Mapping Violeta Parra’s Cultural Landscapes
CHAPTER 7

Violeta Went to Heaven and the Ethics of Contemporary Latin American Melodrama

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Abstract This essay analyzes the film Violeta Went to Heaven (2011), by Chilean director Andrés Wood, as a model for the ethical dilemmas present in the creation and reception of Latin American cinema in the early twenty-first century. As the dichotomy global/homogeneous versus local/heterogeneous becomes blurrier, contemporary film analysis requires a critical stance that sidesteps the limitations of outdated paradigms. Furthermore, the epistemic shift and increased attention to affect in cultural and film studies invite us to approach Wood’s film in its emotional/political context. By framing it as a contemporary melodrama in the capitalist market, we are able to better understand the complex dynamics that govern film consumption and production in a globalized world.

Keywords Violeta Parra • Andrés Wood • Latin American melodrama • Chilean cinema • Affect • Ethics

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Andrés Wood’s film *Violeta Went to Heaven* (2011) was a reasonable box office success in Chile (over 350,000 spectators) despite its limited release in only seventeen theaters across the country. While many critics, and a large portion of the public, applauded the film’s aesthetic and narrative choices, others reproached Wood for making an ideologically opaque *biopic* about one of the most important Chilean icons, Violeta Parra, in order to please national and international audiences, as they claim he also did with *Machuca* (2004) or *Soccer Stories* (1997) (Horta 2012). This study contends that some of these instances of censure are rooted in ethical paradigms that may be losing validity in today’s global cultural market. Consequently, this essay proposes *Violeta Went to Heaven* as a model for the ethical dilemmas confronted by Latin American cinema, particularly melodrama, in the twenty-first century.

Contemporary cultural and film theorists have observed that dichotomies such as cultural imperialism versus autochthonous cultures, Hollywood versus national cinemas, or homogeneous versus diverse are becoming obsolete, making some ethical and political choices increasingly complicated for filmmakers, audiences, and critics. As Sophia McClennen puts it, “the positions of power are muddy and the ‘location’ of the film does not always explain its content or its stance on global neoliberalism” (2013, 12–13). All of the movies labeled as Latin American in this essay are multi-national co-productions, most of which are globally distributed by subsidiaries of the major film companies in Hollywood. In this context, “claims for cultural diversity, when unaccompanied by ethical calls for enfranchisement, equity, and redistribution of unjustly marginalized groups, dovetail perfectly with neoliberalism’s desire for market diversity” (9). Even at the height of the pink tide of progressive governments in Latin America, leftist administrations found themselves “in highly complex negotiations with global capital and with entrenched capitalist elites as they work to balance market interests with social welfare” (10). These are the same governments that support some form of national cinema, so the responsibility for ethical negotiations with the global market is shared with local film producers and directors. If this is the case, what is a relevant critical approach to Latin American cinema in the “muddy” context of cultural globalization? McClennen argues in favor of a critical framework that focuses on “resistance to global liberalism . . . rather than the ontologies of the local and the global”. To support her argument, she provides examples of commercially successful and critically acclaimed Latin American films which have successfully participated in the market but at the same time have challenged its ideologies through their content and form (15–16).

The content and modes of delivery that McClennen highlights are often tied to certain cinematic genres, techniques, and motifs that are anchored in emotion and not in explicit ideology or political discourse. Cultural theorists such as Dierdra Reber have been drawing attention for some time now to the shift from an episteme of reason to one of affect and emotion in Western culture and society. Understanding this change is important because “[u]ntil we know the whys and wherefores of this capitvation, we will continue to willfully misunderstand—to second-guess and devalorize—our own interpretations of affective discourse” (2012, 89). Affect is an essential component in specific subgenres, such as fantasy and horror—best exemplified by Guillermo del Toro’s films—or melodrama, which often appears woven into other film modes. For example, *Pan’s Labyrinth* (2006) is a fantasy/horror/historical film that revolves around the familial drama of a thirteen-year-old girl with a sick mother and an evil stepfather. In fact, melodrama has become one of the preferred vehicles in Ibero-American film and television for works about a traumatic historical past that reverberates in the present.1 As Mathew Bush reminds us, “Melodrama . . . provides a narrative structure that facilitates an understanding of the social. And it is through an active emotional dialogue with the melodramatic text . . . that the reader participates in the production of comprehension” (2014, 14–15).

A number of studies dedicated to Latin American melodrama have demonstrated how it has established its own tradition by both following and departing from the conventions and ideologies of the genre in Hollywood and European cinema. Latin American melodramas “are somewhat closer in spirit than their Hollywood counterparts to the original melodramas of the early nineteenth century” (Sadlier 2009, 3–4). This is a particularly interesting point, considering that the religious roots of the nineteenth-century model are the basis for Carlos Monsiváis’s argumentation about the conservative pillars of Latin American melodrama (2005). Moreover, Monsiváis’s essay identifies melodramatic elements in social, political, and cultural performances that otherwise would not be categorized as classic melodrama, as is the case with Wood’s film and certain political events that coincided with its release in Chile. By analyzing *Violeta Went to Heaven* as a contemporary Latin American melodrama and a problematic example of Chilean national cinema in the capitalist market, this study can pose valid questions about the ethical and affective dynamics that rule film consumption and production in a globalized world. The ultimate goal is to find out whether this film by Wood offers what Reber
calls “a strategy of politicized storytelling in which sensory experience culminates in emotional landscapes that represent moral and ethical positions” (2012, 89).

When asked about his aesthetic choices in the film and his cinematic preferences, Wood declared, “I am not interested in going to the movies only to think. I am interested in thinking but also empathizing with the character and, in that sense, fragmentation allows the viewer a way in” (Estevez 2011, “Entrevista”). In highlighting empathy and therefore emotion, Wood’s response echoes what Reber describes in Walter Salles’s *The Motorcycle Diaries* (2004): “No longer do teachings and long speeches characterize these enduring cultural icons. Their significance is reaffirmed in the stoic endurance of agony; their relationship to pain for the sake of love tells the story that used to be reasoned in words” (2012, 67). The emotional excess and ideological opacity that are so criticized by detractors are openly claimed by Wood, who paradoxically says in the same interview that “[Violeta Parra] had such a structural complexity that her life cannot be linear, a melodrama or a romance. Time, spaces and rationality came undone in her” (Estevez 2011, “Entrevista”). By posing fragmentation and lack of rationality in contrast to a supposedly linear melodramatic narrative, Wood fails to acknowledge that contemporary melodramas do not shy away from affect-driven fragmentation and irrationality. This is particularly true in films that aim to do well in the international award and festival circuit, as was the case with *Violeta Went to Heaven*. The next sections will demonstrate this by analyzing the affective aspect in ghostly motifs and in the self-referential “visualscapes” and soundscapes that give emotional shape to Wood’s stylized melodrama about Violeta Parra.

**Off-Spaces and Ghosts: Memory and Emotion**

The use of ghostly figures, spaces, and motifs is one of the most pertinent aspects for the connection between melodrama, affect, and ethics in *Violeta Went to Heaven*. Some critics divide its structure into two major parts—one encompassing the majority of Violeta Parra’s life and the second focused on the last five years—whereas others see four segments: the first going from Violeta’s childhood until after the death of her young daughter Rosita Clara, the second covering her relationship with Gilbert Freve, the third being her time at La Carpa de la Reina [Tent of La Reina], and the last focused on her death. Despite this seemingly linear plan, the narrative and visual structure of the film follows a circular and repetitive pattern. As Patricia Vilches and others have observed, the initial sequence structures the rest of the film in emotional, narrative, and allegorical terms. It opens with a black screen and unidentifiable background noises. This is followed a close-up of a human eye; an image of a chicken in a hazy forest; a close-up of Violeta’s feet and the guitar she carries, followed by a frontal shot of the character wearing a white blouse as she walks through the same forest. It cuts to Violeta’s interview in Argentina and a close-up of Violeta as a young girl eating maqui berries, accompanied by the off-camera sound of Violeta’s voice sending her daughter out to pick the same fruit; Violeta climbing a hill and falling to the ground, seemingly dead, and intercalated shots of the chicken and a preying hawk, the allegorical characters of Violeta’s musical composition “El gavilán” [“The Hawk”] (Vilches 2013, 66). Some of these elements reappear throughout the film in a pattern that mirrors narrative elements and musical traits in “El gavilán”. The film ends with the close-up of the eye, which is Violeta’s after her suicide, juxtaposed with close-ups of the chicken’s eye. The image is now accompanied by shots and sounds from the initial sequence, though now clearly located in the Carpa, the circus-like tent where Violeta opened a performance space for the folk music she intended to save and disseminate. The audience can now identify the mysterious noise that opened the film as the wind shaking the frail wooden walls of the tent, and spectators are able to hear again the words the protagonist speaks to send out her daughter Carmen Luisa to pick maqui moments before taking her own life.

The motif of the eye and other accompanying elements point to a postmortem focalization (Oporto Valencia 2012, 1). Hence, the entire film becomes a fragmented story from the perspective of someone who inhabits the liminal space reserved for ghosts, allegorical spirit animals, inaudible voices in old photographs, and other problematic entities, such as Violeta Parra, the Chilean icon. This device invites us to explore the possibility that Wood’s film opens by placing a liminal point of view at its crux. Violeta’s postmortem vision inhabits what Teresa de Lauretis calls “space off” in cinematic terms, that is, “the space not visible in the frame but inferable from what the frame makes visible”. In the context of feminist theory on gender conceptualization and representation, de Lauretis claims that this is a space “in the margins (or ‘between the lines,’ or ‘against the grain’) of hegemonic discourses and in the interstices of institutions, in counter-practices and new forms of community” (1987, 26).

Other Latin American filmmakers have also used a ghostly or liminal perspective to sort out the problematic issue of voice and ethical
responsibility, particularly in films about collective memory and trauma. For example, Mexican director del Toro uses a circular plot featuring ghosts in his horror thriller The Devil’s Backbone (2001) in order to indubitably reclaim the voice of those who were disappeared, silenced, and forgotten during and after the Spanish Civil War. Alejandro González Iñárritu, another Mexican director, also chooses a circular structure and a Spanish setting for his film Biutiful (2010), whose protagonist Uxmal is a terminally ill medium who meets his long-dead father in an undetermined space between life and death. In an interesting family twist, Peruvian filmmaker Claudia Llosa, the niece of Claudio Vargas Llosa, uses a similar device in the melodrama The Milk of Sorrow (2009) to give voice to a dead character who sings, as the audience sees a top shot of her corpse being embalmed. In Violeta Went to Heaven, the protagonist appears in the Carpa looking at old photographs while surrounded by ghostly images of her dead parents and baby daughter, childhood visions of herself, her siblings and her grown children, semblances of dead folk singers, and the specter of her absent lover.

This study contends that Violeta Went to Heaven incorporates the blend of contemporary melodrama and ghost story that has been recurrent in Ibero-American cinema for almost two decades. The off space, the liminal, the ghost, and the irrational have a similar aim, which is an attempt to represent what is deemed non-representable in rational terms. José Colmeiro interprets the recurrence of ghostly figures as a “symptom of the collective inability to approach [the repressed past] correctly, although this offers the possibility of rectification, recognition and reparation” (2011, 33). Some would probably see in Colmeiro’s assertion the bias of hoping for a more rational or “correct” way to reconstruct the past from the present. Remarkably, all of the aforementioned films are affectively structured around melodramatic and irrational elements, so they insert themselves firmly in the epistemological sphere of emotion. It is precisely this ability to tap affect that made these pieces commercially successful while maintaining their potential to be an ethical and credible voice vis-à-vis the forces of global neoliberalism.

**OF LIFE AND ART: AFFECT IN “VISUALSCAPES” AND SOUNDSCAPES**

Violeta Went to Heaven is a type of Bildungsroman, more specifically a Künstlerroman, a narrative about an artist’s growth to maturity. Violeta is an eclectic folk artist and researcher whose interwoven activities included musical composition and performance, creation of visual art in the form of arpilleras, and the ethno-didactic enterprise of recovering, documenting, collecting, and disseminating the musical folklore of her land. Wood’s film is designed to mirror the multiplicity and also the patho of Violeta’s undertakings, achievements, and defeats. Not coincidentally, the entire narrative is imbued with the somber philosophical meditation on art and life, which is the topic of one of Violeta’s conversations with her daughter Carmen Luisa near the end of the film. By reflecting on Violeta’s art, life, and death, the movie reveals a broader anxiety about the struggles and limits of any artistic endeavor, including filmmaking.

This self-referential quality is at its most obvious when there is a film within the film—for example, when Violeta is filmed by her lover Gilbert Favre, a Swiss musical ethnographer, and also in the interview for Argentine television that punctuates the movie. Wood uses these sequences for various purposes. The most important, for this analysis, is the film’s reflection on the tension between the camera and its subject. When Favre records Violeta, she tries to control and edit the scope of his filming by telling him to stop recording or refusing to speak or show her whole face. In the televised interview, the interlocutor often takes on the role of critic or commentator by passing judgment on specific aspects of Violeta’s life, namely her performance as wife and mother, the legitimacy of her art, and her political affiliations. In all of these instances, Violeta resists this critical discourse by giving sarcastic or absurd responses that deflect the questioner’s aim. In both of these sections—Favre’s film and the televised interview—the audience is confronted with a character who attempts to be in control of her own narrative. Also significant is that both types of sequences imitate the image quality of the original medium but they are not authentic footage. Instead, they are an artificial remake of these documents featuring the actress who interprets Violeta’s character, Francisca Gavilán. This points to an intentional emphasis on artifice that agrees with another declaration by Wood in the aforementioned interview: “The character is not a person. You imbue it with a series of pertinent elements so that, in the face of a situation you don’t know, it acts in a certain way. Not from real life. You cannot reproduce a person; the character is a dramaturgical ploy to tell a story” (Estevez 2011, “Entrevista”). Hence, Wood’s only focus is the story, understood as the emotional itinerary that will insufflate artistic life into the character in a way that a rational attempt at reconstruction cannot.

A second visual element with self-referential connotations is provided by Violeta’s collection of arpilleras, an artistic technique that consists of
decorating burlap with fabric and other materials. A type of folk visual art, the *arpilleras* provide another reference for the movie’s commentary on popular artistic expression as a form of political resistance, similar to quilting in the southern United States. Violeta’s critic and interlocutor in this section of the film is the director of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs at the Louvre in Paris. His attempts at categorizing or doubting the value of Violeta’s art are again deconstructed by her defiant responses. For example, when the director asks whether she learned this technique as a child, she says she has been doing it for only five years but it should not matter because art is art, so music, embroidery, or painting are all the same. She confidently presents herself as a total artist, whose creations are simultaneously concrete and universal in terms of their affective appeal and therefore worthy of being exhibited in the most hallowed temple of European art. In juxtaposition with that sequence, the Argentine interviewer attempts to undermine Violeta by suggesting that contemporary France would be particularly receptive to a communist artist. Violeta defends herself by humorously turning the comment on the interviewer and by cheekily replying in French to another question. In both exchanges, which are melodramatic peaks in the character’s narrative itinerary, Wood’s film presents Violeta as a triumphant and unpredictable heroine.

Another interesting aspect of this episode is the subtext provided by the *arpillera* tradition, which allowed women to stealthily record silenced figures or events on humble burlap and also earn income independently by selling their art abroad. This entrepreneurial aspect is highlighted during one of Violeta’s conversations with Favre in their tiny Parisian apartment. When he complains about the space taken by her numerous *arpilleras*, Violeta replies that she is going to sell all of them at the Louvre. In this manner, the film highlights not only the singularity of Violeta’s aesthetic recognition in a space dominated by “high art” but also her stance as a female artist-entrepreneur. This portrayal is not devoid of tension and ambiguity in other moments of the film. When Mayor Fernando Castillo Velasco—Violeta’s friend and protector—offers to buy one of the *arpilleras* that are haphazardly piled inside the tent, Violeta refuses his pity and, in a moment of depression, she burns one of the pieces. It is worth remembering that Wood’s film was also criticized for its commercialism and eagerness to please an international audience. Consequently, the melodramatic “*arpilleras* in the Louvre” episode and its aftermath are further examples of self-reflection in a film that emanates the feeling of being between a rock and a hard place in navigating the conflicting demands of thriving in a global market and also satisfying polarized or oblivious audiences at home.

The film’s soundscape, as important as the visual motifs, has already received significant attention (Vilches 2013; Oporto Valencia 2012). This analysis will include both musical and non-musical aspects, including silence. One of the most important elements in *Violeta Went to Heaven* is the song “El gavilán” (“The Hawk”), which opens the film and guides important aspects in its structure. The images of the chicken and the hawk refer to animal allegories in Violeta’s musical composition, which she originally conceived as a ballet that was never performed during her life. The narrative and visual patterns in the structure of the film parallel elements in the rhythm, melody, and lyrics of the song, which plays during other key moments, as when Gilbert appears in Violeta’s life. “El gavilán” tells the love story between a chicken and a hawk, in which the chicken ascends a mountain in search of her lover and ultimately finds death at his hands. In Violeta Parra’s own words,

El tema de fondo es el amor. El amor que destruye casi siempre, no siempre construye. El gavilán representa el hombre, que es el personaje masculino y principal del ballet. La gallina representa a la mujer, y que es el personaje también de primer orden, pero el personaje sufrido, el que resiste todas las consecuencias de este gavilán con garras y con malos sentimientos, que también sería el poder ... y el capitalismo, el poderoso (Céspedes 1960, 1:22–2:01).

[The background theme is love. A love that almost always destructs and not always constructs. The hawk represents man, which is the male and the main character in the ballet. The chicken represents woman, which is also a principal character, but a suffering character, the one who resists all the consequences of this hawk with claws and bad feelings, which would also be power ... and capitalism, the powerful.]

Oporto Valencia highlights some elements in “El gavilán” that are atypical in Chilean folk music and reinforce the link between emotion and ethics in Wood’s film. The author notes that “‘El gavilán’ tells the story of a woman who is betrayed, persecuted and brutally killed by a masculine being, who she has trusted and intimately loved” (2011, 97). The author emphasizes the coincidence between the postmortem point of view in both the film and the song. In the latter, one can hear the voice of a victim “who seeks
acknowledgment, truth and justice ... as if one of its purposes was to present the reconstruction of the crime scene” (97), a crime in which the surrounding community—voiced by a chorus—was complicit. Hence, the voice in the piece subverts a tradition of persecution songs, which typically had the viewpoint of a collective of pursuers who punish a scapegoat to save their community from danger. The musical analysis of the song renders an interesting parallel with its break from narrative tradition. According to Valencia, the element of the tritone musical element, which is used systematically in the song, was associated in medieval times with the presence of the Devil, whose iconographic representations in the Bible include the image of a hawk. The sophistication of this additional allegorical layer and the systematic use of atonal elements in the song—virtually absent in Latin American folk music—belie the myth of spontaneous or non-intellectual composition that many associate with Violeta Parra’s music (2011, 97–98). Not only was Violeta familiar with atonal music, but she intentionally used it to express individual and collective pain in a manner that escaped the traditional categories of high/cultured versus low/folk or regional versus universal art as distinct loci of emotional, ethical, or political expression.

The insistence on emotion and pain as the driving force behind Violeta’s art is repeated throughout the film, as when the character tells her TV interviewer about her forty years of suffering—a comment her interlocutor attempts to soften with a trivial remark. The painful chasm between artist and audience is at its widest when Violeta calls an upper-class audience “deaf” after performing the deeply personal ballad “Volver a los dieciséis” (To Be Seventeen Again), an anthem about emotion above reason which is ignored by the questioning audience. This scene has its exact opposite in Violeta’s impromptu performance of “Arriba quemando el sol” (“The Sun Burning Above”) for a working-class audience. She performs this song during an Easter visit to the salt mines by the Parra troupe. In the scene, Violeta sings this piece about social injustice, suffering, and despair for a rapt audience of miners who explode in applause. In a similar manner, other musical compositions by Violeta Parra that appear in key moments of the film are not merely a typical melodramatic score designed to amplify narrative or visual elements. On the contrary, the songs determine the emotional itinerary and meaning of the film and, as a consequence, they unequivocally anchor Wood’s work through affect, in the absence of what Reber calls “teachings and long speeches” about ideological commitment and specific historical struggles (2012, 67).

In addition to the music, there are other elements of the soundscape that weave in and out of each other, often in apparent dissonance with the image on screen or with the chronology of the plot, and sometimes cross the traditional lines that separate diegetic and extradiegetic sound. The best examples are Violeta’s off-screen voice sending her daughter out and the creaking noise of Violeta’s tent seeping into other parts of the story. For instance, when Violeta is unable to capture the songs of a rural singer who recently died, she records the wind coming through the window of the dead woman’s empty bedroom, and the film blends this sound with that of Violeta’s own death scene. Wood alters the traditional relationship between sound and image on screen to challenge expectations about the icon Violeta Parra, in much the same way that González Iturriutu uses sound-image dislocations with an ethical aim in Babel (2006). Inárritu’s message about interconnectedness, shared humanity, and ethical responsibility largely depends on creating sensory and emotional bridges between seemingly separate stories as well as between the film’s larger tale and its global audience. In Wood’s case, the use of the affective devices described intends an ethical stance vis-à-vis a charged signifier—Violeta Parra—in order to make it translatable and relevant for both Chilean and international audiences in the twenty-first century.

In conclusion, most of what Violeta Went to Heaven aims to communicate about the meaning and context of Violeta Parra’s art, life, and memory lies in the sensory and emotional interstices of the film. An analysis of its content, structure, and technical elements through the lens of affect invites study of the film as a contemporary melodrama. This is despite the fact that the movie was labeled and marketed as a drama, the kind of intimate, stylized, and politically subtle portrayal that is designed to reach an international audience and win awards. However, a postmortem focalization and other ghostly motifs analyzed here connect the film with other Latin American works that blend fantasy and melodrama to take an ethical stance on problematic episodes or figures in the collective memory. Wood’s film is also loaded with self-referential frames and motifs, as would be expected from a work of art about an artist. These include audiovisual and visual elements such as Favre filming Violeta, the televised interview of the protagonist in Argentina, and the arpilleras’ itinerary from the Louvre to the Carpa. Also important is the array of songs and other elements in the film’s soundscape, which dictate the pathos and ethos of the entire piece for those who are able and willing to hear it. Chief among them are the song “El gavilán” and the sounds that surround Violeta’s death in La Carpa de la
Reina, a kind of coda that bleeds through the film and reveals its message in affective terms. All of these are instances of a work of art reflecting on its role, responsibility, and limitations regarding issues of ethical representation. A responsible and self-aware film in a globalized cultural market, Violeta Went to Heaven successfully channels the potency of its subject matter in order to create what Beber calls “a strategy of politicized storytelling in which sensory experience culminates in emotional landscapes that represent moral and ethical positions” (2012, 89). By doing so, Wood’s film portrays Violeta Parra as the unequivocal embodiment of an aesthetic, ethical, and political stance that seeks to resist the same neoliberal forces of globalization that rule how films are created and consumed in our world.

NOTES

1. Andrés Wood’s Machuca (Chile 2004) and Juan José Campanella’s The Secret in Their Eyes (Argentina 2009) provide good examples of the dominance of melodramatic elements in historical dramas meant for a mainstream audience and wide international distribution.

2. All translations from Spanish to English are the author’s unless otherwise indicated.

3. “Ibero-American” is used here because Spain has produced numerous examples of this genre. Many of these films were made by international teams of directors, producers, and actors from Spain, Latin America, and other regions. In the case of Alejandro Amenábar’s The Others (2001), national, regional, and linguistic categories become irrelevant for a film in English directed by a Chilean-Spanish director, financed by Spain and the USA, and featuring English-speaking actors from various continents.

4. Arpilleras are visual creations made in different parts of Latin America by decorating a burlap cloth with scraps of fabric and other materials. Although they always transmitted the views and sensibilities of invisible rural communities, they acquired political significance as a form of popular resistance during Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship in Chile. Working-class women used them to portray images of oppression and protest. Because of their humble origin, arpilleras went unnoticed by the dictatorial regime. This allowed their creators to make money through their sale, often to other countries.

5. Babel’s examples of image/sound disjunction include sequences that are meant to be disconcerting for the audience, such as one that blends a scene in rural Morocco with another on the US-Mexico border.

REFERENCES


CHAPTER 8

Violeta Parra: Her Museum and Carpa as Spaces of Nostalgia

Patricia Vilches

Abstract  Since her death in 1967, Violeta Parra has inhabited two meta/physical geographical spaces in Santiago: a Carpa (tent) and her tomb in the General Cemetery. Now, she also has her own museum. In the Carpa, she struggled for visitors’ attention; in her museum, she achieves a final ascendency. Studying Parra’s Sixties-era Carpa over and against her new museum represents, then, a nostalgic voyage to a particular and meaning-filled point in Chile’s past, a time when the nation was on the verge of Allende’s contentious presidential election (1970) and its violent aftermath. The larger goal, however, is to understand Parra’s space in a nation that is still coming to terms with her life, death, and legacy.

Keywords Violeta Parra • Nostalgia • Museum • Carpa de la Reina • Legacy

Through the Carpa de La Reina, launched in 1965, and the Museo Violeta Parra, opened in 2015, this study explores Violeta’s social spaces in Chile,

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