

## The survivors of torture

### Adriana



was a member of the Chilean Communist Party when she was arrested in Talca on 23 April 1975 by a civil patrol. First she was detained in the "Colonia Dignidad" before being transported to Santiago. Afterwards she was held in a house, the address of which she was able to discover after removing the blindfold, when she found an electricity bill with the address "*Irán 3037*": the address of the "*Venda Sexy*".

"On 23 April my life changed completely, when I was incarcerated in the "*Colonia Dignidad*". Since then there has been a "before" and an "after" for myself and my daughters. I never imagined that a person could suffer such humiliations, and never did I believe which excesses sadism could lead to. Never, neither before nor after, could I tragically measure my own fragility, but also my own strength. In the face of torture I experienced the power of inner dignity, and that made me free forever."

### Armando



was a member of the Chilean Communist Party when he was arrested in 1975 and taken to the "*Nido 20*" camp, where he witnessed several murders, one of them by chain strikes. He was then transferred to the "*Melinka*" prison camp in *Puchuncaví*, where he was finally released. He refused the offer of the Red Cross to go abroad and stayed in *Chile* to join the resistance. In 1986 he was arrested a second time, held by the civil police in Santiago for almost three months, but at least without being tortured.

## Carlos



was arrested on 18 May 1976 and stayed for a short time in the "*Clínica de Santa Lucia*". Subsequently he was transferred to the "*Villa Grimaldi*" and finally at the beginning of July transferred to "*4 Álamos*" to a larger group of heavily tortured fellow prisoners. After a further captivity in "*3 Álamos*". On 24 June 1977 he was sent into forced exile to Sweden. It was not until 1988 that he was allowed to return; however, he went to Berlin in 1991 and returned to *Chile* as late as 1996.

"Shortly after our arrest it became clear to all of us that we had to strengthen the left-wing parties and movements as a unity. Sectarianism does not make sense, under no circumstances and for none of us [...] For us, the enemy was exclusively the cruel dictatorship that oppressed us daily [...] just waiting for us to destroy each other. The self-organization of the prisoners and the huge solidarity among each other were something like a collective therapy [...]"

## Danilo



was already arrested on 7 July 1973 on the destroyer *Blanco Encalada* as an alleged member of the "*Marinos Constitucionalistas*", a group of sailors who tried to protect the Allende government from the coup. On 4 September 1973 he was taken to the "*Cuartel Silva Palma*", where he was beaten and sadistically tortured, but in 1973 he was finally released.

In March 1976 he was arrested again and taken to the Fort "*el Morro*" de *Talcahuano*. There he was tortured again, among other things by being dunked upside down into a barrel full of water and urine. Two days later "I was brought to a man who was allegedly the chief of the secret service (Captain Fuentes) and he told me that they had examined me for a long time, but that they had found nothing. I had to promise not to talk about the torture in order to be released, and if not, they would come and get me again."

## Haydee



was born in 1954. As a student of history and geography in Valparaíso she was elected Representative of her course in the Student Association and member of *MAPU*. She was expelled from university after the coup and banned from studying. At the end of 1975, a few days after her mother and her one-and-a-half-year-old daughter had been arrested in *Valparaíso*, Haydee was arrested in Santiago and transferred to the "*Cuartel Silva Palma*" in *Valparaíso*. At that time she was four months pregnant. During the interrogations a miscarriage was induced with a curved dagger. Later the Naval Intelligence Service transferred her to the *DINA* (*Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia*), which continued the interrogations in various torture centres in *Santiago*, including the Air Force War Academy, "*Villa Grimaldi*" and "*4 Álamos*". In "*3 Álamos*" she was imprisoned for the last time. After its closure in 1976 she was released due to international pressure. Although several countries offered her asylum, she stayed in *Chile* and was rearrested several times in the following years.

## Fermín



was born in 1947. As a student of social work and member of *MIR* (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) he was arrested on 17 September 1975 in Bolivia, along with a group of Argentinean, Bolivian and Chilean fighters from the People's Liberation Army/Revolutionary Workers' Party (*ELN-PRT*). He was taken from *Cochabamba* to *La Paz* in the secret prison "*Achacolla*" and finally on 13 March 1976 together with other Chileans as part of the "*Operación Cóndor*" (*Coordinated Cooperation of the Latin American Dictatorships*) he was illegally transferred to the *DINA* in *Arica*; thereafter he was taken to "*3 y 4 Álamos*", "*Villa Grimaldi*" and finally to Puchuncaví in the "*Melinka*" prison camp from which he was released at the end of 1976. They arrested him again in October 1980 during his attempt to leave the country with the support of the *MIR* (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*). He stayed 20 days in the "*Cuartel Borgoño*". In the ensuing military trial he was accused and sentenced as a member of the *MIR*. "After 11 years in various prisons I was finally released in October 1991. In June 2016 we, a group of survivors, succeeded in preventing the complete demolition of the former headquarters of the *CNI* (*Central Nacional de Informaciones*), thus creating a place of

remembrance commemorating arrests, torture, murder and at the same time a place of resistance.

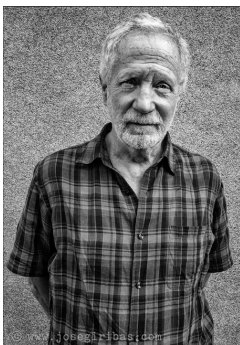
## Eduardo



was arrested in July 1980 by the police (*carabineros*) after his involvement in several bank robberies to raise money for the resistance. Because of a head injury suffered during the arrest he was first admitted to hospital and then transferred to the "*Cuartel Borgoño*" of the CNI (*Central Nacional de Informaciones*). He was released after two days, then rearrested in September 1980 and tortured with electric shocks on the so-called grill. After being transferred to Santiago prison, he stayed there eleven years without a proper trial.

"I am currently working with the Committee for the Preservation of „*Cuartel Borgoño*“, whose aim is to turn this place of terror into a place of recognition honouring those who sought a life of dignity for our country and suffered torture and death in doing so.

## Helios



was a student of engineering when he joined the *MIR* (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) in 1972. In 1974 he joined the resistance and collaborated with the Socialist Party. On 22 September 1974 his mother was arrested and detained in the "*Venda Sexy*" so that he would turn himself in. He himself was arrested on 23 September 1974 and held at the "*Venda Sexy*" for one week before being taken to "*4 Álamos*" for four months. In November 1974 he was expelled to Spain and fled from there to France in 1975 to escape the Franco regime.

"I noticed how fragile one is and I consciously felt dehumanization."

## Jaime



was arrested on 5 May 1975, imprisoned and tortured until 20 May 1975 in the "*Villa Grimaldi*", then detained in "*3 y 4 Álamos*" and in the "*Melinka*" prison camp in *Puchuncavi*. He was released in June 1976.

"Let's continue on the same road to achieve the same goal that those of us had who were political prisoners during the dictatorship: to end exploitation, misery and injustice in order to achieve a better world."

## Jorge



was a member of the *MAPU* when he was arrested on 3 October 1973 in *Valparaíso* by the naval secret service. Within 14 months he passed through various naval camps and facilities, including the "*Cuartel Silva Palma*", the prison and hospital of *Valparaíso*, where he was taken to for the treatment of spinal column injuries caused by torture. He was given his freedom in exchange for exile. On 7 February 1975 he left the country with the help of Amnesty International. For years to come he was dependent on a wheelchair due to spinal injuries. He still needs crutches to this very.

"The government of Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1995-2000) had the motto: 'Let's turn the page and only look to the future' to leave the past with the crimes behind. One of the main reasons for my work (as a journalist) was to establish the historical memory of these crimes in Chilean society. No to oblivion!"

## José



joined the Chilean Navy in 1965. He belonged to the "*Marinos Constitucionalistas*", a group of sailors who tried to protect the Allende government from the coup. In August 1973 José Lagos was arrested aboard a cruiser, and was placed in solitary confinement in the "*Cuartel Silva Palma*". He then went through several camps where he was tortured; in the end he was detained in the public prison of *Valparaíso* until his release in August 1976, after serving his prison sentence imposed by *Valparaíso*'s public prosecutor's office. He went into exile in 1977 and has lived in Berlin ever since.

## José Miguel



was born in 1943 in *Santiago de Chile*. He was co-founder of the *Frente de Trabajadores Revolucionarios (FTR)*, the trade union organization of the *MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria)*, and was actively involved in the *JAP (Junta de Abastecimientos y Precios)*, a citizens' initiative to support the Allende government by distributing food. On 17 September 1973 he was unfairly dismissed from his job on the grounds that he had violated the Labour Code. Four days later he was arrested at his home by Air Force personnel, taken to the National Stadium, interrogated and tortured. He was released on 3 November 1973 and was able to leave for Argentina with the help of the *Comité pro Paz*. When Chilean expatriates were also persecuted in Argentina, José Miguel went into exile to Berlin.

## Lautaro



As a member of the *MIR* from February to October 1976 he was imprisoned, first in the "*Villa Grimaldi*" followed by various stays in the secret clinic "*Santa Lucía*", in "*3 y 4*"



*Álamos*", in the barracks *Silva Palma*, then in "*Puchuncavi*" prison camp and again in "*3 Álamos*". A court martial in *Valparaíso* ended in 1976 with subsequent banishment and exile in Venezuela. He returned to Chile in 1991. His wife was also arrested and released only after his departure. His sister Lumi Videla Moya was tortured to death by the secret police *DINA* on 3 November 1974. Then her body was thrown into the garden of the Italian embassy, and the rumour was spread that she had died in an orgy by refugees in the embassy. The autopsy revealed that she had been suffocated.

"As an organizational representative of the *MIR* in *Santiago* I knew of course a lot of people, so that I was often tortured to reveal information, but on the other hand there was the interest to keep me alive in order to perhaps still find out more.

Due to unexpected friendly actions of my guards I learnt that the 'Stockholm Syndrome' can actually occur in both directions [...] and finally I learned that in the end our 'traitors' are also victims."

### **María Antonia**



After being arrested on 5 October 1973 by the police (*carabineros*) he was admitted to the building of the former Military Naval Academy, a torture centre of the so-called "death squadrons" of the Special Naval Forces. She was transferred first to a ship, then to the women's prison "*Buen Pastor*". In March 1974 she was transferred with three other women to the "*Silva Palma*" barracks where she was subjected to interrogations and torture. Back in "*Buen Pastor*" she was informed of her expulsion; on 13 November 1974 she was taken together with her daughter to *Santiago* airport to be exiled indefinitely to the GDR.

"There was never a trial nor was I entitled to a lawyer. I received neither unemployment benefits nor any compensation for losing my job. There were no concrete accusations, only politically motivated persecution."

## Orlando



was born in 1946. On 12 September 1973 he was arrested as a "very dangerous person" at his workplace. He was taken to the prison of the town of *Linares*, where he was held in solitary confinement for about a month in a 2 x 2m isolation cell. Later he was taken with a group of prisoners to the regimental barracks of *Linares*, where they stayed about four months. He went through several, including "*Chacabuco*" in the *Atacama* Desert, in "*Puchuncavi*" prison camps and "*3 y 4 Álamos*", until he was released in July 1976.

## Soledad



was a member of the youth organisation of the Communist Party of Chile when she was arrested for the first time at the age of 16 by the "*Comando Conjunto*" in 1975. She was first detained in the former premises of the newspaper "*El Clarín*", later taken to the "*Villa Grimaldi*" and to "*4 Álamos*", from where she was finally released. The 16-year-old girl was severely injured in the chest by electroshock torture.

In 1976 she was arrested again, was held prisoner for two months in the "*Villa Grimaldi*" and afterwards again in "*4 Álamos*". On 10 September 1976 she was released from "*3 Álamos*".

"Since I was still a minor in "*3 Álamos*", many fellow inmates offered me lessons, which I gladly accepted. After one week, however, it was unbearable, since from 10 o'clock on I was the only student whom everybody wanted to teach [...]"

But my story doesn't end there: I completed my school education, later studied law and graduated with a master's degree in human rights. Today I am a part of those who still seek justice, truth, reparation and remembrance".



## Patricia



was arrested on 23 August 1984 by *CNI* agents at her home in *Concepción* while she waited for her four-year-old daughter to come home from kindergarten. The arrest took place as part of the operation *Alfa Carbón*, in which the *CNI* executed seven *MIR* members, including Nelson Herrera, her husband.

The next morning she was taken to the "*Cuartel Borgoño*" in *Santiago* where she was beaten, tortured with electricity, threatened with death and disappearance. She was returned to *Concepción* and handed over to the military prosecutor's office. In 1985 she was transferred to the prison in *Coronel* along with other female prisoners.

"A year later I was released on probation and it was not until 2007 that we were acquitted of all allegations, regained our civil rights and had our entry as terrorists in the civil register deleted."

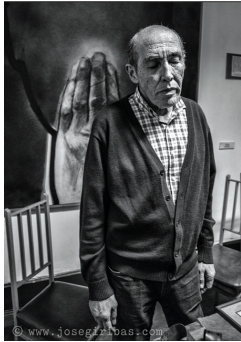
## Pedro Alejandro



was a student at the Universidad de *Chile* and member of the Socialist Party when he was arrested in May 1975 by persons in civilian clothes and admitted to the "*Venda Sexy*" for about one week. He then passed through several camps before being allowed to leave the "*Cuartel Silva Palma*" for New York in July 1976, after being questioned by US embassy staff.

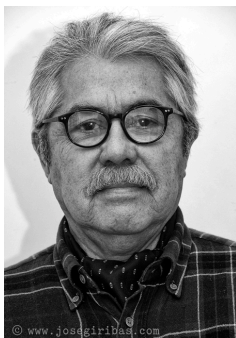
"*Venda Sexy*" is a profound, emotional and psychological turning point in my understanding and concept of being human [...] through the revelation of the dark sides that man carries within himself."

## Samuel



was a member of the Liaison Committee of the members of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party; he went underground after the coup d'état. He was arrested by the *DINA* (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*) on 17 March 1974 and taken to "Londres 38". Then he was imprisoned in the following detention camps: "Tejas verdes", "Estadio Chile", "Cárcel de los Médicos" (former school of the social service of the university of Chile), "Camp of Chacabuco" (in the *Atacama* Desert), where he was a member of the Council of Elders. In the "Melinka" prison camp in *Puchuncaví* he participated in a hunger strike to denounce the murder of the so-called "119" in Argentina. He was released from "3 Álamos" after 18 months.

## Santiago



was born in 1948. He became a student of social work, but was expelled from university in September 1973 because of his political commitment. Then he worked in a locksmith's shop. His first arrest by the *DINA* (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*) took place in March 1975. In the "Villa Grimaldi" he stayed in a small cell without daylight and in which he could only sit. After about four weeks he was transferred to "4 Álamos", then "3 Álamos" and finally to the "Melinka" prison camp in *Puchuncaví*. He was released in October 1975. In 1987 he was arrested again with subsequent separation from his family and forced exile in Spain.

"For this is one of our other psychological burdens: The silence, the feeling that all these horrible and dehumanizing experiences cannot be told."

On 18 July 2018 Santiago Oyarzo Pérez died in Chile after a brief, but serious illness.

## Shaíra



As a member of the Communist Party of Chile she was arrested by the *DINA* (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*) in July 1975 and first brought to *José Domingo Cañas 1367*, then to the "*Villa Grimaldi*" for some days, finally to "*4 Álamos*". For one month she was taken together with 120 other prisoners from "*4 Álamos*" to the holiday resort "*El Salitre*" in *San Juan de Pirque* to deceive a UN commission investigating human rights violations. Shaira was then transferred to "*3 Álamos*" from where she was released in 1975. She went into exile to Paris.

## Victor



was a member of the *Marinos Constitucionalistas* and was arrested on 8 August 1973 on the ship "*Kreuzer Prat*". First he was held in solitary confinement in the "*Borgoño Fortress*" near Talcahuano where he was tortured by sailors of the Marine Corps. He then passed through the naval base "*Cuartel Rodríguez*", the prison of *Concepción* and the prison of *Valparaíso*.

"At the end of 1975 I fell ill with tuberculosis and was sent to the sanatorium in *Peñablanca*. There I remained as a dangerous prisoner (with two guards) until September 1976. Then I could go into the exile to Oslo due to the solidarity of the Norwegian government.

## Angel



was arrested as a member of the *MIR* (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) on 17 August 1978 and brought to the "*Cuartel Borgoño*" where he was tortured until 23 August. "The place where I was tortured was destroyed in 1996-97 to build the new anti-drug unit building of the *PDI* (*Policía de Investigaciones*)."

He was then transferred to *Santiago* prison along with other members of the resistance. He was charged under the "Law on Internal Security and Arms Control" and sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

"I was released from prison on 12 May 1987 after eight years and eight months and served the remainder of my sentence on probation".

## Armando



was a student and worker in the textile industry. He was already arrested on 11 September 1973 and then taken to "*Estadio Chile*", then to the "*National Stadium*" until 16 October 1973. After he had already joined a coordination office for former political prisoners, he has worked for the "*Memorial Estadio Nacional*" since 2012 and supports the establishment of memorials in the complex of the "*National Stadium*".

"Our lives depended on the simple gesture of madmen who, like Roman emperors, determined our lives by raising or lowering their thumbs".

## Higinio



As a member of the Central Committee of *MIR* (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria*) he was first arrested on 3 April 1975. He was first tortured in the "Villa Grimaldi", then taken to "3 Álamos" and finally transferred to the "*Melinka*" prison camp near *Puchuncavi* until he was released in 1976. In 1977 he went underground, and in 1983 he was again imprisoned until September 1991.

"From the moment I was released, I dedicated my life to the cause of memory, truth, justice and reparation.

State terrorism and genocide by a dictator cannot go unpunished, because it is the prerequisite for history not to repeat itself and for promoting the construction of a juster and more civilized society".

## Oscar

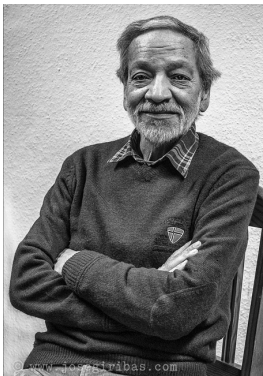


In 1966 he was one of the founders of the student theatre group *Aleph* in Chile, which was founded upon the initiative of Eduardo Sabrovsky. On 20 November 1974 Oscar and his sister were arrested and taken to the "*Villa Grimaldi*". A few days later his mother and his brother-in-law, a member of the *MIR*, went to the secret police to question the reason of the arrest. Both of them were arrested and have since disappeared. Oscar Castro then went through the camps "*3 and 4 Álamos*", "*Melinka*" prison camp in *Puchuncavi* and again "*3 Álamos*" until he was released on 20 November 1976. After his release Ramirez went into exile with his wife and sister to France, where he founded the *Aleph Theatre* in Ivry sur Seine.

The French government appointed Oscar Castro Ramirez Knight of the Legion of Honour on 14 July 2018.

"Every failure is a strange victory".

## Fedor



was born in *Lota*, Chile in 1954. At the time of the military coup he was a member of the Communist Youth and Student Guide. He was first arrested on 13 September 1973 and detained for six days on the island of *Quiriquina*. After his second arrest on 22 September 1973 he was detained in the regional stadium of *Concepción* until 15 January 1974. Then they sent him to the camp "*Chacabuco*" where he was held until the closure of this camp at the end of 1974. Until the middle of 1975 he was detained in the "*Melinka*" prison camp in Puchuncaví and later transferred to " ".

"From this camp I was expelled at the beginning of September 1975 together with about one hundred prisoners from Chile to Panama: with a re-entry ban".

## Abbreviations and explanations

MIR: *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (Movement of the Revolutionary Left)

FTR: *Frente de Trabajadores Revolucionarios* (Front of Revolutionary Workers)

DINA: *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (Director of the National Intelligence Service) until 1977.

CNI: *Central Nacional de Informaciones* (successor to DINA) from 1977.

MAPU: *Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria* (Movement of the Unified People's Action)

FACH: *Fuerza Aérea de Chile* (Chilean Air Force)

SIFA: *Servicio de Inteligencia de la Fuerza Aerea* (Air Force Intelligence Service)

"*Comando Conjunto*" (Joint Command):

The Joint Command was responsible for coordinating the intelligence work of the various security services of the army and the police (*carabineros*). Its existence was secret and illegal.

"*Camp Chacabuco*":

a dilapidated former *salpetre* mine in the *Atacama* Desert.

"*Melinka Camp*":

Camp in *Puchuncaví* about 100 km north of *Santiago*, formerly a recreational facility for working class families.

"*Case of the 119*":

Operation *Colombo* was a military action in the days of the Chilean military dictatorship (1975), which led to the disappearance of 119 opposition members. This issue was to be clarified after the end of the Chilean military dictatorship. According to the prosecution, the Chilean secret service DINA had murdered undesirable opposition members under the order of the dictator Augusto Pinochet and tried to blame these murders on left-wing guerrillas of the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* (MIR). The accused were Pinochet and the former General Manuel Contreras. However, Pinochet, who had been declared fit to stand trial in 2005, died in 2006. In 2008 the former Colonel Mario Manríquez Bravo was sentenced as the person responsible for carrying out the operation. Judge Juan Eduardo Fuentes Belmar subsequently closed the case.