

Clever Monkey Pinochet versus La Moneda's Pigs

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By Jill Hannon

On September 11, 1973, the first democratically elected Marxist leader in the world and president of Chile, Salvador Allende, was removed from office in a violent military coup d'etat led by General Augusto Pinochet just weeks after the end of democratic rule was sanctioned by a majority vote. Thirty years later, Perut and Osnovikoff revisited the political confusion and unrest of this controversial period in Chilean history in this unconventional and highly original narrative documentary.

In *Clever Monkey*, Perut and Osnovikoff allow various groups of Chileans to retell the violent and turbulent events of this pivotal moment in Chilean history in their own distinct voices. Small children, teenagers, and college students from a variety of social, political, and economic backgrounds, are given the opportunity to star in their own series of improvised and staged vignettes. The film follows the stream of their seemingly disparate narratives, casually mixing the innocence of childhood playground games with the brutality of revolutionary war.

This unusual medley of discordant storylines never comes together, nor does it try to. The effect is as abstract and difficult to contain as it is brutally and emotionally raw. By distancing itself from political giants, *Clever Monkey* is able to poke as much fun as it is able to mourn. This is Chilean history not as it was written, but as it is remembered by the children of Chile.