In this article, Ana Rosa Marques discusses the origins and development of CachoeiraDoc, an annual documentary film festival organized since 2010 by the faculty and students of the Film and Audiovisual Program at the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia (UFRB) in the Northeast of Brazil. She argues that, beyond an artistic event celebrating cinema, CachoeiraDoc has been a space in which the university and the residents of the small town of Cachoeira enter into a fruitful dialogue, exchanging knowledge and ultimately engaging in community building.
1. This is a revised translation of the chapter “Memórias de uma árvore empassarinhada: formação e extensão no CachoeiraDoc,” in Desaguar Em Cinema: Documentário Memória E Ação Com O Cachoeiradoc, ed. Amaranta Cesar, Ana Rosa Marques, Fernanda Pimenta, and Leonardo Figueiredo Costa (Salvador: EDUFBA, 2020). I would like to thank Andrew Snyder for revising and improving this translation, and Charlotte Weber for the perceptive copy edits.—Trans.

2. Until that moment the city did not have a film theater. The festival took place in the auditorium of the Center for Arts, Humanities and Letters (CAHL). The Cine Theatro Cachoeirano was only inaugurated in 2014 and, since then, the event has been taking place there.

3. Capão Redondo is a district in São Paulo that contains dozens of favelas.

The city of Cachoeira is a territory of strong Black culture and ancestrality. Yet it is also afflicted by poor socioeconomic development, which is reflected in its precarious cultural infrastructure. When the festival began, the closest film theater was 116 kilometers away. Hence, our objective as organizers was to bring films to Cachoeira, expand the restricted routes through which they circulated, and establish this small but historically rich city as a place where documentary films could be celebrated.

The Franco-Brazilian anthropologist, Indigenist, and documentary filmmaker Vincent Carelli, who created Vídeo nas Aldeias, an internationally recognized training project for Indigenous filmmakers, once remarked: “The films are the heart of CachoeiraDoc.” Over its nine editions, more than four hundred films representing diverse authors, styles, themes, and origins have been screened at the festival. Here the cinema of great masters such as Agnès Varda, Avi Mograbi, Jia Zhang Ke, and Eduardo Coutinho cohabits with the works of Indigenous filmmakers like Alberto Alvares and Lincoln Pericles, whose work has not yet achieved the same level of recognition but who nevertheless persist in producing images and sounds, whether in the middle of the forest or on the outskirts of Brazilian cities.
These films, and the debates they generated, have captivated generations of students. Aquila Jamile, for instance, discovered the festival during its first edition, when she still lived in the distant city of Vitória da Conquista. After that, she decided to move from her hometown to Cachoeira to study film at UFRB:

CachoeiraDoc was responsible for my initial contact with documentary film sessions and discussions about the field. I remember being very touched by the films Corumbiara (2009) by Vincent Carelli and Atrás da porta (2010) by Vladimir Seixas. One was about Indigenous people, the other about people experiencing homelessness and the occupation of abandoned public buildings. Both had a strong social appeal.⁴

Over time, some of these students transitioned from simply attending to working in production, mobilization efforts, written or audiovisual coverage, programming, the Youth Jury, and workshops, making CachoeiraDoc a training space that is also run by students. Since its second edition, students from more advanced semesters in the UFRB film program have participated in film selection and, increasingly, in curatorship. In competitive shows alone, over four hundred films are submitted each year. Thousands of images and sounds issuing from different corners of the country, produced by people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, have thus introduced audiences to multiple ways of seeing, thinking, creating, and screening.

The process of envisioning, debating, selecting, and programming is exhausting but revealing. It requires seeing the potential in each work, relating it to the others, and finding a place and a role for it in the festival. Through the films and discussions among the curatorial team, we have deepened our ability to learn, understand, and talk about cinema, the world, and ourselves. Flora Braga experienced this for three years as a curator:
After making difficult choices, a process that inevitably left many great films out of the festival, I understood what actually constitutes the act of curating: to put together a series of films so that they dialogue and strengthen each other’s potentialities. Hence the enormous importance of programming, an activity that in a space of visibility and discussion requires as much sensitivity as awareness of the concrete gesture that these choices consist of. Sharing and debating the ideas expressed in the films made me realize the real reasons I was studying cinema and wanted to make films. I finally found my role in this scenario.

While films that have been featured in other circuits and produced by renowned filmmakers have graced our screens, over the years we have also aimed to develop our own curatorial profile, more in tune with the urgent issues of our time and attentive to the new discursive voices. Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) professor and researcher César Guimarães notes that CachoeiraDoc “posits the need for cinema to be discussed in relation to social life, beyond the scope of mere cinephilia and the need for a particular way of doing film analysis, outside of an academic context or the context of our research.” This positions the festival in a “very unique” place, says his UFMG colleague, André Brasil, because “it involves a certain type of curation that tries to escape the particular vices of certain choices. Therefore, it is fresh and open to new films, new directors.” Such direction requires questioning or confronting certain judging patterns already established in academia and in the field of specialized criticism. For students like Evandro Freitas, the experience revolutionized the way they saw (and thought about) films:

CachoeiraDoc took a certain turn when it showed me that cinema is also a relationship. I was re-educating my gaze, not only to the formal aspects of the film but also to thinking about how cinema relates to the world. Seeing films that are connected to certain urgencies in the world, not that we can reduce the curatorial experience to categories, but it was very important to find directors who were not in an already established circuit. To me, these films represented a different experience, maybe because they dealt with issues that we are experiencing, issues that are so urgent in real life. CachoeiraDoc was an entryway into this type of contemporary cinema.

In 2020, after a decade of the festival and a two-year hiatus, CachoeiraDoc relaunched with a brand-new curatorial team, assembled without the coordinators’ input but still made up of UFRB alumni and current students of the film program. The participation of people who came from other locations, perspectives, and life stories breathed new life into the group, and the curation remained a training space, now enriched by new collaborators. The festival remained committed to a cinema that embraced the whole world, and its curators were called upon to “dream up new futures” for cinema itself. Yet the curators’ work was strongly impacted by the arrival and spread of the coronavirus. How can you watch films when the largest pandemic of the century is unfolding before your very eyes? Faced with the imperatives of isolation and social distancing to control the virus and the disease, scheduling a festival—that is, an event fundamentally premised on meetings and co-presence—seemed futile. How to think of a future when the present is suspended?

Stirred by these questions and circumstances, the curators collaborated to build not just a festival, but what they called the Festival Impossível/Curadoria Provisória (Impossible Festival, Provisional Curatorship), an experience with films, texts, and online debates intent on thinking/rethinking life, cinema, and the very concept of curatorship. The act of curating, as defined by Flora Braga in 2017, could no longer remain the same in the pandemic world of 2020 and gained new meanings, such as taking care of others and of ourselves through film. According to Alex Antônio:
Most of the time, these films ended up healing us more than we curated them, they ended up healing our wounds. Trindade\textsuperscript{12} made me reflect on how we look at others, and how we take care of others when their experience differs so much from our own… I was struggling with these questions during this curatorship, thinking about how we look at others and about the ethics of curatorship.\textsuperscript{13}

For his colleague Otávio Conceição, despite a context permeated by fear, anguish, and waiting, this curatorial action brought some optimism about the future when he was faced with films that presented the perspectives of those erased or stereotyped by hegemonic narratives: “The healing process comes from the understanding that we are finite people and that everything is changeable: the only truth that persists is change.”\textsuperscript{14}

If this broad-minded way of thinking about cinema fed the sensitivity of students like Alex and Otávio, it was also nurtured by them. Alex and Otávio belong to the 83 percent of UFRB students who declare themselves as Black or Brown.\textsuperscript{15} Since its inception, UFRB has adopted affirmative action policies and developed a program to support student retention.\textsuperscript{16} Alumni of the university include some of the brightest talents in Black Brazilian cinema: Larissa Fulana de Tal, Thamires Vieira, Glenda Nicácio, and David Aynan.

Strong Black and female representation on the curating team and the jury have exposed issues and established postures that delineate the current aesthetic and political contours of the festival, making it stand out among other film events.\textsuperscript{17} For Cleissa Martins, the increase in Black curators can sensitize audiences to Black cinema. These curators help introduce films by Black filmmakers into the festival schedule outside of sessions that focused specifically on the issue of race, resulting in more and different people watching the films. It also places Black

Figure 3. CachoeiraDoc 2020. Festival Impossível/Curadoria Provisória (Impossible Festival, Provisional Curatorship) virtual flyer. Courtesy of CachoeiraDoc Archives.
cinema in another position, by highlighting its cinematic aspects and not only the issue of representation.\textsuperscript{18}

Several Black directors such as Safira Moreira, Yasmin Thainá, and Vinicius Silva have participated in the festival with works that escape clichés about Blackness. Their presence inspired and encouraged students like Erica Sansil to tell their stories in a very personal way. A Black woman from the suburbs of Rio de Janeiro, she was bothered by the predominance of white men and people from the wealthier classes in the production of narratives about universes of which they had scant experience:

The young Black people, slum dwellers, with limited access to education, who died as a result of violence, represented the young people who lived around me. They were my friends, cousins, and acquaintances. I was startled to conclude that our Black bodies were just the work object for white, middle-class filmmakers. At that moment, I knew that I needed to make a documentary, that our point of view should be presented.\textsuperscript{19}

Erica’s graduation project (Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso, TCC) focused on a topic that she not only knew well but also admired: Brazilian funk balls. Her short film, \textit{Esperando o sábado} (\textit{Waiting for Saturday}, 14 min, 2017), portrayed several funkeiras and their experiences with prejudice. The women featured in the film invited her into their workspaces, their journeys, and their forms of entertainment. The documentary combined staged scenes and fictional devices that revealed the characters’ subjectivities. The youngest child of a single mother of six who made a living ironing clothes, Erica was the first in her family to go to college. After graduating, she returned to her mother’s home in Rio de Janeiro. Her TCC was the passport to the professional world. The short film was finalized at the production company of Vladimir Seixas, a filmmaker she had met in 2016 when she joined CachoeiraDoc’s Júri Jovem (Youth Jury). Their support with the film’s editing led to an invitation to work on the company’s productions. Encounters like this one are not uncommon at the festival. The welcoming atmosphere of the event and the small size of the city of Cachoeira foster connections between people. Some exchanges begin in the screening room, continue in bars and at parties, and are resumed in courses and lectures. The dialogues initiated at CachoeiraDoc are useful for both hosts and visitors.

All film screenings are followed by debates between audiences and filmmakers with the participation of mediators, which provides information and reflections that are very important for the students’ training. Knowing the trajectory of a film’s creation allows them not only to access the directors’ thought processes but also to learn about the challenges, inquiries, dilemmas, and insights that shaped the film’s final form. While these are very important issues from a pedagogical standpoint, they are still not documented or analyzed by film studies in Brazil, which tend to focus much more on the procedures and effects of a finished work than on creative processes. At the same time, this openness, and the encouragement of audience participation, enables students to publicly exercise cinematic analysis and criticism.

The quality of the debates is related to the experience of the UFRB faculty and students, as well as to an investment in audience formation, among other factors. For its 2017 edition, along with student participation in the curatorship, researchers and professors from other universities served as debate mediators, amplifying the exchange with other...
institutions. Panels, lectures, and conferences became spaces for the discussion of ideas and the introduction of research on fundamental topics related to the art, culture, and politics of documentary filmmaking. Through these activities, students came into direct contact with authors they had previously known only through the works they had watched or read about in the classroom.

Audiovisual coverage of the festival, which gradually came to be coordinated by last-semester students and alumni of the UFRB film program, is another important pedagogical activity. These young people are responsible for the production and distribution of all images and sounds from the event, which becomes an intense laboratory of research practices, screenwriting, shooting, and editing. The vignettes they produce alongside UFRB professor Danilo Scaldalferri are crucial to the festival’s dissemination. Coordinating this team was the only task Laís Lima had not yet done at the event when she took it on in 2017. She says she had explored everything she could at CachoeiraDoc, going from usher to curator and attending all available courses, including a film editing class with renowned Pernambuco filmmaker Marcelo Pedroso that greatly influenced her study path. Pedroso’s work, and what she learned from him, informed her TCC and also deepened her reflections as a student in the Federal University of São Carlos master’s degree program.

Every year the festival invites an expert from a particular area to teach courses related to documentary filmmaking. In addition to Pedroso, the festival has thus welcomed filmmakers Vincent Carelli, Geraldo Sarno, Aly Muritiba, Rafael Urban, Larissa Figueiredo, and Ernesto Carvalho; film editor Cristina Amaral; and sound directors Nicolas Hallet and Simone Dourado, among others. Free of charge, the courses seek to contribute to the continuing education of students and professionals in the area and have attracted people from different parts of the country.

The affective immersion in documentary filmmaking begins in the UFRB film program, which has at least four modules related to gender in its curriculum. In the classroom, students explore the richness of the documentary tradition and discover some of its newest forms. Raí Gandra Moreira, who organized an LGBT short films festival as a course completion project and participated in CachoeiraDoc as a member of the Youth Jury, a monitor, and a director, highlights the importance of the course in his formation:

> At that moment, it was possible to open new windows for thinking and making films, discovering the documentary as a rich cinematographic field, through its most plural expressions, contents, and forms. Above all, contemporary currents in documentary filmmaking aroused in me a sharp desire and curiosity, satiated through research and experimental productions.\(^{20}\)

In addition to both a bibliography and filmography, the modules provide a space for praxis. In 2014, the volume of student documentary production increased, resulting in a special show at CachoeiraDoc: the Kékó show, which comes from a Yorubá word meaning “one who studies.” The event’s curators, then-students Evandro Freitas, Luara De, and Thiago Logasa, stated: “We consider that our documentaries share the urgency of political and subjective expression. They are the message and image with which their directors expand the world, compose their work, and assemble themselves.”\(^{21}\)
Some of the films produced in the courses, for instance CorpoStyleDanceMachine (Ulisses Arthur, 7 min, 2017), circulated in several festivals and exhibitions across Brazil. The short film originated as a classroom exercise, was developed throughout the course, and deepened and matured through the theoretical reflections of a research project. It introduces us to Tikal, a resident of Cachoeira who walks throughout the city in drag and is often mocked and harassed for doing so. When the film premiered at CachoeiraDoc, Tikal presented and debated it with the audience. After the film’s success, he started carrying the festival catalog with him, as a sort of shield against the provocations he still encountered in the streets. For many months, Ulysses researched and talked to his film’s protagonist in search of an aesthetic and an approach, which developed from this coexistence and relationship. For the filmmaker, the experience contributed not only to his technical and aesthetic training but also to his political development, which helped him seek his place in cinema and in the world.

The classroom is thus the gateway to an integrated CachoeiraDoc circuit that combines teaching, research, and community outreach activities. Its energy remains in students after they complete their undergraduate studies. The principles they learn and experience in the university reverberate in their future projects, which run the gamut of exhibitions and festivals, films, and postgraduate studies, and permeate their personal lives. Jessé Patrício, for instance, used the experience he accrued at CachoeiraDoc to create the Mostra de Cinema Contemporâneo do Nordeste (Contemporary Northeastern Film Festival):

> “After participating in the curatorship of the third edition in 2012, I was absolutely certain that I had to plan a film festival. All I needed was to find a direction.”

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22. The festival takes place in Feira de Santana (Bahia) and has been held annually since 2018.

One of the emblematic images of CachoeiraDoc is a photo of a film-screening session in a public square in which a leafy tree stands out. Its branches protrude onto the screen and its shade welcomes the spectators. The roots that ground it to earth also alter the level of the stones that surround it. There is something tree-like to the festival. Its activities, since its creation, rooted the project in the Bahian Recôncavo. The Recôncavo nourished and was nourished by it.

There were times when the action onscreen was manifested in the audience. One of those instances happened in 2012 during CachoeiraDoc’s third edition. We were projecting *A Batalha do Passinho* [Passinho Dance-Off], by Emílio Domingos, a feature about a dance style that originated in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and that traced the careers of its young dancers. At the end of the screening, the film seemed to continue, as the motion it depicted reverberated in the body of little Alderivo and in the eyes of the audience members who contemplated the dance movements of the boy from Maragogipe who had recently arrived in Cachoeira.

I’ve always loved to dance. The movie had a lot of influence on me. Those people who came from the favela, who speak like me. Then I ran to the computer to find out who Cebolinha was, the Passinho guys.24

It was the first time Alderivo had entered a film theater, but it wouldn’t be the last. He continued attending the festival and other events at CAHL (Centro de Artes Humanidades e Letras/Center for the Arts, Humanities, and Modern Languages), where UFRB courses are given in Cachoeira.25 Today he is a member of the Mario Gusmão Cineclube and of the city’s hip-hop dance group, and he smiles when he says that he has already enrolled in the Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio-Enem (National High School Exam) to study film in college.

Alderivo grew up in the CAHL environment. He arrived there because he befriended the students and felt welcome. The story of this encounter sharply contradicts the narratives that mock Brazilian universities as spaces removed from the community’s interests and affections. Over these institutions hangs the stigma, currently fueled by a political drive to disparage higher education, of the ivory tower that keeps knowledge hidden and makes it inaccessible.
and unintelligible to those outside of academia. UFRB was created in 2005 with the express purpose of combating this image. It is open to the culture, history, and values of the people of the Recôncavo. It has a deeply cultivated community outreach profile and is committed to discussing and reflecting local needs and interests, while also affirming and developing the region's potential through various programs aimed at and conducted with the community.

In 2019, film projects made up 60 percent of the CAHL’s extension and community outreach activities financed by the university's scholarship program. They included open study groups for the community, film clubs, and collaborative film productions. The projects were often developed by teachers and students not only from the film program but also from other areas, such as the sociology program, that used film as an object of reflection or intervention. CachoeiraDoc is one of CAHL's most enduring extension and community outreach projects and was designed to attract both the local and national communities, connecting them in the process. In addition to the 2019 film programming, which was free and open to the general public, there were screenings in local neighborhoods, small festivals, and special sessions. The festival also experimented with different strategies of attraction such as courses, shows, parties, and artistic presentations. Almost all the event openings took place in public squares, under the moonlight and trees, cooled by the breeze of the Paraguassu River. The festival's activities opened with films, caruru, and music. Via talking, dancing, eating or drinking, and, especially, watching and discussing the films, residents and visitors exchanged ideas and experiences.

Figure 6. CachoeiraDoc 2017. Courtesy of CachoeiraDoc Archives.

26. Caruru is a typical food from Bahia and has African origins.
Figure 7. CachoeiraDoc 2017. Courtesy of CachoeiraDoc Archives.

Figure 8. CachoeiraDoc 2014. Courtesy of CachoeiraDoc Archives.
Considering the difficulties of producing an event of this size in a region that lacks basic services and structure, reliable roads, communication, and quality transportation, there were times when the producers felt as though they were in a sort of scavenger hunt, as Thamires Vieira, a student who worked as an organizer in some editions of the festival, recalls. To her, the showing of *Batalha do Passinho* was a landmark of the festival’s history in this regard:

> I remember the session of the film *A Batalha do Passinho* which included students from the municipal public schools. On that day, buses were supposed to arrive from one of the quilombos. It was almost time for the session when I received a call that the bus had broken down on the way and would not arrive... Communication was very precarious in that region and I could not warn anyone in charge about the problem, so I convinced another driver to make the trip and went with him to get those people [teachers and students]. When I got there, I was greeted by a party, it was incredible... Everyone was eager to participate, and not making it to the screening was never an option for them... That day, mobilizing these people who were committed to being part of the festival, it was amazing!27

Our intense efforts to form audiences paid off: despite several challenges, we observed increasing participation of the city’s residents in the event. Clarissa Brandão, who graduated from the course and was a local producer in 2016 and 2017, credits these difficulties to the lack of art education in general: “People are familiar with a certain repertoire and do not know that other forms exist. That’s why sometimes they are not even interested in going to the film theater.”28 Thus, working with schools was essential to the creation of a film culture in the region. Some of the festival’s screenings and sessions specifically target this audience; they include special mediation work as well as projects and courses for public school teachers and students. In 2010, for instance, elementary and high school teachers participated in a methodology course on the use of audiovisual media in the classroom.29

In each edition, the festival promotes a webdoc workshop for public school students, where they produce short documentaries that can be shared on the internet. The workshop, which covers audiovisual awareness, technical and aesthetic guidelines for equipment use, and production practices, is taught by students of the film program who are members of the Documentary Study and Practice Group. One of the facilitators, Evandro Freitas, reports that when he was discussing with the class how to map their film repertoire, he was told that documentaries were “boring” because “people just keep talking, there is no action.”30 After this initial resistance, Evandro and his colleague Thiago Logasa found ways to shed the “smell of dust and boredom” often associated with documentaries. They proceeded with the activity, and they not only tried to highlight other film references but also considered the students’ own daily realities to imagine and produce works that introduced themes and methodologies that were closer to their interests and concerns. This process generated *Webfaixa*, a short film that discusses and intervenes in Cachoeira’s vehicle traffic, considered by students to be one of the city’s main problems.31

Conceived and produced collectively, these shorts are now part of the festival’s schedule. For high school students, it is an opportunity to create their own stories, see their discourses projected onto the screen, and be recognized as art and culture producers in the presence of their families, friends, and neighbors. For the university, it is a way to strengthen relationships with the community and learn about and value other forms of knowledge. For film students, it is a pedagogical exercise that challenges their preconceived knowledge in the field and forces...
them to research and question their teaching and learning methodologies. Unsurprisingly, many of the students who taught in the workshops now work in community artistic and pedagogical activities. Their experiences at CachoeiraDoc provided them with a method of learning and doing together, of opening up to the knowledges and questions of others. As Thiago Logasa, who is currently an audiovisual technician at the Federal University of Western Bahia, observed,

This experience was incredible from the point of view of training because from it I was able to understand and develop a method of working with audiovisual language in a short amount of time with significant practical results. And this ended up unfolding in many other workshops that I later taught to various groups and communities, from classes with adolescents of up to sixteen years old to classes with university professors with master’s and doctoral degrees.  

Thiago’s partner on several of his undergraduate projects, Evandro, also remains connected to the university. In the UFRB extension and community outreach projects, where he acts as a technician, he has experienced different forms of collaborative creation through audiovisual media. Through his work with marginalized communities from the Iguape quilombola women and the youth of Acupe and Saubara to the men of the Movimento Sem Terra (Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement), Evandro has directly encountered the issue of alterity: “These projects show that we can also share sensitivities; this encounter that the camera facilitates mobilizes other forms of the self.”

Diego Jesus, one of the first webdoc instructors, is currently a PhD student at the University of Texas, before which he coordinated an audiovisual training project with residents of the Maré favela, in Rio de Janeiro. He attributes his role in the project to his training at CachoeiraDoc in various capacities:

Developed in 2014 by the NGO Redes da Maré, the ECOM (Escola de Cinema Olhares da Maré) would not have been possible without CachoeiraDoc’s intervention in my trajectory. It affirmed cinema as a vehicle for political intervention in the world, to create an echo for the ‘marginal voices,’ for marginalized groups, for the ‘children’ of the country’s re-democratization, like me and, finally, for the authors and disseminators of discourses hitherto invisibilized by official history.

A few years earlier, Diego had already experienced cinema as an instrument for affirming marginalized or invisibilized groups. In 2010, he participated in a UFRB project organized by the coordinators of CachoeiraDoc in Iguape, a rural area of Cachoeira, that focused on the development of self-representational documentaries. Almost a decade later, he happened upon Jeff, one of the teenagers he had worked with on the project. The young man was now studying at the Federal University of Bahia in Salvador and was preparing for a student caravan that was going to the Brazilian capital to defend quilombola and Indigenous rights threatened by government budget cuts. In Diego’s eyes, that child of Iguape was like a mirror reflection. Like him, he believed in the university as a vehicle for the realization of dreams and would join the fight against those who want to prevent the consolidation of this right: “They think they’ve beaten us. They’re actually in more trouble than ever.”

In addition to the actual festival, we have developed other community outreach projects to stimulate and disseminate interest in, and reflections on, cinema and encourage year-long
engagement with it. Our actions, especially those in secondary schools, provide opportunities for thinking about and experimenting with activities that will contribute to the training of more engaged spectators and foster an education concerned with audiovisual expressions focused on the artistic, affective, and intellectual development of students. For Ana Paula Nunes, UFRB professor and cinema and education researcher, in Brazil

the partnership between cinema and education has never been as strong as it is today. There is a great reconfiguration of the production, distribution, and exhibition tripod in the field of filmmaking, increasingly legitimizing collaborative processes and favoring the exchanges between the film/video screen and the classroom’s blackboard.38

Today’s students, having grown up in an environment shaped by TV, film, video games, the internet, et cetera, are immediately familiar with the audiovisual universe when they start school, hence the importance of approaching and communicating with them in a creative and qualified way in this new reality. As theorists such as Jesús Martín Barbero point out, in the face of the whirlwind of images and sounds that are part of everyday life, it is important to “teach how to see.”39

Our students have been researching and experimenting with strategies, without resorting to ready-made formulas, to demonstrate the mobilizing potential of images and sounds for both teachers and high school students. The solution devised by Thiago, a scholarship holder in one of these projects,40 and Cirlla Machado, who served as a volunteer, was to combine audiovisual activities with historical and geographical content, securing a commitment from those responsible for that content. Together they debated films and produced a short film. In a project developed by Fábio Rodrigues, on the other hand, some teachers declined to participate.41 Yet, to him, this ended up fostering greater personal and emotional involvement from the students engaged in activities that dealt with the issue of sexuality, a taboo subject in school that was nevertheless crucial to the lives of these young people. In the school auditorium, he screened short films to generate an experience that led to the collective creation of objects such as photos, sounds, and drawings:

The films presented the possibility of releasing something that the classroom restrained. It was inevitable that painful individual experiences would manifest.... I returned home exhausted. It wasn’t just the film, it was thinking about how to deal with others, with what the films summoned.42

What is most surprising in the analysis of these project reports is the disposition of UFRB students despite the obstacles they faced, including the university’s lack of resources and the Brazilian government’s neglect of public schools. They had to navigate their surroundings on foot, carrying heavy equipment, and they often encountered spaces that lacked the physical and human resources to support the activities they had planned.

To foster the development of more extension and community outreach activities, in 2017 CachoeiraDoc used its own financial resources to launch a call for applications for projects that would focus on festival awareness and audience formation. One of the challenges we faced was connecting with the various institutions, people, or spaces that had already developed social, educational, or artistic activities in the region. While the call was open to proposals from CAHL


40. Coordinated by Ana Rosa Marques, the project was called “Audiovisual Training of School Communities in Recôncavo Baiano” (2014).

41. Coordinated by Amaranta Cesar, the project was called “Documentário nas escolas: formação em leitura e montagem de imagens da realidade sócio-política brasileira nas comunidades escolares de Cachoeira e São Félix” (2016).

students, teachers, and technicians, most of the projects came from the students themselves, showing that the seeds of interest in extension and community outreach activities had already been sown among them. Many of the projects proposed were transdisciplinary, such as the Social Trainer project, which brought together film and social work students to think about the issues experienced by socially vulnerable women through audiovisual production.\(^{43}\)

For the Cinema e Vizinhança (Cinema and Neighborhood) project, three students incorporated a young nurse into the team. Together they went through the streets of Cachoeira and São Félix, entering diners, houses, and terreiros to watch and talk about cinema with the owners and dwellers of the spaces.\(^{44}\) The films and the chat, accompanied by some snacks after the screening, turned these young "outsiders" into neighbors. Another shift occurred in this encounter as well. Instead of people going to the theater to watch a movie that is available at a given time, they now chose which film from the students' collection they wanted to watch and set a time to install the projector in their homes. Students and homemakers sewed together the screen, and children interacted with the film, especially through dancing. The power and knowledge relations between the university and the community were challenged and redesigned. For project creator Olivia Barcellos,

> We believe that the spectator from the local community, as a host—which is primarily their position in this context—can receive the cultural activity brought by the academic community from a place of belonging and not as a visitor, a foreigner in their own land. Hence, by finding their place of belonging in relation to that activity, they are able to represent this practice with greater autonomy and, consequently, bring a more relevant contribution to the intended cultural integration.\(^{45}\)

Beyond just providing social interaction, these encounters further fuel the university's community outreach program. The academic community and local community coexist and exchange experiences and knowledge. As Fábio Rodrigues recalls, boys who had never seen a professional camera in their lives have learned how to tell their stories in movies. Homemakers who previously did not believe that cinema was a place for them have come to debate films with the enthusiasm typical of initiates. Teachers and students have learned new skills by communing with people who also know how to teach about the world and life, and who, for many generations, have mastered such sophisticated sciences as the musicality of samba de roda, the medicinal power of plants, the flavors of local cuisine, and the power of Recôncavo spirituality. And that is how we have learned how to teach our comrades.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


AUTHOR BIO

Ana Rosa Marques is a documentary filmmaker and a professor in the Film and Audiovisual Program of the Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia (Brazil). She is one of the coordinators of CachoeiraDoc (Cachoeira Documentary Film Festival) and served as coordinator for the SOCINE (Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos de Cinema e Audiovisual/Brazilian Society for the Study of Cinema and Audiovisual) from 2020 to 2022, editing thematic seminars. She holds a BA in communications from the Universidade Federal da Bahia, an MA in communications from the Universidade Federal Fluminense, and a doctorate in communications from the Universidade Federal da Bahia.

TRANSLATOR BIO

Isabel Machado is a cultural historian who specializes in the fields of gender and sexuality and celebration studies, and currently investigates carnivals and drag competitions. Her first book, Carnival in Alabama: Marked Bodies and Invented Traditions in Mobile (2023), uses Mardi Gras as a vehicle to understand social and cultural changes in Mobile, Alabama (USA) in the second half of the 20th century.

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