song for All Men*.
6. Rob Hunter-Henderson will introduce Constance Cummings who will read two poems from *Canto general* by Pablo Neruda: '*Los muertos de la plaza*' ('The Dead in the Square') and '*El pueblo victorioso*' ('The people victorious'), and a poem by Victor Jara: '*Te recuerdo, Amanda*' ('I remember you, Amanda').
7. Tina Keane will introduce a performance of Victor Jara's *Te recuerdo, Amanda* by the Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre. Director: Jun Terra.
8. Lynn MacRitchie, John Dugger and Catharine Waley will announce the events in the festival and will read messages of support and solidarity with the Chilean people in their heroic fight against fascism.
9. Pippa Smith will introduce Libba Davies who will read three poems by Violeta Parra: '*La carta*' ('The letter'), '*Me gustan los estudiantes*' ('I like the students'), and '*Gracias a la vida*' ('Thanks to life').
10. Sylvia Stevens will introduce a performance of Violeta Parra's *Gracias a la vida* ('Thanks to life') by Martha Grogan (dancer), Peter Smith (guitar), and Simon Steyne (flute).
11. Jonathan Miles will introduce 7-year-old Accabre Huntley who will read her poems in support of the Chilean resistance.
12. Steve Pusey will introduce 75-year-old Andrew Kim who will perform rhythmic movements with illuminated Chinese clubs to the song *Todos juntos* ('All together') composed and sung by Los Jaivas musical group of Chile.
13. Mass-singing by Artists for Democracy and the audience of the Chilean revolutionary song *El pueblo unido jamas sera vencido*: 'The people united can never be defeated'.
14. Mitch Davies will introduce the film *Chilean September* made in 1973-74 by the French film-makers Bruno Muel and Theo Robichet.

Inside message of invitation to the opening of the Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile / A student group making puppets for the Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre, Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile

Innenseite der Einladung zur Eröffnungszeremonie des Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile / Eine Studentengruppe beim Anfertigen von Puppen für das Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre, Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile



Parte interna dell'invito alla cerimonia di apertura del Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile / Un gruppo di studenti preparano marionette per il Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre, Arts Festival for Democracy in Chile

but a major solidarity event organized by the Joint Labour Movement and the Chile Solidarity Campaign, where it was displayed at the head of a rally at Trafalgar Square in view of ten thousand people. In his book on popular art and modern history, published a decade after the end of AFD, Guy Brett identifies a combination of forces that he saw as containing the “seeds of a new popular culture”: “Artistic ideas are in the air, and ripe for use. Nor is it a question of putting art *first*, as a kind of prime mover. ... The really significant fact is the *relationship* between the people, the event, and the means of expression.”⁹ The festivals organized by AFD established a particular set of relationships between concrete and imagined political blocs, linking them to world-historical events (the coup in Chile, victory over imperialism in Vietnam) via multifarious means of expression.

Its organizing, infrastructure, and maintenance also deserve consideration. Lynn MacRitchie describes AFD at the time of the Vietnam festival as a “self-generating organization,” and it is interesting to note that the group was never collective in the sense of taking a “collective position.” Instead, discussions aimed at a broad consensus that allowed different positions to coexist. This also led to splits and open contradictions; founding members all highlight certain maverick and less-than-democratic behaviors, which add an ironic inflection to the group’s positioning “for democracy.” The Vietnam festival also inaugurated Whitfield Street as an organizing space,

Bewegungen der politischen Solidarität und des Antiimperialismus, die sich mit Gewerkschaftsbewegungen und lokalen Gesundheits- und Mieter-initiativen überschnitten. Die Beteiligten beschreiben die Intensität des Lebens in Großbritannien zu dieser Zeit – die Atmosphäre von Rassismus und Gewalt ebenso wie ein Sinn für neue Möglichkeiten. Das Programm von „Frauenveranstaltungen“ auf dem Vietnam-Festival zeigt die Bandbreite der Praktiken und Interessen, die sich unter der Rubrik des Antiimperialismus versammelten: eine Präsentation von Frauen der Indochina-Gruppe; eine Vorführung der Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre Group, die sich mit Fragen wie Kinderbetreuung und Abtreibung befasste; sowie eine ortsspezifische Performance auf der Straße vor der Galerie durch die experimentelle Performance-Gruppe Limited Theatre Company unter Leitung von Sally Potter, Jacky Lansley und Rose English, die sich weniger mit Vietnam als mit Irland beschäftigte.

Die Aktivitäten von AFD fordern auch zu einem anderen Verständnis der Begriffe „Kunst“ und „Ausstellung“ auf. So war etwa eines der besonders verbreiteten Bilder unter den Arbeiten der Gruppe – John Duggers monumentales Streifenbanner *Chile Vencera* – für eine Demonstration zur Unterstützung der chilenischen Widerstandsbewegung am 15. September 1974 produziert worden. Sein vorrangiger Ausstellungskontext war also nicht die Präsentation beim Chile-Festival, sondern eine große, vom Joint

problemi come la cura dei figli e l'aborto; una performance site-specific nella strada davanti alla galleria, realizzata dal gruppo sperimentale Limited Theatre Company, guidato da Sally Potter, Jacky Lansley e Rose English, che riguardava più l'Irlanda che il Vietnam.

Le attività di AFD invitano anche a una serie di modalità diverse di intendere i concetti di ‘arte’ e ‘mostra’. Per esempio, una delle immagini più note del lavoro di AFD è quella del monumentale striscione di John Dugger intitolato *Chile Vencera*, realizzato per una manifestazione a sostegno della resistenza cilena tenutasi il 15 settembre 1974. Il contesto principale in cui lo striscione fu esposto non fu il festival-mostra in Cile, ma un grande evento di solidarietà organizzato dal Joint Labour Movement e dalla Chile Solidarity Campaign, e l'opera fu collocata alla testa di una manifestazione tenutasi a Trafalgar Square davanti a diecimila persone. Nel suo libro sull'arte popolare e la storia moderna, pubblicato dieci anni dopo la fine di AFD, Guy Brett identifica una combinazione di forze che a suo dire contenevano i “semi di una nuova cultura popolare”: “Le idee artistiche sono nell'aria, pronte per essere utilizzate. E non si tratta di mettere l'arte al ‘primo posto’, come una specie di motore primario[...]. Il fattore davvero significativo è la ‘relazione’ tra le persone, l'evento e gli strumenti espressivi”⁹. I festival organizzati da AFD inaugurarono una speciale serie di relazioni tra blocchi politici reali e immaginari, collegandoli a eventi storici di portata globale (il colpo

with groups involved in liberation struggles invited to use it for events and presentations. MacRitchie's experience speaks to the overlap of practices at AFD:

As an artist, my time at AFD allowed me to achieve what I had struggled with as a student—bringing my artist self and my political self together. ... While making my own work was very important to me, being part of the AFD project and the responsibilities this involved—attending meetings, taking part in discussions, organizing events, etc.—was just as vital. ... As a trade unionist and a feminist, I attended many meetings. Trade union meetings were structured, with agendas and minute taking. Women's group meetings tended to have a subject which was addressed by each participant in turn, who had to be listened to respectfully. Both the task-led approach of the union meetings and the supportive “listening” that we practiced at women's meetings were useful in AFD organizational meetings, which were also disciplined and productive.¹⁰

The didactic displays and environments at the Vietnam festival were assembled by the group, but this was not considered collective work—although individual input is also obscure, lending them an ambiguous status. The critic and artist Raymundo Albano's essay “Installations: A Case for Hangings,” published in the *Philippine Art Supplement* in 1981, speculates an equivalence between fiesta displays and contemporary installation art.¹¹

Labour Movement und der Chile Solidarity Campaign organisierte Solidaritätsveranstaltung, wo es an der Spitze eines Demonstrationzugs auf dem Trafalgar Square Zehntausende Menschen sehen konnten. In seinem Buch über populäre Kunst und moderne Geschichte, das zehn Jahre nach dem Ende von AFD veröffentlicht wurde, identifiziert Guy Brett eine Kombination von Kräften, die für ihn die „Saat für eine neue populäre Kultur“ enthielt: „Künstlerische Ideen liegen in der Luft und sind reif genutzt zu werden. Genauso wenig geht es darum, die Kunst an *erste* Stelle zu setzen, als eine Art Triebfeder. [...] Die wirklich wichtige Tatsache ist die *Beziehung* zwischen den Menschen, dem Ereignis und den Ausdrucksmitteln.“⁹ Die von AFD organisierten Festivals begründeten spezifische Beziehungen zwischen konkreten und imaginierten politischen Blocks und verbanden sie durch vielfältige Ausdrucksmittel mit welthistorischen Ereignissen (dem Putsch in Chile, dem Sieg über den Imperialismus in Vietnam).

Auch Organisationsform, Infrastruktur und Pflege von AFD verdienen eine nähere Betrachtung. Lynn MacRitchie beschreibt die Gruppe zur Zeit des Vietnam-Festivals als eine „sich selbst erzeugende Organisation“, und interessanterweise war sie niemals ein Kollektiv in dem Sinne, dass sie eine „kollektive Position“ eingenommen hätte. Die Diskussionen zielten vielmehr auf einen allgemeinen Konsens ab, in dem verschiedene

di stato in Cile, la sconfitta dell'imperialismo in Vietnam) tramite molteplici strumenti espressivi.

Anche l'organizzazione, l'infrastruttura e il mantenimento di AFD meritano una certa attenzione. Lynn MacRitchie racconta che all'epoca del festival per il Vietnam AFD era una “organizzazione autogenerativa” ed è interessante notare che il gruppo non fu mai un collettivo, nel senso che non prese mai una “posizione collettiva”. Invece, le discussioni erano mirate all'ottenimento di un ampio consenso che doveva permettere la coesistenza di posizioni diverse. Questo generò anche fratture e contraddizioni aperte; fondatrici e fondatori sottolineano all'unisono certi comportamenti anarchici e poco democratici, il che non fa che aggiungere un tocco di ironia alla definizione del gruppo, che avrebbe dovuto lavorare “per la democrazia”. Il festival per il Vietnam fu anche il primo evento a utilizzare Whitfield Street come spazio organizzativo, dove i gruppi interessati a lottare per la libertà erano invitati ad allestire eventi e presentazioni. L'esperienza di MacRitchie descrive la sovrapposizione di pratiche in uso da parte di AFD:

In quanto artista, il tempo che ho trascorso dentro AFD mi ha permesso di ottenere quello per cui avevo tanto faticato da studentessa – mettere insieme il mio lato artistico e quello politico [...] Realizzare i miei lavori era per me molto importante, ma far parte del progetto AFD e assumermi le responsabilità che questo comportava – intervenire alle riunioni,

This is taken up in what Patrick Flores describes as an “installative” tendency within art from Southeast Asia, a “relationality activated by multiple forces,” motivated by a desire “to convene an art world, or a relational or transpersonal world of art, by creating conditions for people to assemble along the various axes of dissent, development, nationalism and solidarity.”¹² But to think about the Vietnam initiative via Southeast Asia is made more complex by the legacy of the Chile festival, which took explicit inspiration from the cultural efflorescence of the Allende years.

Jun Terra describes his presentation of the Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre and workshops at the Chile festival (based on the Indonesian practice of *wayang kulit*) within the framework of an exhibition system inspired by popular autonomous cultural centers set up in 1960s and '70s Chile.¹³ Courtney Martin has described Dugger's work at that time in terms of “festival culture,” also linking this to the 1972 documenta, in which Dugger and Medalla both participated, understood by Martin more as a freewheeling multiplatform event than an institutional art exhibition.¹⁴ The Exploding Galaxy group is another thread to follow, its crossover into 1960s counterculture suggesting a lateral connection with the popular free festival movement that reached its peak in the mid-1970s in Britain.¹⁵

If a festive method can be found in AFD, it might include the following elements: performativity and ephemerality; multiple participants and

Positionen nebeneinander bestehen konnten. Dies führte auch zu Abspaltungen und offenen Widersprüchen; alle Gründungsmitglieder heben gewisse nonkonformistische und nicht unbedingt demokratische Verhaltensweisen hervor, wodurch die Positionierung der Gruppe „für Demokratie“ auf ironische Weise gebrochen wird. Mit dem Vietnam-Festival begann die Nutzung des Whitfield Street Space als organisatorischer Raum, der auch von Gruppen, die sich für den Befreiungskampf einsetzten, für Veranstaltungen und Präsentationen genutzt werden konnte. MacRitchies Erfahrungen bezeugen die Überschneidung der verschiedenen Praktiken bei AFD:

Meine Zeit bei AFD erlaubte mir, als Künstlerin zu verwirklichen, womit ich als Studentin noch gerungen hatte – mein künstlerisches Ich und mein politisches Ich zusammenzubringen. [...] Während es für mich wichtig war, meine eigene Arbeit zu verfolgen, waren meine Mitgliedschaft bei dem Projekt AFD und die damit verbundenen Aufgaben – Teilnahme an Versammlungen, Beteiligung an Diskussionen, Organisation von Veranstaltungen usw. – von ebenso großer Bedeutung. [...] Als Gewerkschafterin wie als Feministin habe ich an vielen Veranstaltungen teilgenommen. Gewerkschaftsversammlungen waren strukturiert, mit Tagesordnungspunkten und Protokollführung. Die Treffen der Frauengruppen hatten zumeist ein Thema, das der Reihe nach von jeder einzelnen Teilnehmerin behandelt wurde, denen respektvoll zugehört

partecipare alle discussioni, organizzare eventi ecc. – era altrettanto vitale [...] In qualità di sindacalista e femminista ho partecipato a moltissimi incontri. Le riunioni sindacali erano strutturate, c'era un ordine del giorno e venivano stilati i verbali. In generale le riunioni dei gruppi femminili avevano un tema che veniva toccato a turno da ogni partecipante, che bisognava ascoltare con rispetto. L'approccio più concreto delle riunioni sindacali e l'“ascolto” di incoraggiamento che praticavamo alle riunioni dei gruppi femminili tornarono utili per le riunioni organizzative di AFD, che erano sempre disciplinate e produttive¹⁰.

Gli allestimenti e gli spazi didattici del festival per il Vietnam furono realizzati dal gruppo, ma quello non era considerato lavoro collettivo – anche se non è ancora chiaro quale sia stato il contributo individuale, per cui si tratta di lavori che conservano una condizione ambigua. Nel suo saggio *Installations: A Case for Hangings*, pubblicato nel 1981 su “Philippine Art Supplement”, il critico e artista Raymundo Albano propone un'equivalenza tra gli allestimenti della *festa* e le installazioni artistiche contemporanee¹¹. Questo tema viene ripreso in quella che Patrick Flores descrive come la tendenza “installativa” nell'arte del Sud-est asiatico, una “relazionalità attivata da forze multiple”, motivata da un desiderio “di mettere insieme un mondo artistico, o un mondo artistico relazionale o transpersonale, creando le condizioni grazie alle quali la gente possa riunirsi lungo i diversi assi del



Exhibition view with *First Manifesto of the Artist's Liberation Front – Movement for People's Culture* by John Dugger and David Medalla, documenta 5 (1972)

werden musste. Sowohl der aufgabenorientierte Ansatz der Gewerkschaftstreffen wie das unterstützende ‚Zuhören‘, das wir bei den Frauentreffen praktizierten, waren für die Organisationstreffen von AFD wertvoll, die ebenfalls diszipliniert und produktiv waren.¹⁰

Die didaktischen Vorführungen und Environments des Vietnam-Festivals wurden von der Gruppe entwickelt, jedoch nicht als kollektive Arbeiten betrachtet – auch wenn die individuellen Beiträge unklar bleiben, wodurch sie einen ambivalenten Status erlangen. In seinem Essay „Installations. A Case for Hangings“, der 1981 im *Philippine Art Supplement* veröffentlicht wurde, denkt der Kritiker und Künstler Raymundo Albano über das Verhältnis von Vorführungen bei Festlichkeiten und zeitgenössischer Installationskunst nach.¹¹ Dies greift Patrick Flores auf, wenn er in der Kunst Südostasiens eine „installative“ Tendenz feststellt, eine „durch vielfältige Kräfte aktivierte Relationalität“, die durch den Wunsch motiviert ist, „eine Kunstwelt oder eine relationale oder überpersönliche Welt der Kunst zu versammeln, indem man Bedingungen schafft, dass Menschen entlang der verschiedenen Achsen der Meinungsverschiedenheit, der Entwicklung, des Nationalismus und der Solidarität zusammenkommen können“.¹² Die Reflexion über die Vietnam-Initiative über den Umweg Südostasiens wird jedoch durch das Vermächtnis des Chile-Festivals noch komplexer gemacht, das sich explizit von der kulturellen Blüte der Allende-Jahre inspirieren ließ.

Ausstellungsansicht mit *First Manifesto of the Artist's Liberation Front – Movement for People's Culture* von John Dugger und David Medalla, documenta 5 (1972)

dissenso, dello sviluppo, del nazionalismo e della solidarietà”¹². Ma pensare all'iniziativa sul Vietnam attraverso il Sud-est asiatico diventa più complesso se pensiamo all'eredità del festival in Cile, che prese direttamente ispirazione dalla fioritura culturale degli anni di Allende.

Jun Terra descrive la sua presentazione del Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre e i laboratori che si tennero al festival in Cile (basati sul teatro delle ombre indonesiano *wayang kulit*) come parte di un sistema espositivo ispirato ai centri culturali autonomi popolari nati in Cile negli anni sessanta e settanta¹³. Courtney Martin ha descritto il lavoro di Dugger di allora in termini di “cultura del festival”, collegandolo anche a documenta del 1972, a cui parteciparono Dugger e Medalla, e che lei considera più un evento informale dotato di svariate piattaforme che una mostra d'arte istituzionale¹⁴. Un altro filo da seguire è quello del gruppo Exploding Galaxy, la cui deviazione verso la controcultura degli anni sessanta suggerisce un collegamento laterale con il noto movimento dei free festival che ebbe il suo momento di massima espansione in Gran Bretagna a metà anni settanta¹⁵.

Se in AFD possiamo identificare un metodo festivaliero, questo metodo potrebbe includere i seguenti elementi: performatività ed effimerità; partecipazione e modalità multiple del fare creativo; arti multiple piuttosto che arte al singolare; assenza di autorità curatoriale (“Se volevi farne parte, bastava farlo”, come si è espresso uno dei partecipanti); un collegamento

Fotografia della mostra con *First Manifesto of the Artist's Liberation Front – Movement for People's Culture* di John Dugger e David Medalla, documenta 5 (1972)

modes of creative agency; multiple arts rather than art in the singular; an absence of curatorial authority (“If you wanted to take part, you came along,” as one participant put it); a connection to the everyday; practices of conviviality, celebration, hospitality, and joy; and *processionality*—related to process, procession, and the coexistence of different temporalities and worlds. AFD was a platform for a precarious coalition of anti-imperialist, feminist, artistic, and non-artistic concerns. Its festivals performed specific ways of relating to its historical moment, with an overlap of agitprop and experimental modes that remains unresolved.

It is in this space of irresolution that I will finish. In 1975, Cecilia Vicuña left London for Bogotá, where she would stay for the next five years. The year she arrived, she produced a series of silk banners in homage to the Vietnamese victory and Ho Chi Minh, which drew on Vicuña's encounter with a visiting group of female Vietnamese soldiers in the early 1970s. Like John Dugger's banner for Chile, it is cut into strips so the wind can move through it.

Jun Terra beschreibt seine Aufführung des Red Star Shadow Puppet Theatre und die Workshops während des Chile-Festivals (die auf dem indonesischen Puppen-Schattenspiel Wayang Kulit basierten) im Rahmen eines Ausstellungssystems, das durch die in den 1960er- und 1970er-Jahren in Chile gegründeten populären autonomen Kulturzentren inspiriert war.¹³ Courtney Martin beschrieb Duggers Arbeit aus jener Zeit mit dem Begriff der „Festivalkunst“ und verband dies auch mit der documenta 5 (1972), an der sowohl Dugger als auch Medalla teilnahmen, und die Courtney Martin eher als eine zwanglose Multiplattform-Veranstaltung denn als institutionelle Kunstaussstellung verstand.¹⁴ Die Gruppe Exploding Galaxy wäre ein weiterer Strang, den man verfolgen könnte, wobei ihre Überschneidung mit der Gegenkultur der 1960er-Jahre auf eine Querverbindung zur populären Bewegung der freien Festivals verweist, die ihren Höhepunkt in Großbritannien in den 1970er-Jahren erlebte.¹⁵

Wenn sich bei AFD eine Methode der Festlichkeit finden lässt, dann könnte sie die folgenden Elemente beinhalten: Performativität und Ephemerität; vielfältige Teilnehmer:innen und Formen des kreativen Handelns; vielfältige Künste statt Kunst im Singular; die Abwesenheit kuratorischer Autorität („Wenn man mitmachen wollte, kam man vorbei“, wie ein Beteiligter es ausdrückte); eine Verbindung zum Alltag; Praktiken der Geselligkeit, der Feier, der Gastfreundschaft und der Freude; sowie *Prozessionalität*

con il quotidiano; pratiche di convivialità, festa, ospitalità e gioia; e ‘procesionalità’ – legata al processo, al procedere, e alla coesistenza di diversi mondi e temporalità. AFD è stata una piattaforma per una coalizione precaria che portava avanti istanze antimperialiste, femministe, artistiche e non artistiche. I suoi festival hanno messo in scena modi specifici di relazionarsi con quel momento storico, grazie a una sovrapposizione tra agit-prop e modalità sperimentali rimasta irrisolta.

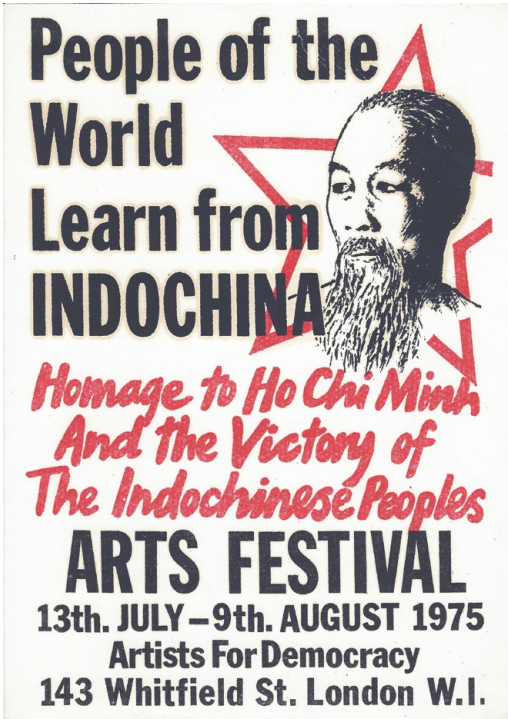
Voglio concludere con questo spazio di irrisolutezza. Nel 1975 Cecilia Vicuña lasciò Londra per Bogotá, dove sarebbe rimasta cinque anni. L'anno del suo arrivo realizzò una serie di striscioni in seta per celebrare la vittoria vietnamita e Ho Chi Minh, basati sul suo incontro con un gruppo di soldatesse vietnamite avvenuto nei primi anni settanta. Come lo striscione di John Dugger per il Cile, anche l'opera di Vicuña è tagliata a strisce in modo che il vento possa attraversarla.

- This text is based on ongoing research first presented at “London, Asia, Art, Worlds” in 2021, hosted by the Paul Mellon Centre and organized by Hammad Nasar, Ming Tiampo, and Sarah Turner. I am grateful to the organizers of this event, as well as to Nick Aikens, Eva Bentcheva, Patrick Flores, Yaiza Hernández Velázquez, Lee Weng Choy, Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez, Grace Samboh, Lucy Steeds, and David Teh. I also wish to thank those AFD participants I have had contact with, in particular Lynn MacRitchie, Rose English, Jun Terra, Rasheed Araeen, Dave Rogers (Banner Theatre), Jonathan Miles, and Cecilia Vicuña.
- Cecilia Vicuña, “Organized Dreaming,” trans. Christopher Winks, in Vicuña, Lucy R. Lippard, and Paulina Varas Alarcón, *Artists for Democracy: El Archivo de Cecilia Vicuña* (Santiago de Chile: Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos/Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2013), unpaginated.
- The founding of the group, the festival for Chile, and the subsequent dispute are described from several perspectives in the abovementioned

- publication; their falling-out is largely attributed to actions by Medalla surrounding the auction of works at the close of the event.
- Vicuña, “Organized Dreaming.”
 - Rasheed Araeen, “Conversation with David Medalla,” *Black Phoenix*, no. 3 (Spring 1979). Araeen was also a part of AFD, and the Whitfield Street space hosted his first solo exhibition in the UK.
 - Paul Overy, “Aware and absent,” *The Times*, August 5, 1975.
 - Overy, “Aware and Absent.”
 - In 1979, following the closure of the Whitfield Street space, and in reaction to overseriousness and puritanism within British political circles (in Guy Brett’s estimation), Medalla organized an AFD “Grand Artists’ Banquet.” One hundred artists were invited to cook their favorite recipes together as part of a great banquet in London, invoking a tradition of famous artists’ banquets and Ho Chi Minh’s early culinary training with the great chef Auguste Escoffier. See Guy Brett, *Exploding Galaxies: The Art of David Medalla* (London: Kala Press, 2007), 122.

- Guy Brett, *In Our Own Eyes: Popular Art and Modern History* (London: Heretic Books, 1986), 153.
- Lynn MacRitchie, correspondence with the author, 2021.
- Raymundo Albano, “Installations: A Case for Hangings,” *Philippine Art Supplement 2*, no. 1 (January–February 1981), 3.
- Patrick D. Flores, “A Changing World,” in David Teh and David Morris (eds.), *Artist-to-Artist: Independent Art Festivals in Chiang Mai 1992–98* (London: Afterall Books, 2018), 264–78.
- Jun Terra, conversation with the author, 2021.
- Courtney Martin, “Collectivity, Temporality, and Festival Culture in John Dugger’s Quasi-Architecture,” in Jo Applin, Catherine Spencer, and Amy Tobin (eds.), *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent, and Ephemeral Networks, 1960–1980* (Philadelphia, PA: Penn State University Press, 2018), 95–114.
- On the Exploding Galaxy, see Jill Drower, *99 Balls Pond Road: The Story of the Exploding Galaxy* (London: Scrudge Books, 2014).

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– mit Bezug auf den Prozess, die Prozession und das Nebeneinanderbestehen verschiedener Zeitlichkeiten und Welten. AFD war die Plattform für eine prekäre Koalition aus antiimperialistischen, feministischen, künstlerischen und nicht künstlerischen Interessen. Die Festivals führten spezifische Methoden der Verbindung mit ihrem jeweiligen historischen Augenblick vor, wobei sich Agitprop und experimentelle Formen auf ungelöst bleibende Weise überlagerten.

In diesem Raum der Unentschlossenheit möchte ich enden. 1975 verließ Cecilia Vicuña London in Richtung Bogotá, wo sie die nächsten fünf Jahre leben sollte. Im Jahr ihrer Ankunft schuf sie eine Reihe von Seidenbannern als Hommage an den vietnamesischen Sieg und an Ho Chi Minh, für die sie auf eine Begegnung mit einer Besuchergruppe vietnamesischer Soldatinnen Anfang der 1970er-Jahre zurückgriff. Wie John Duggers Banner für Chile ist das Werk in Streifen geschnitten, damit sich der Wind hindurchbewegen kann.

- „[Giving] material and cultural support to liberation movements worldwide”. – Questo testo è basato su una ricerca non ancora conclusa presentata per la prima volta nel 2021 a *London, Asia, Art, Worlds*, evento organizzato presso il Paul Mellon Centre di Londra da Hammad Nasar, Ming Tiampo e Sarah Turner. Sono molto grato alle organizzatrici e all’organizzatore e anche a Nick Aikens, Eva Bentcheva, Patrick Flores, Yaiza Hernández Velázquez, Lee Weng Choy, Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez, Grace Samboh, Lucy Steeds e David Teh. Vorrei anche ringraziare le collaboratrici e i collaboratori di AFD con cui mi sono relazionato, e in particolare Lynn MacRitchie, Rose English, Jun Terra, Rasheed Araeen, Dave Rogers (Banner Theatre), Jonathan Miles e Cecilia Vicuña.
- Cecilia Vicuña, *Organized Dreaming*, trad. Christopher Winks, in Cecilia Vicuña, Lucy R. Lippard e Paulina Varas Alarcón, *Artists for Democracy: El Archivo de Cecilia Vicuña* (Santiago del Cile, Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos/Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, 2013), senza numeri di pagina.
- La nascita del gruppo, il festival per il Cile e il dissidio che ne seguì sono descritti da diversi punti di vista nella pubblicazione menzionata

- sopra; la rottura viene generalmente attribuita all’atteggiamento di Medalla riguardo all’asta delle opere che si tenne alla chiusura dell’evento.
- Cecilia Vicuña, *op. cit.* “The failure of the original AFD is its greatest beauty, as failure seeds the birthing of new forms.”
 - Rasheed Araeen, *Conversation with David Medalla*, in “Black Phoenix”, n. 3, primavera 1979. Anche Araeen faceva parte di AFD, e tenne nello spazio di Whitfield Street la sua prima personale nel Regno Unito.
 - Paul Overy, *Aware and absent*, “The Times”, 5 agosto 1975: “series of environments made of simple, often waste, materials”.
 - Ibidem* – “on the life and work of Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnam Workers’ Party [and] the role of women in Vietnam”; “a kind of knowing *faux naïveté*”.
 - Nel 1979, in seguito alla chiusura dello spazio di Whitfield Street, e per reagire alla seriosità e al puritanesimo all’interno dei circoli politici britannici (secondo il parere di Guy Brett), Medalla organizzò per l’AFD un “Grand Artists’ Banquet”. A Londra, cento artisti e artiste furono invitati a cucinare insieme le loro ricette preferite per un grande banchetto, ispirato alla tradizione dei banchetti di artisti e artiste celebri ma anche

- all’apprendistato in campo culinario di Ho Chi Minh presso il grande chef Auguste Escoffier. Vedi Guy Brett, *Exploding Galaxies: The Art of David Medalla*, Kala Press, Londra 2007, p. 122.
- Guy Brett, *In Our Own Eyes: Popular Art and Modern History*, Heretic Books, Londra 1986, p. 153: “seeds of a new popular culture”. “Artistic ideas are in the air, and ripe for use. Nor is it a question of putting art *first*, as a kind of prime mover. [...] The really significant fact is the *relationship* between the people, the event, and the means of expression.”
 - Lynn MacRitchie, corrispondenza con l’autore, 2021: “As an artist, my time at AFD allowed me to achieve what I had struggled with as a student —bringing my artist self and my political self together. [...] While making my own work was very important to me, being part of the AFD project and the responsibilities this involved—attending meetings, taking part in discussions, organizing events, etc.—was just as vital. [...] As a trade unionist and a feminist, I attended many meetings. Trade union meetings were structured, with agendas and minute taking. Women’s group meetings tended to have a subject which was addressed by each participant in turn, who had to be listened

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- „[Giving] material and cultural support to liberation movements worldwide”. – Dieser Text basiert auf einem laufenden Recherche-projekt, dessen erste Ergebnisse 2021 bei der Konferenz „London, Asia, Art, Worlds“ präsentiert wurden, die im Paul Mellon Centre stattfand und von Hammad Nasar, Ming Tiampo und Sarah Turner organisiert worden war. Ich danke den Organisator:innen dieser Veranstaltung sowie Nick Aikens, Eva Bentcheva, Patrick Flores, Yaiza Hernández Velázquez, Lee Weng Choy, Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez, Grace Samboh, Lucy Steeds und David Teh. Darüber hinaus möchte ich den AFD-Mitgliedern danken, die sich zu Gesprächen bereit erklärten, insbesondere Lynn MacRitchie, Rose English, Jun Terra, Rasheed Araeen, Dave Rogers (Banner Theatre), Jonathan Miles und Cecilia Vicuña.
- Cecilia Vicuña, „Organized Dreaming“. Übers. von Christopher Winks, in: Vicuña, Lucy R. Lippard und Paulina Varas Alarcón, *Artists for Democracy: El Archivo de Cecilia Vicuña*, Santiago de Chile (Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos/Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes) 2013, unpaginiert: „a space of conversation and mutual apprenticeship [...] that brought together artists from Africa,

- Asia, Europe, and the Americas in a multi-faceted conglomerate”.
- Die Gründung der Gruppe, das Festival für Chile und der spätere Konflikt werden in der oben zitierten Publikation aus verschiedenen Perspektiven dargestellt; ihr Zerfall wird größtenteils Medallas Aktionen im Zusammenhang mit der Auktion von Arbeiten am Ende der Veranstaltung zugeschrieben.
 - Vicuña, „Organized Dreaming“ (wie Anm. 2): „The failure of the original AFD is its greatest beauty, as failure seeds the birthing of new forms.”
 - Rasheed Araeen, „Conversation with David Medalla“, in: *Black Phoenix*, Nr. 3 (Frühjahr 1979). Araeen war ebenfalls Teil von AFD, und seine erste Einzelausstellung in Großbritannien wurde im Londoner Whitfield Street Space gezeigt.
 - Paul Overy, „Aware and absent“, in: *The Times*, 5. August 1975: „series of environments made of simple, often waste, materials”.
 - Ebd. – „on the life and work of Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnam Workers’ Party [and] the role of women in Vietnam“; „a kind of knowing *faux naïveté*”.
 - Im Jahr 1979, nach Schließung des Whitfield Street Space und (so Guy Bretts Einschätzung) als Reaktion auf die übertriebene Ernsthaftigkeit

- und den Puritanismus in britischen politischen Zirkeln, organisierte David Medalla ein „Grand Artists’ Banquet“ der Gruppe. Hundert Künstler waren eingeladen, als Teil eines großen Festmahls in London gemeinsam ihre Lieblingsrezepte zu kochen, womit sowohl die Tradition berühmter Künstlertafeln aufgerufen war als auch Ho Chi Minhs frühe Ausbildung bei dem Meisterkoch Auguste Escoffier. Vgl. Guy Brett, *Exploding Galaxies. The Art of David Medalla*, London (Kala Press) 2007, S. 122.
- Guy Brett, *In Our Own Eyes. Popular Art and Modern History*, London (Heretic Books) 1986, S. 153: „seeds of a new popular culture”. „Artistic ideas are in the air, and ripe for use. Nor is it a question of putting art *first*, as a kind of prime mover. [...] The really significant fact is the *relationship* between the people, the event, and the means of expression.”
 - Lynn MacRitchie, Korrespondenz mit dem Autor: „As an artist, my time at AFD allowed me to achieve what I had struggled with as a student —bringing my artist self and my political self together. [...] While making my own work was very important to me, being part of the AFD project and the responsibilities this involved—attending meetings, taking part in discussions, organizing

- to respectfully. Both the task-led approach of the union meetings and the supportive ‘listening’ that we practiced at women’s meetings were useful in AFD organizational meetings, which were also disciplined and productive.”
- Raymundo Albano, *Installations: A Case for Hangings*, in “Philippine Art Supplement”, vol. 2, n. 1, gennaio–febbraio 1981, p. 3.
 - Patrick D. Flores, *A Changing World*, in David Teh e David Morris (a cura di), *Artist-to-Artist:*

- Independent Art Festivals in Chiang Mai 1992–98*, Afterall Books, Londra 2018, pp. 264–278: “installative” [tendency] “relationality activated by multiple forces,” [motivated by a desire] “to convene an art world, or a relational or transpersonal world of art, by creating conditions for people to assemble along the various axes of dissent, development, nationalism and solidarity”.
- Jun Terra, conversazione con l’autore, 2021.

- Courtney Martin, *Collectivity, Temporality, and Festival Culture in John Dugger’s Quasi-Architecture*, in Jo Applin, Catherine Spencer e Amy Tobin (a cura di), *London Art Worlds: Mobile, Contingent, and Ephemeral Networks, 1960–1980*, Penn State University Press, Philadelphia, PA 2018), pp. 95–114.
- Su Exploding Galaxy, vedi Jill Drower, *99 Balls Pond Road: The Story of the Exploding Galaxy*, Scrudge Books, Londra 2014.

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- 11 Raymundo Albano, "Installations. A Case for Hangings", in: *Philippine Art Supplement*, 2, Nr. 1 (Jan./Feb. 1981), S. 3.
- 12 Patrick D. Flores, "A Changing World", in: David Teh und David Morris (Hrsg.), *Artist-to-Artist: Independent Art Festivals in Chiang Mai 1992–98*, London (Afterall Books) 2018, S. 264–278: „installative“ [tendency] „relationality activated by multiple forces,“ [motivated by a desire] „to convene an art world, or a relational or transpersonal world of art, by creating conditions for people to assemble along the

- various axes of dissent, development, nationalism and solidarity".
- 13 Jun Terra im Gespräch mit dem Autor (2021).
 - 14 Courtney Martin, „Collectivity, Temporality, and Festival Culture in John Dugger's Quasi-Architecture“, in: Jo Applin, Catherine Spencer und Amy Tobin (Hrsg.), *London Art Worlds. Mobile, Contingent, and Ephemeral Networks, 1960–1980*, Philadelphia, PA (Penn State University Press), 2018, S. 95–114.
 - 15 Zur Gruppe Exploding Galaxy vgl. Jill Drower, *99 Balls Pond Road. The Story of the Exploding Galaxy*, London (Scrudge Books) 2014.



A Fine Cena Spumante per Tutti
(After Dinner, Champagne for Everyone), 1977, collage a tecnica mista

A Fine Cena Spumante per Tutti
(After Dinner, Champagne for Everyone), 1977, Mixed Media Collage

A Fine Cena Spumante per Tutti
(After Dinner, Champagne for Everyone), 1977, mixed-media collage