





these two images: Cristóbal Lehyt, *Supermercado*, 1997

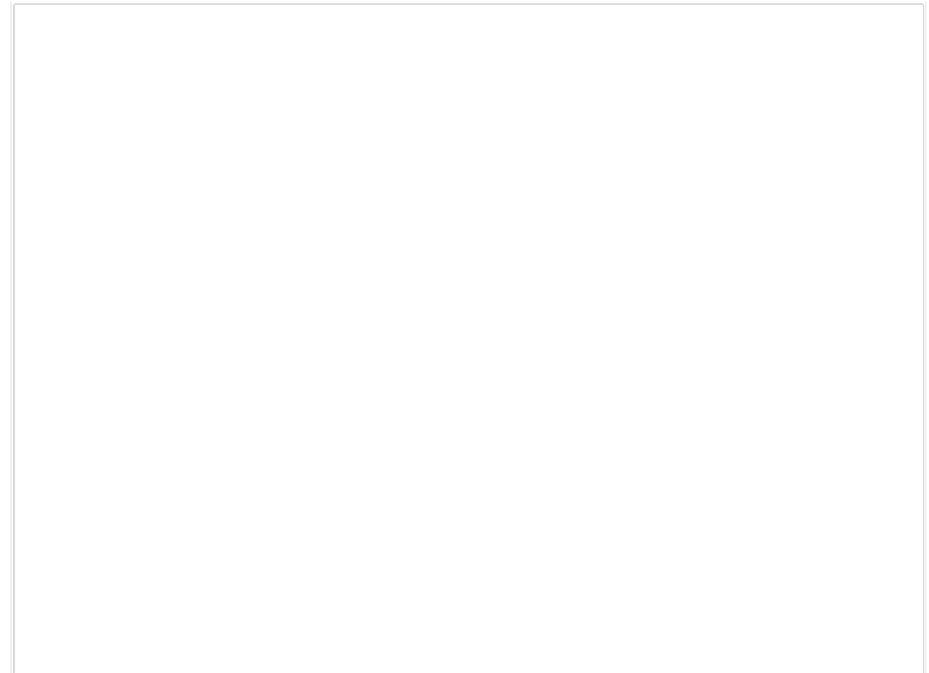
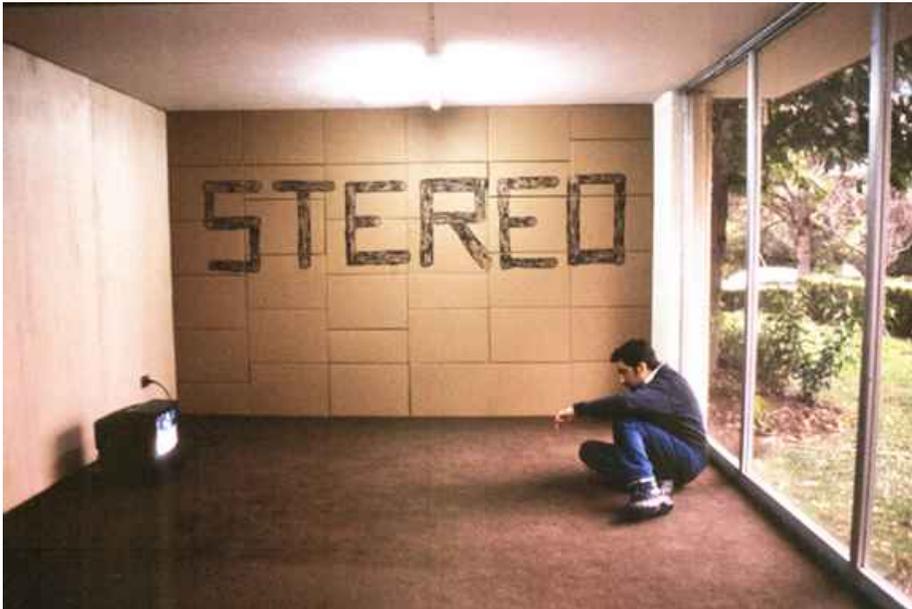
This was the first show we made, at Joe's studio-home; we had an opening party and then made it last for the whole weekend. The show consisted of six pieces of plexiglass that Cristóbal had sent from New York, where he was living already for a while. The plexis were carved and scratched on their back, and then tinted with blue and purplish inks to produce a ghostly series of paintings based on a single image of a burning supermarket after the riots that happened in L.A. in 1965; this photograph was later published and reviewed by the french situationistes in 1966.

In the picture on the top you can see how the pieces of plexiglass were displayed on the floor just leaning against the walls, where the light of the room played shadows and put through all the white in the image; again, on the bottom picture, the ghost, the shadows and the reflection of two of the few who witnessed that first try of GCH. *Supermercado* was also Cristóbal's first exhibition.





these pages: *THE NEW IDEAL LINE (STEREO)* by Mario Navarro (at left), 1998. The second show we produced was made at the building where Joe's parents live in Vitacura, the same area where a handful of commercial galleries are placed, so we thought it was appropriate. Mario was working on a series of installations, drawings and sculptures (actually, *ALL OF HIS WORK*) he calls *TNIL*, based on a found comic about art and how accidents can lead to great ideas. For *STEREO* he build a wall of cardboard boxes that cut the space in half (that could only be seen from outside, through the windows) a charcoal drawing on it, then covered a wall with plywood sheets and produced a soundless video loop where a man wearing a red pijama and a pink woolen mask runs amok into the woods with an ax and chops logs like a nut. This show was made possible by an anonimous sponsor. Open for two weeks.





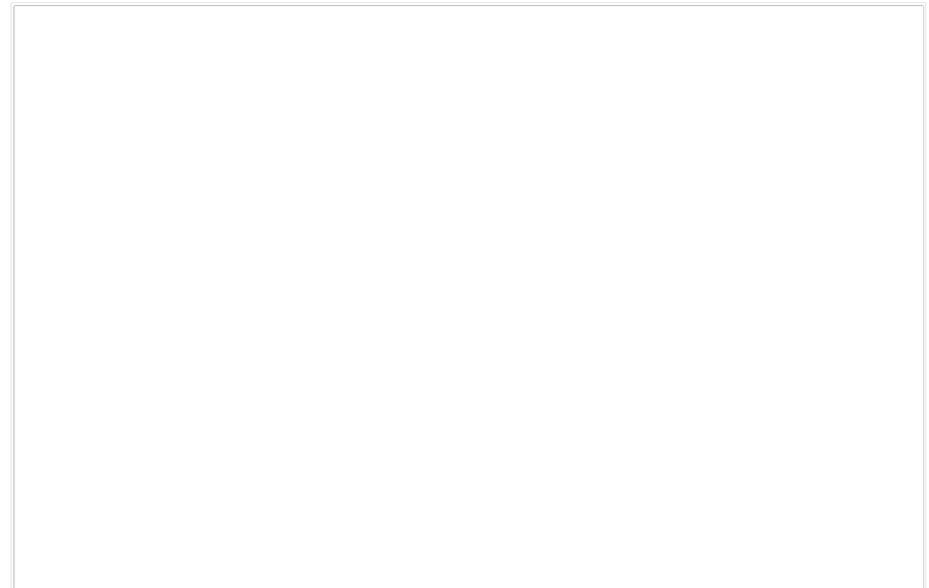
the opening night of GALCHI #3, a show by Juan Céspedes and Rodrigo Galecio in May 1998. The place was a model apartment front store right across the street from Plaza Brasil, a big old square with tall trees in downtown Santiago. It was the first time we trade visibility for space, dealing directly with the real state agents that managed the building, deliberately constructed in "lofty" double-height style to resemble a lifestyle that makes you dream of better horizons.



At the time of GALCHI #3 we were strangely worried that people would say we had a gallery only for our friends, so we decided to go out and visit other art schools in town, hunting for new and undiscovered young talents. The search turned out Juan Céspedes, a guy working with video and a lot of hand made tech-toy fantasies in a crazy display of kiddie creativity. He came from the Universidad de Chile, and we chose him precisely because he was working in an opposite way to everybody else in his surroundings, a total original, and since he had this impossible amount of toys and micro sculptures and other stuff, we asked him to make a video that would contain all of this. For GCH#3 Céspedes produced the video INSIDE, where a constructed TV-sized box is filmed so it seems that he actually IS inside of the TV. There he acts like the little guy who makes possible the "picture in picture" and the "freeze-frame" and all the silly features of a modern TV. At one point he pulls out a marker and makes a drawing on the screen where he depicts the room where the actual show is happening, included the works by Rodrigo Galecio and the GCH heart shaped logo on the window, and finally, the viewer. We made an edition of this video, and it quickly became our first sale.



Rodrigo Galecio was in the same school we came from, Universidad Catolica de Chile, a sort of lab where there wasn't much space for dirty experimentation due to its strict rules of hygiene. His work consisted in a series of dated arrangements of the objects inside the drawing shop at school: stools here, drawing boards over there, the model's platform against the wall, lights all standing by the door... he did a different arrangement for each of the weekly session of his class... a living portrait of the clinical ambience. We attempted a comercial move by asking him to take photographs of his arrangements and he agreed and chose to work over the messy shelves at Bettoni's Foundry (later somebody bought one of these photos too!). We decided this show would be presented like a clash of the titans, with one gladiator from each of these two schools, the oldest, biggest and most important in Santiago... and the gallery was set in a neighborhood were a lot of new schools



*This here is Joe Villablanca playing guitar in the band MAESTRO (with the Twin Torres Brothers: CTR and Fufú) at the high point of the First Alternative Festival we organized in July 1998. They really have some serious songs and lyrics and music too!
It was a rock show in a real theater that Maca Rivas got us into, and finally we got like two hundred people to actually pay for the show. We thought it was a good way to bring together the different crowds we had at the time: art, music, friends...*



*The end of the show was only smoke and cables.
We had been on stage for about six hours, since we told the people to come at seven, while we had our final rehearsal right there for about two hours, then we served some indecent wine and so it was time for the real thing, so be it, TAZOS came out with incredible noise and after we added the improvised jazzy tropicalia of special guests BROCCOLI and then the left handed guitar virtuoso of Mario Navarro and later Juan Céspedes with his altered music toys (next page) and then... man... people had to be enjoying it... or maybe just trying to figure it out... then MAESTRO... then just smoke.*





Felipe Mujica, Corazón Solitario/Solitario Corazón, 1998, acrylic plates and plywood, at the show "Galería Chilena en Galería Posada del Corregidor", August 1998.

The first volumetric piece that Felipe ever produced was made for this show were all three of us were invited as individual artists, but only because we had GCH. Actually, we think the director was afraid of letting us curate our own show, with our own artists. Anyway, it happened inside of a colonial house that is now used as art gallery, funded by the city of Santiago, depending of the National Ministry of Education, Galería Posada del Corregidor was at the time one of very few spaces open to new forms of artistic expression in Santiago.

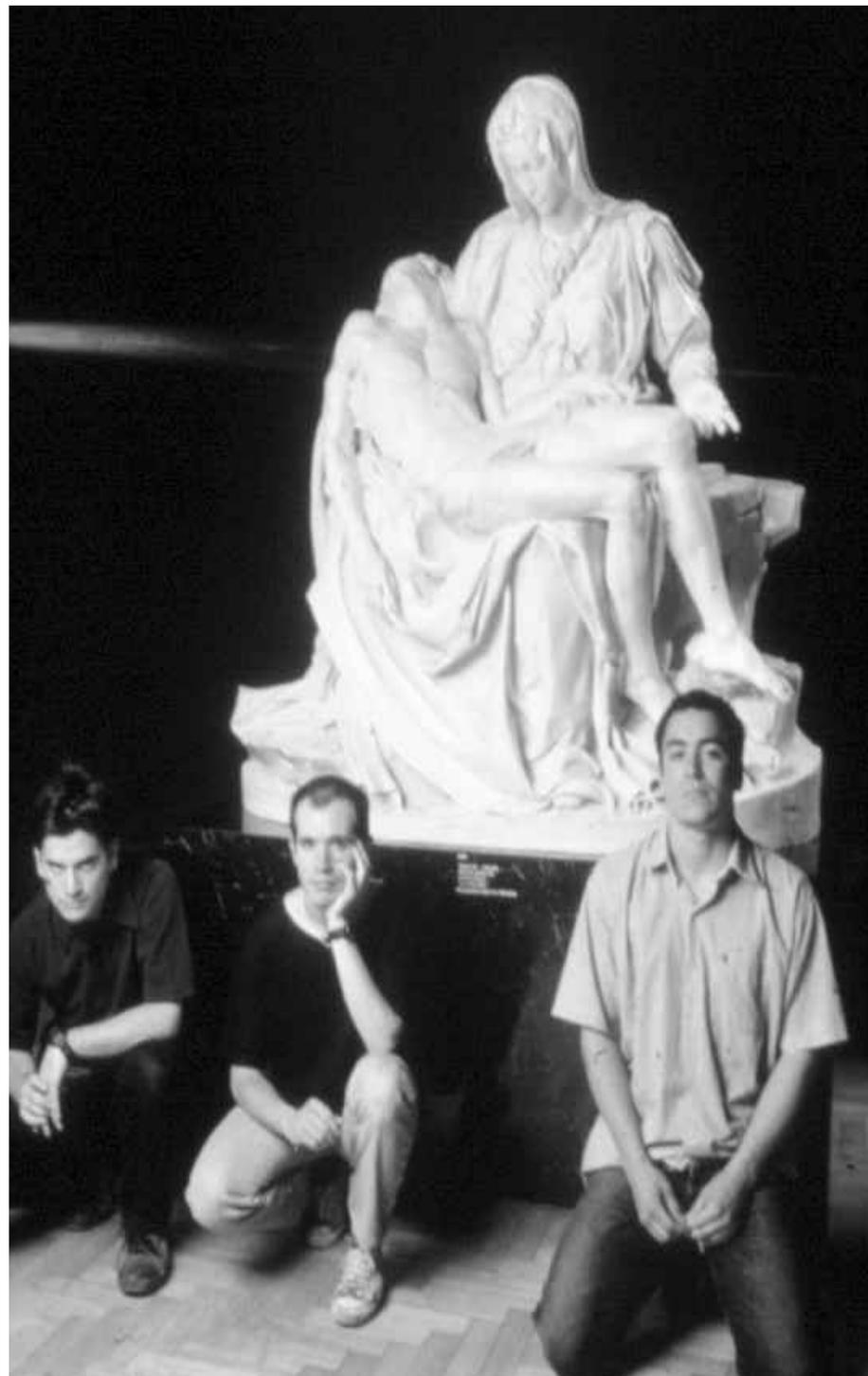
This is Galería Posada del Corregidor, built in the sixteenth century, this colonial house has seen most of the "young-emerging-artists" of Santiago. It's true they're not the kind of gallery you really want to work for, but their budget is very low, they really struggle and they get no feedback at all they use to print a little brochure for your show, they pay for the opening cocktails... lately they even make an annual memory book with nicely printed full color images. That's a lot more than you would expect anyway.





The opening of Galeria Chilena en Galeria Posada del Corregidor (as Pablo says, quoting Hans Ulrich, "a gallery within a gallery...") was crowded as usual, at this point we were quite a social circus in Santiago. Here we see some of the frequents: from left to right: Patricia Cepeda, Michele Faguet, Francisca Garcia, french corresposnal Miss Steph and super producer Maca Rivas and last but not least writer and philosopher Felipe Fernandez.

Below: Diego Fernandez, MA/MA Telethon (detail), 1998, casted iron, fire, brass fittings, rubber hoses...
 This piece presents the death masks of two chilean national sport heroes, their native facial features accentuated in the sculpture, their eyes spitting flames, quite supernatural indeed... ball chasers... heroes... monsters...
 Thank to Bettoni Foundry who didn't charge the artist for all the work.



In September 1998, a Santiago based magazine called PAULA had an article about young creative people and they included us as the paladins of self-management. We made an appointment with their photographer at the National Museum of Fine Arts, which at the time held a travelling exhibition of the great european masters of sculpture... only they were all copies made in resin!

This is Diego all dressed up and getting off Joe's car, the one we call "the galchi mobile" and that building behind is the house of the chilean government, where the president is working: Palacio de la Moneda. It's the unfamous building that was bombed when the militars took over the government, killing president Salvador Allende on September 11th 1973. But this picture is from September 30th 1998, and although Felipe and Joe are not shown, we all were there that morning to meet the president, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (his dad was president of Chile in the sixties).







Our long time friend Michele Faguet was working at the Swiss Institute of New York in 1998. She and Annette Schindler traveled all the way down to Chile researching and somehow we got scheduled for this show, about artist run spaces from outside the states; they were interested in representations of the national and the different ways and contexts of various art spaces, including also Message Salon (Esther Eppstein) from Zurich, and Laboratorio de Arte Contemporáneo LAC (Diana López) from Caracas. The show was called Especies d'Espaces.

So this is why we went to meet the president:

Since our gallery didn't have a fixed space and it consisted basically of the use of social connections and diplomacy for self-promotion, we thought a radical way to show this was try to reach the apex of the social pyramid, and get the president of the nation to collaborate by agreeing to take a picture with us, to be used as an advertisement for the gallery to be shown in New York. This piece would be very representative of the local context and also of our specific way of working.

So the picture to the left is just a nostalgia shot of Michele and Diego walking through Columbia University, going from Michelle's house towards the Swiss Institute in SOHO, carrying a PVC tube containing the unfamous work that we got to call:

"GCH meets the president of Chile, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle at Palacio de la Moneda, September 30th 1998".



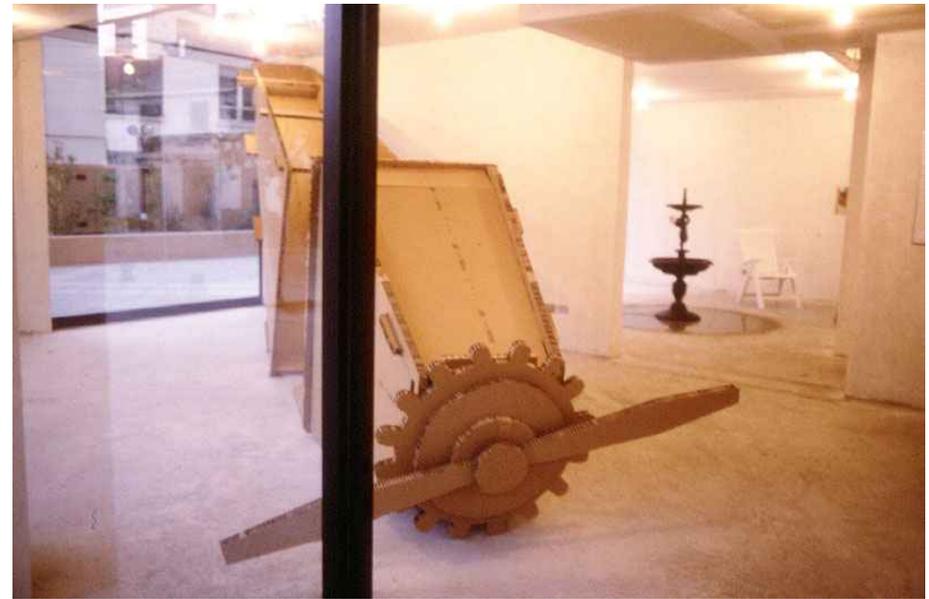


*On this page we see the final product with the smiling real protagonists matching the flat version.
And here on top we have a view of the actual display at The Swiss Institute. Note the slogan on top right corner: "Galería Chilena, Since 1997".*



bottom: that's Joe staring at Ester Eppstein's "Message Salon" installation at the Swiss Institute of New York for the show Especies d'Espaces, November 1998.





It took us until May 1999 to come out with a new show after the trip to New York. We got a very good corner-window space in the heart of the super commercial night-life district of Providencia; this place was packed with roaring harleys and all sorts of pseudo gringos and happy hours galore! (on previous page is the view from our door).

This time we wanted to do a show with Patricia Cepeda and Johanna Unzueta. They were very close to us as schoolmates and friends, and their projects were clear and good. Patricia's consisted of a series of photo-performances of herself naked in 3 different locations through the city: the top of the hill where Santiago was officially founded in 1542; inside a little fountain behind the National Museum of Fine Arts; at a subway station construction site before the stunned eyes of a hundred workers (this was way before The Spencer Tunic Experience). Her installation also included a garden fountain inside the gallery, a couple of garden chairs with two video projections on loop: one as a self-portrait of herself smoking cigarretes in a depressed mood and one of her brother and a friend playing some crazy impro-tunes in his room. She said she wanted to transpose the interior and exterior spaces, public and private, all the way, architectonically and emotionally.

Johanna had been working in series of sculptures made out of cardboard (one thousand tiny toilets, bathroom appliances inside a commercial window...) and her project this time was to build a life size replica of Lindenberg's Spirit of Saint Louis and crashed it down inside the gallery. This was the first in a group of three sculptures that also included a car and a motorcycle. This show was called Guauhaus which is a name we figured out after long discussions... probably making a joke between the supposedly fancy location (guau!) and the Bauhaus influence at PUC art school, both formal and structural.





*Patricia Cepeda, Buenos Dias a Todos (Good Morning Everybody), 1998
an installation including a fountain, furniture, video and photography, at GUAUHAUS, GCH #10,
Providencia, Santiago de Chile.*



*Johanna Unzueta, Artefactor Mr. Postman, 1998
a sculpture made out of 2" Honeycomb cardboard sheets, at GUAUHAUS, GCH #10, Providencia,*

*Another view of the opening at GUAUHAUS, with Patricia's pictures on the wall and the fountain making everything wet.
That woman on the right is Diego's mom, talking to Eduardo Vilches, one of the founders of the art school at PUC, our good teacher and friend, and later also an artist at GCH #13, in the exact same location.*



*A view of Artefactor Mr. Postman, 1999 by Johanna Unzueta at GUAUHAUS, GCH #10, Providencia, Santiago de Chile.
This sculpture, assembled without any glue, was a big eye hook inside the glass corner, a vision of wreck in a town of bars.*





The place we finally dealt for our 11th show was a very special landmark: inside a rarely visited underground gallery in a subway station under the military school. It still wore the sign of its former inhabitants: Juvenile Diabetes Association.

Diego got money from the government to produce the DIGITAL paintings (FONDART 1998). He had to dress up in return.

Although it was a master shape-shifter, the logo for our enterprise was always a heart. Because it's love. And it's blood.





These pictures are from the opening of GCH #11: DIGITAL, a show of paintings by Diego Fernández in September 1999. Each of the paintings (2 x 1.5 meters, enamel on canvas) had three colors

This space was located in a subway station and so it wasn't easy to obtain. The people at METRO finally acceded to lend the place but bureaucracy wouldn't allow the use of the premises for free, so we had to pay them a "minimum" rent, just to produce some sort of legal contract that would hold us responsible in case of damage; it was the only time that we had to pay for the space, usually we would just meet the realtors a couple of times, explain the nature of the project and display the advantages of teaming up with a crew of entrepreneurial youths. Our best argument was the fact that our presence would bring possible tenants to the site, that the show would get reviews in newspapers of ample circulation were the real estate office would be mentioned and praised. This show was open for two weeks.



Top picture: we see part of the photographer, Felipe, Francisco (Johanna's father), Georgina (Johanna's mother), Johanna and Caco (Felipe's father)... "GCH: the gallery that keeps your family together"





Eduardo Vilches, Desde El Jardín, cibachrome prints, 1999, at GCH #12, December 1999, Santiago de Chile.



At the end of 1999 we thought of inviting Eduardo Vilches to do a show with us. A professor of color theory, engraving techniques and also the head of the most experimental and contemporary classes given at PUC (objects, installations, video..) Eduardo had been producing art, making exhibitions and collecting honors for more than four decades by then (born in 1932). For us, he was the main figure in the art school, a bright representant of previous generations of chilean art, really established in history. We proposed the show to him and he happily agreed to participate. Then he confessed to us that he had a hobby: for the last twenty years he had been photographing artificial landscapes (mostly gardens and parks) and had thousands of slides. We were all stunned to find out he had an inedit work and was willing to share it with us, amazed to see such volume and quality been kept as a side project for so many years. We got rather excited to put up a show with them, but there were so many! shot in different seasons, in different countries. Finally we chose a series taken in his own garden, right there at home. The images looked like a dense jungle, a series of close up's of plants and blooming flowers delicately combined in an "organized landscape", light and color with a velvety feeling of depth, and then suddenly a flower pot would come into frame and the whole perception of the model would be altered. This was a very intimate work, a real gift that perfectly reflected the patience and the rigorous method that he had put into his docent career. Due to Eduardo's widely recognized accomplishments with relative ease we got an important sponsorship to print out the pictures within the highest quality standards. The space was the same we had used for Guauhaus half a year before, and since we saw it was still empty we asked the owners for it again. It was easier the second time around. We even got confidence enough to paint the walls black.





The opening of our last appearance in Santiago, GCH #14: Second Anniversary & Carpeta de Grabados, December 1999.

After the show with Eduardo Vilches was over we used the space one more time to hang a set of silkscreen prints design by all the artists that had participated GCH through our first two years. We thought this edition of print portfolios could be a way to gain some money with dignity, not willing to change our curatorial profile by pushing our artists into more profitable trends of work. The prints were specially designed and entirely produced by GCH in our loyal headquarters on Julio Prado Street.

Next page: for some strange reason our good friend DJ Lari was riding a bike inside the gallery, where the picture with the president we did for the SINY show in New York was also in exhibit, for the first time in Chile.

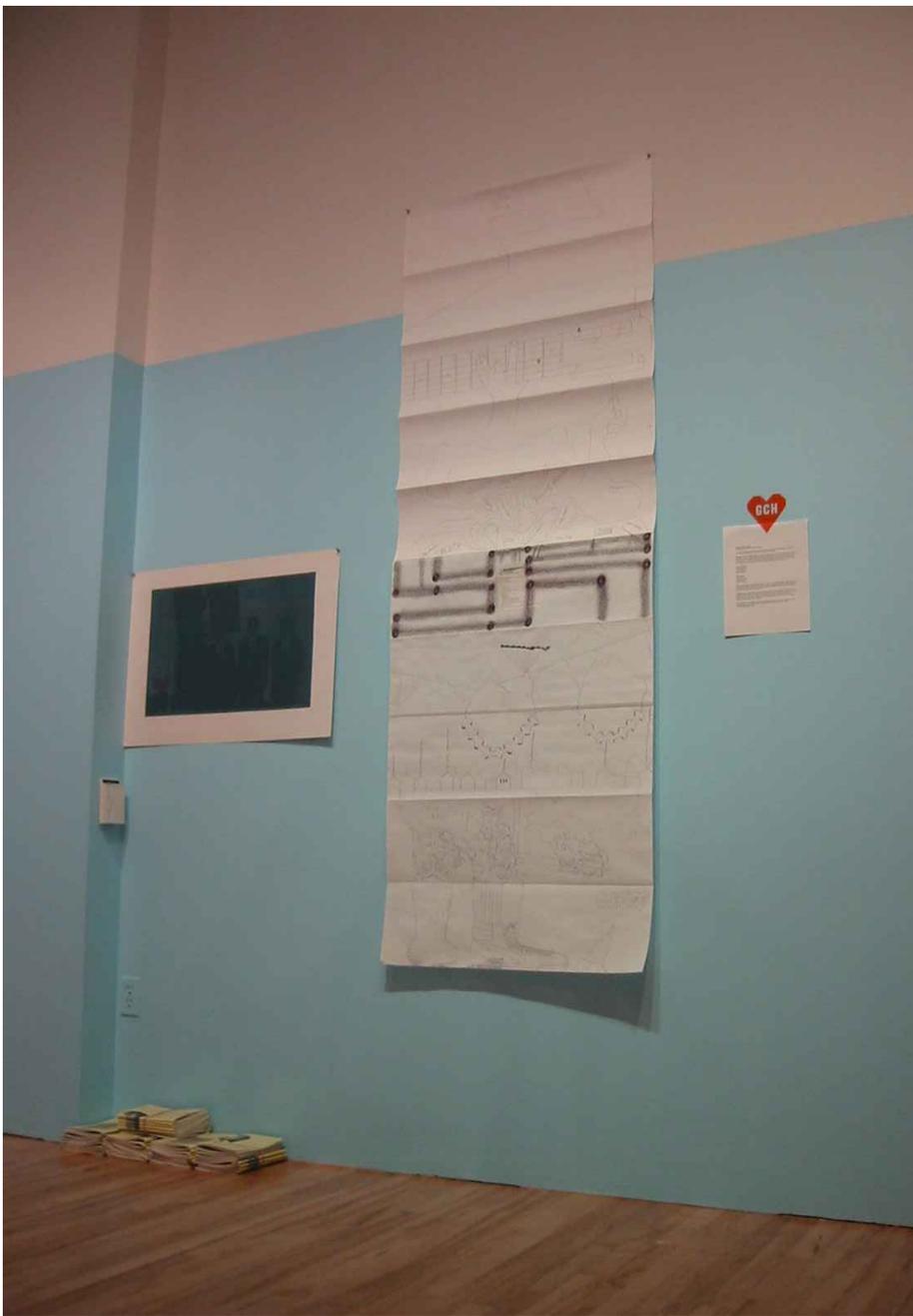


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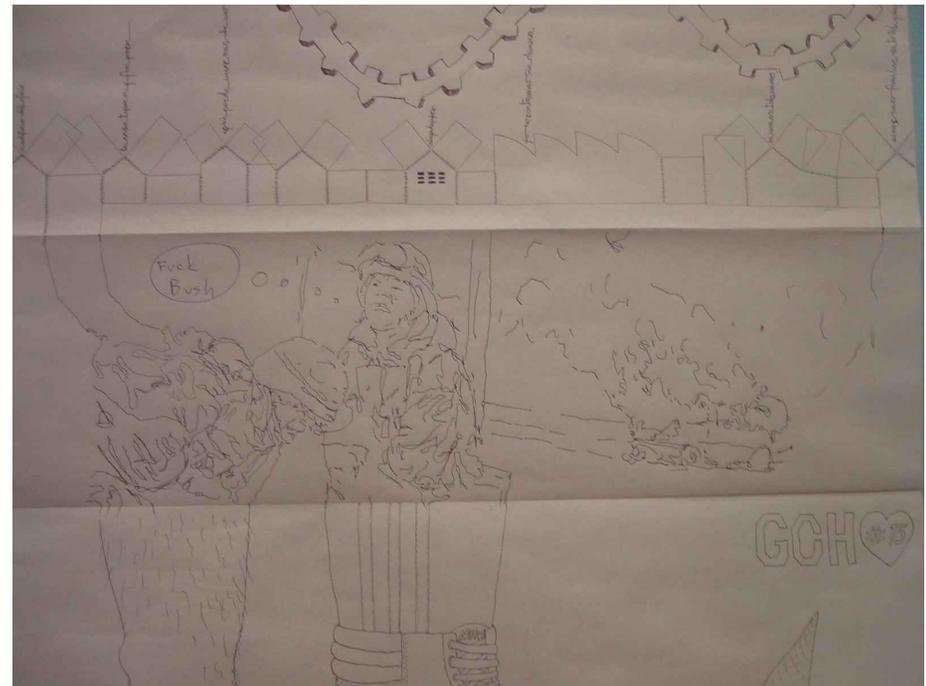
REGLAS INVENTADAS POR LOS SURREALISTAS



Next page, a drawing Joe made and e-mailed to all our artists to set the rules for the making of the exquisite corpse at To Be political It Has To Look Nice.



Above we have the three pieces we showed at *To be political it has to look nice*, at apexart, NY in October 2003. We were invited by Pablo Leon de La Barra and what we decided to do was a combination of collaborative work and self reflection.





For TBPIHTLN at apexart GCH presents three works that relate and interrelate by focusing on the idea of collaboration and by producing space-time exercises.

Exquisite Corpse (2003) consists in a collective drawing made by 10 artists who have worked or exhibited with GCH, following the surrealist free style art-game. The only two rules were to use a bold black pen and to not to look at the drawing before each artist made their part (both rules were broken). The drawing is divided in two parts that were made separately, the upper section in Chile and the lower one in New York City. The list of artists from top to bottom is:

Eduardo Vilches
Rodrigo Galecio
Joe Villablanca
Juan Céspedes
Mario Navarro

Iván Navarro
Felipe Mujica
Johanna Unzueta
Cristóbal Lehyt
Diego Fernández

Smog (1998) is a silkscreen that was made as a remix or re-mastered version of the *historical* piece "Galeria Chilena meets the president of Chile, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, at Palacio La Moneda, Santiago, September 30th 1998". It was part of a silkscreen portfolio intended to produce commercial pieces from GCH, a serious intention to get into the market. It has not worked yet.

Catalog (2003) is a low budget edition of texts and photographs of two main subjects. The first one is a series of email texts that describe the work process between the "directors" of GCH about what to do for TBPIHTLN. The second part is a chronological description of the events that GCH organized several years ago in Santiago de Chile. Both parts are interconnected. Emails are in Spanish, GCH activities are in English.

Because of the small amount of catalogs we were able to produce they are not for free. Public please feel free to read them and if you are interested in buying one, please contact:

At the opening night GCH would be selling them outside of apexart in a street vending floor "approach"...



Galeria Chilena (GCH) is an artist-run gallery from Santiago de Chile founded. GCH has no fixed showroom and works as a nomadic communication center that seeks the development, diffusion and wider cultural insertion of contemporary Chilean art.

GCH was founded by Joe Villablanca, Felipe Mujica and Diego Fernández in 1997.

1997 SUPERMERCADO
Paintings by Cristóbal Lehyt
Julio Prado, Santiago de Chile

1998 THE NEW IDEAL LINE (STEREO)
Video Installation by Mario Navarro
Detroit, Santiago de Chile

Special Meeting Number One: THE FUTURE OF ART IN CHILE
Slideshow and panel discussion

GALCHI #3
Video by Juan Céspedes & Photography by Rodrigo Galecio
Plaza Brasil, Santiago de Chile

CACO CINCUENTA
A private exhibit of GCH's stock to attract possible collectors
Brown Sur, Santiago de Chile

PRIMER FESTIVAL ALTERNATIVO
Live rock show with bands MAESTRO and TAZOS+guests
Teatro Condell, Santiago de Chile

GCH EN GALERIA POSADA DEL CORREGIDOR
Works by GCH's directors: Diego Fernández, Felipe Mujica & Joe Villablanca
Galería Posada del Corregidor, Santiago de Chile

Special Meeting Number Two: GCH'S STORAGE ROOM
Slideshow and pannel discussion with an installation of GCH's stock
Galería Posada del Corregidor, Santiago de Chile

ESPECES D'ESPACES
Curated by Michelle Faguet
The Swiss Institute, NYC

1999 GUAUHAUS
Video installation by Patricia Cepeda & Sculpture by Johanna Unzueta
Edificio Progesta, Santiago de Chile

DIGITAL
Paintings by Diego Fernández
Estación METRO Escuela Militar, Santiago de Chile

DESDE EL JARDIN
Photograpy by Eduardo Vilches
Edificio Progesta, Santiago de Chile

GCH#13: CARPETA DE GRABADOS & SEGUNDO ANIVERSARIO GCH
A portfolio of silkscreen prints made specially by 7 GCH artists
Edificio Progesta, Santiago de Chile

2003 TO BE POLITICAL IT HAS TO LOOK NICE
Curated by Pablo León de la Barra
Apexart, NYC



Whenever we've had to hang our picture with the president, because the picture is bigger than life size, we would proportionally calculate the right height in order to have an empty space under the photo that would be equivalent to the part of our legs that was left out of the frame. God knows we try.