

Elías Adasme

Elías Adasme was a member of a group of artists who attempted to offer their paralyzed society an alternative narrative to Pinochet's military dictatorship in public space. One of Adasme's best-known works from this time is *A Chile* (1979–80). In his five-part photo series, Adasme directly relates his own body to the map of Chile. In the first four photographs, he writes and projects the map onto his body, and hangs upside down with it on a subway station sign. These images were put up in the streets of Santiago and their documentation was in turn integrated into the work in the form of a fifth panel. In *La Araucana* 81 (1981/2013), the artist's body was described in a similar way and became the physical bearer of Chile's history of colonization. The series, consisting of four photographs, shows the artist lying on the ground being covered in earth, then standing up, and finally thrusting his arms triumphantly into the air; the Chilean map hangs on the wall behind him. The quotation written on his chest is taken from the 16th-century epic poem, *The Araucaniad*, relating Chile's history of conquest in the Arauco War of the 1550s during which native people successfully battled against the Spanish conquerors. By recalling the historic resistance of Chile's ancestors, Adasme achieves a parallel to the more contemporary resistance that took place during the Pinochet regime. (SW)

Elías Adasme (*1955 in Illapel, Chile, lives and works in Puerto Rico) studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts at University of Chile. His work has recently been shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Juan (2009), Reina Sofía, Madrid (2012), and Fondation Cartier, Paris (2013).

