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GORE AESTHETICS: CHILEAN NECROLIBERALISM AND TRAVESTI RESISTANCE

This article develops a concept I call “gore aesthetics” by focusing on the regulatory and productive capacity of sexual obscenity and gore in contemporary performance art to diagnose shifts in neoliberalism’s perceptual regimes. To do so, I centre the artistic practice and legacy of Chilean performance artist and underground, travesti punk monstrosity Hija de Perra or Daughter of a Bitch (1980–2014) to consider how her performance art, sexually obscene gore aesthetic, and legacy highlight the intensification of what Sayak Valencia theorizes as “necroliberalism”. As neoliberalism’s “b-side” (Valencia 2010), necroliberalism represents a form of governance and power organised by heightened modes of extractive violence against racialised, poor, queer, femme, trans, and travesti subjects in the Global South that produces value through death. Reading Hija de Perra’s work, the extractive circumstances surrounding her untimely death from HIV/AIDS complications and the post mortem performances that ensued through sexual obscenity and gore, I argue that gore aesthetics ultimately foreground necroliberalism’s intensification and operate as a travesti strategy of resistance to the extractive violence this form of power and governance occasions. At the same time, I consider gore’s limitations when state actors co-opt gore aesthetics, as occurred during the Chilean estallido (2019) when police intentionally maimed protestors.

Keywords: estallido; gore capitalism; Hija de Perra; neoliberalism; ocular trauma; travesti

Hija de Perra (1980–2014) was a Chilean performance artist and underground, travesti punk monstrosity whose artistic praxis and drag aesthetic were punctuated by sexual obscenity and gore. An explosive, iconic, and subcultural figure, Hija de Perra emerged onto Chile’s queer performance art scene in the early 2000s and performed throughout Latin America’s Southern Cone. She appeared in venues like Santiago’s El Club Bizarro, starred in b-quality horror film *Empaná de pino* (2008), or *Meat and Onion Empanada*, delivered speeches at pride and protest marches, and taught ludic sex education classes at major Chilean universities. She was a talented performer and produced several hit tracks with her punk band Indecencia Transgénica (Transgenic Indecency) alongside artists Perdida and Irina la Loca, delighting and scandalising die-hard fans and unwitting spectators alike.



Figure 1. Zaida González, *El parto de Hija de Perra*, 2008, hand-painted watercolour on print from 35 mm black and white negative. Image copyright and courtesy of photographer Zaida González.

This image by Zaida González (Figure 1) condenses several of Hija de Perra's visual and performance practices grounded in sexual obscenity. Dressed in drag as a traditional bride, her wedding dress is hiked well above her pelvis as she births a stream of colorful textiles pouring from her exposed genitals crafted in felt. Her garish makeup highlights the lurid contrast between her closed eyes and open mouth agape with ecstasy. Decked out in heels and white lace with costume breasts bared, she appears against an oceanic blue backdrop peppered with kitsch:

red hot chiles, gold doilies, and colorful fake flowers. A crass altar featuring a severed pig's head rings her feet while the image's composition and framing echo Catholic saint prayer cards. Although her white bridal gown and headdress might imply purity, Hija de Perra is anything but chaste. As I claim throughout, her visual and performance practices challenged the respectability politics and aesthetics that govern the contemporary politics of sex and gender in Chile, which Chilean neoliberalism has fostered.

Despite the importance of Hija de Perra's cultural production for the queer, trans, and punk scenes, there has been little academic scholarship on Hija de Perra or her work.¹ This article represents one of the first on Hija de Perra's extensive subcultural oeuvre and examines her aesthetic and its legacies as a powerful critique of neoliberalism in Chile, which was installed in the 1970s following the Chilean coup d'état. To do so, I develop a concept I call "gore aesthetics", focusing on the regulatory and productive capacity of sexual obscenity and gore in contemporary performance art to diagnose shifts in neoliberalism's perceptual regimes. Centring Hija de Perra's performance art, sexually obscene gore aesthetic, and legacy, I suggest that together these highlight the intensification of what Sayak Valencia theorises as "necroliberalism" (2019). As neoliberalism's "b-side", necroliberalism represents a form of governance and power organised by heightened modes of extractive violence against racialised, poor, queer, femme, trans, and travesti subjects in the Global South that produces value through death (Valencia 2010, 18; Valencia 2019).² Reading Hija de Perra's work, the extractive circumstances surrounding her untimely death from HIV/AIDS complications and the post mortem performances that ensued through sexual obscenity and gore, I argue that gore aesthetics ultimately foreground necroliberalism's intensification and operate as a travesti strategy of resistance to the extractive violence occasioned by this form of power and governance. At the same time, I consider the limitations of gore, which come to the fore when state actors co-opt gore aesthetics through practices of intentional maiming.

This article is organised into four sections. The first tracks the shifting sex/gender politics of neoliberalism in Chile as these relate to Hija de Perra's emergence as a performance artist. Here Chilean postdictatorship politics of consensus condition multicultural neoliberalism and represent the political and historical context of her interventions, which destabilise consensus-based politics. The second situates and theorises Hija de Perra's mobilisation of sexual obscenity and her gore aesthetic through her performance practices, musical production, and appearance in films such as *Empaná de pino*. I read her aesthetic in part through Jillian Hernandez's work on raunch and "sexual-aesthetic excess", a concept Hernandez develops to illuminate and critique the ways in which neoliberalism, as a "racializing discourse that correlates stylistic deviancy with sexual impropriety", obfuscates racial, class, gender, and sexual difference (2020, 12). Reading Hija de Perra's aesthetic through obscenity and as a mode of "sexual-aesthetic excess", I suggest that Hija de Perra's parodic introduction of gore elements generates a complementary visual economy to that described by Hernandez, illuminating the simultaneity of neo- and necroliberalism while foregrounding necroliberalism's intensification.

The article's third section examines an aesthetic example of what I call gore aesthetics and its relationship to necroliberalism. I analyse the street performance "58 millones de besos con SIDA" [58 Million AIDS-Infected Kisses] organised by Hija de Perra's queer kin and fans in response to Dávila Clinic's aggressive debt-collection practices following her sudden hospitalisation and untimely death.³ I show how throughout the street performance, Hija de Perra's fans reanimated her aesthetic legacy grounded in sexual obscenity and gore to interrupt and denounce the clinic's extractivism. In doing so, I suggest that such practices staged through gore aesthetics identify and resist necroliberal capital accumulation's ongoing post-mortem and extractive material consequences for queer, trans, and travesti subjects, which include private health-care sector profiteering from HIV/AIDS deaths.

In the article's final section, I turn to the Chilean *estallido social* of 2019, interrogating the state's use of gore practices to subdue protestors by inflicting ocular trauma. As I suggest, this generated a visual economy of state power through gore. The *estallido social* or the massive protests that broke out over student transit fare hikes quickly coalesced into a collective social movement organised by transversal social, economic, political, and cultural demands centred on rewriting Chile's dictatorship-era constitution. Such demands aimed to dismantle Chile's neoliberal political economic practices and re-envision the role of the state. I analyse the state's use of gore practices against protestors to interrogate the contemporary stakes of Hija de Perra's sexually charged gore aesthetics and their legacy amidst heightened state violence.

Chilean neoliberalism and the politics of sex and gender

Hija de Perra's emergence as a performance artist in the early 2000s coincides with the institutionalisation of Chile's GLBT movement following the country's transition to democracy. Within this political and historical context, Hija de Perra's obscene, ludic, raunchy, and grotesque aesthetic as political project defies the homonormative and transnormative aesthetics of respectability politics that accompanied the nominal inclusion of GLBT subjects within Chile's nascent and neoliberal democracy. As Francine Masiello elaborates in her work on gender and neoliberalism in Chile, with the country's transition to democracy and during the post-dictatorship era, "the neoliberal state expand[ed] its image and scope by taking gender as a token of exchange" (2001, 46). The insertion of diversely gendered subjects into the state apparatus without making any structural change served to contain and administer political demands while furthering "the image of an inclusive democracy at work" (Masiello 2001, 45).⁴ To signal to the world and the nation that dictatorship had ended and that human rights were a priority, the Concertación administrations amplified social rights and recognition to previously marginalised groups including gay and lesbian activists primarily through HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and programmes of "Tolerance and Integration" (Rivas San Martín 2011a, 5).

Formal inclusion in state politics through these social programmes was tactical however in that "neoliberalism also allow[ed] the proliferation of difference in

order to prove its legitimacy. A tolerance for difference creates the illusion of a noncoercive state” (Masiello 2001, 63). This illusion of a noncoercive state that absorbed and assimilated sexualised and gendered “difference” was key to Chilean economic success stories. In their narrative construction, such stories aimed to prove that neoliberalism could thrive not only under conditions of authoritarianism and rampant human rights abuses but also in a post-dictatorship and democratic context that hinged on the preservation of human rights as a central tenet of governance. In contrast, Hija de Perra’s parodic representations of explicit sex, violence, and gore remain unassimilable and therefore pose a destabilising threat to such narratives invested in establishing the complementarity of neoliberalism and sex/gender rights that rely on normative performances of sex/gender expression.

The Coalition of Parties for Democracy known as Concertación emerged with the end of Pinochet’s dictatorship and introduced a consensus-based form of politics that defined the postdictatorship era. Paradoxically, given the moral and ideological divides within the coalition between the Christian Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party, maintaining unity led to negotiations that excluded liberal legislative demands such as gay marriage, antidiscrimination protections, and gender identity recognition. As Felipe Rivas San Martín notes, these “progressive” demands operated as the “constitutive outside” to the Concertación’s alliance: by excluding them, the Concertación’s political parties remained united (2011a, 3–4). Hija de Perra’s sexually dissident aesthetics and legacy antagonise the consensus-based politics of postdictatorship Chile. Her work reignites modes of aesthetic experimentation that pointedly interrogate the consequences of democracy’s consolidation when founded on transactional politics that de-radicalise minoritarian political demands.

In the early 2000s, the period that most closely corresponds with Hija de Perra’s firm establishment in Chile’s underground performance art scene, major inroads to GLBT formalised rights and legal recognition occurred across Latin America – from the decriminalisation of sodomy and same-sex relationships, the authorisation of free trans-affirming surgical care in some countries like Cuba, and same-sex marriage – resulting in what Corrales and Pecheny (2010, 10) term “Latin America’s coming out in the 2000s”. At the same time, these legislative advances were also representative of what Héctor Núñez González calls the “*homonormalization* of gay/lesbian discourse” echoing Lisa Duggan (Núñez González 2010, 386; Duggan 2002).⁵ Discussing Chile, Núñez González reflects that those in power have similarly and “continually recas[t] sexual minority movements as agents to be domesticated with minimal access to power” thereby “hinder[ing] the circulation of a more revolutionary discourse against the political-cultural structure of heterosexuals” (2010, 386). That most GLBT rights legislation in Chile passed under conservative former President Sebastián Piñera’s administrations (2010–2014; 2018–2022) further evinces the complementarity of neoliberalism and the state’s co-optation and domestication of sex/gender dissidence as I will discuss shortly. The political, performance, and aesthetic work of Hija de Perra and her contemporaries including Irina la Loca, Anastasia Benavente, Wincy Oyarce, Maracx Bastardx, and artist-activist groups like CUDS intentionally contests and undermines homonormative demands and their accompanying aesthetics of respectability and legibility.⁶

Sexual obscenity and gore aesthetics

Hija de Perra's sexually charged and gory aesthetics constellate affective, embodied, and visual tropes that directly contrast with the trans- and homonormative aesthetics of respectability politics tied to neoliberalism's perceptual regimes. In Hija de Perra's case, her aesthetics are grounded in sexual obscenity, criminality, marginality, risk, and nightlife. They are gore in that they combine tropes of obscenity with representations of dismemberment, femicide, infected bodily fluids, bestiality, rape, and incest. While related to the abject (Kristeva 1982), such aesthetics differ in that they primarily conjugate deviant sex and sexual practices with gore. In this case and unlike the abject, erotically charged gore aesthetics are specifically about queer, marica, troló, trans, and travesti sexual practices and identifications as expressed alongside and often through explicit representations of violence and death. Even when explicit, however, gore aesthetics constellate sexual practices and violence primarily through humour, parody, excess, grotesquerie, and camp.

Gore aesthetics are also not identical to "postporn" or "performance[s] of sex that denaturalise the body and sexuality" by capitalising on the performative functions of porn, resignifying hardcore, displacing the "correspondence" between genitals and sex, and generating representational agency for subjects who have traditionally been excluded from or fetishised by mainstream pornography (Rivas San Martín 2011b, 129). As expressed in interviews, Hija de Perra did not primarily understand her performance practices, musical production, or performance persona as an expression of postporn even while her work shares many core stylistic and formal elements with this genre of live performance (Wayar 2014; Benavente 2023).⁷ Further, in the case of postporn, sexual acts such as penetration are often physically consummated between performers and/or objects whereas Hija de Perra's representations of explicit sex and gore are not always consummated and are more deeply camp, humorous, and parodic. I thus propose gore aesthetics as an adjacent concept and set of performance practices that ludically conjugate sexual obscenity with gore as a political strategy to denounce the sex- and gender-based violence that neo- and necroliberalism foment, anticipating an intensification of necroliberalism.

Hija de Perra's use of performance art as a bodily medium to critique state violence and normative sexual and gendered comportment is quite fitting. She draws on a long tradition of sexually dissident and feminist performance art in Chile and the USA blending influences from Chile's avant-garde scene of the 1970s and 80s with US-based subcultural influences from the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. She was influenced by Chilean artists including Pedro Lemebel and Francisco Casas (Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis), Carlos Leppe, members of CADA, and others of the *escena de avanzada* who combined tropes of sexual dissidence with sacrifice, mourning, pain, bodily fluids, and sexual ambiguity to denounce state terrorism, sexual violence, and sex/gender norms.⁸ Her influences also included a wide array of US artists and filmmakers like John Waters (particularly his 1972 cult film *Pink Flamingos*), drag artist Divine, and other artists such as Cindy Sherman often associated with abject art's feminist current (Becerra Rebolledo 2007). From Las Yeguas' sacrificial

use of blood to Divine's wickedly arched eyebrows and heavy drag makeup, to the dead animal parts and sexual violence depicted in John Waters's b-quality films, as well as Sherman's exploration of the grotesque in self-portraits, such aesthetic tropes informed Hija de Perra's own and she expanded on them, mobilising gore while heightening the sexual obscenity of her performances as a critique of the sex/gender politics of neoliberalism.

Drawing from these influences, Hija de Perra capitalised on and played with sexual obscenity and gore to shock people out of their complacency with the institutions and modes of repression that regulate and produce socially acceptable, normative performances of sex, gender, race, and class. As Lucha Venegas, Cristeva Cabello, and Jorge Díaz suggest, "the desire to shock, [to create] anarchy on the set, [to produce] an interruption that frightened [spectators], [were some] of [her] performance strategies. [She produced] an interruption to the heteronorm that for some could be pure violence, something unimaginable, [and] abhorrent" (2014, 20). In short-circuiting heteronormative modes of perception, her work draws attention to the visual, spatial, social, and political production and regulation of "perversity" and, by extension, "perverse" marica, queer, trans, travesti bodies and subjects. As her performances suggest, those who enact such regulation – whether subjects, institutions, or the state – are just as "inmunda" or "filthy" as these supposedly "perverse" subjects (Barros 2011). Through gore aesthetics, her work holds up a mirror to spectators, interrogating social, political, and cultural hypocrisy by parodically reflecting back to the viewer the unimaginable and the abhorrent that inheres within them: the very violence that has produced the abhorrent as such. In response to this hypocrisy, what Hija de Perra ultimately desired was that her sexually charged, obscene, and gory cultural work would "darte un charchazo para que te des cuenta de qué tan inmundo eres tú" or "slap you so you realise just how filthy you are" (Barros 2011). From the visceral slap or shock of her work, sensorial disturbance results, scrambling valuation or the ordering principles of aesthetic judgement. Such forms of creative interference at times surface alternative modes of reception and perception, which can anticipate other styles of collective political action including for example the Chilean *estallido* or the movements for legal, safe, and free abortion that have coalesced across Latin America igniting major legislative advances.

Reflecting on her aesthetic influences in an interview titled "Siempre he sido una puta asquerosa", or "I've Always Been a Nasty Slut", Hija de Perra describes herself as "una mujer inmunda, asquerosa y ordinaria que nace de la prostitución periférica de la ciudad" [a filthy, disgusting, and cheap woman who emerges from peripheral prostitution in the city] (Hija de Perra 2007). As she shares in multiple interviews, her aesthetics remain grounded in the popular class, racialised aesthetics of sex and sex work; they parodically highlight the social, economic, and spatial precarity that marginalises and criminalises sexual practices and sex workers. Such criminalisation occurs in part through formal charges of obscenity and public indecency levied against trans, travesti, and non-trans sex workers as well as others who circulate within informal economies (Robles 2008, 42). Reflecting on her stylistic inspirations, she shares: "[s]iempre admiré el look marginal style de las maracas y las prostitutas, su osadía, su vida nocturna, su imagen centelleante de

deseo carnal, provocándome ese enamoramiento visual que me llena de gozo hasta el día de hoy” [I always admired the marginal style and look of those sluts and prostitutes, their daring, their nightlife, their scintillating image of carnal desire, arousing in me this visual love that fills me with pleasure to this very day] (interview by *Analís de Moda*, 29 November 2012, cited in Sutherland 2014). Her verbiage which includes expressions like “sluts and prostitutes” as well as “carnal desire” and her use of verbs such as “arouse” and “fill” alongside descriptors like “scintillating” charge her prose with an erotic dimension. These rich sensorial and performative descriptions also evince the visual and representational genre of pornography, playing at the edge of socially acceptable language use and inviting censorship.

Her use of sexual obscenity and gore in music videos and song lyrics further pushed the limits of representation and “the moral limits of the left, feminism, and GLBT parties” to critique the contemporary politics of sex and gender in Chile (Venegas, Cabello, and Díaz 2015, 19). “Violencia intrafamiliar” for example is particularly charged in its lyrical content as it deals with rape and, more specifically, incest, generating resonance with and resistance to contemporary political events (Hija de Perra 2021). In “Violencia intrafamiliar”, Hija de Perra protagonises the oppressor rather than victim, performing representations of sexual violence while satirising it. Through a catchy melody that blends urban street music and electro pop, Hija de Perra’s voice depicts scenes of incest, commanding the song’s subject to “rub vaseline on your hole” because “I’m going to make you shit”. The lyrics employ verbs that conjure force like “rip” and “break” in reference to skin and bodily orifices, and Hija de Perra’s voice orders the subject to “get on all fours”, sneering that “it’s all you’re good for”. The chorus repeats the command to “rub vaseline on your crotch” and “keep it open”, in this way continually lubricating and rending open the body for incest enacted through the lyric representation of violent and repeated rape.

Here Hija de Perra renders familial sexual violence pop, readily available and consumable on Spotify, situating it within the everyday and the family – one of the central institutions to reproduce sex/gender violence. In doing so, I suggest that Hija de Perra levies a sharp critique of “the perversions of the ‘normal family’”, revealing how the everyday sexual violence of incest against femme subjects is normalised within the family (Venegas, Cabello, and Díaz 2015, 17). The sexual obscenity and violence the song lyrics and Hija de Perra performatively depict further denounce contemporary Chilean state politics surrounding sex and gender. That is, I suggest that her mobilisation of sexual violence in “Violencia intrafamiliar” also critiques the complementarity of GLBT legislative advances and the absence of reproductive rights. Indeed, while major advances have occurred concerning GLBT rights, reproductive justice practices like abortion have remained illegal since Pinochet outlawed them during dictatorship. This total ban on abortion includes pregnancy resulting from rape or incest. Hija de Perra’s “Violencia intrafamiliar” denounces such violence through obscenity and emphasises the consequences of these contradictory sex/gender politics that promulgate GLBT rights while criminalising abortion.

A particularly high-profile case that highlighted this contradiction occurred in 2013, when 11-year-old Belén of Puerto Montt was forced to give birth after

being repeatedly raped by her stepfather (Cea 2013a). Responding on behalf of Piñera's government, former Minister of Health Jaime Mañalich told CNN "[t]he [Chilean] government is against all abortions" adding that Piñera was not in favour of decriminalisation (Cea 2013a). Rather than denounce the crime, Piñera instead endorsed Belén's pregnancy, stating that the "girl wants to give birth and she has demonstrated 'self-reflection and maturity'" (Cea 2013b). Piñera's perverse endorsement of child pregnancy resulting from rape and incest alongside his simultaneous support for legislative projects including same-sex marriage highlight the complementarity of sexual violence alongside human rights advances for GLBT subjects under democratic and multicultural neoliberalism. *Hija de Perra's* sexually obscene depictions of rape and incest in "Violencia intrafamiliar" foreground and critique this perverse contradiction.

While *Hija de Perra's* sexual obscenity and gore critiques neoliberalism's sex-/gender politics and is certainly camp-heavy, it also shocks and horrifies, performatively re-enacting the violences that neoliberalism perpetuates like femicide. The B-quality horror film *Empanada de pino* manifests these tropes. The film's plot follows *Hija de Perra* as she makes a pact with an underworld deity to revive her dead husband Caballo, whom she killed prior to the start of the film's plot (Oyarce 2008). The devil agrees, but in turn she must make the largest quantity of empanadas from human flesh she can muster. To comply, she hosts a house party, inviting her marica, queer, travesti, trans, and trolo friends. Brewing a powerful potion of hallucinogenic flowers, she serves it up and assassinates her guests, grinding them into empanada filling.

During the massacre, *Hija de Perra's* brutal treatment of her lesbian lover Perdida is challenging to view. After killing all her guests, *Hija de Perra* chases down Perdida with a metal rod. She finally catches her, beats her to death, and then penetrates her with a handgun, detonating it inside of Perdida in an index of overkill. The footage is difficult to view in its gendered and gendering violence. As Carl Fischer notes, the representation of *Hija de Perra's* overkill of Perdida and the "link between penetration and death" can be read as a reference to the final scene in Gregg Araki's film *The Living End* (1992) where "the two [cis gay male] protagonists, both seropositive, decide that one must shoot the other in the moment of orgasm when one ejaculates inside the other" (2019, 120, footnote 19). *Hija de Perra's* recourse to gore and sexual obscenity surfaces Araki's commentary on HIV/AIDS alongside *Hija de Perra's* femicide of her lesbian lover. In doing so, the scene elicits a relationship between two ongoing epidemics that have flourished under neoliberalism and generate extractive profit: from the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its inception during dictatorship to the heightened epidemic of violence to which queer, trans femme, and trans masculine folks as well as non-trans feminine people are subjected through gendered forms of death including femicide and travesticide.

Given her representations of sexual obscenity and her gory aesthetic, *Hija de Perra* experienced constant media censorship as she describes in a video-recorded interview with *Revista Fill* (*Hija de Perra* and Oyarce, n.d.). Such censorship underscores that *Hija de Perra's* cultural work disturbs; it is not culturally or socially acceptable and requires regulation. Indeed, her use of adjectives such as

“appalled” and “frightened” to describe responses to her work index her audience’s visceral reactions to her performances, highlighting the simultaneous power and threat that her performances and aesthetic hold. However micro their production and reception may be, performances such as Hija de Perra’s enact cultural work that generates enduring citational forms. They elicit modes of action, perception, and reception that one can inhabit and mobilise to denounce neoliberal respectability politics, their accompanying homo and transnormative aesthetics, and the violence they occasion.

In fields such as Art History, aesthetics are often understood as modes of valuation or judgement that determine what can be considered art. Historically and at their most conservative, aesthetics have been weaponised to delegitimise and dismiss cultural production by minoritarian subjects whose work contests the racialised, sexualised, classed and gendered exclusions that produce and regulate perception. By these standards, Hija de Perra’s explicit representations of sex and sexual violence and parodic mobilisations of filth or *inmundicia* render her performances obscene and “in bad taste”, as evidenced by the repeated censorship she experienced throughout her career. Indeed, when used in this sense, aesthetics operate as a normalising system of valuation that determines cultural production by performance artists like Hija de Perra to be “too sexy, too ethnic, too young, too cheap, [or] too loud” to merit studied attention or to qualify as serious cultural production, much less as artwork (Hernandez 2009, 2020, 12). Hija de Perra’s work is thus rendered obscene through a normative system of perceptual valuation and subjected to censorship.

Nonetheless, as performance studies and visual culture theorists from Leticia Alvarado to Jillian Hernandez, Nelly Richard, and Macarena Gómez-Barris have shown, aesthetics remains a useful concept and set of theories from which to examine the subversive potential of minoritarian cultural production (Richard 2018; Chavoya and Frantz 2017; Hernandez 2014; Alvarado 2018; Gómez-Barris 2018). These scholars and their work show how such cultural producers illuminate and contest the normative operations of aesthetics, suggesting other forms of world-making practices and modes of perception that denounce the operations of power that produce visual and embodied exclusions. Drawing on this tradition, I suggest that Hija de Perra’s cultural work denounces and defies the regulatory impulse of aesthetics through what Jillian Hernandez theorises as “sexual-aesthetic excess”. In her exceptional monograph by the same title, Hernandez argues that minoritarian subjects harness sexual aesthetic excess through “ostentatious styling” and “raunch, grotesquerie, [and] camp” to highlight and contest neoliberalism’s sensory and perceptual proscription of Black and Latina style and form as well as the modes of regulation that condition “what becomes legible as Blackness and Latinidad” (2020, 13 and 7). Working from within US Black and Latino Studies, Hernandez proposes that these cultural producers do so in part through representational work that mobilises sexual aesthetic excess to produce “social and cultural disturbanc[e]” (2020, 10). Such disturbance has the power to simultaneously illuminate, contest, and reimagine gender, sexual, class, and racial formations beyond the ways in which neoliberalism has functioned to occlude such differences and how we perceive them.

Here I suggest that Hija de Perra's sexual aesthetic excess converses with Hernandez's deft theorisation of sexual aesthetic excess as it relates to US Black and Latina femme cultural production and contestations of neoliberalism. Like the cultural production and artists Hernandez analyses, Hija de Perra and her mobilisation of obscenity, raunch, gore, grotesquerie, and camp denounce the operations of neoliberalism (in this case in Chile) and the ways in which it occludes sexual, gender, class, and racial differences. This occurs particularly through Hija de Perra's sexually obscene representations of travesti economic and social marginality that, in Chile, correspond with the national excision of ethnic and racial formations of indigeneity and Blackness through genocide. Yet unlike the cases Hernandez analyses, Hija de Perra's sexual aesthetic excess is expressed through *explicit if parodic representations of sexual violence and death*. This occurs precisely through her unique blend of sexual obscenity and gore or what I have called gore aesthetics. I argue that these explicit and sexually obscene representations mark an intensification of necroliberalism as the systematised and heightened production of death for subjects whose sex, gender, racial and class identifications render them targets of extermination. In doing so, I suggest that Hija de Perra's explicit if campy representation of sexual violence and death, as a form of sexual aesthetic excess, produces a parallel visual economy to that described by Hernandez that indexes the parallel production of death in the Global South for non-normatively racialised, classed, sexed, and gendered subjects. In doing so, I argue that Hija de Perra's work highlights neo- and necroliberalism's simultaneity and foregrounds necroliberalism's intensification by manifesting the heightened violence to which minoritarian subjects are exposed under extractive conditions.

58 millones de besos con SIDA

On 25 August 2014, Hija de Perra died from encephalitis due to HIV/AIDS complications in Santiago's Clínica Dávila at the age of thirty-four. In Chile, it is mandated by law that any person in life-threatening danger due to a medical condition be treated in the nearest hospital with emergency care. In this case, if the hospital is out-of-network, the public health system or Fondo Nacional de Salud (FONASA), the state entity which provides state funds for health care, issues a loan to the patient or the patient's family members for the services provided ("Ley de Urgencia," n.d.). That is to say that such care is not provided for free and, unless doctors certify that a life-threatening emergency exists, the patient is responsible for the full cost of medical care provided during out-of-network treatment. When Hija de Perra was interned in Dávila Clinic, the Ley de Urgencia was not applied, which meant that her surviving family members were billed \$58,000,000 Chilean pesos or US\$105,000 for her stabilisation and end-of-life care, an obscene sum for Rosa Peñaloza, Hija de Perra's mother, to repay.

Hija de Perra's marica, queer, trans, and travesti kin, however, would not let this debt go unnoticed. Two years after her death, approximately one hundred of her chosen family and fans staged a "Pagan Parade" on 27 February 2016.⁹ They dubbed their performance intervention *58 millones de besos con SIDA* or *58 Million*

AIDS-Infected Kisses, using the sum of Rosa Peñaloza's inherited debt as metaphor to protest against Clínica Dávila's unrelenting debt-collection practices linked to the state's private health-care system and structural changes enacted in 1981 under Pinochet's dictatorship (Díaz Berrios and Robles 2018).¹⁰ During the dictatorship, health care was restructured through multiple constitutional reforms that privatised and eviscerated the state's existing health-care system. This had dire consequences for queer, trans, and travesti subjects – especially with the onslaught of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Chile, which began in 1984 during Pinochet's dictatorship (Donoso and Robles 2015). Describing the politicisation of HIV/AIDS through its shared spatial and temporal relationship to authoritarianism, Lemebel (1997) writes in *Loco afán. Crónicas de sidario*, “the deathly stench of dictatorship was a preview of AIDS”, resulting in what Lemebel termed the “double disappearance” of loca, marica, queer, trans, and travesti subjects (2000, 14 and 15). Lemebel's framing of such deaths as “double disappearance” highlights the intimate relationship between the HIV/AIDS epidemic's death toll and the death toll from dictatorial violence. This framing further suggests that, in both cases, the state was responsible: practices of state terror and extractive neoliberalism produce queer, trans, and travesti body counts.

Well-known underground performance artists and friends including Irina la Loca, Perdida, Maracx Bastardx, CUDS, and members of what was formerly the band Maraco Intenso arrived for the Pagan Processional. Friends and fans wore t-shirts denouncing public-health corruption with slogans like “Chilean health system infected by profit” (Aguayo Mozó 2016). Others carried protest signs with writing and imagery that condemned health-care extractivism, suggesting “in Chile, AIDS is profitable” or “En Chile se lucra con el SIDA”, underscoring private and public-sector profiteering from HIV/AIDS (Aguayo Mozó 2016).

One of Hija de Perra's fans carried a stark black sign lifted high into the air that foregrounded a white hypodermic needle (Figure 2). In this image, the needle sits angled upwards and drips blood in a steady stream onto the text below, filling the “A” of “LUCRA” or “profit”. The protestor's hands and forearms are covered in costume blood, carrying the gory flow of blood beyond the protest sign's frame to blur the divide between symbolic and material representation. Yet it is not only blood that spills from sign to protest. The sign's iconography and text also vividly condense the double valence of “injection” as both a medical and *economic* procedure. In economic theory, an injection signals the addition of liquidity into the economy, increasing the flow of income and spurring profit. Here this hypodermic syringe “injects” travesti HIV-“infected” blood into the economy as liquidity, where poz queer, trans, and travesti bloodshed *as* liquid asset spurs profit. In doing so, this image and protestor's performative gesture explicitly underscore neoliberalism's corporeal dimensions while laying bare the extractive violence against seropositive queer, trans, and travesti subjects through which necroliberal capital accumulation multiplies.

To recall Valencia's (2018, 19) definition: “[G]ore capitalism' refers to the undisguised and unjustified bloodshed that is the price the Third World pays for adhering to the increasingly demanding logic of capitalism”. The logic of necroliberal capital accumulation – which necessarily includes the privatisation of health care and the loan as primary forms of indebtedness – generates and feeds off



Figure 2. Protestor with sign “En Chile se lucra con el SIDA”. Daniel Aguayo Mozó, *Pagan Processional*, 2016, digital photograph. Image copyright and courtesy of photographer Daniel Aguayo Mozó and MOR.BO, cultural convergence.

seropositive bloodshed spurring economic growth and profit from queer, trans, and travesti death.

During the parade, Hija de Perra’s fans displayed her unforgettable sartorial punk, trash travesti style. Decked in high heels, leather bondage gear, ludic wigs, assorted masks, animal print, pink tutus, tight corsets, and fake fur with a mix of fleshy dildos, they marched with sass along major Santiago thoroughfares (Figure 3). They stopped in front of the National Art Museum and, to the beat of Hija de Perra’s hit track “Nalgas con olor a caca”, an assortment of her friends and fans parodically sucked on and broke open condoms filled with white and red liquid – “HIV-positive” “semen” and “blood” – splattering their faces, mouths, and torsos with fluids. This grotesque scene that mobilises gore aesthetics underscores the mix of pleasure and danger, revelry and mourning, and excess alongside risk of death under extractive necroliberal conditions that target seropositivity and queer, trans, and travesti sexual practices.

Moving through el Parque Forestal, they wound their way to Clínica Dávila, their central target. Shouting into megaphones, the protestors startled and scandalised people leaving and entering the clinic, yelling “We bring you AIDS-infected debt!”, “AIDS is not a business!”, “We denounce the private health system!”. They spewed costume blood from water bottles across the pavement in front of the clinic’s entranceway, smearing “SIDA” or “AIDS” in red across an exterior wall, denouncing the clinic’s privatised operations and debt-collection practices (Figure 4). They also



Figure 3. Performance artists Anastasia Benavente, Irina la Loca, and Camilx Santa Cruz break open condoms covering their faces and torsos with “blood” and “semen”. Daniel Aguayo Mozó, *Pagan Processional*, 2016, digital photograph. Image copyright and courtesy of photographer Daniel Aguayo Mozó and MOR.BO, cultural convergence.



Figure 4. “SIDA” stained on Dávila Clinic’s exterior wall as a protestor condemns the clinic’s practices. Susana Díaz Berrios and Efraín Robles, film still, *58 millones de besos con SIDA*. Image copyright and courtesy of directors Susana Díaz Berrios and Efraín Robles.

dragged a “bloody” cluster of plastic baby dolls in front of the clinic, suggesting abortion as a metaphor for the termination of economic, social, and cultural systems that result in death for seropositive trans, queer, and travesti subjects. In doing so, they linked sexually dissident politics with reproductive justice (Figure 5).

The visceral nature of this protest, even with costume blood, disrupted operations. In additional footage of the event, security guards usher confused members



Figure 5. Splatters of blood and a cluster of plastic aborted fetuses on the ground in front of Dávila Clinic. Susana Díaz Berrios and Efraín Robles, film still, *58 millones de besos con SIDA*. Image copyright and courtesy of directors Susana Díaz Berrios and Efraín Robles.



Figure 6. Close-up shot of stickers striated with costume blood left on the Dávila Clinic's walls. Daniel Aguayo Mozó, *Pagan Processional*, 2016, digital photograph. Image copyright and courtesy of photographer Daniel Aguayo Mozó and MOR.BO, cultural convergence.

of the public around red splatters and toward the hospital entrance, attempting to navigate the interruption to capital's flow. Through their protest and performance tactics, the Pagan Processional and its strategies that denounced Clínica Dávila's debt-collection practices mirror the irreverent, ludic, and festive tone of the post-dictatorship era *funas* or the unruly performative actions that condemned and publicly shamed accomplices of authoritarianism. Using music, costumes, and dancing, human rights groups intervened in public spaces, enacting alternative forms of justice in the absence of official state recognition. This connection between the *funas*' and the Pagan Processional's tactics is particularly fitting as the Pagan Processional denounced a longer history of the evisceration of the public health-care system which began during Pinochet's dictatorship. Yet in this case the Pagan Processional queerly inflected the *funas*' tactics with Hija de Perra's obscene music, travesti drag, red "HIV+" costume blood and public denunciations from activists and

friends, some of whom are also poz. This enacted a form of queer, trans, and travesti justice for Hija de Perra that publicly shamed the clinic and disrupted its extractive practices (Figure 6).

While costume blood may quickly fade, Hija de Perra's queer kin also left hundreds of stickers with lush red pouty femme lips that read "58 millones de besos con SIDA" stuck to the clinic's exterior walls. The rhythmic wordplay between "besos" and "pesos" signalled how economic risk as well as debt are intertwined with dissident sexual and gender practices. At the same time, the number underscored the outrageous sum that Rosa Peñaloza still (perversely) owed after inheriting medical expenses, exemplifying how heterosexual reproduction cleaves inheritance and debt. The ritual and serial nature of the action and stickers further tabulated another form of debt: the death toll the state produces from extractive practices and targeted violence against seropositive queer, trans, and travesti subjects.

Due, in part, to pressure applied by Hija de Perra's queer kin through their Pagan Processional, in May 2016 the Chilean Minister of Health Carmen Castillo met with Peñaloza to discuss her child's death. Peñaloza denounced medical negligence and the "difficult and corrupt process of economic mediation sustained by hospital lawyers and representatives of patients and users affected [by this negligence and corruption]" (Robles 2016). Two years later, after additional pressure, Peñaloza's debt was rescinded, and this clearly represents a foundational victory for Peñaloza. Yet the individual nature of the resolution underscores neoliberalism's predictable response to conflict resolution: individuation and monetary retribution. Nonetheless, I read this protest by Hija de Perra's queer kin (rather than the state's predictable response) and their mobilisation of gore aesthetics as foreshadowing the demands of recent mass street protests and social movements such as the *estallido* that, in the past four years, have reinvigorated sex/gender politics, shifting their orientation. This has resulted in the move to rewrite Chile's dictatorship-era constitution with particular attention to health care, and it remains ongoing after a failed national popular vote on 5 September 2022.

Chile's *estallido* and gore practices

In this contemporary moment, gore aesthetics are not only mobilised by sexually dissident artists, they are also generated by the state itself. The state's gore aesthetics index the gore practices it employs albeit with the patina of democracy. We can see this from the *estallido*, the massive protests that erupted over a student transit fare hike in October 2019. During the militarised police response, *carabineros* (members of the national police force) purposely targeted protestors' eyes with rubber bullets, permanently blinding them (Olivares and Rojas 2020; "Chile: Police Reforms Needed in the Wake of Protests" 2019). Through such gore tactics, hundreds of Chilean protestors were intentionally maimed in response to their expanded demands for the redistribution of wealth, the nationalisation of social services including health care, and the redrafting of Chile's dictatorship-era constitution. Such demands threatened the bedrock of neoliberalism, grounded in privatisation and individuation.



Figure 7. Portrait of 24-year-old Camilo Gálvez, who lost his right eye after being shot directly in the face by members of the *carabineros*. In the series “Balas contra piedras. ¿Qué tanto vimos para que nos dispararan a los ojos?”. Image copyright and courtesy of photographer Nicole Kramm Caifal.

Reflecting on what she calls “the right to maim”, Puar (2017, xviii) contends that maiming is a biopolitical tactic intimately tied to the sovereign expression of power where “debilitation and the production of disability are in fact biopolitical ends unto themselves, with moving neither toward life nor toward death as the aim”. In the case of Chile, I suggest we read “the right to maim” as a gore tactic bent on debilitating the Chilean population to create docile bodies and subjects compliant with the maintenance of neoliberal reforms enacted during Pinochet’s dictatorship – such as privatised education, privatised pensions (AFP), and privatised health care (ISAPRES) – all upheld through continuous force. Together the ISAPRES, AFP, and police shootings are forms of calculated debilitation and paradoxical optimisation of the population. This, too, is a form of state terror. The government’s gore tactics bent on debilitating and maiming the Chilean population exercised and made power visible on the body, as this image by photographer Nicole Kramm Caifal suggests (Figure 7).¹¹ In doing so, the state generated its own gore aesthetic visible to the population as a regulatory, disciplinary reminder of the visceral price of civil disobedience and its remainder: a new class of maimed subjectivity.

This representational logic of maiming as a gore aesthetic that renders power visible on the body is particularly evident in the case of Senator Fabiola Campillai, who was both elected to the senate and blinded in both eyes during the *estallido*.¹² Her appearance in the senate as an elected representative and as someone whose body was intentionally maimed by police forces is a daily reminder to the conservative Right in the Chilean senate of the *estallido* and the state’s calculated deployment of force to debilitate leftist resistance through intentional maiming. I suggest that Campillai’s presence in the seat of power and active participation in the senate represents a mode of continuous leftist resistance to a necroliberal form of power that intended to alter the Left’s perceptual, diagnostic ability and capacity to respond by wreaking lasting sensory damage.

From these histories of neoliberalism and shifts in Chile's culture of capitalism to necroliberal modes of power, Hija de Perra's sexually obscene and gory aesthetic emerge to illuminate and contest the hyperviolent gore practices of value extraction that gore capitalism exercises on trans, femme, and travesti bodies and subjects. Yet in a recent interview with photographer and CIMA Gallery Creative Advisor Daniel Aguayo Mozó, whose images of the Pagan Processional appear throughout this article, he shared his reflections on and doubts about the transgressive nature of Hija de Perra's performance practices in this contemporary moment.¹³ Reflecting on the *estallido*, Aguayo Mozó commented, “[r]ight now, reality is gore” (Aguayo Mozó 2021).

In other words, with the heightened militarisation of the Chilean state since the *estallido* and the visual economy generated by the carabineros' maiming tactics as an expression of necroliberal power, it may be worth reflecting on the explicit and transgressive nature of Hija de Perra's performance practices grounded in gore to ask whether sexual obscenity and gore remain transgressive or even viable as queer, trans, and travesti performance practices. Indeed, this question as well as Aguayo Mozó's concerns directly echo an excellent examination of postporn artists in Mexico by Jennifer Tyburczy (2022). There Tyburczy asks “[c]an, and if so at what point does, a dissident art form lose its ability to transgress in the context of its changing geopolitical milieu?” (2022, 617). She explores how postporn has, for some Mexico City-based performance artists, lost its transgressive value and is no longer viable as an aesthetic project given its resonance with the mediatic reproduction and hypersaturation of violent imagery in contemporary Mexico. Extending this claim, we might ask if gore has, more broadly, become the *ordering principle* of necroliberalism's contemporary perceptual and sensory regime, begging the question of whether gore represents a *critique* or instead a *continuation* of what Candice Amich (2020, 4) calls neoliberalism's “sensorium” as neoliberalism's “perceptual regime that disciplines time and space” and “register[s] in our bodies”. This perceptual regime is not static but in constant flux like ne(cr)oliberalism itself, generating new orderings of the senses, modes of flexibilisation, and markets. If in the early and mid-2000s, Hija de Perra's work aggressively ruptured the reigning “neoliberal sensorium”, which underwrites the liberal politics of symbolic recognition and inclusion on which the material structures of state-sanctioned economic life depend, we might ask: what is the function of sexual obscenity and gore in a *post-estallido* Chile?¹⁴

While Hija de Perra's sexually obscene and gory aesthetic practices may now serve as an index of contemporary necroliberalism's sensorium where, in this case, the partition between violence's representation and its lived and sensed experience has partially collapsed, Hija de Perra's legacy and iconicity endure and represent, I think, an important contestation of necroliberal power. Indeed, Hija de Perra's broad oeuvre, performance practices, and death draw our attention to the entanglement of the material and the symbolic; of poverty, marginality, and queer, trans, and travesti life; of dispossession, devaluation, and rage. These are the transversal connections – between political economy, reproductive justice, sexual health, Indigenous and territorial sovereignty, racial justice, and queer, femme, trans, and travesti politics – that are spawning massive demonstrations and fuelling contemporary social and political movements across the Américas (Berkins 2006; Figari 2014; Gago 2020). These mass movements focus on and generate what the late travesti activist Lohana Berkins

and contemporary feminist activist Verónica Gago name as “transversal alliances” that work against the individuation and liberal subjectivity (and identifications) that neoliberalism engenders. Here I suggest that sexual obscenity and gore as political tactics highlight how transversal struggle might also bring together the racialised, the stateless, the perverted, the polymorphous, and the non-reproductive. These “perverse subjects” of transversal struggle whose alliance Hija de Perra and her gore aesthetics foreshadowed further disrupt the aesthetics of respectability espoused by identitarian social movements whose politics are oriented toward state inclusion and recognition as their primary aim. As the *estallido* and its non-identitarian coalitions further underscore, these are also the non-identitarian targets of necroliberalism or gore capitalism united not by a particular identity claim but rather by a shared yet uneven experience of marginality and dispossession in relation to power (Cohen 1997). These, too, are the transversal alliances, spawned in part by precarity, on which our collective futures may depend.

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Disclosure statement

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Notes

1. Exceptions include Eljaiek-Rodríguez (2018) and Fischer (2019). Chilean popular press and blog publications on Hija de Perra and her work include articles by members of the Colectivo Utópica de Disidencia Sexual or CUDS and by performance persona, activist, and journalist Víctor Hugo Robles “El Che de los Gays”, among others.
2. While Valencia develops her argument through sharp analyses of narcopower’s operations in a formally democratic Mexican state, my reading of Hija de Perra’s artistic production and aesthetic legacy reconceptualises and geographically shifts Valencia’s theorisation of necroliberalism to other state formations and regions in Latin America such as the Southern Cone. In turning to Chile, we see how neoliberalism was necroliberal from its inception – dependent upon practices of bodily mutilation, disappearance, display, torture, sacrifice, and extermination for its implementation during Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973–1990). Neoliberalism and necroliberalism are co-constitutive and simultaneous forms of governmentality, as Valencia suggests. At times, one form may be more prevalent or visible, coming into relief through contemporary political events or state politics, yet the other remains operational if latent.

3. I purposely use the derogatory term “infected” rather than *poz* – an activist and community-based signifier commonly used by folks living with HIV. As I suggest, the performance’s protest of debt through the trope of “infection” frames debt *as* infection. This highlights the relationship between the contraction of HIV, medical debt, and the expansion of privatised health care in Chile as intertwined with practices of neoliberal capital accumulation. Such practices are also forms of capture and control exercised by the state and private sector in the service of population management. As Lina Meruane suggests, reflecting on the emergence and circulation of HIV, the “lethal journey of the virus” aligns with “changes in the culture of capitalism” in Latin America and simultaneously illuminates how neoliberal practices “fail to fulfill the promised conditions of democratic or economic equality” (2014, 3). The extractive circumstances surrounding Hija de Perra’s death underscore this failure.
4. For additional work on gender, sexuality, and neoliberalism in Chile, see Blanco (2015).
5. See also Pierce (2020) as well as Blanco, Pecheny, and Pierce (2018).
6. On CUDS, see Gómez and Gutiérrez (2021).
7. For more on postporn, see the work of performance artists and collectives such as Diana Torres, Post-Op, and GENERATECH.
8. Pieces by Las Yeguas such as *Lo que el sida se llevó* (1989), *Las dos Fridas* (1989), and *La Conquista de América* (1989) as well as installation work by Leppe such as *Perchero* (1975) exemplify the viscerality of these artists’ sexually dissident denunciations of state violence. On these relationships in Las Yeguas’s work, see Carvajal (2023).
9. My reading of this action is based on performance documentation *58 millones de besos con SIDA* directed by Susana Díaz Berrios and Efraín Robles as well as my interviews with photographer and CIMA Gallery Creative Advisor Daniel Aguayo Mozó, whose images appear throughout this article. Some form of commemoration has occurred every year since Hija de Perra’s death honouring her work and her passing. This often includes performance art, films, dance parties, and music. I specifically focus on this 2016 iteration because the performance remobilised Hija de Perra’s gore aesthetics to illuminate the Dávila Clinic’s economic extractivism and profiteering from seropositive queer, trans, and travesti subjects’ deaths.
10. In addition to directing *58 millones de besos con SIDA*, documentary filmmaker Susana Díaz Berrios is the director of feature-length documentary films *Supersordo: Historia y geografía de un ruido* (2009), *Hardcore: La revolución inconclusa* (2011) (which received the SURDOCS9° prize) and *Ellas no* (which received honourable mention in the 11° Festival IN-EDIT in 2014). Currently she directs the series “Sonidos en Mí, mujeres en la música” (ongoing): <https://cinechile.cl/persona/susana-diaz/>. Filmmaker Efraín Robles has directed numerous films, including *Fragmentum cinema: Sueños* (2019), *Evelyn Cornejo. A la siga del sol* (2014), and *El nuevo amanecer* (2012): <https://cinechile.cl/persona/efrain-robles/>.
11. Nicole Kramm Caifal is a documentary photographer, filmmaker, and journalist who works at the intersection of human rights, migration, ecology, and social and political conflicts. She extensively documented the *estallido* and on 31 December 2019 she was shot by Chilean police officers and lost sight in one eye. She is currently producing and directing a documentary film based on these experiences titled *Ojos contra el olvido* and the photographic series *VTO* or *Víctimas del trauma ocular*: <https://www.nicolekramm.com/vto>.
12. I thank my colleague Carl Fischer for drawing this to my attention.
13. In collaboration with Trinidad Lopetegui, Harold Illanes, and Sebastián Rojas, Aguayo Mozó also produced the short film *Centinela* documenting the *estallido* from Galería CIMA’s camera located in a privileged space above Plaza de la Dignidad, Santiago’s central plaza and the locus of the massive protests. The gallery recorded over 15,000 hours of unedited,

continuous footage, documenting the estallido through live video feed. *Centinela* is a 4 minute 40 second compilation of footage captured between 24 October and 2 November 2019, challenging hegemonic media narratives that portrayed the protestors as unruly, and it documents the force unleashed against them. Gallery CIMA's live feed remains accessible here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4GOcOKkEefz5NamN4WyMFg>.

14. Here I use “post-” not to foreclose a necessarily contingent and unfinished political process of transformation but rather to signal the seismic rupture that the estallido represents in contemporary Chilean politics. It is possible to name a “before” and “after” to 18 October 2019, even while signalling continuity.

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