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Writing Resistance

in Crisis and Collaboration



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Writing Resistance
in Crisis and Collaboration

Edited and Curated by
Lucian Gomoll and Lissette Olivares
University of California, Santa Cruz

This publication accompanies the traveling exhibition *Writing Resistance in Crisis and Collaboration* curated by Lissette Olivares and Lucian Gomoll.

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Supplementary resources were generously offered by Jane Griffin and Resha Cardone, contemporary scholars of Chilean literature and politics who have also written about *Ergo Sum*.

We would like to thank our advisors James Clifford, Barbara Epstein, Mary Nooter Roberts, Diana Taylor, Donna Haraway, Catherine Soussloff, Ruth Behar, Juan Poblete, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, and Jennifer González for their continuing support and intellectual influence.

Thank you also to our partners, Cheto and Brad, for their patience, support, and excitement over our ongoing collaborative endeavors.

Finally, we would like to thank and dedicate this project to Pia Barros and the Ergo Sum and Asterión writing collectives. May our work do justice to your incredible accomplishments achieved in crisis and collaboration.

En solidaridad, Lissette and Lucian



ERGO SUM

Resistencia Escrit(ur)a

Writing Resistance in Crisis and Collaboration:

An Introduction to Pia Barros and Ergo Sum

Pia Barros is a feminist writer and activist who founded the underground presses Ergo Sum and Asterión. Born in 1956, she is part of Chile's NN Generation, or "No-Names" (*Non-Nomine*), a group of countercultural agents that were active primarily in the 1980s. The generation is historically bound to a period of brutal dictatorship led by a military regime that sought to silence and eliminate any opposition to their restructuring of the Chilean state. The NN label is an ironic appropriation of the status conferred to marginal subjects under the authoritarian policies of the state, reclaimed to instead evoke their deceptive revolutionary work that extended beyond the military's and civil society's recognition. Like her contemporaries, Barros approaches literature as a field of political struggle, especially for women. Critically-conscious of the discriminations prevalent in social and literary arenas, she has fought relentlessly on behalf of women as well as other marginal members of society. In her work, Barros introduces disenfranchised subjects to alternative publishing techniques that help them to claim and critique their own realities in the democratic, non-commercialized workshops (*talleres*) that characterize Ergo Sum's production methods. Barros and her contemporaries learn from and empower one another in their mutual efforts to "steal the words made by and for men," as they tell their own stories.¹ Beginning in 1976, in a landscape strictly disciplined by military curfews and censorship, Barros organized *talleres* in subterfuge, attracting collaborators that sought literary, political, and affective camaraderie. She is a dedicated activist and teacher, who greatly influenced Ergo Sum's distinctive pedagogical approaches transforming diverse spaces like prison cells, *poblaciones* (shantytowns), living rooms and university classrooms into workshops where the development of writing, critical inter/subjectivity, and social justice work were inseparable. Indeed, for over thirty years, Barros' and Ergo Sum's consciousness-raising tactics have shaped the ways that countless students develop and project relational voices of resistance in Chile and all over the world.

In 1985, amidst massive oppositional mobilization, **Ergo Sum** officially emerged as one of the most innovative illegal editorial initiatives in the clandestine cultural circuit. As part of a broader underground movement of self-publication, Ergo Sum fought for its members' rights to free expression, subverting and exceeding censorship laws established by the

regime's institutions and forced hegemonies. Of equal importance, their organization desacralized literature through collective efforts – by minimizing the authority often attributed to single authors, and by making their works easily accessible. As their first publication states, “this is a way of ‘making’ a book without editing a book, of reconciling wrapping paper with art, or as a friend would say, of transforming misery into dignity.”² Mobilizing material scarcity as a symbolic field of transgression, the Ergo Sum collective published original book-objects themselves, by hand, often using recycled materials like cardboard and food sacks – and not only binding them in traditional book fashions, but also innovatively sculpting the works into three-dimensions. In these ways and more, Ergo Sum's book-objects dismantled and inverted the mainstream publishing industry's market logic, and continue to do so today. Indeed, the works of Ergo Sum are objects of collective pride, not reflecting mass consumption or profits, but instead representing modes of political resistance and psychological asylum for those who were under siege by the military coup or *junta*, and for those who resist against neoliberal cultural production today.

Writing Resistance in Crisis and Collaboration is an exhibition and ongoing conceptual project that explores the symbolic innovation and ruptures produced by Ergo Sum's collective labor. Various modes of production, reception, and dialogue are activated by this exhibition's curatorial framework, which includes a public conversation with Pia Barros that explores her experiences as a countercultural agent, referencing the various book-objects from Ergo Sum that are on display, many of which are parts of her personal collection. Just as these book-objects have unique social “lives” that began with their collaborative “births” in the *talleres*, followed by the interplay between their creators and collectors, so too does this exhibition hope to engage a contemporary audience in Ergo Sum's ongoing social interventions. We hope this exhibition represents a “next chapter” in the biographies of these book-objects, celebrating and reshaping the extraordinary political and poetic legacies of Ergo Sum.

— **Lisette Olivares and Lucian Gomoll**

Co-Curators, Co-Editors, Co-Directors
Museum and Curatorial Studies
University of California, Santa Cruz

¹ La Seducción de Pia Barros,” Interview by Faride Zerán, Santiago: Date Unknown. Courtesy of Pia Barros' archive.

² Pia Barros, *Intro/Manifiesto*. Ergo Sum Press, Santiago de Chile, 1984

Objetos Traducidos de Feminismo Translated Objects of/as Feminism:

Self-Consciously Engaging with Ergo Sum's Book-Objects

It is in translation that women find out who they are.

—Ruth Behar¹

As a feminist from the United States, I am self-conscious of the ways I engage with objects and ideas derived from beyond my most familiar environments. While it is true that I cannot escape the influence of my own experiences and social location when I approach just about anything – be it an idea, an image, a person, a book, an object, or what we call in this exhibition *book-objects* – I do make a conscious effort to avoid appropriating an “object” or an “Other” to fit my expectations. Rather, my political and scholarly philosophies include an active dedication to collaboration and careful listening. These are some ways that I express my own commitment to feminism.

I do realize that my reflections may seem a bit self-indulgent here. However, I begin my essay with hopes to establish a sort of precedent for engaging with the book-objects featured in the exhibition. I invite you, the reader and exhibition visitor, whom I consider to be my partner in dialogue, to join me in relating to the materials we encounter in a fashion that we are not always accustomed to in museums, galleries, and libraries. I would like for us to challenge ourselves by approaching the materials self-consciously, with open hearts and minds, and to value the complexities and inter/subjective traces that are characteristic of these works.

After Augusto Pinochet was overthrown in 1989, Ergo Sum was free to emerge as more politically visible in Chile. We may never say that all inequalities have been overcome, but the popularity and far-reaching resonances of the press are undeniable; as the Chilean newspaper *Buen Domingo* stated in November 1989, while “most [participants] are women, there are also several men, whom Pia Barros explains ‘have agreed to enter into the world of women’s literature that has grown to a quite massive level in Latin America.’”² Many of Ergo Sum’s members are now successful writers of international acclaim, including Pia Barros, who has published many single-author works and spoken to audiences in countries the world over. Despite the cultural and commercial success of the individual writers, Ergo Sum itself persists as a collaborative entity that continues its anti-commercial and feminist *talleres*.

Lisette Olivares discusses more nuanced and vivid details of the *talleres* in her contribution to this volume. What I would like to re-emphasize in my entry is the collaborative nature of Ergo Sum’s material creations and their political goals – what I call “**objects of feminism,**” in both senses of the phrase. While Pia Barros is indeed the official founder of two important Chilean printing presses, I would like to resist any tendency to baptize her as a “Founder” with a capital “F,” giving her primary credit for the work that was done. Doing so would seriously distort the cultural importance of Ergo Sum, directly contradicting its democratic and feminist ideals. This exhibition, with all its limitations, is collaborative in its own way, as we gesture towards those individuals who contributed to the political and poetic legacies of the *talleres* and book-objects. Their voices echo from the visual, textual, and textural creations that we encounter from within our own unique social contexts here in the U.S.

Consider, for instance, Pia Barros’ own *Miedos Transitorios* (Transient Fears), first published in 1985 through Ergo Sum. Inside, the short poem entitled “*Golpe*” expresses adult frustrations through the curiosity of a child. The poem begins when a child asks the mother, “what is a coup?” to which she replies “It is something that hurts a lot and leaves you bruised when it gives it to you.” The mother’s account of violence perhaps gestures to the limits of language moreso than it achieves a precise description. While my historically reactive



translation of the word *golpe* yields the English “coup,” the word actually has many other meanings in Spanish – including “blow,” “jab,” “concussion,” “shock” and “stroke.” Thus *golpe* was surely chosen by Barros to evoke ambiguous images of bodily harm. Such polysemy might evade potential accusations of political dissent by the military, while contributing to a culturally-specific poetics of the body relevant to Chile in the 1980s. The poem concludes with the child looking out the front door, and the narrator stating, “all parts of the country that fit into the child’s gaze had a violet tint.” In this poem, the act of exploring the meaning of a word transforms how the child sees the outer world.

Barros may have published *Miedos Transitorios* under her own authorial signature, but the collaborative traces of Ergo Sum’s *talleres* are evident in this piece. The relationships she anticipates through her writing are evidenced also in the poetic strategies. Barros’ ambiguous play with a word that *might* mean “coup” (the complete way for *golpe* to refer to a coup is *golpe de estado*) strategically dodges existing censorship structures, while

anticipating her audience's shared anxieties and experiences of injury through a relational poetics. Such intertwined figurations of simultaneous evasiveness and intersubjectivity, emerging out of a sense of **crisis**, saturate almost all of Ergo Sum's book-objects, rendering their translation to English exceedingly difficult (and always partial).

Walter Benjamin once insisted that "the task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original."³ His statement certainly describes the challenges Olivares and I faced while assembling this exhibition. Double-meanings, insider references, metaphors, and other poetic interventions found in Ergo Sum's works all generate meanings which exist "between the lines," performing as "echoes" that cannot be adequately described in English or through exhibitionary modes. If we listed all the possible meanings infused into each and every word used deliberately by the writers, it would come across as tedious to the audience, thus minimizing their affective potential. Recognizing such limitations is certainly humbling to the translator/curator who wishes to express a "fidelity" to that which she translates.⁴

In the epigraph that introduces my essay, Ruth Behar explains that translation is a process that reveals to women "who they are." Referencing feminist theorist Gayatri Spivak, Behar emphasizes the self-conscious processes that one endures as she tries to explain herself according to someone else's terms. This is a process which Chandra Mohanty has called "discursive colonization," in her contribution to the book *Feminism Without Borders*.⁵ Not only does translation in this case make one aware of her own relational differences, it exposes hidden differentials of power and privilege by denaturalizing their discursive regimes. For example, Western feminism's ethnocentric conceptualizations of gender and patriarchy are revealed to Spivak when they do not adequately describe her own experiences as woman from Calcutta, India. It is for these reasons that Behar reminds us that "the question of whether feminism translates across borders" remains open to debate.

I would argue that it is indeed possible for feminism to work across borders, if the process is not unidirectional but one of reciprocity, of attending to delicate complexities, and of learning about one's self through processes of engagement. This approach resonates with Benjamin's warning that "the basic error of the translator is that he preserves the state in which his own language happens to be instead of allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue."⁶ Indeed, if we allow that which we encounter to powerfully affect us, rather than trying to fit it to our terms, then we approach translation as a relational strategy for consciousness-raising. Practiced along these lines, feminists may indeed claim translation as a tool to be part of our ever-changing political and pedagogical arsenal.

Ergo Sum's cardboard sculpture *Secretos y Pecados* (Secrets and Sins), seen on page 8, is in my opinion quite symbolic of this entire exhibition. Although the book-object's exterior was first intended to reference some rather juicy and personal contents, the title takes on a whole new meaning once it is decontextualized, translated, and reframed in the United States.

Set in the display case, we are physically unable to view what is inside the paper chest. Therefore, *Secretos y Pecados* plays with our access to knowledge, and metaphorizes how we are able to engage any of the other objects on display. As feminist translators and admirers of Ergo Sum, such an effect would not produce within us a desire to “know” the object through the “sinful” masculine acts of penetration or mastery.

Instead, we might self-consciously appreciate *Secretos y Pecados* for its meaningful echoes and symbolic promiscuities – as expressions of a feminine playfulness that generates meaning through ambiguity, intersubjectivity, and différance. Taking this to heart, “from the whispers of the book-object,” we will shape each other’s critical consciousnesses, “with dreams and laughter on our side.”⁷

— Lucian Gomoll, UC-Santa Cruz

¹ Ruth Behar: *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza’s Story*. Beacon Press, Boston MA. 1993: page 275.

² As quoted in “Machismo Se Escribe con “M” de Mama,” *Buen Domingo*. Nov. 19, 1989: page 5.

³ Walter Benjamin: “The Task of the Translator,” from *Illuminations*. Schocken Books, New York, NY. 2007: page 76.

⁴ Benjamin’s concepts of the “echoes” in translation are illustrated in the visual design of this catalog, which includes faint and partial translations for the major headers written in both English and Spanish.

⁵ Chandra Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes,” from *Feminism Without Borders*. Duke University Press, Durham, NC. 2003: page 19.

⁶ Benjamin: page 81.

⁷ Quotation from Pia Barros’ essay, “Mujeres, Creatividad y Contracultura” (Women, Creativity and Counterculture). Lecture presented at UCSC on February 04, 2008.



“Secrets and Sins,” from Ergo Sum’s 1993 workshops, directed by Pia Barros



Ojalá se me olvidara (If only I could forget),
Ana Maria del Rio, with Ergo Sum, 1985



La Noche es de los Lobos
(The Night Belongs to the Wolves),
Sonia González, with Ergo Sum, 1985

Té Democracia From Tea to Democracy

Making Space for Feminism in Ergo Sum's *Talleres*

Frente al desafío de la página en blanco, todas somos iguales.

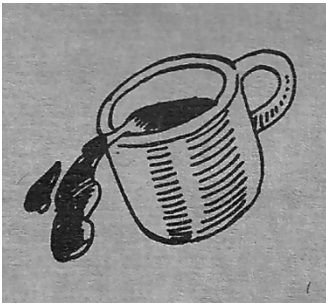
—Pia Barros

Confronting the challenge of a blank page, we are all equal.¹

—Pia Barros

Institutionalizing Tea Time

Ergo Sum's *talleres* begin with teatime. As people trickle into the workshop they choose their seat, lay down their things, and move towards a worn electric kettle.² While drinking their beverages, or sharing food, they engage in conversation, waiting for the class to begin. This "teatime ritual" has been continued by many generations of writers in Ergo Sum's workshops. In an article from 1986, for example, Ana Maria Foxley describes how Ergo Sum's participants have "institutionalized teatime," drawing attention to how the members develop their literary work while sharing cake, "kuchen" or sandwiches that each brings rotationally. Foxley reveals that this institutionalization of teatime is a defiant response to those who upon hearing that women have a literary workshop have asked, at what time will the *tecito* (tea) be ready?" It is a question which Pia Barros asserts "is a way of disqualifying our literary labor."³



Though "quotidian," teatime is an informal and personalizing gesture that prepares the group for a collective experience, placing everyone at ease, yet also marking the beginning of an intensive laboral practice. By appropriating feminized domestic labor and leisure practices, and incorporating them into the structure of the *taller*, the members of Ergo Sum contest the sexist mode of approach that equates "women's work," in this case both domestic and literary, as inferior. Teatime's symbolic reversal is also indicative of

a feminist project that manifests itself throughout Ergo Sum’s workshop structure as well as its numerous publications. Drawing from Foxley’s perceptive statement, I would like to propose that Ergo Sum’s “institutionalization” of teatime is part of a broader engagement with feminist political reconstitution. The press’ creative processes, i.e. the editorial’s mission, the workshop’s structure, and its mode of production, are all imbricated with the development of alternative democratic imaginaries. In an effort to explore the complexities of the book objects on display in *Writing Resistance in Crisis and Collaboration*, I would like to invite you to explore some of the hidden scenarios that are embedded in the composition of these publications.

Rehearsing in the Workshop Scenario: A Space for Enacting Feminist Democracy

Though the *taller* begins informally, setting the scene for constructive interplay, the work done within the space is far from easy and often involves conflict. Workshop members meet weekly throughout the year. In each session they read together, deconstruct the formal approach of a textual sample, and complete an assignment which they must write in the timeframe of the workshop. After the writing period expires, each participant takes turns reading their work aloud, while the rest of the group listens (the written work is not circulated). Barros moderates the discussion, randomly calling on each person to voice their critique, a method that develops critical listening skills, but that also holds each peer accountable for her participation. Once everyone in the workshop has expressed their opinions, Barros offers her own critique, pointing out whether or not the assignment has been fulfilled as well as proposing constructive criticism.

Because Ergo Sum actively creates a space where people from varying social backgrounds can participate, the space of the workshop is constructed as both a training and battle ground. Speaking specifically about the importance of her workshops for women, Barros explains, “In my workshops women have to learn how to use words, but not only written words. They must learn to use their reality and to demand their rights and to voice their opinion.” Barros, who began her pedagogical experience teaching workshops for women who needed the skills to write letters for human rights struggles, argues that literary workshops were the extension of developing social and political needs. In Ergo Sum the skills developed in the workshop – particularly those of expressing and valuing one’s voice – are believed to foment civic participation.

This is not to say, however, that the workshop functions without antagonisms. As Barros prefaces in an introduction to *Cuentos* (Stories), “we have seven years of disagreements, agreements, stimulations, failures, and sometimes aggressions, that are crowned by a steadfast respect for the the texts of our fellow members.”⁴ As this citation indicates, the emphasis on diversity within the workshop created a space that often erupted in discomfort and disagreement. These tensions were especially dense during the dictatorship, when the

expression of any political dissent to the regime's policies could have severe repercussions. Nonetheless, publications like *Ojalá se me olvidara*, (If I could only forget) by Ana María del Rio, and *La Noche es de los Lobos*, (the Night Belongs to the Wolves) by Sonia Gonnzález, lay testament to how the workshop setting and its production of book objects create spaces where writers publicly voice their assesment of the political climate. Similarly, the lived space of the workshop also created an opportunity for political intervention. One of Ergo Sum's most contentious members, Pedro Mardones, used the workshop to sharpen his words and to wield their lacerating potential. Take for example the following passage from *El Wilson*, a story about an adolescent strip teaser:

“a fever of vaseline over my whole body for the single women, the aunties, and even the grannies, who drink after drink rip off my clothes, with the turbid gaze of lonely women facing a phallus, this fragment of mine, creased in shame, because I'm thinking of my old lady, of my *población*, of my friends, of my father who was disappeared into the cavity of a black automobile.”

Mardones (now well known to the literary circuit as Lemebel) uses poetic prose to develop grotesque urban imagery that explicitly cites the intersectionalities of political, class and gendered violence. Reading stories like *El Wilson*, one can almost envision how his performance of this text could have bristled against the moral codes sustained by many of Ergo Sum's upper class participants.⁵

A lack of consensus in Ergo Sum's workshop space should not diminish how we understand its political potential or efficacy—indeed, I argue that it strengthens both. Feminist political theorist Chantal Mouffe argues that radical or agonistic **democracy** must be founded upon antagonism, or the idea that a society comprised of diverse constituencies will necessarily disagree on many points; she explains:

“The aim is to construct a “we” as radical democratic citizens, a collective political identity articulated through the principle of democratic equivalence. It must be stressed that such a relation of equivalence does not eliminate difference[...]that definition of a “we” always takes place in a context of diversity and conflict.”⁶

In concert with Mouffe, it is imperative to also relay the contentious atmosphere and heterogeneous constituency within Ergo Sum's collective. Using literary practice as its site of equivalence, Ergo Sum's conflictive and collaborative structure encouraged the enactment of complex personhood, enabling the elaboration of diverse democratic imaginaries.

Ergo Sum: The Anatomy of a Manifesto

Ergo Sum, the collective's first publication, which mirrors the editorial's newly founded name, can be described as both a feminist and political manifesto. A thin rectangular box

wrapped in brown craft paper, its “cover,” is printed with the editorial’s newly minted trademark, a writing quill fused with the symbol of Venus, or what is commonly recognized as the icon of woman. As its first visual communication, Ergo Sum’s logo interrupts a (historically) phallic pen so it appears to be a cavity or negative space that contains a symbolic representation of femininity – as if the ink that were to emerge from this writing tool were infused with signified womanhood. This provocative image prepares its readers for the book object’s content, while beckoning them to peer inside.

On the inside cover of the box, a riddle confronts the viewer:

“What is expected from a box with **“women’s things?”**”

The provocation continues with a quick succession of potential answers:

“surely buttons; a thread and needle; earrings; hair clips; trinkets. “

But by the next line, the irony transforms into a poetic statement of resistance:

“Anything, for sure, that belongs to “labors of the sex” and not of the brain: a lipstick but never a pen.”

From its hidden interior, Ergo Sum’s manifesto emerges, coalescing the imagery of its trademark with its political positionality.

As the introduction continues, Ergo Sum outlines its mission as an editorial initiative while reaching out to an unknown reader. Though written by Pia Barros, the pronouns emphasized in the manifesto are pluralized signifiers of the collective, just as the description of its process of production reiterates the shared labor and collaboration that make its existence possible.

Central to the manifesto is its incentive to “promote “feminine” literary work,” but it quickly explains that though the majority of publications are by women, there is no intention to repeat a cycle of marginality by excluding others. As Gomoll has indicated in his essay, men were not excluded from the talleres since Ergo Sum’s feminist project was to create gender consciousness and not gendered exclusion – hence feminist visions of democracy are enacted.

The emphasis on providing a space for women’s critical writing and subjectivity is relevant not only to Ergo Sum’s first publication, but to those found throughout its decades of production. It is also a political gesture that recurs in transnational women’s struggles. For example, U.S. third world feminist writers like Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga, emphasized the importance of written expression in the battle for women’s liberation, since women are historically denied the right to signify through written language, or at least they are forced to describe themselves according to the inadequate terms that serve

power. As Chela Sandoval explains, “what U.S. third world feminism thus demanded was a **new subjectivity**, a political revision that denied any one ideology as the final answer, while instead positing a *tactical subjectivity* with the capacity to de- and recenter, given the forms of power to be moved,” in what she describes as “differential” consciousness in social movements.⁷ These women of color writers from within the U.S. also forged dynamic and changing coalitions with third world feminists beyond national borders – a formulation that Sandoval states, “comprised a formulation capable of aligning U.S. movements for social justice not only with each other, but with global movements towards decolonization.”⁸

Similarly, Ergo Sum’s manifesto reaches out to an extended audience beyond the borders of its collective. As the manifesto reaches its end, the collective authorial voice reaches out urgently. The closing paragraph’s beginning pronoun, *juntos* (together), acknowledges its reader, regardless of gender, and extends an invitation to participate in its “interdisciplinary” work, while expressing solidarity through what it perceives is a shared experience of marginalization and struggle. As Cherríe Moraga states in *This Bridge Called My Back*:

Our strategy is how we cope—how we measure and weigh what is to be said and when, what is to be done and how, and to whom and to whom and to whom, daily deciding/risking who it is we can call an ally, call a friend (whatever that person’s skin, sex, or sexuality). We are women without a line. We are women who contradict each other.⁹

—Lissette Olivares, UC-Santa Cruz

¹ Cited in Ana Maria Foxley, “Cruzada Femenina Contra el Machismo Literario en AL,” *Excelsior Newspaper*. México, February 7, 1986: page number unknown. Courtesy of Pia Barros’ archive.

² Ergo Sum’s *talleres* have traveled through many geographic locations over the years. They have taken place in prison cells, *poblaciones*, and internationally. In recent years, a back room in Pia Barros’ home has been the main site for Ergo Sum’s workshops.

³ “Tecito” is the diminutive of Tea, and in this context also reflects the sexist assumptions of the interrogator(s). Cited in: Foxley, page number unknown.

⁴ *Cuentos: Taller Soffia*; Stgo: Editorial Arcilla, 1984: page 5.

⁵ Pedro Mardones Lemebel, “El Wilson,” *Cuando No Se Puede Vivir del Cuento*, Ergo Sum: 1989.

⁶ Chantal Mouffe, “Feminism, Citizenship and Radical Democratic Politics,” *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler et al. Routledge Press, New York, NY. 1992: page 379.

⁷ Chela Sandoval, “U.S. Third World Feminism: Differential Social Movement,” in *Methodology of the Oppressed*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN: 2000: page 58.

⁸ Sandoval: page 41.

⁹ Moraga, Preface to *This Bridge Called My Back*, edited by Moraga and Anzaldúa. KITCHEN TABLE: Women of Color Press, New York, NY. 1983: pages xviii-xix



ERGO SUM

Cuentos de:
Carmen Escobedo
Pía Barros
Ana María del Río
Sonia González
Sonia Guralnik
Luis Hornoilla
Sara Karic
Mireya Keller
Pilar Laporta
Pedro Mardones
Jorge Montenegro
Elena O'Brien

Ilustraciones de:
Luis Albornoz
Patricio Andrade
Eduardo de la Barra
Gustilo Barrios
Alejandro Montenegro (Rufino)
Hernán Venegas



¿Qué se espera de una caja con "cosas de mujeres? Seguramente botones, con aguja e hilo; aros, "pinches" para el pelo; cachureo. Cualquier cosa, en definitiva, propia de las "labores del sexo" y no del seso; un lápiz labial; nunca uno de los otros.

Con estas ediciones pretendemos difundir, principalmente, el trabajo literario "femenino". Por eso esta caja con cuentos escritos, en su gran mayoría, por mujeres. No únicamente, porque no se trata de marginar dentro de la marginalidad.

Estos cuentos en papel de envolver, son producto también del trabajo serio y persistente de las autoras y autores en los talleres de narrativa "Sofía" y "Kafka", que me ha correspondido dirigir.

Vital en este trabajo, ha sido la labor del taller más nuevo: el "Ergo Sum". Ahí, con la sospechosa timidez de los artistas gráficos que participan en él, se da un feliz y productivo concubinato del cuento y la gráfica, del Ergo Sum y La Castaña.

Juntos, publicamos uno a uno los tripticos de esta colección como una forma de trabajo editorial interdisciplinario y practicamente artesanal. Esto es una forma de -sin poder editar un libro- hacer un libro; también, de reconciliar el papel de envolver con el arte o, como diría un amigo, de "convertir la miseria en dignidad". Es una forma, así lo hemos querido, de saludar el Año Internacional de la Juventud y de manifestarnos -mujeres y hombres- contra las condiciones que producen la marginalidad no sólo de la mujer sino también de los artistas y de los receptores de este arte gráfico o literario.

Pía Barros

Pía Barros / Ergo Sum

Ergo Sum, 1985



***Taller Soffia.* One of Ergo Sum's first workshop collectives.**

Members smoke cigarettes and share refreshments while in session. Towards the right corner of the room, Pia Barros issues a critique. Pedro Mardones Lemebel sits to her left (at right). Looking towards the camera from the couch is Sonia Guralnik (now deceased).

Contributor Information

Pia Barros generously offered her personal archives for this project, and will be following the exhibition as it travels. She will be giving lectures on her work as well as offering writing workshops (*talleres*) for interested participants. Barros has directed these literary workshops for over thirty years in Chile. In 1985, Barros initiated the underground press Ergo Sum to facilitate the careers of emerging writers, opening spaces for feminist pedagogy and praxis during the Pinochet dictatorship. In 1990, she founded the independent women's press Asterión, offering Chilean women and minority voices an alternative to corporate publishing.

Lisette Olivares is Co-Director of Museum and Curatorial Studies, and Jacob Javits Fellow in History of Consciousness and Latin American and Latino Studies at UC-Santa Cruz. She is interested in art as activism, and in developing global networks of collaboration and resistance. An alumna of the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program, she specializes in Latin American contemporary art, with an emphasis in performance. Currently, Lisette is editing a volume about the Chilean performance collective *Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis*.

Lucian Gomoll is Co-Director of Museum and Curatorial Studies, and Porter Associate Fellow in History of Consciousness, Feminist Studies and Visual Studies at UC-Santa Cruz. He is interested in histories of exhibiting Otherness in Western museums and world's fairs since the nineteenth century, and the continuing influence of these practices on contemporary displays. Lucian earned his M.A. in Performance Studies at NYU (2004), and is the author of "Objects of Dis/order: Articulating Curiosities and Engaging Histories in the Freakatorium," in the book *Defining Memory* (2007), and "The Feminist Pleasures of Coco Rico's Social Interventions," in the book *Art and the Artist in Society* (2010).

Words build bridges
“Palabras construyen puentes
para romper con los vacíos de la desigualdad”

– Pia Barros



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