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## Arquivo em Cartaz: Archival film festivals amid old and new challenges

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Created under the organization of Brazil's National Archive in Rio de Janeiro, Arquivo em Cartaz[1] (2015-) is among the few festivals dedicated to audiovisual preservation in the national circuit.[2] Established as an annual event since 2015, the festival celebrated its 8th edition in November 2022 with the theme 'ethnographic film – views on the world',[3] and adopting a hybrid model.[4]

Arquivo em Cartaz was the National Archive's (NA) second experience organising an audiovisual event. The institution was also responsible for creating Recine (2002-2014; 2015-2017; 2020),[5] the first archival film festival to take place in the country. With the NA at the forefront, the 2000s saw the advent of specialised events on the topic of archives and preservation nationwide.[6] Nonetheless, as I attempt to elaborate in the review's first section, the ties linking cinematheques, art museums, and other institutions of memory with film festivals go further in the history of the festival phenomenon in Brazil.

Arquivo em Cartaz came into being after Recine left the NA in 2015 – when the partnership between the Archive and the company Rio de Cinema Produções came to an end. As I discuss in the second section of this review, both events' trajectories are entangled and connected to the NA's position as a rather recent and unique film archive in the national context; the last section focuses on Arquivo em Cartaz's latest edition. In my analysis, I attempt to elaborate on the festival's recent developments in light of their connection to the archive film festival phenomenon, the dilemmas of audiovisual preservation, and the national festival (sub)circuits in Brazil. As pointed out by De Valck and Damiens, one cannot understand the recent emergency 'apart from other crises' that the 'pandemic precipitates, accentuates, and/or transforms'.[7]

Festivals in Brazil seem to have been under constant crisis, where a large circuit has been sustained despite scarce and unevenly-distributed funding. When it comes to film and audiovisual archives the story is not very different, as most heritage institutions have not

been properly financed and/or structured. In parallel with the material conditions, the very idea of our memory being under constant menace has been dominant in the audiovisual heritage debate as it happens with film festivals, seen as an important yet fragile sector.[8] Even though this review is not the space to develop a strong argument on cultural policies in Brazil and Latin America, we would like to indicate how important steady policies are for both festivals and archives. With the link between festivals and archives as a central axis, this review is an attempt to elaborate on important dilemmas of the archival film festival phenomenon in Brazil, from the experience of the events organised under the country's NA.

## **Festivals and archives in Brazil**

Originating from film clubs,[9] the first Brazilian film archives were created with a focus on 'dissemination and reflection of the seventh art'.[10] It is the case for both the Film Library of the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art – MAM-SP[11] (1946-) and Rio de Janeiro Museum of Modern Art – MAM-RJ Cinematheque (1955-). Attention to preservation developed over time with the formation of collections and shifts in the national film culture. Those institutions' ties to film festivals goes back to the 1950s, when the first international events took place. The most prominent example would be the correlations between MAM-SP Film Library and the First International Film Festival of Brazil in 1954, when films were transferred from European archives to São Paulo,[12] under the influence of Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes, whose relevant connections in Europe had also been vital for the institution's affiliation to the International Federation of Film Archives – FIAF in 1949. The Film Library was directly involved in the festival organisation, particularly in its retrospectives, and different activities like film exhibitions and lectures took place at the museum facilities.

This bond between archives and festivals can be observed in different moments and situations since then. A few possibilities and situations that preceded the creation of Recine in 2002 include: archives and museums serving as festival venues, as was the case for Mostra de Cinema de São Paulo in the early years (1977 to 1983) in the Art Museum of São Paulo – MASP; cinematheques lending films and videos to festival screenings, to mention one among various examples, Mostra Internacional do Filme Etnográfico appeared in 1993 with the close collaboration of MAM-RJ Cinematheque; activities discussing film preservation, such as the encounter of Latin American cinematheques during Festival Internacional do Filme in 1965.[13] This rather incomplete picture already reveals complex exchanges between events and archives.

Debates on heritage date to the 1930s with the inauguration of a National Service for Historical Heritage (SPHAN) in 1937. At the time film preservation was not officially included in the legislation, which only changed in 1970 with Resolution No. 34 of the National Institute

of Cinema (INC),[14] recognising cinema as part of the national cultural patrimony. Still today, national policies for audiovisual preservation are late and partial. Even with the creation of new cultural policies in the 2000s, most archival institutions do not have adequate conditions of storage or personnel. In the past years, political, economic, and sanitary crises have severely affected the sector – in 2021 a fire hit the Brazilian Cinematheque. Besides the examples mentioned in this section, other local, regional, and federal institutions have appeared since the 1940s. In the 1980s, Brazil's National Archive started to receive collections of audiovisual materials.

## **Film preservation in the National Archive**

Created in the 19th century as an official body to deposit documents of the federal administration, the National Archive has a unique trajectory, as it was not intended to become a film archive. The formation of its audiovisual collection resulted from a series of more or less isolated events, starting in the 1980s when the NA began to receive public and private audiovisual materials and implemented adaptations in terms of infrastructure, personnel, and protocols.[15]

Three decades later, in 2002, the partial transfer of the MAM-RJ Cinematheque collection guaranteed NA a position as the depository of 'a memorable portion of the history of Brazilian cinema'.[16] Throughout the years, the audiovisual sector has undergone great expansion. If, in the early 1980s, the collection was estimated at 2,000 items, in 2003 the number reached almost 100,000. In 2008, the NA became a FIAF Associate, a position shared with two other institutions nationwide: MAM-RJ Cinematheque, also an associate; and Brazilian Cinematheque (São Paulo), the only one with official member[17] status.[18]

For NA, it was the need to reflect on its recent condition as a film archive that served as an impulse for diffusion.[19] The format of choice was the archive film festival with Recine, Mostra de Cinema de Arquivo, being created in 2002. In the next subsections I will go over the main characteristics of Recine, adding a few observations in comparison to other Latin American archival film festivals, and Arquivo em Cartaz, before entering a discussion of the 2022 edition.

## **Recine**

In 2002, under the curation of Clóvis Molinari Jr.,[20] Recine started as a non-competitive national film week, showing silent films accompanied by live music – repeating the formula of the Italian archival festivals. There were 700 people present in the NA's courtyard for the

opening ceremony, which was also the inauguration of the archive's new headquarters, located in front of the Republic Square in Rio de Janeiro's city center. A forum with two panels on preservation brought together representatives of the main institutions in Brazil.

In 2004, Recine went through major changes, becoming an international archival film festival. Maintaining forums and non-competitive sessions, the program gained a competition and workshops. The competitive program accepted films and videos made with at least 40% of archival footage, of private or public origin, with no limits of length or genre.[21] Prizes were distributed by a jury of guests for Best Film or Video, Direction, Screenplay, Image Editing, Contribution to Film Language, Research, and Sound Design – a division that remained the basis for subsequent editions, and later for *Arquivo em Cartaz*.

Another important addition of the 2004 edition was the creation of a journal aimed at registering and accompanying the festival program, bringing articles by researchers, critics, and filmmakers, in addition to interviews. That same year the festival's technical and creative workshops started. In the video workshops experienced professionals supervised novice filmmakers in the creation of short videos that later premiered at the festival in a separate competition.

The creation of Recine can be linked to the emergence of archival film festivals since the 1980s in Europe,[22] such as Pordenone Silent Film Festival (1982-) and *Il Cinema Ritrovato* (1986-). The phenomenon went global in the following decades, however in Latin America the format has been rare. Besides Brazil, only two countries have dedicated archival festivals: Chile with *Festival Internacional de Cine Recobrado de Valparaíso* (1997-); and Mexico with *Festival Internacional de Cine Silente* (2015-).[23] In Brazil, after Recine, other initiatives gained shape with *CineOP - Mostra de Cinema de Ouro Preto* (2006-) and *Jornada Brasileira do Cinema Silencioso* (2007-2012). In the 2010s *Arquivo em cartaz* (2015-) was created.

Before the pandemic *Jornada*, Recine, and *Arquivo em Cartaz* took place in the busy cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, while CineOP happened in the smaller, historic Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, listed by UNESCO as a world heritage town since 1980 (making it similar to the Chilean *Cine Recobrado*).[24] Organised by *Universo Produção*,[25] CineOP is still active today, having become the setting for the Brazilian Association for Audiovisual Preservation – ABPA annual meetings since 2008.

The trajectories of Recine and *Jornada Brasileira de Cinema Silencioso* are in many aspects similar. For one, they were both initially inspired by European festivals focused on silent cinema. Created under (film) archives, *Jornada* is an initiative of the Brazilian Cinematheque; their stories are also both affected by difficulties in the festival organisation leading to their interruption. Usual challenges such as funding particularly affect festivals promoted by public institutions (not only archives) due to the rigid rules they must follow in the

management of funds, causing events to choose between being limited to their internal budget or to resort to alliances with private producing companies.

Until 2014, Recine was organised by the NA in a joint project with Rio de Cinema Produções, directed by Ricardo Favilla. This partnership was important to shape the festival format, but it was also the source of conflicts that led to a rupture in 2014. Amid accusations from both sides, different understandings about crucial aspects of the festival such as funding, programming choices, and how to reach audiences seem to be the central causes for dispute.[26] Because the trademark was registered by Rio de Cinema Produções, the NA could no longer use the festival title.[27] This situation was the origin of Arquivo em Cartaz in 2015.

### **Arquivo em cartaz**

The second festival in the NA started with the establishment of a new partnership. From 2015 to 2017 Arquivo em cartaz was co-organised with Universo Produção – the same company responsible for producing CineOP. Among the different producing companies implicated with NA film festivals, Universo was the one with the most solid experience in the area. In 2018, a new partnership was sealed, this time with a smaller company from Rio, Crioula Carioca.[28] Since 2019, the festival has been organised with funds from the NA and other public institutions. The 2021 edition was a joint initiative with another public institution, Centro Técnico do Audiovisual – CTAV, and in 2022 the NA was the sole organiser.

The festival trajectory indicates that the relation with private producing companies remained challenging. The longest cooperation lasted only three editions. Coinciding with a moment of reduced funding for culture in Brazil, in the past years the festival suffered with budget constraints, counting primarily on the NA's internal funds, and political interference. Festival directors and curators were part of the NA's professional team. Considering the programme, Arquivo em Cartaz carries many similarities with Recine, among which are the presence of competitive and non-competitive sessions, educational activities, technical and creative workshops, and a festival journal. Innovations encompassed a new trophy, new workshops, including some for kids and teenagers, and changes in the criteria for the competition – reducing the requirement for 30% of archival footage.

Audience formation, education, and technical training have been central to the festival. As with Recine, attracting audiences has been a challenge. Besides recent shifts in the forms of cinephilia, the location of the NA in an area of downtown Rio associated with theft has posed additional obstacles, especially for evening screenings. Having switched from in-person to

online in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, the 2022 edition had a hybrid program, which is analysed in the next section.

## **Ethnographic cinema, views on the world – going hybrid**

Carried out from 3-13 November 2022, the latest edition of Arquivo em Cartaz centered around 'ethnographic cinema – views on the world', proposing a dialogue between visual anthropology, audiovisual archives, and film festivals.[29] With Mauro Domingues[30] and Maria Elizabeth Brêa Monteiro[31] as curators, planning for the event started one year before with a set of five goals: contribute to preservation and access; foster international ties with Portuguese-speaking nations and South America; stimulate the creation of new cinematographic work from historical footage; promote technical training in preservation; and attract new audiences.[32]

On 3 November the opening ceremony celebrated the UNESCO World Day for Audiovisual Heritage. The festival program was dedicated in memoriam to Patrícia Monte-Mór (anthropologist and cultural producer), Darcy Ribeiro (anthropologist and educator), and Geraldo Sarno (film director), who were all honored in film exhibitions and panels. Patrícia Monte-Mór, director of Mostra Internacional do Filme Etnográfico (1993 and 2013), was only included among the honorees after her death in January 2022. Though not an archive festival, Mostra dedicated special attention to the memory of ethnographic cinema in Brazil and developed consistent relations to archival institutions.[33]

The choice for a hybrid format was both due to financial costs and the yet unstable sanitary situation. The online program included the opening and closing ceremonies, as well as various roundtable discussions and a virtual workshop, all broadcasted live on the archive's Youtube channel.[34] A selection of 88 films could be accessed on the platform AmazoniaFlix, divided into four main sessions: Competition, Archives of Tomorrow, Magic Lantern, and Archive Collections. While the first three showed recent productions, the last one assembled a set of historic materials from different institutions such as CTAv, Museu do Índio, and Vídeo nas Aldeias.[35] Archival Collections had another four subdivisions: Homage, Ethnographic Film, Memory of the World, and World Day for Audiovisual Heritage – including films produced since the 1910s in diverse contexts, among which were important records of Indigenous communities in Brazil.

The competition brought together 27 productions from five countries: Brazil, Spain, Germany, Argentina, and Norway; and in various formats, from documentaries with traditional narratives to more experimental formats. Themes comprised historical events, political issues, personal memories, and archival preservation. Magic Lantern consisted of

six short videos resulting from the 2022 audiovisual workshop supervised by Beth Formaggini.[36] In both competitive sessions, the centrality of documentaries coexisted with a wide range of cinematographic styles and uses of the archives, a characteristic shared with other events in Brazil combining ethnographic, documentary, and/or experimental cinemas, such as Fórumdoc[37] (1997-), and less common in generalist or (exclusive) documentary festivals.

According to the organisers, the edition has successfully attracted applicants for workshops and competitions, as well as viewers for online exhibitions, expanding audience numbers from previous festival (in-person) editions. Engaging audiences in live activities online proved to be a more difficult endeavor, as panels on Youtube were only able to reach a small, yet participative audience during live broadcasts. Contents remained available on Youtube, allowing the audience to watch it later, increasing the number of streams considerably.

In-person activities ranged from workshops and special film exhibitions to students from public schools held at the National Archive headquarters, besides two film screenings at the MAM-RJ Cinematheque. Based on an interview given by Darcy Ribeiro in the 1980s, *Da terra dos índios, aos índios sem terra*, a film directed by Zuenir Ventura, premiered at the festival on 5 November. Followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker, the screening took place with the room partially full.[38] On 9 November, in the same venue and with a similar turnout, a digitally restored copy of *Festa de Nossa Senhora da Glória do Outeiro* (1946) was screened with a follow-up discussion. The audience consisted mostly of film scholars, archivists, and professionals in the audiovisual industry.

In this edition, the meeting between ethnographic cinema and film archive raises important issues on Brazil's audiovisual memory, such as (the future of) Indigenous peoples and their images. As I have argued in the previous sections, in Brazil audiovisual archives and festivals have been profoundly interconnected, with both film festivals and film archives surviving in a delicate balance between precariousness and cultural diversity, conservatism and modernity, backwardness and novelty,[39] proper to the cultural history of Latin American countries. Archival film festivals deal with additional problems as they embody dilemmas of archival preservation and film materiality, particularly suffering the consequences of historical problems – as exemplified in the trajectories of Recine and Jornada Brasileira do Cinema Silencioso.

The Covid-19 emergency imposed new, challenging scenarios for festivals in Brazil, a situation only aggravated by the political crisis. Intersections connecting the recent situation with structural fragilities in the festival circuits are many and complex. As we move towards a post-pandemic scenario, small[40] and mid-sized events continue to be particularly at



risk.[41] With the political renovation in the federal government, the moment seems crucial to discuss national policies and funding for audiovisual heritage.

Having experimented with different formats since 2020, the future of Arquivo em Cartaz remains open. Hybrid or in-person, the festival's main issues will still involve finding forms to engage audiences and reach economic and political sustainability, to fulfill its mission to promote audiovisual memory. Arquivo em Cartaz's next steps are not only deeply tied to developments in the National Archive structure, but also dependent on the broader situation unfolding in the national cultural sector, affecting (archival) film festivals and audiovisual preservation.

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## Notes

- [1] [https://www.gov.br/arquivonacional/pt-br/sites\\_eventos/arquivo-em-cartaz](https://www.gov.br/arquivonacional/pt-br/sites_eventos/arquivo-em-cartaz) (accessed on 2 March 2023)

## ARQUIVO EM CARTAZ: ARCHIVAL FILM FESTIVALS AMID OLD AND NEW CHALLENGES

- [2] This review is part of a post-doctoral research funded by FAPERJ – Carlos Chagas Filho State Research Foundation of Rio de Janeiro [SEI-260003/014769/2021].
- [3] [https://www.gov.br/arquivonacional/pt-br/sites\\_eventos/arquivo-em-cartaz](https://www.gov.br/arquivonacional/pt-br/sites_eventos/arquivo-em-cartaz) (accessed on 2 March 2023)
- [4] Since 2020, Arquivo em Cartaz switched from in-person to online.
- [5] From 2002 to 2013 the Recine took place at the National Archive in a partnership with Rio de Cinema Produções, a small company directed by Ricardo Favilla. From 2014 to 2017, Recine left the National Archive and was organised by Rio de Cinema in collaboration with the MAM-RJ Cinematheque. It was interrupted after 2017 due to a lack of funds. In 2020, a special edition was organised online by the filmmaker and cultural producer Cavi Borges.
- [6] Mager 2019.
- [7] Damiens & De Valck 2020, pp. 300-301.
- [8] Mattos 2013.
- [9] Butruce 2003, p. 118.
- [10] Bezerra 2015, p. 197.
- [11] Embryo of the Brazilian Cinematheque.
- [12] Zanatto 2021, p. 109.
- [13] Nuñez 2015, p. 66.
- [14] Bezerra 2013, p. 113.
- [15] Molinari Jr. 2003.
- [16] Hollós 2003, p. 103.
- [17] According to the information found on the FIAF website, 'members are institutions with legitimate and primary responsibility for the preservation of an original moving image collection, which have resources to undertake this responsibility and will sign the FIAF Code of Ethics as a statement by which they agree to be bound'. While associates 'are institutions active in a field related to the goals of the Federation, but they do not necessarily have care of a qualifying archival moving image collection. They will sign the FIAF Code of Ethics as a statement which they endorse in principle and agree to uphold'. The original text is available at: <https://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Affiliates.html> (accessed on 23 March 2023).
- [18] <https://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Affiliates.html> (accessed on 23 March 2023).
- [19] Mager 2019.
- [20] Clóvis Molinari Jr. was a director, researcher, and historian of Brazilian cinema. He became a server at the National Archive after 1982, being an active agent in the audiovisual sector. In the early 2000s, Molinari Jr. was the founder and first curator of Recine.
- [21] The information was obtained on the festival website, no longer accessible.
- [22] Usai 2013, p. 23.
- [23] Considering events dedicated to memory would provide us with a wider list.
- [24] Peirano 2013.
- [25] Universo Produção is a production company created in Minas Gerais, Brazil in 1994, with the cultural producer Raquel Hallak as director. The company is most known for the organisation of film festivals such as Mostra de Tiradentes, CineOP, and CineBH. More information at <https://universoproducao.com.br> (accessed on April 6 2023).
- [26] During my PhD I have conducted oral history interviews and ethnographic work interacting with different agents involved in the festival organisation. Many of them mentioned different disagreements in the festival organisation day-to-day as the cause for rupture. There was no report of a particular episode being more relevant to the outcome. The dispute continued with arguments regarding the right to use the title Recine. While servers of the Archive accused the producer of misappropriation, Favilla (director of Rio de Cinema Produções) explained that the brand was registered under the company with the accordance of the NA.
- [27] Miranda 2015.

- [28] Crioula Carioca is a production company from Rio de Janeiro. It was created in 1983 and is devoted to cultural and phonographic projects.
- [29] Vallejo & Peirano 2017.
- [30] Mauro Domingues is a Brazilian photographer and specialist in audiovisual preservation. He is Technical Advisor to the General Coordination of Processing and Preservation of the National Archive.
- [31] Maria Elizabeth (Beth) Brêa Monteiro is a social scientist, with a Master's in history. She is a researcher at the National Archive in the Research Division.
- [32] This information was taken from the festival project, shared by the event's curators.
- [33] Monte-Mór 2004.
- [34] <https://www.youtube.com/@ArquivoNacionalBrasil>  
(accessed on 2 March 2023).
- [35] Video nas Aldeias is a NGO coordinated by Vincent Carelli that has promoted several audiovisual training workshops among Indigenous communities in Brazil since the 1980s.
- [36] Beth Formaggini is a Brazilian filmmaker and historian with a trajectory in documentary.
- [37] <https://www.forumdoc.org.br>  
(accessed on 6 April 2023)
- [38] During the festival, restrictions due to the pandemic had already been suspended.
- [39] Barbero 1997, p. 214.
- [40] A number of small events created since 2020 might not survive in the next few years. Mid-sized events have the difficult task of sustaining a legacy and adapting their formats for the ever-changing post-pandemic world.
- [41] De Vack 2020, p. 133.