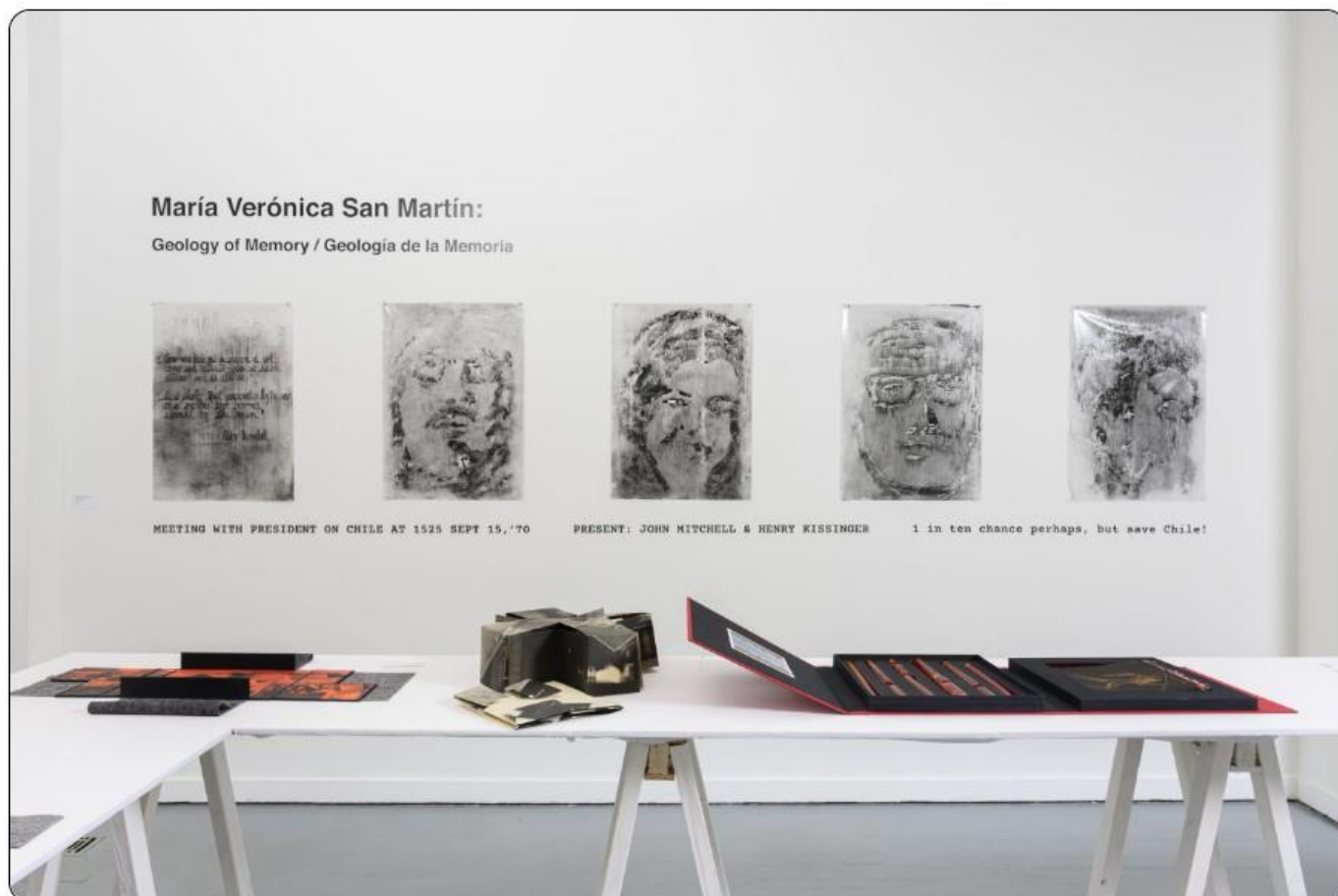


MARÍA VERÓNICA SAN MARTÍN EXHIBITS GEOLOGY OF MEMORY AT THE PRINT CENTER

Por Revista Materia



Installation view by María Verónica San Martín: *Geology of Memory / Geología de la Memoria*, 2023, The Print Center, Philadelphia ©Jaime Álvarez

Reconstructing the political history of the country through art, using engraving, installation and performance, with handmade artist books is the proposal of the Chilean artist [María Verónica San Martín](#) at [The Print Center](#) in Philadelphia. Viewing the book as a repository of both memory and knowledge.

The exhibition "Geology of Memory" proposes a way of learning and healing from past historical traumas in Chilean history, confirming the artist's commitment to civic, historical, and political responsibility.

Many of San Martín's books contain text and images derived from government and press archives exposing human rights violations committed during the dictatorial regime of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990). Her ongoing "Moving Memorials" series, begun in 2012, consists of thirteen edited books: a total of 203 individual volumes hand-printed and bound by the artist to honor the tens of thousands of murdered and missing citizens of her country, where she selects the media and materials that serve her message. San Martín describes woodcarving as "carving in history", and observes making an etching, "an image that disappears in the engraving process, then reappears printed on paper, like the search for truth and reconciliation".

San Martín activates her books and engages the public in performances that transform the intimate act of reading into a public conversation rooted in visual poetry, using expressive choreography that positions reading

as a physical act of protest and remembrance. A selection of videos documenting his process and performances will be on view at "Geology of Memory."



Installation view by María Verónica San Martín: Geology of Memory / Geología de la Memoria, 2023, The Print Center, Philadelphia @Jaime Álvarez



The artist María Verónica San Martín presenting her installation at The Print Center (Philadelphia) @Jaime Álvarez

The relationship between the body, the work and the landscape is an important element of San Martín's practice. For this exhibition he designed a labyrinth of tables to display his books in a sculptural topography that envelops the viewer. The title "Geology of Memory" may refer to this immersive installation; to the Chilean landscape in which so many of its citizens are buried or lost; or to the layers of history and rhetoric that threaten the truth. On the walls surrounding the tables are portraits made of charcoal dust on plastic, based on photographic records from a national database that families use to search for their missing loved ones. The text on the walls below the images comes from declassified documents of conversations between Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger in which they conspired to overthrow the election of President Allende in 1970. The result suggests both the fading of memory and the transition from human to ghost. Despite their fragile and transparent appearance, these portraits collectively serve as a powerful tribute to lost humanity. As the artist explains, "to move forward you have to look at the past, recognize it, take charge and repair."

María Verónica San Martín is a Chilean multidisciplinary artist and educator based in New York. She was a fellow of The Whitney Museum's The Independent Study Program (ISP), she has an MA from The Corcoran School of Art and Design, George Washington University, Washington DC. She has exhibited nationally and internationally.

You can follow their website and Instagram: www.mveronicasanmartin.com and [@san.martin.maria](https://www.instagram.com/san.martin.maria)

Source: Verónica San Martín and [The Print Center](https://www.printcenter.org/), Philadelphia.



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María Verónica San Martín

<https://www.revistamateria.com/noticia/veronica-san-martin-exhibe-geologia-de-la-memoria-en-the-print-center/>