A thin layer of translucent blue hovers above the image of a young blond woman whose flawless beauty is of the type featured in an advertisement. Traces of red pigment streak her face, connecting the billboard on which her image appears to the tensions of the metropolis; the bluish tone heightens the nocturnal or cinematographic effect. The harmony of the blond woman of *La gran tentación* (*The Great Temptation*), her features and the silkiness of her skin enhance the persuasive authority of this physically perfect girl, who holds in one hand, its nails painted red, a cluster of French coins and, in the other, a car, as if offering a gift. “If you are beautiful and blond, you can have all this,” the image seems to say.

Is this an ad for a car (a Buick? a Pontiac?) that makes reference to the poster for the 1958 film *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman*? In any case, she is powerful, whether by virtue of her stereotypical beauty or because of her larger-than-life-size presence on the billboard. Above the car, a blotch of red paint explodes. A terrorist attack, a sign of violence, clashing worlds, meanings and senses. Below, or on the other side, separated by a fence made of pieces of tin and paint, a group of characters stands in a grotesque parade; the people’s faces are deformed;
their expressions exuberant and strident. The group walks amid pieces of trash, the representation of their gestures and bodies diametrical to the canon embodied by the model.

Antonio Berni. *La gran tentación or La gran ilusión* [The Great Temptation or The Great Illusion], 1962, diptych, detail. Courtesy MALBA (© Inés and José Antonio Berni).

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The exasperated bodies and faces of all the male characters—a tramp or a *clochard*, men in suits, what appears to be a military officer—surround a woman, half-undressed, adorned with feathers, wearing stockings and garters, and carrying a purse. She is the stereotype of a prostitute. She looks at the woman in the advertisement. Compared with the “perfect woman,” her skin is not soft, and her makeup is not neat. The prostitute’s face—with its angles, contrasting colors, and textures—is the face of excess and violence. Mad glimmers. Ramona comes apart, breaks into fragments. Coins, a rhinestone, and a mouth that almost seems to be made of false teeth wage a battle to give shape to her fragmented forms. Her body is inhabited by faces and clippings from magazines showing normal married couples: the hypocrisy of the society that creates and then rejects Ramona. The crowd stretches that body, which overflows in flaccid breasts. This is a body run ragged by the experience of reinventing itself every day on the street, designing its face like a mask that turns its bearer into merchandise. A source of employment. The pictorial material combined with trash from the street seems to be the place from which the red pigment was flung.

Ramona could be from any major city in the world. Unlike the Juanito Laguna series, the Ramona series that Antonio Berni conceived does not necessarily ensue in the shantytowns of a Latin American metropolis. Ramona represents, rather, the female margins of urban culture: the prostitute, the foreigner, the other, and the marking of class. She comes from a place from which failed modernity is visualized and foretells the tensions on the basis of which the development model of the 1960s was organized. Berni envisions her between Buenos Aires and the material remains of Paris’s *Folies Bergère*.3
The two major painting-collages depicting Ramona that Berni produced in 1962 formulate a state of tension with respect to the capitalist world, which is embodied in the exaltation of consumerism (a blond, a car, coins) in *La gran tentación* and in the Pepsi-Cola ad in *Ramona espera* (*Ramona Waiting*). In that second work, it is not entirely clear if Ramona is one of the figures or all four of them. One figure is leaning forward in what appears to be a kiosk and the other three—adorned in garters, lace, glitter, and wearing high heels—are clustered. On the other side of the wall is the factory, the cogs of the urban explosion that triggers the story of Ramona. Industrial development, progress, and shantytowns, the margins inhabited by children who live in poverty and by prostitutes who pace back and forth in front of the wall that divides their world—the world of the alleyway—from the world of the industrial city on the other side. The two worlds are connected by the universe of consumerism, represented in *Ramona espera* by Pepsi-Cola, that tantalizing beverage that, since the 1960s, has crossed geographic, social, and class lines to appeal to palates the world over. The persuasion of the senses, the conquest of wills by the desire for immediate gratification. Pepsi was more than merely a thirst-quenching beverage; it was a drink that became a symbol of dependency as anti-imperialist discourses grew. As Isabel Plante points out, in Latin America and in Europe, especially in France, a parallel was drawn between increasing consumerism in daily life, the Vietnam War, and underdevelopment in the Third World (Plante 2013). It is not surprising, then, that when the French President Charles de Gaulle arrived in Buenos Aires in 1964, he was met by crowds of supporters chanting “Perón-De Gaulle, un solo corazón” (Perón-De Gaulle, the same heart) or “Perón-De Gaulle, tercera posición” (Perón-De Gaulle, a third position), thanks to the anti-American shift in the French politician’s discourse (Galasso 945).
Both the Juanito and the Ramona series engage zones banished from the economic growth that marked the post-World War II period. These, however, are not the only representations mobilized by the Ramona series. The genealogy of the morality surrounding prostitution is extensive in Argentine literature and art. Evaristo Carriego’s famous poem *La costurerita que dio aquél mal paso* (The Seamstress Who Went Astray), written in 1913, briefly recounts a story whose discrete events were well ingrained in popular morality. The female character’s fall from grace was reinforced by discourses that determined where a woman should and should not be, that is, which places were respectable to frequent. Just as there were manuals explaining how to be a good wife, that is, how to cook, how to look after a man and the home,\(^6\) there were certain steps believed to lead a woman to a loss of honor. Carriego tells the story of a seamstress, a woman who worked at a task performed in the home. The sewing machine, invented by Isaac Singer in 1851, brought with it a revolution insofar as it enabled women to contribute to the household economy without leaving home. Although piecework provided women with a degree of economic independence, they also were isolated during ten-hour workdays, heightening their confinement and contributing to their celibacy. In order to leave that life behind and to pursue one more pleasurable, many women sought a protector, sometimes for love and sometimes for economic reasons. In a moralist discourse, the expression “*mostrar la hilacha*” (literally, to show the loose end) meant to make evident that the reasons for seducing a man were economic rather than sentimental. In either case, the end result was a loss of honor. Carriego’s seamstress is motivated by love. She leaves home out of shame, the poem seems to indicate, when she can no longer hide her pregnancy. When she
returns, her family takes her in, but the misfortune that has beset it appears to be an allegory for her own fall: her mother is ill and her father dead.

Ramona’s genealogy also lies in the tradition of Argentine art, for instance, in the series of thirty-six monoprints titled *Breve historia de Emma* (Brief History of Emma) produced by Lino Enea Spilimbergo in 1935 and 1936. Emma Scarpini (known as “Lola”) is a girl from a humble background who engages in prostitution and, ruined by exploitation, commits suicide at the age of thirty. Spilimbergo bases this work on what seems to be a newspaper article, as if attempting to build an archive to demonstrate that the images reference actual events. That is the only way the series can become a public condemnation. In the narrative sequence, the road to prostitution begins the moment Emma gets in a car that takes her to a nightclub. Symbol of modern life, the automobile—like the one the blond in *La gran tentación* shows us—is also the passage to danger. This holds true in Lucas Demare’s film *Detrás de un largo muro* (Behind a Long Wall, 1958), a moralizing portrait of Rosa and Teresa, two women who drive a convertible through the city that is home to the Modernist Kavanagh Building, from the elegant Retiro neighborhood to the shantytown where they will live. The modern woman’s means of transportation could also be her path to perdition.

*La gran tentación* is urban life, speed, and luxury. Berni, like printmakers Masereel, Rebuffo, and others, constructs a character in episodes (Dolinko 224). Michel Ragon pointed this out when he said that Berni wrote a novel in images. Adolfo Bellocq used the same resource to represent the life of Rosalinda Corrales, the female meatpacking worker who becomes a prostitute on the Isla Maciel, in his illustrations for Manuel Gálvez’s novel *Historia de Arrabal* (Story from the Slum) published in 1922 (Dolinko 249). There is, then, a long-standing
tradition of prostitutes and brothels, the street and the morality tale, in modern Argentine literature and art.

But Berni’s Ramona is not only the figure of the prostitute. Though that may be her predominant aspect, Ramona also encompasses women who play other social roles. We can read the Ramona series either as a narrative of the life of a woman who engages in prostitution or as a map of the places and positions occupied by women in the 1960s who did not play the traditional roles of mother, wife, and housewife. Ramona is, primarily, a woman who works
outside the home. She is the worker embedded in industrial modernization. In Berni’s series, she is the woman who, dressed as a worker, heads to the factory. She is not on the other side of the wall, selling her body like merchandise. Although factory work did expand women’s universe, it did not abate responsibilities for housework or child care: networks of relatives and neighbors had to be organized to take care of workers’ children (Lobato 171-205). Rather than a personal decision, women’s entry into the factory reflected the demands of industrial growth. Women were paid less, and considered more docile than men. Female labor was more profitable; it yielded greater earnings and, as such, was a necessary evil (Rocchi 222-243). As Graciela Queirolo points out, “there was a consensus about gender representations that cut across religious, political and class identities. Catholics, right-wingers and socialists, industrialists and workers, all defined woman as mother, and though they saw wage labor as foreign to female nature, they accepted it as an exception or as a lesser evil in the face of economic hardship. It was preferable to prostitution, which was altogether possible, especially amongst poorer women” (2005 n/p). Women also worked in the service sector as salespeople, administrative assistants, telephone operators, and school teachers.

Berni does not envision Ramona in other professions. She is never a secretary or a saleswoman at a department store. Nor is Ramona a mother. She is a woman who was once a baby, then a girl, then a teenager; she took first communion, got married, worked as a seamstress, and took charge of her own life; she became a prostitute and she reached old age. In a number of depictions she undresses and is observed by the men who want to possess her: ambassadors, military officers, priests, men of power.
The social imaginary of prostitution takes shape in literature, in the visual arts, and in film. The aforementioned film by Lucas Demare is about the decision of two young women to move from the outlying provinces to the capital city. Though they may cross the splendid modern city in a car, they will live in a shantytown, behind the large wall that hides it. The film formulates the dilemma between one woman who chooses the protection of a man to whom she is not married (a way out of the shantytown and toward a certain level of comfort at the cost of being seen as dishonorable), and another who decides to move back to the countryside.
and preserve her moral rectitude. The first, Teresa, is a brunette, and the second, Rosa, is a blond.\textsuperscript{10}

I would like to consider briefly the ways that this choice is constructed in French film from the 1960s. One of the prints from \textit{Ramona vive su vida} (Ramona Lives Her Life), which is a literal translation of the title of Jean-Luc Godard’s 1962 film \textit{Vivre sa vie}. In the film, Nana (the same name as the title character from Zola’s novel, and who personifies social ascent through the use of her body, which is also the cause of her decline) goes from selling records at a music store to being a prostitute. While her decision is predicated on a certain economic need, it is not born from desperation. She has a child and a man who wants her to come home, but she opts for another kind of life, making a personal choice that is reinforced by a scene in which she insists that we are responsible for everything we do. Though her choice brings temporary and illusory ascent, she seeks happiness by transforming her environment, if only for as long as a song lasts, like in the scene where Nana dances, by herself, in a context that is by no means joyful. Is Nana the victim of society or a woman capable of choosing her own fate? The film ends with her death when she is sold by her pimp. Nana makes decisions that do not lead to the happiness she seeks. She is a victim of the system and its machinery. Influenced by the aesthetics and philosophy of Brecht, Sartre, and film director Robert Bresson, this is an existential film structured from using techniques of estrangement. The twelve tableaux that make up the film partake of a narrative order also found in Berni’s Ramona series. As Silvia Dolinko has pointed out, Godard’s film premiered and won an award at the International Venice Film Festival in 1962, the same year that Berni’s work was awarded the grand prize at that city’s Biennal.\textsuperscript{11} In Berni’s print, Ramona lifts her arms to take off her clothes; this is a
common gesture seen many of the prints from the Ramona series, and it is also an action performed numerous times in Godard’s film by the beautiful actress Anna Karina, who plays Nana. The film formulates a question that Berni’s series may also ask: is Ramona a victim or a woman who takes charge of her own life?

Antonio Berni. *Ramona vive su vida* [Ramona Lives her Life], 1963, woodcut-collage-relief on paper. Courtesy MALBA (© Inés and José Antonio Berni).
That question is inextricably linked to a theme that runs through Western culture: the twofold vision of woman as victim and as threat. Perhaps the most dangerous thing is her freedom to decide how to use her own body. This issue is crucial to the agenda that addresses a woman’s place in society. Condemnation of prostitution is not the same as condemnation of the prostitute. If the first is aimed at the power networks that make prostitution possible, then the second ends up being a puritanical moral discourse. In neither case does the prostitute’s life work out well, but in the first case that is understood in terms of power structures and in the second in terms of dissolute individual morality. The Asociación de Mujeres Meretrices en la Argentina (AMMAR), the Argentine women sex workers’ union, upholds the right of sex workers to be recognized as workers and, as such, to organize, fight for their rights, and publicly condemn violence, injustice, and impunity toward women. The practice of prostitution on an individual level has been legal in Argentina since 1937, but trafficking in sex, that is, sexual exploitation and profit from the prostitution of another, is prohibited and illegal. From 1875 to 1936, the Argentine State regulated brothels and monitored the health and sanitation of prostitutes in order to protect the health of their clients. The city of Rosario, whose brothels Berni photographed in the 1930s,\textsuperscript{12} was at the forefront of these regulations and of the disbandment of the brothels in 1932. At the same time, self-employed prostitutes have been the target of police brutality and bribes.\textsuperscript{13} The film \textit{Vivre sa vie} also draws a map of positions on this topic. Nana decides to engage in prostitution. She starts out working for herself and then works under the protection of a pimp. In the film, the seventh tableau contains a good deal of information on prostitution: social regulations, the laws passed soon after World War II, health monitoring, rates, fees that can be earned from a day’s work, and how much must be paid in
advance for a man’s protection. The film provides information on days off and covers questions about topics such as pregnancy, children, and alcohol. Before operating under the “protection” of a pimp, Nana is self-employed. In a letter she writes to a provincial madam for whom she wants to work, Nana describes herself, even measuring herself with her hands to then tell her potential employer her height. In the film, Nana asserts with absolute confidence that everything we do is our own responsibility. In a sense, the film confirms the distance between prostitution when the woman works for herself and prostitution performed under the control of a “protector.” Nana does not die because she is a prostitute, but because she falls into the hands of a pimp who sells her and uses her as a shield against bullets in order to save his own life.

Ramona took shape between Buenos Aires and Paris. Although in an interview with Michel Ragon in Paris in 1962, after Berni had won the print prize at the Venice Biennale, he says that he is working on a new character named Ramona Montiel, she was anticipated three years earlier, in 1959, in the work La boda (The Wedding), in which the bride is wearing the same pieces of plastic lace that would later appear in the matrices used to print the Ramona series (Ragon 10). In a letter to Rafael Squirru, Berni describes Ramona as a combination of the local dance-hall characters “Cumparsita-Milonguita” and “Marilyn Monroe” (García 249-250). By 1962, Berni had all the elements he needed to construct the episodes of a story that would lead to prostitution. He had investigated the brothels on Pichincha Street in the 1930s, studied the collage technique to tackle the Juanito series, and expanded the limits of printmaking. Ramona was born of the simultaneous staging of all those elements.
Milonguita and Marilyn: they are a combination of tango and pop. Milonguita is the character from a tango whose lyrics Samuel Linning wrote in 1920 and that Berni returns to in the print *Te acordás Milonguita* (Remember Milonguita), included in the print portfolio *Tango*, published in 1962. She is an extension of Evaristo Carriego’s character, which Berni places in the world of work and in the society of the 1960s. Berni describes her as follows:

Ramona must play a social role and do publicly what many spoiled girls from the upper classes as well as the underworld do in secret. She must also fill the vacuum that those girls leave in the realm of the erotic. She does so like a slave, mimicking with her gestures and body the estrogen sought in the marketplace of promiscuity. [...] Her adventures begin in factories and offices, her manual labor loses importance; the only things about her that stand out are her big eyes, her shapely legs, and her calves in the form of champagne bottles. Soon after she has begun in her trade she realizes that her body can be much more profitable in relations with bosses and executives. [...] Flashy pieces of silk, accessories, and gold leaf are blatant signs of Ramona’s sophisticated environment. This is how she enjoys temporarily the vanity of the imitative luxury of living large. [...] In the defenseless solitude of her room, Ramona’s atavistic sense of guilt fashions delirious and dreadful monsters, her early-morning nightmares peopled with repression and age-old fears. The monsters in an array of materials I entitled “La Voracidad” (Voracity) and “El Gusano triunfador o El Triunfo de la muerte” (The Victorious Worm or The Triumph of Death) [plates TK and TK] are the materialization of
those extreme states. They are the physical materialization of vague unconscious images. (Viñals 92-96)

The monsters are the moral residue of an analysis that views prostitution as fall. Gardel appears as the reproduced image of a symbol of Argentine identity in Ramona vive su vida. Ramona, as Berni himself says, is born of the remains of the Folies Bergère in Paris but, as Silvia Dolinko points out, she is also steeped in the best idiosyncrasy for self-promotion in Paris: tango. This print contains references to the lamp in Picasso’s Guernica from 1937 as well as a portrait of Gardel, generating friction between high and low culture that, throughout the history of Modernism, repeatedly mobilized the avant-garde (Crow cited by Dolinko 223). In modern art, this tension was often made visible in the body of the prostitute. Consider, for instance, Manet’s Olympia from 1865 and Picasso’s Les demoiselles d’Avignon from 1907.

But Ramona is also Marilyn, a young woman emancipated by a beauty that, though not wed to the moral basis of the relationship between beauty and prostitution, also marked her tragic fate. Marilyn grows in and feeds the Hollywood market, and becomes connected to top-level politicians. Her body is not reduced to social condemnation, and she evidences the morals of power.

The problem of woman’s place is crucial to feminist discourses of the 1960s and 1970s (Ballent 2011). The morality tale is deployed from different perspectives in Argentina, as well as in the United States and France. The body becomes instrument or weapon in a battle to redefine the space and role of woman in contemporary society. The body even becomes enmeshed in politics. In Godard’s La Chinoise (1967), one of the young women involved in the
Maoist guerrilla cell battling the Soviet Communist Party explains naturally how she engages in prostitution when she needs money. In this case, prostitution is not the fate of a poor girl but, rather, one of many viable options, a way for a young female student to fund her juvenile and performative life of activism. Whereas *Vivre sa vie* is interspersed with texts explaining the place of prostitution in society and how it is regulated by the law—none of whose ordinances ensures Nana’s life—in *La Chinoise* prostitution and armed struggle coexist comfortably, both of them touching on certain registers of farce.

Berni expands a discourse that can be traced back to Spilimbergo’s Emma series, though with Ramona he fundamentally alters the attitude and expression. Ramona is never a sad or defenseless young girl, but a strong and violent woman. Though exploited and marginalized, she is capable of evidencing the workings of power that make her situation possible. The series not only depicts Ramona, but also her clients, without whom her situation would not exist. These are members of a rising middle class and of the military, religious, and political powers that be. In this sense, the Ramona series partakes of the registers that characterize the second wave of feminism and its discourses. Berni, with his far-reaching agenda, agrees with that movement’s vision of sexuality and of work.  

One of the most outstanding features of the Ramona series is how it is made, the techniques and processes with which Berni revitalized printmaking on a par with international figures like Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg. The growing mass of trash that surrounded Juanito until he was left in the midst of a heap of trash is restructured in Ramona’s body. In the prints, Ramona is put together from once-dispersed fragments whose power she appropriates and puts to work in the mechanism of her body. She could, in a way, be seen as a
robot; that is, a mechanism that operates on its own, that can perform tasks in a self-sufficient manner. At the same time, her body can be broken down into different parts; it is a way of making visible the functions of each part, as well as the precepts and conducts that they set off. In a number of prints, her breasts are circles formed not by the outline of her body but by a mechanical element encrusted on the work, one that interrupts the body’s continuity to render the breasts visible.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, artists associated with the second wave of feminism, especially those involved in the *Womanhouse* project, engaged in group experiences that entailed performance and installation. By means of kitsch and irony, they called attention to social stereotypes of the female body. They also attempted to give visibility to a body that, in the visual arts, had been addressed solely from a male perspective or a perspective that was patriarchal in terms of forms of representation. *Womanhouse* focused on female intimacy and on everything related to a woman’s reproductive cycle. The documentary *Womanhouse* (1974), directed by Johanna Demetrakas, shows different facets of the project that Judy Chicago and Miriam Shapiro, along with a group of students, formulated in an old mansion in Hollywood in the 1970s, a residence whose facilities they altered in order to investigate the experiences and fantasies of women while they sew, cook, wash up, and iron.

These installation-performances staged the female body, as well as exposed the clichés and standardization surrounding women’s tastes and activities. Female and male sexuality was broken down into bodily fragments (breasts, vaginas, phalluses) on the basis of which stereotypes operated. This project formed part of a movement that opposed the Greenbergian formalist canon of Modernism determined by the notion of an autonomous
language. In addition to addressing contents and issues related to gender, these installations crucially depended on the nonhierarchical use of materials and techniques, as well as forced a rupture with the (masculine) litany of artistic criteria, aesthetic values, and practices in art history (Wilding 1994 32-47). The visual forms of feminism in the 1970s broke the body down into its components and fractured the harmonic point of view that joined forms and language. Berni’s interventions are comparable. By incorporating discarded materials into what the Argentine bourgeoisie considered poorly made works, and that were supposedly indicative of poor taste, Berni brought the real world into the world of the artwork. In these collages, trash is not arranged according to geometric, abstract, or orthogonal orders; it is experienced in all its heteronomy. I think, as a counterpoint, of collages by Kenneth Kemble or Alberto Burri. Indeed, I can even link the twisted sheets of metal with which Berni shaped some of the ominous skies in the Juanito Laguna series with John Chamberlain’s crushed cars. The basic difference lies in the fact that Berni undermines the autonomy of art not only on the basis of the materials he used, but also on the themes he addressed. Berni thwarts the traditional notion of the work of art, thereby expanding and ultimately redefining the parameters of interpretation. He narrates the world he wants to analyze by dissecting the bodies of its leading protagonists; materials found in the streets burst apart on Ramona’s body, a body that is also organized as each of its parts is re-signified in a process of potential mutation into something else. By formulating methods for joining mechanisms, Berni effects de-naturalization; he introduces the otherness, resistance to the normative nature of sex, a theory of the body.¹⁹

This does not mean that Berni was painting or thinking like a woman. He attempted to interrogate what was, in a way, a fetish.²⁰ The series could be interpreted as a questionnaire on
the motivations and feelings that underlie each of Ramona’s behaviors and actions, like Paul in *Masculin Féminin*, when he asks different young women the same questions on topics that range from their politics to their contraceptive choices.

Unlike Spilimbergo’s Emma or Nana in *Vivre sa vie*, we do not know the fate of Ramona. There is no suicide or murder. Nonetheless, the nightmares that hound Ramona as she sleeps introduce a certain morality: there are consequences to living her life.

Is Ramona a victim or a woman who lives her life? Her body assembled from fragments can be activated in relation to either option. The Spanish word *armado* has two meanings. It is, on one hand, the act of putting parts together to find an order, a meaning, akin to the English verb “to assemble.” But *armado* also means to carry an arm or a weapon, to be ready to attack or defend. The constructed body is a mechanism that also implies possessing the elements necessary to act on a given reality. True, Ramona is a victim of society, but she is also someone who ensures a margin in which to live her life.

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-----. *La chinoise*, 1968.


**Notes**

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1. I would like to thank Michael Wellen for the reference to the advertisement for this film.

2. See Clark, “Olympia’s choice”.


4. For a detailed analysis of this painting, see Plante 2013 240 et seq.

5. Along with Coca-Cola. Pertinent along these lines is Antonio Caro’s conceptual work Colombia Coca-Cola (1976).


7. The series in its entirety was exhibited in a show curated by Diana B. Wechsler. The works are reproduced in a book for which Wechsler conducted the research, wrote the essays, and compiled the documentation. See Wechsler Spilimbergo.

8. For an analysis of this series, see Wechsler (2006 11–25).

9. This was the same year that Berni began working on the Juanito series and one year after the publication of Bernardo Verbitsky’s book Villa miseria también es América, both of which deal with life in the shantytown. See Giunta (2008 96).

10. For a detailed analysis of this film, see Giunta (2006 49–87).

11. Dolinko was also the one who pointed out the link between Berni’s series and the film (Dolinko 248).


13. See the catalogue to the exhibition Mujeres. 1810–1910 (52–53).

14. Published by gallerist Natalio Povarché, the portfolio included prints by other artists as well, among them Carlos Alonso, Juan C. Castagnino, Emilio Centurión, and Enrique Policastro (García 303).

15. The friction to which I refer is on the level of iconography. Silvia Dolinko makes use of the same concept to analyze the friction that Berni produces on the level of technique by placing the photoengraving of Gardel in his print—that is, inserting a mass-produced item of popular culture in a work of art, an item of high culture. She also points out the references to Picasso.

16. Jean-Luc Godard was more precise regarding the agenda of the 1960s. In a film such as Masculin Féminin (1966), in which prostitution is dealt with tangentially, the characters answer a number of questions about birth-control methods. They discuss their fear of getting pregnant, list the contraceptive methods of which they are aware, and demonstrate a willingness to control their own bodies.

17. If in their narratives major museums truly reflected the idea of the avant-garde as forerunner in the transformation of visual language and used that idea to decide which works to place on public display, MoMA would have to exhibit Berni’s prints alongside the ones by these North American artists. The only explanation for the fact that the innovations that Berni effected in printmaking have not been included in the corpus of the international artistic experimentation that took place in the 1960s is the geopolitics of worldwide cultural power.

18. An installation and a space for feminist performances organized by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, cofounders of the Feminist Program at CalArts (California Institute of the Arts), Womanhouse took place from January 30 to February 28, 1972. Participants in the project included students and the community, and consciousness-raising techniques were used to come up with exhibition proposals.

19. This is a notion introduced by Beatriz Preciado and related to the idea of counter-sexuality, understood to lie outside the man/woman, masculine/feminine, heterosexual/homosexual oppositions. It defines sexuality as a “technology” and holds that “the different elements of the system sex/gender denominated ‘man,’ ‘woman,’ ‘homosexual,’ ‘heterosexual,’ ‘transsexual,’ as well as its practices and
sexual identities, are nothing more than machines, products, instruments, apparatuses, tricks, prostheses, networks, applications, programs, connections, energy and information flows, interruptions and switches, keys, laws of circulation, borders, constraints, plans, logics, equipment, formats, accidents, detritus, mechanisms, uses, detours ....” See Preciado (2000 14) (Translation from http://autonomies.org/es/2012/11/the-rebellion-of-bodies-beatriz-preciado/).

According to Selene (Silvina Rita del Valle Victoria), in 1968 Berni had a “bachelor’s pad,” an apartment with dim red lighting that bore signs of a fetishistic relationship with women: “I remember there were red panties stuck to the wall with tacks” (García 312).