Abstract

In May 2011, state-funded secondary schools and Public Universities in Chile started a national movement demanding the end of for-profit private educational institutions and stronger legislation regarding the supervisor role of the state by stopping the public funding to these private institutions and improving the access of the poorest sector to higher education. Between May and September of 2011, the students devised several site-specific street performances, which served as a political tool for peaceful protest and resistance against the unwillingness of the government and parliament to make the changes, and against the constant criminalisation of the movement by the official media. This paper will analyse two street performances organised by the students. The first one is Thriller por la Educación (Thriller for the education), where 2000 students dressed like zombies danced Michael Jackson choreography at Constitución Square in Santiago, in front of the palace of Government. The second performance is 1800 Horas por la Educación (1800 Hours for education), a durational performance where students ran for 1800 hours, during two months, around the palace of government. I aim to describe these performances in terms of their models of organisation, promotion, and influence in the public sphere. Moreover, I will analyse the dialogue that these artistic actions established with outdoor (squares and main avenues) and constructed governmental institutions involved in the student conflict.
Choreographing Meanings: Performance and The Student Movement in Chile

By Camila Gonzalez Ortiz

How do you make a class operate like a work of art?
- Felix Guattari (1992, 80)

In May 2011, state-funded secondary schools and universities in Chile started a national student movement, demanding the end of for-profit private universities and secondary schools. Specifically, the movement demanded Parliament to legislate for a better supervisory role of the state; and asked to stop state subsidies to for-profit private schools and universities. During four months, the students stopped attending classes and occupied educational facilities.

Between May and September 2011, the movement devised several site-specific and street performances which served as political devices for non-violent protest against the constant unwillingness of President Sebastian Piñera’s government, and the most conservative right wing of the Chilean parliament, to legislate for change and an improvement of the current education system. These street performances echo Diana Taylor’s description of the repertoire when she states that:

The repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproductions of knowledge by ‘being there’, being part of the transmission. As opposed to the supposedly stable object in the archive, the actions that are in the repertoire do not remain the same. The repertoire both keeps and transforms choreographies of meaning. (Taylor 20)
Taking, both symbolically and literally, the idea of the repertoire as a transformer of choreographies of meaning, I will highlight the performances Thriller por la Educación Chilena and 1800 Horas por la Educación as two instances of street-performance-as-protest during the uprising of Chilean students in 2011. My analysis will be divided into a description of how each performance was devised; its political and performative relationship with the public sites where it took place and its use of other media platforms, such as the official press and internet. It is important to mention that during this period the movement developed several street performances, but I will focus only on these two, as I believe they were the most important and complex in terms of organisation, scale, and impact in the public sphere and they represent the latest example of Chilean students’ long tradition of appropriation of public spaces for political aims.

But first it is important to briefly describe Chile’s current education model and why it is in crisis. In 1981, a program of educational decentralization was carried out during the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet, where primary and secondary public education administration went from being managed by the state, to local city halls throughout the country. At the same time, a new policy was agreed upon which allows private primary and secondary schools to receive state subsidies. This meant that the fee payment will be shared between the parents and the state. The public funding to privately run schools was in line with a wider national policy of privatisation, which also included natural resources, such as copper, and the healthcare and pension system. These co-funded institutions are profit-driven and base their existence on the idea that the co-payment system gives parents the freedom and right to financially contribute to their children’s education. This right to contribute is strongly supported by the right-wing coalition Alianza por
Chile\textsuperscript{1} and school owners, against the student movement and some sectors from the left, such as socialist MPs and politicians, who want to eliminate profit-making educational institutions by legally enforcing them to switch to a non-profit status.

But why is this system being questioned? There are several factors. First, by the end of Pinochet’s dictatorship in 1990, considerable differences started to arise between these three types of schools regarding teachers’ working conditions, facilities, and budget (Drago 161). These differences led to a social stratification of the students based on their families’ incomes. Currently in Chile, “the rich elite (7%) go to exclusive and expensive private schools; the middle class (52%) attend private subsidized schools, which combined family co-payment with a public subsidy; and the lower group (41%) participate in municipal public school, free of charge” (Weinstein, 76).\textsuperscript{2}

Secondly, the system draws criticism because this system itself is an illusion. As constitutional lawyer Fernando Atria points out in his La Mala Educación: Ideas que inspiran al movimiento estudiantil (2012):

\begin{quote}
If there is an increase in the public education subsidy, and at the same time, there was a corresponding decrease in the co-funded system, then what damage would it do to the parents who are currently co-funding and what would they stop paying for? The answer is clear: They will get damaged if we understand that the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1} The Alianza por Chile (Alliance for Chile) was created after the arrival of democracy in 1990. They represent the most conservative side of the parliament and many of its members publicly supported the Coup d’Etat in 1973 and later worked as Pinochet’s ministers and advisers during the Dictatorship.

\textsuperscript{2} This segregated distribution has also had an impact on standardised test results. According to the results of the Simce (System for measuring the quality of education), students from fee-paying private schools achieve higher results than the ones from public or state-subsidized private schools (www.simce.cl).
aim of their co-payment is not to improve the education of their children, but to secure to the ones that can pay that their sons will not be educated with (the son of) someone that cannot pay. Therefore, the families do not choose an educational system, but an exclusion criterion. (Atria 40)

Regarding higher education, in 1981 the Dictatorship led a reform that allowed the free foundation of private universities. Although the law refused the creation of for-profit institutions, it has been proven that many of these universities made profits, transforming the education system into a market-driven product. At the same time, the academic performances of these private universities are considerably lower than the top institutions such as the University of Chile (public) and Universidad Católica de Chile.

Student unions in Chile, specifically in public secondary schools and universities, have always played an important role within the Chilean political landscape, and for decades they have been demanding a reform that could change the commercial nature of the education system. But as

---

3 My Translation.
4 The Universidad Federico Santa María, Universidad Católica and Universidad de Chile (all non-profit and founded before the 1981 bill) are the only Chilean universities currently listed in the THE’s World Universities Ranking and ARWU.
5 The uprising of secondary students in 2006 during the first term of President Michelle Bachelet, also known as La revolución pingüina (The Penguin Revolution, so called as a reference to the penguin-like uniform worn by public secondary school students in Chile, which is a white shirt with a navy blue jumper for the girls and a white shirt and grey trousers for the boys) was the first socio-political event that showed the first sign of the recovery of political participation by Chile’s citizens after a rather passive period of students’ movements during the 90s. There were, indeed, street demonstrations during the first decade of recovered democracy, but they did not achieve the same level of support. With the Revolución Pingüina, a new generation started to reconfigure the national debate around the subject of education, through the emergence of alternative social actors who not only want a change in the education model, but also want to play a more active political role in the decision-making process of such social reforms.
Jacques Ranciere points out, “it’s not a misunderstanding of the existing affairs that nurtures the submission of the oppressed, but a lack of confidence in their capacity to transform it” (Ranciere 83). It was not until 2011 that a set of key factors converged, fueling the movement with this capacity to transform the education model.

First, the arrival of the Alianza por Chile to the government in 2010 meant that for the first time since the return of democracy in 1990, the same group that was in power were also the group that strongly stood-up for the existence of private education. Meanwhile the left-wing has always believed that there were more urgent battles to fight for, such as the overthrow of the military regime and later dealing with human rights violation cases: the new right-wing government served as the perfect target to reproach. As Giorgo Jackson, one of the student movement’s main leaders in 2011 and currently MP for Santiago, points out:

In 2011, the Alianza por Chile did not have anywhere to hide or anyone to blame for not carrying out the social demands. They were the main detractor against public education and the main supporters of profit-making in education. Therefore, they [the Alianza] could not elaborate an argument that could diminish the increasing strength of the movement. (Quoted in Atria 17)⁶

Moreover, 2011 was undoubtedly the most complicated and intense period for Piñera’s government, as it was the year in which a series of social movements emerged in the south, north, and centre of Chile. The common factor among these movements was the use of the street as the main political arena where they voiced their social demands and expressed their discontent with the political class. During that year, in

---

⁶ My Translation.
Santiago alone, there were 240 street demonstrations compared to 134 in 2010, which gives an average of 20 demonstrations per month.\(^7\)

The second common factor is related to the communication skills acquired by these young generations of students. The students soon understood that to gain people’s support they needed to communicate in a clear and concise manner the flaws of the education model which were the movement’s main grievances. Influenced by the strategies used in advertising, social media, and with a solid theoretical frame,\(^8\) the movement strategically consolidated their demands into three main points. First, they demanded an improvement in the *mechanism of access* to university, by increasing the intake of students coming from the poorest sector. Secondly, they demanded an increase of the *state subsidy* for public universities. The third and final demand asked for *stronger regulations* against private higher education institutions that continually break the law by making profits. In Chile, most private universities consciously mislead students by offering them expensive academic programs with mediocre entry requirements for subjects with a low rate of employability.\(^9\) The political sector that defends this system argues that the increase of private co-founded secondary school and private universities during the 80s and 90s facilitated the access of poorer sectors to education. But in fact, this system works as a market-driven cycle of segregation, where people with lower incomes received a mediocre

---

\(^7\) From these 240 demonstrations, 75 corresponded to the Student Movement and 165 to other social demands (C. Perez).

\(^8\) This theoretical frame was built mainly from the work of constitutional lawyer Fernando Atria and his research on public sphere Chilean constitution and educational crisis (See Atria 2007, 2009, 2010), and Chilean historian Gabriel Salazar who has published substantial work criticizing Chilean neoliberal economic models and social movements (see Salazar 2003, 2011, 2012).

\(^9\) A symbolic example of this situation was the scandal of the Universidad del Mar. Founded in 1990, the Universidad del Mar was an unaccredited private university who was sued for bribery in receiving its accreditation (A. Perez, 2013).
education forcing them to choose mediocre degrees in mediocre institutions while paying overinflated fees.

This three-demand speech penetrated like an Artaudian plague within Chilean society, and by late August the movement and its demands “enjoyed favourable public opinion, with more than 70% of those surveyed indicating their support.”¹⁰

The first demonstrations in May 2011 attracted 15,000 participants. This was followed by an occupation of schools by the students. Between the 6th and 25th of June, the number of occupied secondary schools and universities went from 3 to 600 all over the country. During these occupations, the students stopped attending classes, slept at the schools and started to rethink the social and political use of their educational spaces. The classrooms were used to celebrate assemblies, to teach other students about the education system and its flaws, and how to organise street demonstrations. But there was also an occupation of time. In this sense, Antonio Negri’s ideas about the concept of *Kairos* (2003) used to describe the nature of time during occupy London and Wall Street are illuminating. Negri points out that “Kairos is the instant, that is to say, the quality of time of the instant, the moment of rupture and opening of temporality. It is the present, but a singular open present” (Nyong’o 142). During the occupation of the schools, the teaching time becomes a revolutionary and urgent one with new qualities and properties.

Another factor that contributed to the radicalisation of the movement was the increase and frequency of public demonstrations. In June 2011 there were four national demonstrations, almost one per week, with an average of 100,000 in attendance just in Santiago. During these public encounters, however, there were several clashes between the police and rioters, resulting in excessive use of force by the police, which

¹⁰ UDP-Feedback, 2011, August-September Youth Participation Survey.
damaged public and private spaces (streets, shops, buses, etc.). The government used these episodes of violence on its behalf to consciously criminalise the movement, hoping it would lose support from the rest of the country. As a way to counterattack the criminalisation campaign lead by the government and also to increase and maintain the sympathy of the population, different groups within the movement began to think of alternative forms of protest.

In general terms, both Thriller Por la Educación and 1800 Horas por la Educación contributed in “the development of a new people’s political language” in two ways ( "Political Art Transforms Audience into Citizen"). First, the use of artistic models of protest facilitated the formation of a counter-public coming from social groups within peripheral sectors of the public sphere, in this case not only public school students, but also their parents and teachers. This counter-public, as Michael Warner points out:

Enables a horizon of opinion and exchange; its exchanges remain distinct from authority and can have a critical relation to power; its extent is in principle indefinite, because it is not based on a precise demography but mediated by print, theatre, diffuse network of talk, commerce and the like. (Warner 57)

Secondly, the strategic use of non-rational, performative elements in their public events, such as dance, reclaimed pre-Colombian narratives, whose devices and enactments did not come from a positivist paradigm, but ritualistic and anti-hegemonic.
Thriller por la Educación

*Thriller por la Educación* (Thriller for the education) was a flash mob that took place on 24th June 2011, during the time when the students’ demands reached their highest level of public approval. The performance consisted of a parody of *Thriller*’s famous choreography devised by Michael Jackson and Michael Peters. The choreography was performed by approximately 2000 students dressed as zombies in front of the Palace of government: La Moneda in Santiago. The main goal was simple and literal: to embody the market-driven nature of the Chilean education system. During 2011, there were other examples of street-performances-as-protest where zombies were used as a metaphor against the neoliberal economic model, such as the Halloween zombie march during Occupy London and Occupy Wall Street. From a semiotic perspective, Tavia Nyong’o states that “the zombie performs the body as an accumulation of genre, of history, of gesture, and of race. The zombie dance is a survival skill for living with dead time” (Nyong’o 145). Though I agree with Nyong’o’s interpretation, I would also add that in the case of Chile, the zombies also portrayed an historical accumulation of class struggle and wealth inequality, which has served as both reason and consequence of segregation within the Chilean educational system.
Another key element of this performance was its production model. It all began with Felipe Villaseca, a Public Policy student at University of Chile, which at that time was being occupied by the students’ union for more than a month.11 He then created an event on Facebook, calling to all the students who would like to participate in the action. The more people involved the better, and although you could identify the main leaders of the event, they played more of a stage manager role rather than being considered as the main artists or authors behind the performance. This type of process-making, where there are not main protagonists, is typically

11 Villaseca stated: “I was at my house watching some Michael Jackson videos on YouTube and then I posted on Facebook ‘Thriller for Chilean Education. Who is with me?’ After two minute I had loads of comments supporting the initiative” (www.lanacion.cl/3-mil-estudiantes-protestaron-bailando-thriller-frente-a-la-moneda/2011-06-24).
used in the production of flash mobs, but it can also be associated with the concept of *Delegated Authorship* proposed by Cuban performance artist Tania Bruguera (2009), who points out that in this type of performance:

What is delegated, to create authorship, is the privilege acquired by artists, a privilege society gives them in its class distribution and by the role historically given to Arts and artist, a space in which freedom, tolerance and other realities is more easily negotiable (“Untitled (Bogota 2009)”)

This artistic delegated authorship echoes the alternative political decision-making protocol used across the movement. The majority of the decisions made regarding the movement’s future actions were decided by popular referendums among the students during local assemblies held by the *cell* of that school or faculty. The decision is later communicated at regional assemblies and then at the movement’s national meetings in Santiago. Moreover, due to its complexity, Michael Jackson’s choreography was rehearsed separately in small groups, which were also called *cells* by the students. Using tutorial videos uploaded in YouTube, one person learned the structure and later would teach it to the rest. I will explain this relationship between learning and the use of media later in the essay, but for now I want to highlight how the production and rehearsal process was aligned with the decision-making models used by the student movement across the nation.

The sassy and invasive action of occupying the schools’ facilities by the students is also seen in *Thriller por la Educación* in two dimensions: spatial (the site) and symbolic (the pop references).

The performance took place at Plaza La Ciudadanía (Citizenship Square), which is in front of La Moneda with Alameda Avenue in between
both sites. This square was big enough to hold 2000 students dancing, and its central and strategic location allowed the *cells* to approach the site from different corners and streets in a crescendo similar to a zombie invasion or a plague. Again, we find Artaudian qualities in the way the students’ *cells* took spatial and political control of the site by “moving beyond the scene of occupation and into pedestrian crush of the corporate city” (Nyong’o 142). While the dance is taking place, it infects the spectators in two ways; the choreography itself is contagious, after all *Thriller* is one of the most popular and successful music videos in history. But at the same time, each spectator, and hence society as a whole, is infected with each student’s financial result from the public and private loan system.

The use of Plaza La Ciudadanía as stage for the performance also produced a swap in the prejudged roles of the student/rioters/spectators and the government/leaders/actors. Until then, La Moneda was the *stage* from which President Piñera and his ministers performed a very well-scripted political spectacle, one that was seen with diminishing credibility by the nation. With the performance of *Thriller por la Educación*, this stage-audience display changed. Plaza de la Ciudadanía became the legitimate public stage where the students delivered their own political script and the government had no choice but to remain as a passive spectator and, at the same time, direct target of the performance.

But in *Thriller por la Educación* there is also an appropriation of pop references. During the agitated months of June, July, and August 2011 there were many street performances that made use of icons from pop culture to promote more ludic and peaceful models of protest. Images, episodes, and characters from Japanese TV cartoons such as *Dragon Ball Z* and *Los Super Campiones*, ¹² which were watched by the students when

---

¹² Also known as *Flash Kicker*.
they were kids in the late 90s (usually in the afternoon after school), were re-adapted, recycled, and politicised using their plots about defending the planet and winning football games as a parallel of the students’ fight. We see a similar political appropriation with *Thriller*, its zombies and choreography. All performers were dressed and acted like the zombies in the video clip, but additionally, each Chilean zombie also carried a sign with the amount of education fees they will owe to the banks when they die. This tension between the video/TV-based reference and the political speech was what produced such a high positive response from other students to participate. For the students, to be part of this performance was both politically urgent and fun. Furthermore, this action was moving away from the traditional models and aesthetics of street political performance in Chile, which were strongly rooted in the 70s and 80s, with a language that chooses content over form and tended to lack humour.

Moreover this parody reflected the rise of a new generation, highly influenced by television, advertising, and pop music, who believed that in order to create an effective dialogue between the movement and the community, it is necessary to devise events that mix an urgent political speech and entertainment. As Diana Taylor states:

> Whether it’s a question of mimetic representation (an actor assuming a role) or of performativity, of social actors socially regulated patterns of appropriate behavior, the scenario more fully allows us to keep both the social actor and the role in view simultaneously, and thus recognize the areas of resistance and tension. The frictions between plot and character (on the level of narrative) and embodiment (social actors) make for some of the most remarkable instances of parody and resistance in performance traditions in the Americas. (Taylor 30)
The use of different media platforms played a central part during the production, promotion, and achievement of the action after its execution. After the students created an event on Facebook describing the action and its political aims, they later began to upload links to different free tutorial videos on YouTube about how to dance *Thriller* and how to look like a zombie. This use of Internet and specifically YouTube proposes alternative non-institutionalised learning systems to the more traditional ones used in the schools and universities. The students swap the classroom, lectures, and schoolbooks for the playground, rehearsals, and dance movements.

Furthermore, there was a conscious and deliberate use of the official press as the main platform to register and later broadcast the performance on TV, Internet, and newspaper. This movement has always criticised the way in which some of the main TV channels and newspapers (controlled by the right-wing) allied with the government in the criminalisation of protesters during the street demonstrations, but at the same time, the students knew how to recognise and understand the influence of the “media show” and use it in their favour.

**1800 Horas por la Educación**

*1800 Horas por la Educación (1800 Hours for Education)* was a durational performance and political action starting on the 13th of June and finishing on the 27th of August 2011, 75 days in total. The action consisted in running around La Moneda 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until they reached 1,800 hours. The aim of running specifically for 1,800 hours is not random. US$1,800 million is, according to a study made by Universidad de Placha Ancha, the budget that the government would need to give full fee coverage to 300,000 higher education students each year.
US$1,800 million is also 1/3 of the public spending in military defense. The initiative was organized by Benjamin Bravo, Sergio Gilabert, and Diego Varas, acting students from University of Chile, who started to run, first just as a simple performatve action and later, little by little, their classmates and later on other faculties spontaneously took over the initiative and volunteered to participate. The main goal was that no matter what happens or what time of day it was, there always has to be at least one person running carrying a big Chilean flag with the inscription “Free education now!”

This type of action can be associated with practices of Participatory Art which, according to Claire Bishop, “[strive] to collapse distinctions between performer and audience, professional and amateur, production and reception. Their emphasis is on collaboration, and the collective dimension of social experience” (Bishop 10).

In essence it sounds a very simple, minimalistic, and cheap idea to devise (running is free), but it actually required huge organizational skills, mental strength, discipline, and perseverance; all qualities hard to find so early in such a young group of people. It is best understood if we see it as an example of the profound political and almost religious commitment to the students’ movement’s demands. At the end, after 75 days, the organisers counted in total 300 runners, 8800 laps, and 8600kms run. This dissident mode of cultural production not only echoes Bruguera’s concept of Delegated Authorship, but it did so in alternative ways that resist the colonialist-based figure of the author who “is a modern figure, a product of our society in so far as, emerging from the Middle Ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual” (Barthes 142). In this sense, *1800 Horas por la Educación* opposes the idea of “the prestige of the
individual” described by Barthes, as the performance’s prestige does not reside in individual but collaborative effort.

In *1800 Horas por la Educación*, La Moneda again served as the main target and its surrounding areas were used as the stage. But unlike in *Thriller por la Educación* where the stage-like display was frontal (as the Italian style), in *1800 Horas Por la Educación* it was circular and peripheral. Runners/performers from different social groups of Chilean society (students, parents, elders, etc.) ran around the palace of the government embodying the demands for a better educational system. This circular and repetitive way of running all day and all night carrying the Chilean flag can be compared with the behaviour of predator animals teasing their prey.
Here we have an empowered citizenry, acting like a political animal, encircling and teasing the executive power in La Moneda; relieving each other when a runner cannot keep going; never allowing the pray to either leave or forget the social and political power of the movement.

1800 Horas por la Educación also affected the daily routine of pedestrians and local habitants of the area. Since the performance started to attract more volunteers, the organisers set a base camp at the start/finish line. At the base there was water, food, a cardboard timer counting the hours and a big sign stating:

*Corrida 1.800 horas por la Educación gratuita alrededor de La Moneda a 75 días desde el 13 de Junio al 27 de Agosto. 1.800 millones de dólares son los que necesitan para cubrir la educación superior de Chile. 1.800 millones es menos de 1/3 de lo que hoy se usa en fuerzas armadas anualmente. Que la educación sea nuestro arma!*

This text was also printed on flyers and delivered to pedestrians and drivers along the street. The flyers were also distributed by local shop-workers who wanted to help and support the action. The eruptive nature of this performance as protest into the daily life can be related with the street art work done by the Art Collective CADA in the early 80s in Chile who:

*Used the concept of interfering in the models of everyday life prescribed by society, but this time by using a ‘Social Sculpture’ to

---

13 "1800 hours run for free education around La Moneda. 75 days from 13th June to 27 August. 1.800 million dollars is what they need to cover higher education in Chile. 1.800 million is less than 1/3 of what is used today, every year, on the armed forces. Let education be our weapon!"
designate the degree to which their art practice could reappropriate interpersonal relations in the community in new aesthetic terms’. (Richard 144)

The long settlement of this performance in one of the busiest blocks of Santiago produced an “interpublic coordination” (“Working Publics” 13) that set up new models of social interaction and cooperation between citizens that went beyond any deadline or time mark to achieve. It was what happened during those 75 days, in that site, among those people, that constitutes the performance’s main political strength.

1800 Horas por la Educación, as with many durational performances, established a symbiotic relationship with the use of digital technologies and in this case specifically, with video recording and Internet. The 75 days were constantly recorded and later the archived material was used to create short videos uploaded in the performance’s official website as a way to both archive and promote the event to encourage more citizens to participate. While some people were watching the videos online, there were also others running at that same time. Moreover, the use of video helped to establish collaborations between other artistic disciplines. A good example of this was the use of music by the band Dizzlecciko as a soundtrack for the video clips on the Internet promoting the action. Later the band was invited to play live at the base while the people ran. The gig was also recorded and shared online; creating a “co-presence of multiple channels of communication” (Reinelt 18), enriching the performance with more complex artistic dimensions. The public site, used at the beginning for social political purposes, became a stage for cultural and interdisciplinary exchange.

The uprising of a national student movement in Chile in 2011 encouraged Chilean society to rethink the relationship between the public
sphere, the institutional power, and the historical role of the state regarding education policies. Within these movements, the diversity of participatory art events such as Thriller por la Educación and 1800 Horas por la Educación appropriated public spaces to enact choreographic performances which crystallized the student movement’s demands for better and free public education in Chile. The impact of these performances as protest can be traced through different perspectives.

From an immediate level, during the peak of the movement in 2011, the performances were nourished by the debate and nourished the debate in turn. From an epistemological perspective, their means of production, execution, and promotion reflected alternative modes of creating; teaching and learning that are not based on the current market-driven Chilean educational system or historical colonial-based paradigms. Moreover, in terms of style and aesthetic, these performances made a conscious use of a variety of pop references, dance, music, and digital technologies available in mass media platforms. One can’t help but wonder if we might be in the presence of what could be called a Spectacle turn within Chilean protest history. This sense of spectacle represents this generation’s journey in search of its own political language, with its own narratives and aesthetic paradigms. It is a language that reflects on what it means to be a political actor in the twenty-first century, where the interaction between cyberspace and traditional public spaces produce new strategies and mechanisms for social change.

Finally, if we take into consideration the words of Tania Bruguera when she points out that, “political art works on the consequences of its existence, of its interaction and does remain in the level of association or graphic memory” (“Political Art 134), then it would be appropriate to revise, 4 years later, the social and political impact of the students’ uprising, especially now in the middle of Michelle Bachelet’s second term.
and the comeback of the left-wing coalition re-named “Nueva Mayoría”. After all, there is always the risk that the “student protest gets remembered—not as urgent political critique—but as an amusingly adolescent rite of passage en route to spirited, modernized post-graduate careers” (“Kleenex Citizens” 245). In this sense, if we observe that there are currently four former leaders of the 2011 Students’ Movement in Parliament, and that an Education Reform is currently under discussion in the senate, we could fairly affirm that this movement will not be remembered just as a noble and utopia-driven *rite of passage*, but as a civil network that effectively influenced the government’s political and legislative agenda.
Works Cited


