

Film (Co)Production in Latin America and European Festivals

The Cases of Production Companies Fabula & Control Z
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In the late 1980s, the *Rotterdam International Film Festival* launched the *Hubert Bals Fund* with the intention of supporting films shot in peripheral regions. During these two decades many other festivals have created similar programs and film producers are increasingly using these funding mechanisms to finish their films and, at the same time, achieve exposure on the circuit.

In the case of Latin America, which is one of the so-called ‘peripheral regions’, the Uruguayan production company *Control Z Films* and the Chilean *Fábula* are clear examples in this funding circuit that are becoming ‘less and less alternative’. Almost all these companies’ films have received some financial aid from this kind of initiatives. Some of the programs of most relevance in the international context, the ones created around European festivals, are the above mentioned *Hubert Bals Fund* and the *World Cinema Fund* launched by the *Berlin International Film Festival* in 2004. *Cine en Construcción*, crucial for the cinema in Latin America since its inception in 2002, is a joint initiative between the *San Sebastián International Film Festival* and the *Recontres Cinémas d’Amérique Latine de Toulouse* that exhibits selected film projects in film sessions for film professionals.¹ One of the key aims of these film funding models is related to an interest held by some festivals in producing in regions they consider to be peripheral. Despite the fact that cinemas from Africa, Asia or Latin America are still considered to be peripheral, they have been continually present in festivals all over the world for decades (ELENA 1999). These funding programs show the way in which film festivals still consider some areas as peripheral. The same happens if we look at the themed festivals or sidebars organized around any of these peripheral regions.

1 For more detailed information on these funds, see CAMPOS (2013); de VALCK (2013); FALICOV (2013); TRIANA-TORIBIO (2013); OSTROWSKA (2010); ROSS (2011).

1. Control Z and Fábula. Context and funding possibilities

There are also support and training programs associated with film festivals as well as production and coproduction meetings. Even in the 2000s similar initiatives emerged in many Latin American festivals (and in other of the regions subsidized from the outset), thereby joining what appears to be becoming a financing circuit. However, despite establishing as some “especie de industria paralela / sort of parallel industry”, as David Oubiña (2009: 18) points out, the tendency to homogenize the films that the author relates to these financing mechanisms is debatable. The films of *Fábula* and *Control Z* are not representative of the annual production of their respective countries and, besides, both film producers allow an approach as particular filmographies, since the lines of work of each one seem to be well differentiated. The *Fábula* and *Control Z Films* are achieving considerable exposure and credit in the context of international festivals as well as in the (sub)circuit of Latin American film festivals. This impact is probably connected with the production and distribution strategies associated with these two companies. Miriam Ross synthesizes this idea as follows:

Even when South American films do not anticipate film festival exhibition in their production processes, they do frequently rely on festivals for visibility, funding opportunities and distribution contacts and thus enter into transcultural contracts that are determined by the power that festivals hold over the global film circuit. (ROSS 2010: 14)

Many of these funds specify their interest in supporting authentic images from the project’s region, while intending to be an additional aid; the meagre budget available for these programs could not be otherwise taken into account. The higher aids from the *Hubert Bals Fund* and the *World Cinema Fund* directed to production amounts to € 50.000, some calls even amounting to € 100.000. These cash contributions are added to the national or international public support given to *Control Z* and *Fábula’s* films.

Both film producers were created just a decade ago, in a context in which this funding (sub)circuit was starting to take shape; hence why it is not surprising to find similarities. *Control Z*² was founded by Juan Pablo Rebella, Pablo Stoll and Fernando Epstein in 2001 to distribute

2 *Tanta agua / So Much Water* (Ana Guevara y Leticia Jorge, 2013); 3 (Pablo Stoll, 2012); *Hiroshima* (Pablo Stoll, 2009), *Gigante / Giant* (Adrián Biniez, 2009); *Acné / Acne* (Federico Veiroj, 2008); *El custodio / The Custodian* (Rodrigo Moreno, 2006), *La*

the film *25 Watts*, their debut film co-directed by Rebella and Stoll. The production company and the film finally got started after receiving \$ 15.000 from the *Capital Fund* of the *Central Bank of Uruguay*. *Control Z* is exclusively dedicated to fictional production, including short films and music videos in its filmography. As stated on their website, the aim is “poder seguir haciendo y estrenando películas en Uruguay / to be able to continue shooting and releasing films in Uruguay”.³ In 2011, two of the producers involved in the *Control Z* film project during the previous decade (Agustina Chiarino and Fernando Epstein) put *Mutante Cine* into operation, a project in line with the work done by their previous film company. In fact, *Mutante Cine* is a sort of continuation project.⁴ *Mutante Cine* started by distributing the last film produced under the *Control Z* label itself: *Tanta Agua* (Ana Guevara and Leticia Jorge, 2013). Other films that originated as *Control Z* projects (which participated in some calls for funding backed by certain festivals) whose development continues in the framework of *Mutante Cine*, are currently in the post-production phase. One example of this ‘change of film company’ is *El cinco de talleres* (Adrián Bíníez), which received a *Hubert Bals Fund* grant for production as a *Control Z* project in the spring of 2011 and the post-production is already being managed by *Mutante Cine*.

The story of *Fábula*⁵ is pretty similar. It was created by the brothers Hernán, Juan de Dios and Pablo Larraín in 2003 to produce the latter’s debut film: *Fuga* (2006). *Fábula* has produced feature films, short films and, in partnership with *La Casa Films*, commercials. Furthermore, *Fábula* has produced a television drama serie for *HBO Latin America* (the second season was broadcasted in 2013) called *Prófugos*.⁶ Among its feature films *4:44 Last Day on Earth* (Abel Ferrara, 2011), co-produced with the USA and France, stands out. However, this film falls out-

perreira / The Dog Pound (Manolo Nieto, 2006); *Whisky* (Juan Pablo Rebella y Pablo Stoll, 2004); *25 Watts* (Juan Pablo Rebella y Pablo Stoll, 2001).

3 <<http://www.controlzfilms.com>>.

4 This article concerns the work of *Control Z Films* instead of *Mutante Cine* as the latter is still beginning its film work and therefore, evaluating its labour is impossible.

5 *Crystal Fairy* (Sebastián Silva, 2013), *Las niñas Quispe / The Quispe Girls* (Sebastián Sepúlveda, 2013), *Barrio Universitario* (Esteban Vidal, 2013), *Gloria* (Sebastián Lelio, 2013); *Polvo* (Julio Hernández Cordón, 2012), *NO* (Pablo Larraín, 2012), *Joven y alocada / Young and Wild* (Marialy Rivas, 2012), *Paseo de oficina* (Roberto Artiagoitia, 2012); *El año del tigre / The Year of the Tiger* (Sebastián Lelio, 2011), *Ulises* (Óscar Godoy, 2011); *Post Mortem* (Pablo Larraín, 2010); *Grado 3* (Roberto Artiagoitia, 2009); *Tony Manero* (Pablo Larraín, 2008); *La vida me mata / Life Kills Me* (Sebastián Silva, 2007); *Fuga* (Pablo Larraín, 2006).

6 <<http://www.fabula.cl>>.

side the parameters set by this studio mainly because, albeit this is a film on an international expansion, it is entirely unrelated to the ‘Chilean cinema’ label with which international forums such as film festivals work. In any case, Abel Ferrara’s film does illustrate the interest recognized by *Fábula* in co-production and summed up by Juan de Dios Larraín in three fundamental matters:

Firstly, they help bring in funds and often enhance technical assistance. Secondly, they help with artistic matters such as gaining international actors to participate in productions. He finally added that they also help to acquire distribution in other countries and in festivals. (ROSS 2011: 111)

As mentioned above, production in Chile and Uruguay is not limited to the films of *Control Z* and *Fábula*. However, these films are part of what could be defined as the fundamental nucleus of what some academics and critics have identified as new national cinemas of the region. As in the case of the almost coetaneous (New) New Argentine and Mexican Cinema,⁷ film festivals have become vital showcases to make known and consolidate these new artists who, in the case of Uruguayan and Chilean cinemas, are closely linked to the work of *Control Z* and *Fábula*. In Chile, the publication *El novísimo cine chileno*, edited by Ascanio Cavallo and Gonzalo Maza, includes in the list of members of this ‘movement’ the names of film directors associated with *Fábula* such as Pablo Larraín, Sebastián Silva and Sebastián Lelio (2010). Something similar has been happening in Uruguay, where the precepts, attitudes and tendencies of the New Uruguayan Cinema have arisen around *Control Z Films* and partly around *25 Watts*, as shown in the text written by David Martin-Jones and Soledad Montañez (2013: 28).

In addition to their origins, *Control Z* and *Fábula* have in common the production model because, although one cannot speak of cooperative creation, many members of the technical and artistic crew have worked on several projects and have also seen their names included in the acknowledgements of films by both production companies. In the case of *25 Watts* (Juan Pablo Rebella and Pablo Stoll, 2001), for example, crew members include Manolo Nieto as assistant director and Federico Veiroj as script supervisor and who plays the role of ‘Gerardito’. Manolo Nieto also plays the small role of the ‘chicken’s man’ in *Hiroshima* (Pablo Stoll, 2009), at the end of which some new faces in New Uruguayan Cinema appear after the lead actor. In the same way, in the acknowledgements

7 See SHAW (2011); MENNE (2007); ELENA (2009); references for New Mexican Cinema, and AGUILAR (2006); ANDERMANN (2012); ELENA/CAMPOS (2014) for New Argentine Cinema.

of *Tony Manero* (Pablo Larraín, 2008) the participation of the Chilean directors Andrés Wood and Sebastián Silva are included. Both film companies give special importance to distribution and to the itineraries of their projects since they consider it “una parte fundamental del proceso de ‘hacer’ una película / a fundamental part of the process of ‘making’ a film” in addition to understanding that the work of the producers is related to “generar redes, con ver que las películas funcionen en el circuito internacional / generating networks, with seeing that the films work in the international circuit” (BELLO 2009: 6; CONTROL Z 2012).

In the 1990s and 2000s new funds were launched to support production at European film festivals, such as the above mentioned, but they also began to appear at Latin American festivals. *Control Z* and *Fábula* have taken full advantage of this sub-circuit, together with the development of the recent Cinema Laws in Uruguay (2008)⁸ and Chile (2004)⁹ and the establishment or consolidation of funds by the local governments to support their film making. These Laws include mechanisms to improve development and production of film projects, as well as Chilean Law specifying actions for diffusion, protection and preservation of their national cinema and film industry.

Consideration should be given to how these funding programs, at local or national level (and public or offered by festivals), are particularly relevant in regions where the annual volume of film production is rather moderate. All of them are giving shape at national, international and/or transnational level to what might be called a circuit or a film funding model with “implicaciones (anti)industriales / (anti-)industrial implications” (LÓPEZ RIERA 2009: 29). This importance would refer not only to the project budgetary issue, but also to the exposure given to certain national cinematographies that are not excessively prolific¹⁰. In this sense, the association of a good deal of the current production in Chile and Uruguay with a new cinema and with these funds refers directly to the importance of this funding model in the emergence of the so-called New Argentine Cinema, as mentioned above.

8 Ley N° 18.284 Instituto del Cine y el Audiovisual del Uruguay. Diario Oficial de la República Oriental del Uruguay, Montevideo, Uruguay, 2 de junio de 2008.

9 Ley N° 19.981 Sobre Fomento Audiovisual. Diario Oficial de la República de Chile, Santiago, Chile, 10 de noviembre de 2004.

10 During the past fifteen years, an annual average of five films have been produced in Uruguay (none in 1999), and about 21 in Chile (peaking at forty films in 2011 and 2012) (<<http://www.imdb.com>>).

In this line of grants or support, some specific examples are worth mentioning. In the case of *Fábula*, *NO* (Pablo Larraín, 2012), *Joven y alocada* (Marialy Rivas, 2013), *Paseo de oficina* (Roberto Artiagoitia, 2011), *El año del tigre* (Sebastián Lelio, 2011), *Post Mortem* (Pablo Larraín, 2010) or *La vida me mata* (Sebastián Silva, 2007) were funded by the Chilean *Fondo de Fomento del Audiovisual* and, with the exception of *El año del tigre*, also with the financial support of CORFO¹¹ for distribution. On the other hand, some *Control Z* films such as *25 Watts*, *Whisky* (Juan Pablo Rebella and Pablo Stoll, 2004) and *Tanta agua* had the financial backing of FONA.¹² Likewise, all *Control Z*'s films have counted on some international support like that of the INCAA¹³ for *Whisky*, *La perrera* (Manolo Nieto, 2006) and *Acné* (Federico Veiroj, 2008) and of the ICAA¹⁴ for the latter; grants which are directly connected with the co-production of Argentina and Spain respectively. In the case of *25 Watts*, it should also be mentioned the supports from the *Fondo Capital de la Intendencia Municipal de Montevideo*, the *Bank Boston Foundation*, *Universidad Católica* and the *Uruguayan Escuela de Cinematografía*, as well as the *Universidad del Cine de Argentina Foundation*. It is a must to mention the financial aid provided for many of these feature films on the *Ibermedia Programme*.

At this point it is appropriate to indicate that *Control Z* has worked closely with the film producer *Rizoma Films*,¹⁵ an Argentine company which could have been added to the studio taking into account that many of its films have been funded in a similar way to that of *Control Z* and *Fábula*. Something similar happens with the film company created at

- 11 CORFO: *Corporación de Fomento de la Producción* (Chilean Corporation for the Promotion of Film Production)
- 12 FONA: *Fondo para el Fomento y Desarrollo de la Producción Audiovisual Nacional* (Uruguayan Fund for the Promotion and Development of National Media Production)
- 13 INCAA: *Instituto Nacional de Cine y Artes Audiovisuales* (Argentinean National Institute of Cinema and Media Arts)
- 14 ICAA: *Instituto de la Cinematografía y las Artes Audiovisuales* (Spanish Institute of Cinema and Media Arts)
- 15 *Otros silencios / Another Silence* (Santiago Amigorena, 2011), *Un mundo misterioso / A Mysterious World* (Rodrigo Moreno, 2011), *Medianeras / Sidewalls* (Gustavo Taretto, 2010); *Gigante* (Adrián Biniez, 2009); *Amorosa Soledad / Lovely Loneliness* (Martín Garranza y Victoria Galardi, 2008); *Acné / Acne* (Federico Veiroj, 2007), *Agua verde / Green Waters* (Mariano de la Rosa, 2009); *¿Quién dice que es fácil? / Who Says It's Easy?* (Juan Taruto, 2007), *La perrera / The Dog Pound* (Manolo Nieto, 2006); *El custodio / The Custodian* (Rodrigo Moreno, 2005); *Diario argentino* (Guadalupe Pérez, 2004), *No sos vos soy yo / It's Not You, It's Me* (Juan Taruto, 2004), *Whisky* (Pablo Stoll y Juan Pablo Rebella, 2004); *Los guantes mágicos / The Magic Gloves* (Martin Rejtman, 2003).

the end of the 1990s by Pablo Trapero, *Matanza Cine*,¹⁶ to shoot his own features and, over time, projects from other filmmakers. However, since Argentine cinema has a traditionally more solid 'industrial' infrastructure, and with the intention of focusing on the analysis, it seemed appropriate to highlight on the above production companies. In any case, and as can be seen from this study, the situation of what might be called new cinemas in the 2000s in Chile, Uruguay, Mexico and Argentina (their emergence, mechanisms and development) are closely related.

The interesting thing in the case of *Control Z* and *Fábula*, besides the fact that they have completed the financing of almost all their feature films with the support of European festivals, is the way in which this fact has somehow caused many of those films to become co-productions while at the same time they were establishing themselves through this funding sub-circuit. Apart from the interests of the film companies themselves in participating in international projects or the continuous cooperation of *Control Z* and *Rizoma Films*, there are some variables that encourage co-production. In some cases, as in that of the *Berlinale's World Cinema Fund*, the basis of the program forces the project to include a German producer or distributor. However, in others, such as *Cine en Construcción*, the fact that at the same time meetings are celebrated makes the sharing of these projects with agents from other regions easier. Obviously, this does not always happen, but simply to illustrate this idea, it is curious how most *Fábula's* films have not had this circulation prior to their finalization are Chilean productions (with the exception of *NO*, but it is certainly true that this film should be analyzed in brackets inside *Fábula's* filmography). At the same time, if not directly, supporting programs are often responsible for sending the selected films to (co)production markets and forums.

Although no causal-effect relation can be established, enlightening synergies exist in this regard. For example, *La perrera*, produced by *Control Z*, despite applying to first calls as an Uruguayan production, it became a co-production with Argentina, Canada and Spain by the time it

16 *Elefante blanco* (Pablo Trapero, 2012); *La vida nueva / The New Life* (Santiago Palavecino, 2011); *Carancho* (Pablo Trapero, 2010); *Excursiones / Sightseeing* (Ezequiel Acuña, 2009); *Leonera / Lion's Den* (Pablo Trapero, 2009), *La rabia / Anger* (Albertina Carri, 2008); *Nacido y criado / Born and Bred* (Pablo Trapero, 2006), *La punta del diablo* (Marcelo Pavan, 2006); *Mi mejor enemigo* (Alex Bowen, 2005), *Di buen día papá* (Fernando Vargas, 2005), *Géminis / Gemini* (Albertina Carri, 2005); *Familia rodante / Rolling Family* (Pablo Trapero, 2004); *La mecha* (Raúl Perrone, 2003); *Mundo grúa / Crane World* (Pablo Trapero, 1999).

premiered.¹⁷ Or *Tanta agua*, by the same film company, after two years immersed in such funding sub-circuit, premiered as a co-production with Mexico, Netherlands and Germany. At the same time, the Chilean film *Gloria* (Sebastián Lelio, 2013), after winning the prize *Cine en Construcción* at San Sebastián, was premiered as a Spanish co-production at the 2013 *Berlinale*.

2. Visible results at film festivals

The proposal of this study consists of linking the selection prior to the completion of these feature films to their subsequent programming at film festivals, to the extent that upon learning of some projects, programmers have a relative advantage over their competitors. Having stated *Control Z* and *Fábula* is conception of current distribution and the importance they attach to it, this idea is vitally important in the proposed analysis. *Whisky* is perhaps the most important case: a film which has been identified as the turning point in the history of Uruguayan cinema as it gave this cinema the visibility which had been lacking in the international circuit. Furthermore after receiving the *FIPRESCI award* at its premiere in the *Un Certain Regard* section at the *Cannes Festival Whisky* was programmed at numerous and important festivals. In the case of *Fábula*, several films have strengthened the Chilean cinema presence at festivals worldwide: *Post Mortem*, premiered in 2010 in Venice, *Joven y Alocada* in Sundance and Berlin and more recently *Gloria*, programmed in the Official 2013 *Berlinale* Competition.

However, although as Marijke de Valck (2010) points out, the importance of festivals and inevitably of awards is relative, the truth is that film festivals “help a selected group of film-makers and independent producers to navigate and access the complex network of film industry contacts” (OSTROWSKA 2010: 145). This is something that inevitably benefits both sides. In this regard, it is easy to discern how most of the films funded by the circuit are in the parameters of what might be understood as ‘Latin American festival cinema’; a cinema that, according to Paul Julian Smith “can be as formulaic and anonymous as the genre films from which they work so hard to differentiate themselves” (SMITH

17 Its circulation through the funding sub-circuit includes support from Hubert Bals (screenplay, postproduction and distribution), from the Amiens and Göteborg festivals and the BAFICI, and it was selected for *Cinéfondation's Atelier* at Cannes, and on two occasions for *Cine en Construcción*.

2012: 72). A 'festival' cinema in which, despite being able to determine differentiating or characteristic features, more broadly materializes and manifests itself in some homogeneous topics, aesthetics, and narratives (CAMPOS 2013).

Beyond where each film was premiered and how, without going into details, any new selection at a festival increases the exposure and draws the attention to a film, the circulation of some of these projects is remarkable. The film *Gigante* (Adrián Biniez, 2008) has been programmed at festivals such as Berlin, the *BAFICI*, Karlovy Vary, Sarajevo, San Sebastián, Toronto, London or Thessaloniki. In the same way, one of the latest *Fábula* releases has been a brilliant success for the Chilean cinema in 2013. The film is *Gloria* which, after its success at the *Berlinale* where it won the *Silver Bear* for its main actress Paulina García, has been successfully programmed at festivals like Karlovy Vary, Locarno, San Sebastián, Busan, New York and Warsaw.

The truth is that within the Latin American cinema (sub)circuit both *Control Z Films* and *Fábula* have established themselves as brands of reference for their respective national cinemas, an issue closely connected with the success of the above mentioned films at festivals all over the world. This fact implies how, in attempting to build a panoramic picture of contemporary Chilean and Uruguayan cinema, the first approach is almost inevitably 'contaminated' by the filmography of these two film companies.

3. The image and filmography of the film companies

Control Z and *Fábula's* international vocation cannot only be a question of the production and distribution strategies they put into practice, but at the same time they build a sort of unified filmography. The production of each of these film companies has features which serve to define their aesthetic and narrative interests beyond the fact that some circuits (especially and specifically the film festival circuit) pay attention to the connection with the national or national reality of each company. It is curious how the proposals which are considered 'realistic' from virtually any perspective are very diverse among themselves, and not only those associated with the film festival circuit, but in a more general environment connected with these new cinemas and specifically with Latin America. In Deborah Shaw's study on *Y tu mamá también / And Your Mother Too* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2001) and *Japón* (Carlos Reygadas, 2002), she

concludes highlighting how “[none of the films present] a more authentic view of the nation, but both present representations that guarantee their place in different sectors of the international film market” (SHAW 2011: 130). Further to this fact, international film markets continue to emphasize the ‘authenticity’ of these proposals. As said at the beginning of the essay, many festivals continue adding a national label to each film or regional themed section in their programs and catalogues. In this way they do not ‘exoticize’ films by their content but by one of their (co)producing nationalities.

It should be stated that *Control Z* and *Fábula* were created not only to produce a couple of films. Far from it, they continue to be closely linked with the very same directors with whom they associated from the beginning. For this reason, notwithstanding a certain unity in their feature films, both companies still have at their core the filmography of the filmmakers involved in the origins of the production: Pablo Larraín in the case of *Fábula* and Pablo Stoll (together with Juan Pablo Rebella until his demise in 2006) in the case of *Control Z*.

Control Z Films produces a cinema which could be defined as generational and aesthetically and formally close to North American indie.¹⁸ The most obvious example is clearly its first film, *25 Watts*: a (perhaps intentionally careless) black-and-white pseudo-documentary film about a Saturday in the life of three youths. The same spirit prevails in *La perrera* with its aseptic and aggressive aesthetics despite the ‘banality’ and ‘tempo moderato’ of the story. As well as in these two films, the generational issue is evident in *Acné*. In short, films in which the main characters combine living their everyday lives and making the transition into adulthood, whether from the late youth in *La perrera* or the adolescence of the main character in *Acné*.

Fábula is connected, in one of its production lines, with a new class of Chilean comedy based on the characters’ privacy and social relations. Among these, *Gloria*, *Joven y alocada* or *La vida me mata* must be pointed out. There are other marginal attempts by the company of a more conventional comedy such as *Paseo de oficina* and *Grado 3* (Roberto Antiagoitia, 2003). These comedies focus on the characters beyond their national identity, as happens in the case of the Uruguayan company. In addition these films are characterized by their careful aesthetical and formal clarity which somehow dismiss stereotypes about these films

18 For an extended analysis on the cinema of *Control Z Films*, see MARTIN-JONES/MONTAÑEZ (2013).

held in certain circuits about the new (young) cinema in Latin America. Some further examples of this type of comedy, abundant over the last decade in Chile and not produced only by *Fábula*, are *La nana / The Maid* (Sebastián Silva, 2010), *Fiesta Patria* (Luis R. Vera, 2008), *Bonsái / Bonsai* (Cristián Jiménez, 2011) or *Ilusiones ópticas / Optical Illusions* (Cristián Jiménez, 2009). This cinema is linked to an 'indie wave' that has appeared over the past decade in Chile and has deep musical roots. This phenomenon that could be similar to the idea suggested by Alberto Elena about the connection between New Mexican Cinema and rock music that was prevailing during its inception (ELENA 2009).

The other production line of *Fábula*, as stated earlier, is designed around Pablo Larraín's filmography and specifically around his 'Pinochet/Dictatorship Trilogy' which includes the films *Tony Manero* (2008), *Post Mortem* (2010) and *No* (2012). Other films that could be added to a more inclusive production line related to historical facts are: *El año del tigre*, about the earthquake that devastated a large part of the country in 2010; and *Las niñas Quispe* (Sebastián Sepúlveda, 2013) about the infamous 1970s Chilean story of three sisters that committed suicide together.

In this regard, it is understandable that *Fábula's* films lend themselves to festivals as well as to cinema screens around the world, particularly Pablo Larraín's trilogy about Chilean historical memory. Inevitably, knowledge of the country's recent history in an international context enables viewers to become involved (a priori) with the issue and the film. The use of icons is clear in Larraín's films, for example *Tony Manero*, the main character of *Saturday Night Fever* (John Badham, 1977), President Salvador Allende or an advertising campaign¹⁹ with an audiovisual proposal similar to *Coca Cola* commercials. This fact is very important regarding the interest of the festivals that have supported these films in order to fund authentic cinema. In this respect, it is possible to 'decaffeinate' the stories in the same way in which these internationally oriented speeches are described by Teresa Hoefert de Turégano (2002: 5). The suspicion about the interference of festival's tendencies on films supported by the circuit is inevitable. This idea is not just related to Latin American films, but to the rest of national cinemas included in these funding initiatives. Taking into account the number of supported films included later in the same festivals' programs, it is possible that these

19 The *No* campaign organized in 1988 around the referendum on Pinochet's continuity in power.

events prefer not only 'typical/authentic Latin American projects' but films that could be included in different sections.

In the case of *Control Z's* films, the subject relates to the recognition or identification of generational groups (undoubtedly rather than social or national) and as such has the leading role in this company's films. Accordingly, David Martin-Jones and María Soledad Montañez's proposal on the 'self-erasure' policy is precisely interpreted as a tendency to erase or disregard the place. In their article they point out how *Control Z Films* uses 'auto-erasure' tactics in order to blur local references and thus contribute to internationalization followed by the project: an interest shown by the producers themselves (MARTIN-JONES MONTAÑEZ 2013). There is no doubt that this international focus and the funding and distribution strategies practiced by *Control Z* and *Fábula* are having a positive effect on their exposure and presence on the international festival circuit of these two young Latin American film companies; and, by extension, in other film circuits.

4. End notes

To conclude, it is appropriate to return to the idea of relating these 'festival films' to film events in a dual sense: if on the one hand they receive financial support, it is crucial that, once concluded, they receive the final push to be screened. It is also important not to ignore the difficulties that some producers have to face exhibition (regardless of the fact that this circuit is based around film festivals) and how, despite having received some kind of funding, some projects are never finished. Undoubtedly this is a field of action and study difficult to systematize but well worth approaching in order to understand some of the dynamics of those hypothetical centre-periphery relationships with which festivals keep on working; or the ideas of 'national cinema' or 'authentic representations' they strive for.

What does seem unquestionable is the key role played by festivals on the 'new peripheral cinema' scene, cinemas that are scheduled by these events and internationally acclaimed by critics there. Festivals are, perhaps now more and in a broader and more complex way than ever, an essential part of the exposure system of the film industry.

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