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Public-private collaboration and the “Venice Effect”: Chilean art in the Venice Biennale (2009–2019)

María Sofía Edwards* 

International Studies Institute, University of Chile, Santiago, Santiago Metropolitan Region, Chile

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Abstract

Biennials (also known as biennales) have proliferated globally, becoming key platforms for the international agenda of contemporary art. As central institutions of the art system, biennials serve as public arenas where cultural and foreign policies intersect with market dynamics—an archetype shaped by the Venice Biennale in 1895. This study analyzes the role of public-private collaboration in Chile’s participation at the Venice Art Biennale between 2009 and 2019. Drawing on public-private partnership (PPPs) theory, dossier analysis, and interviews, the study adapts Johanson *et al.*’s methodology to assess the impact of this participation, commonly referred to as the “Venice Effect,” and to examine the factors influencing this impact. The findings reveal that Chile’s participation evolved from informal, network-based arrangements to more structured and transparent processes. Outcomes varied across cases depending on artists’ career stages, international positioning, support structures, and the specific curatorial approach of each exhibition. Only one case resembled a formal PPPs. By treating the Biennale as a pivotal moment for artistic validation, this study contributes to ongoing debates on symbolic capital, cultural policy, and international projection. It highlights the need for cohesive cultural strategies and data-informed policies to support Chilean art on a global yet hierarchically unequal stage.

***Corresponding author:**María Sofía Edwards
(mariaedwards@ug.uchile.cl)

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1. Introduction

There are many ways to become an influential, respected, or “successful” artist. One could say that Cecilia Vicuña became visible only after receiving the Golden Lion at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022. Others could argue that she already had a distinguished and politically engaged career across decades. It all depends on how we define recognition, prestige, and visibility. However, there is a common understanding in the art world: An active career beyond one’s country of origin is perceived as a positive indicator of professional achievements. As Quemín¹ argued, international recognition emerges as a key criterion for artistic consecration.

While awards, scholarships, and certain exhibition venues provide some visibility, informal practices—embedded in circulation, pricing, mobility, and even authorship—play a fundamental role in determining artistic trajectories.²⁻⁷ Debates around the cultural economy, creative industries, and symbolic value have offered theoretical frameworks,^{8,9} yet empirical data to guide evidence-based cultural policy development in Latin America remains limited.¹⁰ Fialho and Esmanhotto¹¹ highlight this gap while demonstrating the capacity of Global South countries to adapt effectively to external shocks when the art market is challenged. Their work shows that resilience became evident when cultural actors adopted digital platforms in response to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This resilience, however, does not reflect a prior inclusion in and sudden exclusion from the international hegemonic art field. Rather, it emerges from a long-standing structural condition in which artists from the periphery, confronted with limited local opportunities, rely on mobility, relocation, and improvisational strategies to sustain their practice.¹² Despite these adaptive strategies, recognition by art institutions and the global market remains highly concentrated in a few Western countries, leaving a wide range of nations marginalized, playing “a minor role,” whose “voices are seldom heard outside of the contemporary art biennials.”¹³

In highly internationalized yet structurally fragile art systems, the interplay between state and private actors shapes access, visibility, and career trajectories.¹⁴ Chile exemplifies this dynamic. As Castro¹⁵ noted, the Chilean pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale would not have been possible without the sponsorship of international galleries representing “our” artists, revealing the country’s dependence on external support even for national representation. Therefore, public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a key variable for understanding how artists from peripheral countries navigate global art circuits.

Despite its purported autonomy, the Chilean art field remains closely associated with its political and economic systems. Artistic production often relies on public funding rather than market mechanisms.¹⁶ Even commercial galleries frequently establish non-profit entities to access public subsidies rather than depending on sales. Hence, the commercial side of the art world is still largely ignored or resisted, contributing to a structural opacity that hinders long-term cultural planning,¹⁷ particularly in contexts where the state facilitates participation. Here, a dual logic emerges: Access and legitimacy are shaped both by national representation and by market dynamics embedded within global hierarchies.

In this context, the routes to autonomy are as complex as the routes to domination, if not impossible, according to Bourdieu.¹⁸ Distinction is achieved not only through esthetic innovation or taste but also through understanding the strategic positioning required within the artistic field. Just as the rules governing domination are structured by economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, the paths to autonomy are shaped by these same forms of capital. This ongoing negotiation is especially acute for artists from a peripheral field like Chile’s, who must navigate the challenges of inserting themselves into dominant, centralized art spaces to gain international recognition and professional achievement.¹³ Platforms such as the Venice Biennale exemplify this dynamic, offering opportunities to accrue symbolic capital and visibility, even while maintaining historically entrenched structures such as the national pavilions.¹³

Even within the Biennale’s highly structured framework, Cecilia Vicuña’s Golden Lion award illustrates how recognition can unfold in ways that exceed the national logic of centralized institutions. A year after being invited by curator Cecilia Alemani to participate in the main exhibition, *The Milk of Dreams*, in 2022, Vicuña was awarded the 2023 Chilean National Art Prize by the government.¹⁹ This highlights how platforms like the Venice Biennale generate symbolic capital that can shape subsequent national acknowledgment. It is not a question of the Biennale acting against its own hierarchies but rather of the complex dynamics at play.

Rather than erasing borders, the internationalization of art has reconfigured them around institutions, funding mechanisms, and influence networks.³ Consequently, biennials have become privileged venues for observing how states and artists negotiate visibility, recognition, and legitimacy on the global stage.²⁰ The present study focuses on the so-called “Art Olympics”—the Venice Biennale, the “mother of all biennials,” founded in 1895—and Chile’s official participation from its national pavilion’s launch in 2009 to 2019.

Chile has actively sought to internationalize its artistic production, but participation in global art circuits remains fragmented and under-evaluated. Despite the prominence of biennials in shaping artistic exhibition logics, empirical research on how national representation functions and translates into career impact remains limited,²¹ particularly in the Global South.

This study addresses that gap through the following research question: How did public-private arrangements shape Chile’s national pavilion at the Venice Biennale between 2009 and 2019, and in what ways did they influence the career trajectories of the selected artists?

Using a mixed-methods approach—including an integrative literature review, press and dossier analysis, exhibition data, and semi-structured interviews—this case study analyzes the Biennale as a valuation device,²¹ assessing both the agendas and roles of State and private entities,²² as well as the changes in their interactions and in artists' careers following each participation.²¹

In a country where state-funded cultural projects are both recurrent and contested,¹⁶ this research seeks to understand the conditions under which cultural policy either enhances or limits international visibility. In doing so, it provides empirical insights into the symbolic hierarchies of global art circuits, the role of biennials, and the evolving place of the state within international cultural projection and image-building.

2. Theoretical framework

Cultural democratization has been a core value in the development of cultural policies since the 1960s. Although implemented through diverse designs and methods, most of these policies share the same objective: To promote cultural offerings and expand access to them. At the same time, the field has navigated ongoing tensions between state and market forces. With the aim of offering broader access to culture, institutional agents have assumed the role of promoting cultural production as a matter of public interest.²⁴ However, globalization, digitalization, and recurrent financial crises have intensified the challenges faced by contemporary artistic sectors.²⁵ These factors have made cultural funding increasingly vulnerable, highlighting the need for alternative mechanisms to support symbolic production and its internationalization.

2.1. PPPs in culture

Among these mechanisms, PPPs have emerged as a critical tool for the cultural sector, where funding remains one of the most persistent operational challenges.²⁶ PPPs are voluntary collaborations between public and private (profit and non-profit) entities that aim to achieve shared goals.^{27,28} They can be understood as an “assembly tool” that aligns the interests of different sectors around a shared objective oriented toward collective action.²³ From Devlin and Moguillansky's²³ perspective, PPPs represent innovative forms of governance with the potential to align diverse institutional and social agendas toward common goals.

In Chile, PPPs peaked during the 1990s as an alternative strategy to attract private sector investment in infrastructure and the provision of public services. Over time, this instrument evolved into new forms of public-private cooperation with social goals.²⁹ This evolution can

be understood as a modern intervention by the state aimed at promoting productive transformation, particularly when emphasis is placed on the social processes that bring both actors into closer collaboration.³⁰

The implementation of PPPs in the cultural sector remains limited and understudied, mainly focusing on the conservation and/or renovation of European monuments and public facilities that, during their construction, incorporate a museum or art gallery into the building.³¹ Even so, there is a growing interest in evaluating and promoting these innovative financial mechanisms for cultural initiatives, also known as “PPP for Development.”³² These efforts extend beyond the traditional logic of concessions and associations found in traditional PPPs, evolving toward governance structures that are philanthropic, transactional, integrative, and participatory in nature.³³ Ultimately, PPPs represent a collaboration between both spheres to address development challenges in a globalized world.³²

In this sense, it is necessary to promote the development of innovative projects in culture and the arts, as well as in education, focusing on society, history, and leisure. The implementation of PPPs in the cultural sector shares certain features with the principles of innovation-based financing. In both fields, initial risk-taking, the presence of novelty, and the establishment of a structured relationship across all levels of representation are key elements for competitiveness within an interconnected market.³¹

However, PPPs remain effective tools only if the state retains its autonomy in safeguarding public welfare; in Evans³⁴ words, maintaining its “embedded autonomy” to avoid capture by particular interests. This is particularly relevant when considering the autonomy of art from economic, market, and policy influences.³⁵ Moreover, as alliances are inherently idiosyncratic, there is no fixed formula that determines how they operate,²³ especially within the cultural field.

The idiosyncratic character of PPPs can also be understood through the lens of institutional logics. As Thornton *et al.*²² argue, institutional logics provide networks of accessible structures that guide both attention and action. In cultural PPPs, actors draw on different logics—such as market, state, or professional/artistic agendas—depending on the relevance they attribute to specific contexts. This perspective highlights that PPPs in the cultural field are not standardized formulas but context-dependent arrangements shaped by the mobilization of actors around new value–practice couplets, interpretations, negotiations, and power relations.^{36,37} It is precisely the coexistence and interaction of multiple logics that make these alliances possible, while also rendering them inherently unstable and open to transformation.³⁸

At the core of these arrangements lies the question of value. Institutional logic theory is particularly useful for understanding how different orientations are mobilized and negotiated in cultural PPPs.²² Each logic carries with it a distinct conception of value: The state logic emphasizes public welfare and cultural rights; the market logic stresses efficiency, competitiveness, and visibility; while the professional/artistic logic foregrounds creativity, autonomy, and symbolic experience.^{22,39}

PPPs in the cultural sector thus operate at the intersection of these heterogeneous values, requiring actors to constantly balance, translate, and hybridize them in practice. From this perspective, the value of PPPs does not derive solely from their instrumental benefits, such as funding or image-building, but from their ability to sustain cooperation amid competing rationalities and to generate new value-practice couplets that redefine what is considered legitimate in both cultural policy and artistic production.³⁸

A PPP in the cultural field constitutes a deeper relationship than mere sponsorship. It involves a structured plan in which the commitments and responsibilities of each party are made explicit within a framework of flexibility and adaptation. Rather than functioning as a closed structure, it represents a process of interaction in which new management techniques, best practices, and partnerships are combined to strengthen nation-branding instruments and enhance corporate reputation, while also energizing the cultural economy and increasing its appeal.⁴⁰

Thus, compared to mere privatization, PPPs tend to be more accepted by the public. They do not imply the loss of ownership of public assets but rather establish a limited and project-specific partnership.²⁷ By sharing risks, resources, and knowledge, uncertainty is mitigated through a joint effort that enables long-term planning. Moreover, the inclusion of organized civil society facilitates the achievement of long-term objectives and reinforces collective well-being.³²

In recent years, PPPs have been increasingly justified as a tool for promoting the internationalization of the cultural sector. The underlying argument is that when cultural organizations or independent agents gain visibility in the international circuit, they also contribute to shaping the country's image abroad—an aspect traditionally associated with public cultural diplomacy.⁴¹

Although cultural diplomacy depends on each state's administration, the platforms for cultural circulation have expanded globally, involving new agents in shaping the image of each nation. In this sense, "it is not possible to isolate the state's external cultural action from external

influence. The image of a country responds to a multitude of factors that the state cannot control."²⁸ Therefore, this notion should be approached critically, as it does not imply that states fully control the perception of their cultural image. Within this context, the process is better understood as one of internationalization rather than globalization, since it emphasizes the circulation of culture, ideas, and artistic practices across borders, often mediated by both public institutions and private agents.⁴²

This process has brought together the interests of both the public and private sectors in matters of global projection and nation branding.²⁸ Hence, the projection of a country's identity on the international stage responds to a complex interplay of elements such as market dynamics, institutional partnerships, and transnational networks, which can reinforce or challenge national narratives. Consequently, the collaboration between public and private sectors in cultural circulation reflects both strategic interests and the inherent unpredictability of cultural influence.⁴¹

In this way, the business knowledge and learning acquired by the public sector from the private sector,⁴³ in cultural terms, are enriched by new elements that help shape a nation's international projection. The most extreme example is Hollywood, an audiovisual mass exporter that, for decades, has illustrated an "American way of life" around the world. Other cases follow different models, such as Germany and the United Kingdom, which conduct much of their external cultural action through government-backed cooperation institutions like the *Goethe-Institut* and the British Council, respectively.²⁸

As Redondo *et al.*⁴⁴ argue, artistic activities thrive through interconnectedness, transcending territorial boundaries and combining identity values with market logic. In Latin America, however, the internationalization process remains fragmented, often lacking cohesive public strategies and relying on individual efforts.⁴⁵ This tension is evident in biennials, which function as key sites for cultural diplomacy, symbolic validation, and market positioning in a highly interconnected art world.⁴⁶ Yet, the concept of internationalization and the presumed effectiveness of biennials should be questioned. Quemín¹³ emphasizes that hierarchical structures within the global art system constrain the participation of countries from the Global South, limiting them to biennials as their primary points of entry into international circulation. While these events offer symbolic visibility, they rarely translate into sustained influence or integration within the broader global art market. This tension highlights the limits of PPPs and biennials as tools for sustainable internationalization, particularly for contexts in the Global South like Chile.

2.2. Biennials

The multiplication of biennial events, or the process of “biennialization,”⁴⁷ is not merely a factual trend but a phenomenon shaped by specific political and economic conditions that influence global artistic production. From this perspective, contemporary art biennials and their proliferation have contributed to the internationalization of the art market, its practices, and its associated counterculture.⁴⁸

According to Enwezor,⁴⁹ biennials present themselves as a “diagnostic toolbox” capable of taking the pulse of a constantly changing global scene—that of contemporary art.⁵⁰ Today, biennials often emerge from agreements between cultural policy actors—both national and metropolitan governments—and private actors, thereby creating a platform for symbolic investment.²⁰

Even if symbolic production is widespread, Sassatelli⁶ argues that biennials serve as key arenas for its articulation, conceptualizing them as “symptomatic institutions” that reflect the current crises and opportunities of contemporary societies.⁵¹ Similarly, art biennials are understood as institutions within the art system, whose functions include encouraging participation and public discussion around the meaning and role of contemporary art.⁵²

Observing biennials offers a novel analytical lens, as they make visible cultural hierarchies, identity values, classifications, and global resonances almost simultaneously. From another angle, however, their growth also intensifies concerns about commodification, stemming from an irreconcilable assumption—the antagonism between economic and symbolic value.⁶ Within the institutional logic framework, this tension can be understood as the clash between market-oriented logic, focused on commodification and exchange, and artistic or professional logic, which privileges symbolic autonomy and recognition.^{18,22} At times, their fusion weakens the symbolic logic of art, thereby undermining its autonomy.⁸

Velthuis² argues that this model of hostile worlds is more sophisticated than a mere reduction to commercial value and thus overly simplistic. Sassatelli⁶ suggests analyzing the coexistence of both spheres, since treating the competition between these worlds as a zero-sum game reduces the entire spectrum to economic logics and overlooks the ongoing interest in symbolic production and its specificity. This coexistence is complex and actively negotiated by artists, curators, and other intermediaries. As noted by Moulin,⁵³ the valuation of art operates at the intersection of market forces and institutional frameworks, where artistic legitimacy and economic recognition are continuously constructed and contested.

However, art institutions respond differently to the global economic system and its complexities. Challenges such as financial pressures and competition have encouraged the instrumentalization of art in pursuit of immediate and practical results.⁵⁴ This is particularly evident among biennials, where both curatorial criteria and the artworks themselves are conditioned by nationalistic values, economic considerations related to dissemination, and foreign policy agendas.²⁰ From this perspective, biennials function as a form of governmental action seeking to establish links with the private sector through the incorporation of new lines of action.

This logic is inherited from the “mother of all biennials”—the Venice Biennale—a public-private institution that seeks to represent a universal panorama of culture.²⁰ Though debated, the Biennale still aspires to be a reference point, offering “an unprecedented effect of order and certainty.”⁵⁵ For this reason, ironic attitudes often arise, challenging the Biennale’s capacity and ambition to provide a “state of the art” for contemporary art.⁶

Much of the critique stems from the national pavilion structure, a fundamental pillar of the Venice Biennale. Gardner and Green⁵⁶ describe this as an anachronistic concept, a set of “oddly national little buildings, akin to the structure of World Expositions (Expos) and administered by a select group of nations.” In this sense, given that Expos and Biennials serve as mechanisms that disseminate modern and Enlightenment ideals, it is unsurprising that both remain trapped within the critique of their own dialectic.⁵⁷

Quemin^{58–61} provides a long-standing analysis of the Venice Biennale’s artist ranking reveals persistent inequalities: Among 21 countries analyzed, only three held privileged positions in the ranking, confirming that even in symbolically open structures, center-based hierarchies prevail, as the participation of artists from underdeveloped or peripheral countries does not reconfigure market rankings, thereby reinforcing existing inequalities.¹³

From the market and circulation perspective, the impact of participating in the Biennale generates what Velthuis⁴⁶ termed the “Venice Effect.” Although participation is often seen as a milestone, the outcomes perceived vary and depend heavily on political, economic, cultural, and social factors.²¹ For some, exhibiting in Venice boosts sales, triggers artistic careers, increases price levels, and helps artists secure higher-ranked distributors in the global art market. While business may be conducted more discreetly than at an art fair or commercial gallery, and even though monetary exchange does not occur visibly within the *Arsenale* or *Giardini* of the Biennale, the “market is never asleep.”⁴⁶

The effect stems from the widespread perception that exhibiting in Venice guarantees a certain level of quality and artistic legitimacy. It is a platform for showcasing everything, where tastes are shaped for the acquisition and collection of art.⁴⁶ Thus, governments around the world invest large sums of money to ensure their artists' participation in this event, as it has even been asserted that participation in the Biennale provides a positive boost to a country's profile.²¹

Returning to the Venice Effect, the term arises from observing the (unobserved) commercial scene of the Biennale. One sees calculations about the best way to position a piece for future dissemination, invoking the credo: "see it in Venice, buy it in Basel."⁴⁶ At its simplest, this reflects the possibility of a shift in market circulation.

However, there is limited empirical evidence that demonstrates the universality of the Venice Effect. To address this gap, Johanson *et al.*²¹ conducted a comparative study on artists' exhibiting activity before and after their Venice participation. They found that established artists increased their international activity after exhibiting at the Biennale, while others failed to do so due to gender bias, peripheral status, and career stage factors.

Given the existence of effects for artists—though not universal—Chile's involvement can be critically analyzed through the differentiated outcomes experienced by each artist. Particular attention must be paid to the role of external funding sources, including state subsidies, corporate sponsorship, and gallery support, as they both shape viability and visibility. The central question, then, is whether public–private collaborations in this context generate long-term outcomes that simultaneously benefit the cultural field while also serving the interests of sponsoring sectors, or whether the gains and potential spillovers remain unevenly distributed, privileging one sphere over the others.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative case study design, focusing on Chile's official participations at the Venice Biennale of Art between 2009 and 2019. Situated within the field of cultural policy, the research considered the Biennale as a site where symbolic value, public and private funding, market dynamics, institutional logics, international projection, and artistic behavior intersect.

Following the study by Gerring,⁶² we selected the case study approach due to its flexibility in capturing complex social, institutional, and symbolic processes within a bounded, comparative framework. The Chilean pavilion is understood not merely as a venue for exhibition, but as

a collective social endeavor shaped by individual careers, collaborative efforts, and as a state-supported instrument of cultural internationalization policy.

Recognizing the interpretative nature of case studies,⁶³ the research integrated exploratory quantitative elements, such as the PPP index and dossier-based career mapping. Rather than seeking generalizable laws, the study aims to produce structured, evidence-based insights into how symbolic value, visibility, and institutional networks interact in the internationalization of Chilean contemporary art. In addition, the analysis included a historical overview (1974–2009) to contextualize Chile's transition from a marginal presence to official pavilion status.

3.1. Analytical framework

The study was drawn from a neostructuralist approach throughout public–private theory to frame the dynamics of each participation.²³ To systematically assess these dynamics, a PPP index was constructed. Some dimensions—public, private, and professional involvement—serve as proxies for the dominant institutional logic at play²² (e.g., state, market, or artistic/professional), while the remaining dimensions capture structural and processual elements of the collaboration—explicit frameworks,⁴⁰ aligned goals,^{27–28} mixed funding,³¹ and learning process.⁴³

An additional dimension—value orientation—explicitly records the dominant institutional logic,²² providing a key lens for subsequent analysis of the Venice Effect.^{46,21}

Dimensions that build the PPP index include:

- (i) Public involvement: Degree of state participation, including funding, symbolic endorsement, and diplomatic support.
- (ii) Private involvement: Engagement of galleries, corporations, and philanthropic organizations. This dimension reflects financial investment, logistical support, and reputational capital mobilized from the private sector in cultural initiatives.
- (iii) Professional involvement: Participation of cultural field professionals, such as curators, critics, and museum staff, ensuring disciplinary alignment and the symbolic legitimacy of projects.
- (iv) Explicit framework: Existence of formal agreements, contracts, or institutional arrangements that regulate the partnership. This reduces uncertainty, distributes responsibilities, and structures the collaboration beyond ad hoc or informal arrangements.
- (v) Aligned goals: The extent to which the objectives of different actors converge, reconciling state interests in cultural diplomacy, private interests in visibility or reputation, and artists' pursuit of symbolic recognition and creative autonomy.

- (vi) Mixed funding: Presence of diverse funding sources, combining public and private contributions, reflecting hybrid governance.
- (vii) Learning process: Knowledge transfer, innovation, and networking generated through the collaboration, with potential long-term impact beyond specific projects.
- (viii) Value orientation: Dominant institutional logic shaping dynamics and outcomes—state logic (emphasis on cultural rights and public welfare), market logic (efficiency, visibility, competitiveness), or artistic/professional logic (autonomy, creativity, symbolic value).

The Biennale is treated as a valuation device, recognized for generating symbolic legitimacy and reputation capital. This study adapted the methodology developed by Johanson *et al.*²¹ using artist portfolios as data to measure the so-called “Venice Effect,”²⁴⁶—the impact of Biennale participation on career trajectories. In addition, this study primarily focused on Chile, highlighting how a peripheral country navigates a global hierarchy, where center countries dominate symbolic and market influence,¹³ revealing both strategies and limitations in symbolic validation, institutional logics, gallery networks, and international exposure.¹² This approach aligns with Moulin’s⁵³ analysis of the interplay between market forces and institutional recognition, highlighting how artistic value is continuously negotiated at the intersection of symbolic and economic circuits.

Although the ideal approach would rely on primary art market data, such information is rarely accessible.²¹ Therefore, artist dossiers (portfolios) serve as a practical alternative, providing a chronological and verifiable record of artistic activity, international exhibitions, and institutional recognition.⁶⁴

3.2. Data sources

Primary data sources include:

- (i) Policy documents and press releases: Retrieved in 2022 from the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile, and the Chilean art online magazine (*Artishock*). Sources were used mostly for mapping public–private dynamics and general context.
- (ii) Transparency requests: Solicited in 2022 and verified via online searches in 2005, confirming the absence of a systematic funding record (except for 2019).
- (iii) Artist dossiers: Retrieved in 2025 from three different sources for all six artists who participated in the Venice Biennale in the Chilean National Pavilion between 2009 and 2019. *Artistas Visuales Chilenos*

- (Chilean Visual Artists) of *Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos* (Directorate of Libraries, Archives, and Museums) for all six, the artists’ official website, and one or two galleries representing the participant.
- (iv) Semi-structured interviews: Conducted in 2022 with five of the participating artists (Iván Navarro, Fernando Prats, Alfredo Jaar, Bernardo Oyarzún, and Voluspa Jarpa) and two private agents. The first agent, Antonio Arévalo, played a key role in curating and securing the official Biennale participation, while the second, Alfonso Díaz, co-managed, through *Fundación Antenna* (Antenna Foundation; a non-profit Chilean organization that fosters philanthropy and collaboration to strengthen the country’s visual arts ecosystem), the funding for Voluspa Jarpa in 2019.

Despite comprehensive data collection, several limitations remain:

- (i) Paz Errázuriz, though included in the dossier analysis, was not interviewed due to unsuccessful contact attempts; therefore, she was not included in the PPP index analysis.
- (ii) Although Lotty Rosenfeld also participated in the 2015 Venice Biennale, she was excluded from the sample as she had deceased in 2020.
- (iii) Alfredo Jaar’s earlier participation in the 1986 exhibition is briefly included for comparative purposes, based on the artist’s own statement regarding early-career impact.

3.3. Data analysis

The research combined quantitative and qualitative analyses, including:

- (i) Public–private dynamics mapping: Each stakeholder’s role and involvement was scored using the PPP index, ranging from 0 (non-existent or uninformed) to 3 (high). Scores were averaged to produce a standardized measure across cases.
- (ii) Career mapping: Artists’ activities were segmented over 5 years before and after their Biennale participation, tracking solo exhibitions, group shows, distinctions, and references, as well as the geographical and institutional scope of each exhibition. To support this, a comprehensive database was constructed, organizing dossier information by type of activity, city, country, institution(s), title, and date, allowing for detailed chronological and categorical analysis of career trajectories.
- (iii) Comparative analysis: Public-private dynamics and career trajectories were compared across artists to identify similarities and variations in outcomes.
- (iv) Interviews were coded using general concepts to contextualize and complement the data. The retrieved

narratives helped explain the different outcomes and revealed gaps in overall coordination.

3.4. Limitations

The 2015 Venice Biennial was not included in the public-private analysis due to miscommunication issues. The lack of accessible public documentation limited the capacity to quantify the state's funding across all editions. Only the 2019 project had a documented resource transfer agreement. In addition, these data limitations affect the generalizability of PPP index scores and the interpretation of the Venice Effect. Historical and qualitative contexts help compensate for incomplete quantitative records.

4. Results

4.1. From marginal participation to official pavilion (1974–2009)

Chile's engagement with the Venice Biennale emerged as a symbolic rather than an official presence. In 1974, the Biennale highlighted opposition to Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship through the *"Libertà per il Cile"* exhibition, featuring artists such as Gracia Barrios and José Balmes. After undergoing organizational changes, the International Art Exhibition did not take place in 1974, while theatre and cinema programs were organized that year and the following year (1975) under the same title and cause. The unofficial presence of Chile continued through curatorial invitations and the interest of the Italo-Latin-American Institute.¹⁵

The first attempt to establish a Chilean pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale took place in 2001, with an exhibition of Juan Downey's work, curated by Antonio Arévalo. Although it was not officially part of the Biennale's perimeter, the pavilion attracted a large audience and received an honorable mention from the organization.

According to Arévalo, the pavilion was hosted at the Thetis, a venue in Venice that was just emerging as an exhibition space and later gained prominence. The pavilion setup was minimal, with no formal services such as waiters and bottle openers. Visitors had to take a small boat to reach the site, and the artworks were presented in an amphitheater. Arévalo personally invited contacts via email, resulting in a turnout of approximately 500 people on the opening day. This initiative reflects both the informal nature of early Chilean participation and the resourcefulness required to secure visibility at the Biennale during that time (Antonio Arévalo, personal interview, October 13, 2022).

The official entry came in 2009, when concerns were raised within diplomatic circles about the limited visibility

of Chilean art in the event. With the support of the Cultural Affairs Department of the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile's official participation in the Venice Biennale was launched.⁶⁵ This marked a turning point: From dispersed curatorial efforts to an institutionalized presence backed by Chilean public institutions and private sponsors. A precedent was set by inviting an emerging artist with international representation, which secured funding and logistics for the event.

In 2011, Chilean curator Carolina Castro¹⁵ acknowledged the efforts involved in launching a national pavilion at the Biennale, while also noting that it was "embarrassing to observe that the pavilion in Venice would not be possible without the sponsorship of international galleries representing "our" artists." She criticized the reliance on foreign financial support to enhance the country's image, arguing that this practice extended beyond the visual arts to a wide range of privatized national assets, including parks and territorial concessions to energy companies.

She had a point: The first two official participations of Chile in the Art Biennale were largely made possible by the involvement of international private entities. She highlighted the cultural fissures embedded in the institutional framework and contended that participation in such high-profile events often served to embellish the surface of Chilean art while failing to address deeper structural issues, such as education, wisdom, and the authentic development of the national art scene.

Over time, the selection process for Chilean representation evolved. The direct-appointment system used in 2009, 2011, and 2013 was replaced by an open call,⁶⁶ with publicly announced requirements, resources, participating institutions, and jury members. This framework mirrored the model of the National Fund for Cultural Development and the Arts, established in 1992, which had undergone its own series of adjustments over the years. Similarly, the governance of artistic affairs shifted from a Cultural Council that answered to the Ministry of Education to a Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Heritage, founded in 2018.⁶⁷

These changes illustrate broader trends in Chilean cultural policy—a growing national interest in international visibility, increasing professionalization, expanding access to global opportunities, and ongoing negotiations regarding the role of public and private actors.

In its early years, the reliance on international galleries demonstrates how public-private collaborations were central to enabling Chilean participation on this global platform. These collaborations reveal both opportunities and tensions: On one hand, access to funding, networks,

and international circulation; on the other, concerns over national cultural sovereignty, policy coherence, and equitable support to artists.

4.2. PPPs index scores by artist

Although PPPs are described as promising instruments in cultural governance,²⁶ the following collaborations are best characterized as project-based arrangements. However, the examined cases offer valuable insights into how functions traditionally associated with state-driven diplomatic tools now involve a wider array of actors from diverse backgrounds and origins.²⁸

The PPP index was applied to all Chilean participations in the Venice Art Biennale from 2009 to 2019 by analyzing seven dimensions. Each dimension was scored on a scale from 1 (very low) to 6 (high), based on qualitative evidence from interviews, funding sources, curatorial involvement, contractual arrangements, and documented learning processes. The resulting scores (Table 1) reflect both the intensity and effectiveness of contributors, as well as the degree of formalization and knowledge transfer.

4.2.1. Scoring rationale by artist

- (i) Iván Navarro: The state contributed moderate funding and limited strategic involvement, mostly related to enabling the first official invitation (public = 4), while the Templon Gallery provided decisive experience and support for production and circulation (private = 6). Professional coordination through curators was essential (professional = 6), but the absence of formal contracts reduced the explicit framework score (score = 2). Goals were partially aligned, primarily in the novelty of the project: The state sought to present a new pavilion, while the gallery supported an emerging artist's debut (aligned goals = 5). Mixed funding was effective (score = 6), and mutual learning was moderate, mostly reflecting the state's reliance on the gallery's know-how (score = 4).
- (ii) Fernando Prats: State support included partial funding and substantial operational and production logistics, as the artwork traveled to Antarctica on a Defense Ministry vessel (public = 5),⁶⁸ with resources complemented by Gallery Joan Prats (private = 5). Curatorial and artistic oversight ensured legitimacy (professional = 6), though formal agreements were lacking (explicit framework = 2). Objectives were aligned, since the artwork showcased the Chilean landscape (score = 6). Co-financing was effective but informal (score = 6), and learning occurred mostly at the individual artistic level (score = 3).
- (iii) Alfredo Jaar: The state's contribution was limited to partial and delayed funding and formal recognition

(score = 2), whereas galleries provided most financial and logistical support (private = 6). Professional involvement was through the artist's studio in New York and curatorial oversight (score = 6). As in the two previous editions, the invitation lacked an explicit framework (score = 2). The artist's goal was to critique the Biennale's hierarchical structure, while the state aimed to consolidate its presence through the participation of a consecrated Chilean artist (score = 1). Mixed funding was modest (score = 3), as private entities provided most of the resources. The learning process was minimal (score = 1), as stakeholder interaction was limited.

- (iv) Bernardo Oyarzún: State funding was essential but insufficient, and the management relied heavily on the artist's initiative (public = 5). Private support was minimal due to the artist's and curator's principled refusal (private = 1). Professional involvement was high (score = 6), as the project's execution depended on the artist's personal resources. The framework was explicit, following an open call similar to that of 2015, but limited by administrative and bureaucratic complications, including taxes required to transfer funds from the Paraguayan account of the curator/commissioner to the artist for production (explicit framework = 4). The objectives were partially aligned (aligned goals = 5), as the exhibition was selected by a state-appointed jury, ensuring the artist's creative control while highlighting the long-standing marginalization of Mapuche communities in Chile. Funding was almost exclusively public (mixed funding = 1), and the learning process (score = 4) was primarily personal and reflective, focusing on navigating logistical and administrative challenges.
- (v) Voluspa Jarpa: Public support was strong, and the state's administration managed the open call for selection, provided part of the funding, and ensured the pavilion's legitimacy (public = 5). The funds were insufficient for the project's ambition; therefore, private contributions were decisive in securing the production, dissemination, and Chilean agents' participation during the event (private = 5). Professional involvement was crucial (score = 6), since the artist and her team orchestrated the collaboration. Selected through an open call, the framework was explicit (score = 6). A notable novelty was that, unlike previous editions, Jarpa negotiated the contract to avoid defining the artwork as a public cultural asset, as stipulated in the previous edition. Objectives were largely aligned due to effective communication practices (aligned goals = 6), financing was clearly hybrid (mixed funding = 6), and mutual learning was consolidated across all three levels (score = 6).

The findings revealed that the PPP index demonstrates substantial variation in the balance of public, private, and professional involvement across Chilean participation in the Venice Art Biennale. Voluspa Jarpa exhibits the strongest overall engagement (PPP = 40), reflecting a robust alignment of objectives, hybrid funding, and structured collaboration between public and private actors.⁶⁹ Iván Navarro and Fernando Prats show similarly high scores (PPP = 33), both driven by decisive private support, experience, and professional coordination, despite limited formal frameworks. In contrast, Alfredo Jaar and Bernardo Oyarzún scored lower (PPP = 21 and PPP = 26, respectively), reflecting a high reliance on the artists' own resources and minimal private or institutional backing.

These differences suggest that while high PPP scores correlate with better-resourced and more coordinated projects, the ultimate “Venice Effect” on career trajectories does not align closely with them (Table 2). Jarpa had strong alignment and hybrid funding but experienced a modest decline in post-Biennale activity (−12), whereas Navarro declined (−20) and Prats increased (+8), indicating that similar PPP levels (PPP = 33) can lead to different outcomes. Alfredo Jaar maintained stable activity (+2) and expanded internationally (+10 countries), while Oyarzún faced a sharp decline (−26 total; −8 countries), highlighting how limited private support constrains potential gains. Overall, the PPP index captures enabling infrastructure, yet the “Venice Effect” depends on both institutional support and broader artistic dimensions.

Table 1. Public-private partnership index and agent mapping for Chilean participation in the Venice Biennale (2009–2019)

Dimension/actor	Artist (participation year)					
	Navarro (2009)	Prats (2011)	Jaar (2013)	Errázuriz (2015)	Oyarzún (2017)	Jarpa (2019)
Selection method	Direct appointment	Direct appointment	Direct appointment	Open call	Open call	Open call
Public	4	5	2	-	5	5
Private	6	5	6	-	1	5
Professional	6	6	6	-	6	6
Framework	2	2	2	-	4	6
Goals	5	6	1	-	5	6
Funding	5	6	3	-	5	6
Learning	4	3	1	-	5	6
PPP index	4.57	4.43	3.39	-	4.29	5,14
Key public actors	DIRAC, CNCA, ProChile	DIRAC, CNCA, Chilean Army, ProChile	DIRAC, CNCA	DIRAC, CNCA	DIRAC, Ministry of Culture	DIRAC, Ministry of Culture
Key private actors	Galerie Templon	Gallery Joan Prats	^a	-	-	<i>Fundación Antenna</i>
Curatorial/professional	Antonio Arévalo; Justo Pastor Mellado	Fernando Castro Flórez	Madeleine Grynstejn	Nelly Richard	Ticio Escobar	Agustín Pérez Rubio

Note: ^aGoodman Gallery (Johannesburg and Cape Town), Galerie Lelong (New York), Kamel Menour (Paris), Galerie Thomas Schulte (Berlin), *Fondazione Giuliani per l'arte contemporanea* (Rome), and *Impresa Construzione Ulisse Navarra* (Rome). Data are based on the author's own elaboration from open call guidelines, interviews with participants, and press analysis.

Abbreviations: CNCA: National Council of Culture and the Arts; DIRAC: Division of Cultures, Arts, Heritage, and Public Diplomacy; PPP: Public-private partnership.

Table 2. Artist activity and public-private partnership index

Artist/category	Public-private partnership index score	Δ Solo exhibitions	Δ Group shows	Δ Total activity	Δ Destination countries
Iván Navarro (2009)	33 ^a	+5	−20 ^b	−20 ^b	0
Fernando Prats (2011)	33 ^a	+10	+6	+8	+3
Alfredo Jaar (2013)	21 ^a	+8	−5 ^b	+2	+10
Bernardo Oyarzún (2017)	26 ^a	+4	−21 ^b	−26 ^b	−8 ^b
Voluspa Jarpa (2019)	40 ^a	+1	−13 ^b	−12 ^b	0

Notes: ^aindicates the total score for PPP index; ^bindicates negative results. Data are based on the author's own elaboration from open call guidelines, artists' dossiers, interviews with participants, and press analysis.

Nevertheless, the “Venice Effect” also varies by category, and overall activity alone does not fully capture its nuances. Reductions in group shows are not necessarily negative, as they may instead reflect a shift toward more selective, high-profile opportunities. Increases in solo exhibitions or international venues often signal career consolidation and the accumulation of symbolic and market privileges, suggesting that changes in specific metrics can indicate strategic advancement rather than professional decline.

The following section examines the “Venice Effect” in greater depth to explore other dimensions that shape its impact, moving beyond overall activity to consider the qualitative shifts in visibility, recognition, and international positioning associated with the Biennale.

4.3. The Venice effect: Measuring its impact on artist trajectories

To assess the impact of participation in the Venice Biennale, a 5-year window before and after each edition was used to analyze four categories: Solo exhibitions, group shows, distinctions, and references. Country diversification was also measured as an indicator of international reach. Each year of participation was compared with the artist's career stage at that time to contextualize the observed variations.

4.3.1. Iván Navarro (2009 Venice Biennale)

This trajectory reflects a shift from quantity to quality. As shown in [Table 3](#), the total activity of Iván Navarro decreased by –20 units, yet solo exhibitions—typically regarded as higher-value opportunities—increased by five. This rise suggests a consolidation in terms of selective privilege, marking a transition from an emerging artist toward more curated and institutionally endorsed formats—a strong indicator of professional consolidation. Furthermore, the reduction in distinctions (–3) and group shows (–20) underscores his increasing emphasis on selectivity and a growing alignment with new opportunities within prestigious international circuits.

His international reach remained stable, with activity recorded across 22 countries, indicating that his participation in Venice maintained rather than diminished his global positioning. The artist reported that the effects of participating in the Biennale have remained positive to this day. He noted that, as an emerging artist, the international positioning and gallery support he had were key to navigating the event, as well as to managing the subsequent changes observed after the Biennale.

4.3.2. Fernando Prats (2011 Venice Biennale)

This case illustrates a distinctly positive “Venice Effect.” Following his participation in the Biennale, solo exhibitions increased by 10 records, while geographic diversification

expanded by three additional countries, suggesting that his participation effectively launched him into broader international circuits.

This interpretation is supported by the artist, who stated that his participation in the Venice Biennale served as an entry point into the international art circuit. He explained that his approach to the exhibition was not as a culmination of his career but rather as a continuation of his mid-career development ([Table 3](#)).

Although there was a decline in distinctions (–2) and bibliographical references (–6), overall activity increased by eight ([Table 3](#)), reinforcing the idea that the Biennale facilitated his integration into higher-visibility international networks.

4.3.3. Alfredo Jaar (2013 Venice Biennale)

In this case, the artist was already an established global figure by the time of his 2013 participation, and the Biennale did not redefine his career. As shown in [Table 3](#), total activity increased only slightly (+2), while country diversification expanded by 10 and solo exhibitions by eight, reflective of a selective privilege consistent with an already consolidated international career. This participation functioned as a symbolic intervention and a critique of the Biennale itself, rather than an expansion tool for his career. When asked about the effects, the artist stated that the most significant impact occurred in 1986, when he became the first Latin American artist to exhibit at the Biennale. Nevertheless, his 2013 participation had notable national repercussions: Shortly after the pavilion's opening, Jaar was awarded Chile's National Art Prize. In the following years, he received an *honoris causa* distinction from the *Universidad de Chile* (University of Chile) in 2021 and later held his first solo exhibition at the *Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes* (National Museum of Fine Arts). This suggests that the Biennale may have contributed to renewed symbolic recognition within Chile's institutional sphere.

As shown in [Table 3](#), his earlier participation in the 1986 Venice Biennale had a catalytic impact: Solo exhibitions increased by 30, group shows by 32, references by five, and country diversification expanded by 9. Overall activity increased by 63, marking 1986 as a decisive turning point in his international projection as an emerging artist. This contrast underscores the relevance of timing and career stage in shaping the Venice Biennale's impact, as early exposure can operate as a breakthrough mechanism with lasting effects.

4.3.4. Paz Errázuriz (2015 Venice Biennale)

The 2015 participation of Paz Errázuriz represents a case of measured and consistent growth. As shown in [Table 3](#),

Table 3. Venice effect: Changes in artistic activity before and after participation in the Biennale

Artist (participation year)	Career stage (years)	Category	Before participation in the Biennale	After participation in the Biennale	Variation
Iván Navarro (2009)	13	Solo exhibition	17	22	5
		Distinction	4	1	-3
		Group show	62	42	-20
		References	9	7	-2
		Total activity	92	72	-20
		Destination countries	22	22	0
Fernando Prats (2011)	19	Solo exhibition	19	29	10
		Distinction	2	0	-2
		Group show	16	22	6
		References	12	6	-6
		Total activity	49	57	8
		Destination countries	7	10	3
Alfredo Jaar (2013)	34	Solo exhibition	27	35	8
		Distinction	0	1	1
		Group show	148	143	-5
		References	12	10	-2
		Total activity	187	189	2
		Destination countries	29	39	10
Alfredo Jaar (1986)	7	Solo exhibition	3	33	30
		Distinction	5	1	-4
		Group show	28	60	32
		References	2	7	5
		Total activity	38	101	63
		Destination countries	7	16	9
Paz Errázuriz (2015)	35	Solo exhibition	16	22	6
		Distinction	2	3	1
		Group show	12	12	0
		References	10	10	0
		Total activity	40	47	7
		Destination countries	10	11	1
Bernardo Oyarzún (2017)	19	Solo exhibition	3	7	4
		Distinction	2	0	-2
		Group show	29	8	-21
		References	10	3	-7
		Total activity	44	18	-26
		Destination countries	10	2	-8
Voluspa Jarpa (2019)	23	Solo exhibition	8	9	1 ^b
		Distinction	2	3	1
		Group show	23	10	-13
		References	2	1	-1
		Total activity	35	23	-12
		Destination countries	14	14	0

Notes: Data were compiled from three primary sources for each artist: *Artistas Visuales Chilenos* (Chilean Visual Artists) of *Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos* (Directorate of Libraries, Archives, and Museums), the artists' official website, and one or two representing galleries.

solo exhibitions increased by six, distinction increased by one, and group shows and references remained stable. These shifts resulted in a total activity increased by 7, suggesting that the participation in Venice contributed to the consolidation of an already established trajectory of 34 years (Table 3).

No major changes were observed in her geographic diversification, consistent with a well-balanced exhibition record across the national territory—including regional and civic cultural centers—indicating a stable circulation framework already in place before Venice.

Notably, her institutional visibility was further strengthened within both national and international circuits focused on feminist and documentary practices. At the national level, the artist received the National Art Prize in 2017, while institutions such as the *National Museum of Fine Arts* continue to play a central role.

4.3.5. Bernardo Oyarzún (2017 Venice Biennale)

The 2017 edition presents the most pronounced decline in total activity among the cases studied. As shown in Table 3, Bernardo Oyarzún's overall activity dropped by 26 units, while country diversification decreased significantly (−8). Although solo exhibitions increased by four, this shift stems from a low baseline and should be interpreted with caution. Group shows (−21) and references (−7) declined significantly, further signaling a shift in career dynamics.

His career post-Venice Biennale appears to have turned inward, focusing more on local and territorial engagement, a direction aligned with the artist's stated interest and long-term research. Notably, his Chilean exhibitions are not centralized in the capital; on the contrary, they are distributed across the country, reinforcing a deliberate strategy of decentralization and cultural redistribution within the national context.

4.3.6. Voluspa Jarpa (2019 Venice Biennale)

The results for this case are mixed, partly influenced by the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As shown in Table 3, Voluspa Jarpa's total activity decreased by 12, yet solo exhibitions increased by one, and international reach remained stable across 14 countries. While the quantitative effects are limited, qualitative evidence suggests that participation in Venice enabled the artist to reposition herself within international circuits. Her gallery in France, Mor Charpentier, reported a rise in the market value of her artworks.

The artist herself attributes these positive outcomes to the learning and professional exposure gained through the intensive process of preparing and presenting in Venice.

She emphasized the scale and stakes of the event, stating that “not just anyone can exhibit in Venice, being there can also be the graveyard of a career.” In her view, successfully presenting work at such levels demonstrates the extent of what an artist is capable of achieving.

4.4. Discussion and contextual analysis

The Venice Biennale goes beyond a mere exhibition—it is an arena for symbolic production, competition, cultural positioning, and the projection of national identity. The Chilean experience shows that private support is both a reality and a key driver of the nation's participation. In this light, PPPs are potentially valuable instruments for cultural promotion and internationalization. However, their impact remains unpredictable, as the actors and resources involved constantly change and manifest as project-based arrangements. Hence, it is unclear whether these partnerships benefit the partners involved equally or whether the loosely structured collaborations tend to privilege one sphere over the other.

From an institutional perspective, the Biennale signifies a missed opportunity for a more structured approach to cultural diplomacy. As argued by Marco and Otero,²⁸ if a nation's image is influenced by actors beyond governmental structures, public institutions must develop their capacity to coordinate and activate these stakeholders. The pavilions operate within the domain of symbolic capital, where the generated value tends to be diffuse and often invisible within political agendas. However, this does not imply a lack of returns; rather, it indicates that Chile's public cultural policies are insufficiently equipped to measure and manage these returns effectively.

The constant changes, coupled with the lack of transparency and data on public spending, complicate the further evaluation of the returns from these participations and the formulation of policy recommendations. The answer is complex when viewed through the lenses of public policy. Evidence confirms that the Biennale can produce positive outcomes, especially regarding institutional visibility, artistic recognition, and long-term career advancement. As for the state's cultural projection, simply “being there” suggests that the country respects and supports its artists and cultural diversity (Fernando Prats, personal interview, October 6, 2022).

Although the commercial dimension of these effects was not measured, the artists who had an international gallery supporting their pavilion—such as Navarro, Prats, and Jaar—demonstrated higher levels of activity, indicating broader circulation within the international art scene than those without such affiliations. However, the impact of the Biennale on each artist's career tends to yield more positive

outcomes when artists are supported by private entities. Nevertheless, this argument is supported by contrast when observing Oyarzún's case, where the absence of private backing coincided with weaker effects.

To address the outcomes perceived by the artists, one must consider that, overall, the Venice Effect is inconsistent and highly uneven. Additional dimensions beyond funding patterns emerge, and these are briefly outlined below:

4.4.1. Career stage

The stage of an artist's career influences the effects, especially in terms of showcasing consolidated artists such as Alfredo Jaar and Paz Errázuriz. Both artists participated in the Biennale with over 30 years of active careers (Table 3), and their outcomes tend to reinforce pre-existing reputations rather than generate major growth in activity. Furthermore, both established artists received the Chilean National Art Prize shortly after their participation in Venice.

The only emerging artist featured in the Chilean pavilion was Iván Navarro, and although his overall outcomes showed a decline, a positive effect was observed in solo exhibitions and in the maintenance of a wide geographical diversification across 22 countries. Although the catalytic effect is more evident in Jaar's 1986 exhibition, the volume of Navarro's activity at that career stage remains remarkable and difficult to sustain.

Regarding mid-career artists, Prats stands out compared to Jarpa and Oyarzún, showing substantial growth in solo exhibitions. In contrast, the latter two display more modest or declining activity. Regardless, dimensions such as geographical positioning and unforeseen events influenced their outcomes, including the impacts of relocation and the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.4.2. Geographic positioning

In terms of activity volume, the exhibitions by Navarro, Prats, and Jaar stand apart from the rest, demonstrating higher levels of activity compared to those of Errázuriz, Oyarzún, and Jarpa. The key difference is that Navarro, Prats, and Jaar had established themselves in New York and Barcelona years prior to their participation in the Biennale, securing an international positioning that the others had not yet achieved. A relevant metric for this is artistic mobility, and these findings provide clear evidence of its impact.

4.4.3. Unforeseen events

External factors beyond the artist's control, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and mass uprisings like Chile's *Estallido Social* in October 2019—a popular revolt against

neoliberal policies and deep structural inequalities—disrupted exhibiting circuits and funding flows, restricted mobility, and reshaped institutional agendas. These external forces can obscure or interrupt the catalytic effects typically associated with Biennale participation, underscoring how artistic trajectories are also conditioned by broader struggles and systemic crises.

Returning to the public-private dynamics and their correspondence with the Venice Effect, the 2019 edition stands out as an anomaly—a rare case of public-private synergy that amplified impact, broadened networks, and revealed what effective partnerships can accomplish. The fact that it remains exceptional underscores an urgent need for improved coordination, institutional knowledge retention, and strategic foresight.

Until such improvements occur, determining whether participation is “worth it” will remain contingent: Yes, but only if executed effectively. This requires ensuring inclusivity and recognizing the value of alternative international platforms to assess which best align with the realities of Chilean art production and available resources.

Nonetheless, econometric studies and the quantification of cultural data remain debated topics, as the social and symbolic role of culture should be sufficient to justify public funding in this field.⁷⁰ That discussion, however, lies beyond the present scope.

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to determine whether public-private dynamics influenced the career trajectories of artists following their participation in the official Chilean pavilion at the Venice Art Biennale, during the first decade since its launch. It combined dossier-based analysis with semi-structured interviews to examine the impact behind the so-called “Venice Effect” on each artist's career and the potential of a multistakeholder policy model. Although the subject remains open and context-dependent, this study identifies several key findings.

The study revealed that the impact of the Venice Biennale is an inconsistent factor in shaping the careers of these six artists. While some artists, such as Fernando Prats, Iván Navarro, and Voluspa Jarpa, leveraged the platform to maintain or consolidate their entry into international circuits, others, including Alfredo Jaar and Paz Errázuriz, used it to reinforce their already established status. Bernardo Oyarzún's case illustrates the challenges of a highly symbolic exhibition that relied solely on institutional support and local anchoring. However, cases such as Oyarzún's illustrate that visibility does not always translate into sustainability. Even with institutional support, artists

may face stagnation, particularly when re-entering local circuits without adequate follow-up or strategic guidance. Meanwhile, well-structured frameworks, such as Jarpa's 2019 participation, allow artists to focus on production and international exposure.

These findings support the idea that the "Venice Effect" is real but contingent, and that international cultural projection depends on strategic planning, the dimension of artistic recognition, and cross-sector alignment. The results indicate that the observed outcomes were less influenced by the mere act of participation and more by artists' international networks, career stages, unforeseen events, and the presence—or absence—of structural support and administrative systems.

Building on the main conceptual pillars of this study, prioritizing cultural access and the democratization of artistic opportunities emerges as a key consideration when examining the logic of state-funded platforms such as national pavilions. The evolution of the process, from diplomatic appointments to public contests, reflects an ongoing effort to promote culture as a public good tied to national interests and global representation.²⁴ At the same time, it reveals persistent gaps in evaluation mechanisms, systematized archives, accessible cultural data, and updated structures for cross-sector bridging networks necessary to foster collaboration. These are crucial components for ensuring smoother administrative processes and optimizing cultural policies that acknowledge the complexities of contemporary international cultural projection.

PPPs, although traditionally applied to infrastructure, have found increasing application in the cultural sector, offering a flexible framework for cooperation between the state and private agents. As noted by Casado,³² Devlin and Moguillansky,²³ and Minguella,⁴⁰ there is no fixed formula for implementing PPPs—a point further supported by the present study, as the collaborations examined are highly idiosyncratic and context dependent. Only the 2019 selected project displayed the defining characteristics of a PPP, while the other editions appeared more occasional and fragmented in nature.

Nevertheless, the Chilean experience reveals that the Biennale's impact on artists' careers tends to be greater when participation is backed by private entities with international management capacity, as the formal and logistical burdens are lifted from the artist. In this light, PPPs represent a valuable instrument for cultural promotion.

As for the last theoretical topic, drawn from Velthuis²⁴ and Johanson *et al.*,²³ the Venice Biennale can be conceptualized as a "valuation device"—a platform that

produces both symbolic capital and international visibility. However, its impact is highly variable and reflects the inherent tensions between symbolic recognition and commercial circulation. As Quemin⁵⁹⁻⁶¹ argues, the event also reveals persistent global power asymmetries and hierarchies within the art world. This is particularly relevant in the Chilean case, where higher volumes of international artistic activity are most evident among artists living abroad, such as Navarro, Prats, and Jaar. Therefore, the so-called "Venice Effect" is neither automatic nor guaranteed; it is conditioned by the artist's prior trajectory, the institutional network supporting the participation, and broader circulation dynamics.

However, the combination of these pillars enabled an exploratory approach grounded in a hybrid methodology. Drawing conclusions from this method, the dossier analysis developed here could serve purposes beyond academic inquiry. With adequate institutional support and a more robust entity recognition system, these databases could become valuable tools for cultural management, career development, funding allocation, and the articulation of multistakeholder support networks. Such an approach is particularly relevant in contexts where traditional economic indicators fall short and a deeper, more integrated understanding is required. Future studies are recommended to explore the interactions between data-driven profiles and broader narratives within international platforms.

There is no fixed pattern or formula for achieving recognition and prestige within the art world. However, there are identifiable commonalities, such as internationalization and participation in events like the Venice Biennale, that provide insight into how different artists reach that milestone.

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Ethics approval and consent to participate

The first version and extended version of this article were approved by the Ethics Committee of the International

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Consent for publication

Interviewees gave verbal consent on the publication of their data.

Availability of data

Data used in this study can be obtained from publicly available artist portfolios, including:

- (i) <https://www.artistasvisualeschilenos.cl/658/w3-channel.html>
- (ii) <https://danieltemplon.com>
- (iii) <https://lucianabritogaleria.com.br>
- (iv) <https://galleryhyundai.com>
- (v) <https://alfredojaar.net>
- (vi) <https://www.goodman-gallery.com>
- (vii) <https://fernandoprats.cl>
- (viii) <https://www.galeriajoanprats.com/es>
- (ix) <https://www.mor-charpentier.com/es>
- (x) <http://www.pazerrazuriz.com>
- (xi) <https://www.galeriapready.cl>
- (xii) <https://artishockrevista.com>
- (xiii) <https://www.voluspajarpa.com>

Further disclosure

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