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The KINEČKO

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Editorial

“Morre lentamente, quem não troca o certo pelo incerto, em busca de um sonho.”

... “Slowly is dying he who doesn’t exchange the security for insecurity on his way towards a dream,” is a short excerpt from a poem by Pablo Neruda (a.k.a. Neftalí Ricardo Reyes Basoalto) and I am taking the liberty of using it to start this Brazilian edition of Kinečko despite the fact that Neruda came from Chile. For it were dreams and desires about an (at least intellectual) adventure that motivated us to turn our attention towards the cinema of a country that is so far from Slovakia as Brazil.

KINEČKO is a relatively young bimonthly magazine (founded August 2010) that reflects cinema in the context of contemporary culture, presents to the public a profound non-conformist analysis of film, and supports writing about film as a relevant component of living cinema. It also serves as a source of information and a platform for unofficial, yet well-founded debate between contemporary filmmakers and critics. The target group for KINEČKO comprises film professionals, students, festival-goers, film club members, film enthusiasts, and those interested in sharing a bolder perspective about contemporary cinema. In 2013, the magazine staff have decided to try a new conception of focusing upon cinema of a concrete country in the section dedicated to the world film. The other half of every issue remains always focused on reflection of actual audiovisual events here in Slovakia.

As the first country in 2013 it is Brazil. This addendum, translated into English and thus made available to foreign

readers, contains only a part of this issue of KINEČKO that is dealing concretely with the Brazilian Cinema. The whole issue contains more texts on Slovak film as well as actual reviews of movies from other parts of the world. Yet it is the research in the field of Brazilian cinema that we would like to make available to you.

Thanks to Paula Fabiani¹, a Brazilian director we have met at the festival in Bratislava, we have gained contact to professor Daniela Gillone, who has not only prepared an extensive article on realism in the present Brazilian cinema for us, but she also compiled a DVD with short Brazilian films. The text on the Brazilian cinema is worth reading also due to the parallels with elements that start appearing also in our Slovak film. It was again Daniela who had helped me in communicating with the director Kleber Mendonço Filho² to whom I talked about his full-length debut movie *The Sounds From The Neighbourhood*, differing from the present Brazilian filmmaking in that instead of being a social drama, the film is rather trying to be a generation confession of middle class. Another text is the review of the film *Stories only exist in memory* by a young director Julia Murat³ and the text by Jana Dudková about the movie *Macunaima* that was based upon the key novel of Brazilian modernism and magic realism. Maroš Brojo has provided us with a cross-section of history of the Brazilian animation. Furthermore, we shall introduce the programme of the Brazil Visual festival that is taking place in Slovakia for the first time. Last but not least, we are honoured to express gratitude to her Excellence Susan Kleebank and her colleague Edna Ferreira from the Embassy of the Brazilian Republic in

Slovakia who, with a great portion of enthusiasm and willingness, have helped us issuing this Brazilian edition of our magazine here in Slovakia. We hope and believe, or more precisely, we dream about an extensive further cooperation in the territories of both Slovakia and Brazil. How about issuing a Brazilian magazine on Slovak cinema, or organizing a Slovak festival in Brazil? Await what’s next or contact us with your own ideas at KINEČKO (kinecko@kinecko.com).

EVA KRIŽKOVÁ

- 1 Paula Fabiani’s film in the programme of the IFF Bratislava was the title *The Curse of Cages (Essa Maldita Vontade de ser Pássaro)*, shot with the super-eight. The film was not a buster, yet the energetic Paula was.
- 2 Originally, our mutual friend Zuzka Bielíková has helped me contacting him (thanks Zuzi!), but he did not react.
- 3 The movie *Stories Exist Only In Memory* could have been viewed by the Slovak audience at the Art Film Fest last year.

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Kleber Mendonça Filho (source: director's archive)

Each movie is a new friend

Kleber Mendonça Filho (KMF) is important to me for several reasons. It is the very first Brazilian director I have ever met (at the Art Film Fest in 2007), his full-length debut from 2012 has astonished me and you can find his short-footage movie *The Green Record* on our DVD. From the context of the contemporary Brazilian cinema, based on the “politics of realism and the ordinary man”¹, he is standing out with his personal, almost sensual depiction of what he knows best – the life of the upper middle class in an urban settlement (not a favela).



EK: In your work, you have gradually moved from short-footage films, let's say experimental, surreal and inspired by the poetry of Cinema Novo, to the present, more realistic form which your full-length debut *The Sounds from the neighbourhood*² takes. How would you describe the continuity within your work? Are the changes of the continuity related to the changes of technologies and media development?

KMF: I see every film as a new friend, a new person you meet and you start liking. Every film has its own personality, tone, style, yet as they are my friends, each of them ought to be cool and interesting (laughs). Every film requires a specific manner to express its idea. That is why I find it possible to shoot a movie based on the motives of the Slavonic fairy-tales and then another one, very realistic, about life in my own district. The short-footage film *The Green Record* was planned from the beginning as a pictorial story for children, whereas *The Sounds from the neighbourhood* should have been a great movie with plenty of characters from the very beginning, and I also had more money to produce this movie than I had for my previous films. Each film dictates its own style and visual. As I started working with video in the 90s, in the last twenty years, I have tried out all the possible technologies, as there were many changes in this area at that period. It was a bit crazy to me, but on the other side, it was interesting as well. The change of formats has brought about a change in the functioning of the film, in the sensation of the film, in the appearance of the film. Sometimes, the selection of format depends on the budget, which is a completely different story. It's so that my shorts, same as the full-length movie, are also influenced by the conditions under which I was allowed to create them.

EK: I have defined your style for myself as modern, electrified magic realism. What do you think about that?

KMF: Sincerely, I only make movies I would like to see myself or I like watching. As I have been watching movies all my life, I feel that the films I am making are based upon me as are all the other things I like in my life. I believe that movies should be personal. They should be giving the impression of a very special and personal expression. My friends should recognize me in my movies, because the worst thing produced nowadays are “shitty movies” as I use to call them, and these are those that look terrible, as if they were created by nobody.

EK: Many motives found in *The Sounds from the neighbourhood* can also be found in your short *Electrified household*³. Did you know from the very beginning that this motive will once become a full-length movie?

KMF: No I had been shooting short movies⁴ without even thinking about ever shooting a full-length, until I sat down to the script with a head full of thoughts. Then I realized that I had been planning *The sounds from the neighbourhood* actually for years, and that my previous movies were truly some kind of steps towards something much more complex – a full-length film. To tell the truth, it was rather surprising for me. I felt this in the strongest way in a moment when Bia, a mother of two children from the movie *Electrified household*, has appeared in my new script without any explanation. She has just entered and said she wanted to participate in the new movie as well. And I had to apprehend that it was logical. That is why she appears also in *The sounds from the neighbourhood*.

EK: I think that many sound engineers would consider *The sounds from the neighbourhood* a true dream work. What did your sound engineer say?

KMF: I love sound and I have made the sound for my short-footage films myself. I was lucky to cooperate on my first full-length movie with a friend of mine, Pablo Lamaro, a sound engineer from Paraguay, who was living in Recife at that time.

We had a wonderful cooperation, as Pablo has this special quality of sound engineer / he is listening. Moreover, he understood the sense of finding certain sounds as replacements for the classic scale.

EK: One of the main roles, the old patriarch of the Francisca district, was played by the famous writer Waldemar Solha. What about the main female character of a woman in the household? What was the main prerequisite for the selection of actress who was to replace her predecessor from the short-footage *Electrified household*?

KMF: We got lucky. I chose Solha for the role of Francisco after the first audition. Five actresses went through the casting for the role of Bia, and I chose Maeve⁵. It had to be a different actress as this is a completely different film, the way of shooting and thus, also a different character. The *Electrified household* is a movie about electricity, mechanics, consummation and pleasure. *The sounds from the neighbourhood* are “more juicy”, they're less about machines and more about loneliness. Simply put, different.

EK: How do you choose your actors generally? I have the feeling that they are prevalently non-actors but I have read in one interview that there is a casting specialist doing this job for you...

KMF: For *The sounds from the neighbourhood* we have had a regular casting department. My assistant brought me videos with interesting people. I watched them and selected those who then came to meet me and my two other assistants, Amanda Gabriel and Leonardo Lacco. It was a very pleasant and fascinating process that I have enjoyed very much. We met plenty of people, plenty of great people.

EK: While we're speaking about the structure of the film crew, what is the situation in production of the contemporary Brazilian cinema? Is it easy to put together an excellent crew and to provide for the conditions for production of an artistic film?

KMF: Film-making means putting together the right bunch of people and that's what we were lucky to achieve. The most of them are my good friends who also happen to be very talented – I like them very much. I think I was really lucky to gather them all together and to get money for a good film.

EK: What is the principle of financing movies in your country?

KMF: Presently in Brazil, there is money for film-making available. It only takes some patience and trying to partake in various calls of funds or script-writing contests. *The sounds from the neighbourhood* were made with state support. The film is considered an investment in culture. On the federal level, cinema is supported from taxes, big companies are allowed to deduct their support of specific cultural projects from their taxes, and which is more, the cinema in the state Pernambuco is supported also locally with the sum of 4 million of Euros per year.

EK: What does it take for the present Brazilian to become a film-maker? Can anybody afford studying film at a university?

KMF: In the last decade, the conditions became significantly more democratic thanks to the fact that films from outside of the historic centre, *São Paulo* and *Rio de Janeiro*, have made it to TV and cinemas. Digital technology has made a lot of things much easier, and the regional, local financial support has also made many things available. I think that starting with short-footage as I did is a good way of getting to film-making. There are many film festivals in Brazil and if you are talented, you have a chance. To tell the truth, apart from technologies or financing, the artistic essence of the film and the natural talent of film-maker are still the most important thing. And, a lot of work.

EK: You have devoted quite a long period of your life to film criticism. Don't you have problem forgetting you're a reviewer when you create? Isn't your theoretical background rather an obstacle for you?

KMF: This week, I have seen a video where Orson Welles is lecturing students of film school in Paris: “an intellectual is an enemy of fine arts.” In reality, it depends on what kind of a film reviewer we're talking about. I believe that too much thinking can “mess up things” as the transformation of thoughts into a film should be resulting from the film-maker's own nature. I think that watching movies and perceiving them on a personal level is much more interesting and productive than generalizing the heavy theory on the basis of what we see. I wish good luck to those who would then try to apply this back in the film-making. After I have shot *The sounds from the neighbourhood*, from time to time I'm getting similar questions regarding film theory and I usually try to avoid them and talk rather about personal approach to film. It is easier for me.

EK: apart from being a film-maker and a reviewer, you are also active as festival dramaturgist. What films do you usually choose for the programme of your festival?

KMF: For the programme of the film festival Janela Internacional de Cinema do Recife, we usually choose films we like and are enthused about, films that are inimitable, unique. Film production is so mechanized nowadays that when I come across a film that is depicting the world from its own viewpoint, I tend to fall in love and can hardly stop watching it. It is very difficult to define exact criteria when you have to choose from so many films. Like the majority of other festivals, we sometimes do make surprising decisions, sometimes fairly predictable, but anyway, I must say I love this work. And I can be even happier to see that my film was chosen by festivals I really appreciate so much.

EK: Thank you for finding time for this interview for Kinečko despite your very busy schedule and I look forward to coming to see the *neighbourhood* of Recife personally and to watch the “unique” movies in the programme of the International Film Frame.

EVA K

¹ The topics of the present Brazilian cinema are addressed in details in the next two pages by Daniela Gillone.

² *O som ao redor*, 2012

³ *Eletrodoméstica* (2005), Celý film je k dispozícii tu: <https://vimeo.com/10022944>

⁴ Väčšinu režisérových filmov nájdete na Vimeu pod menom Kleber Mendonça Filho.

⁵ Maeve Jinkings

Politics of realism and ordinary man in the present cinema

A great deal of enthusiasm supported by the new Audiovisual Act and other stimuli is characterised by the strong film movement from the middle of the 90s, also known as “resurrection” of national cinema. The reorganization of this cinema, enriched with historic advancements like adoption of legislation on subsidies as well as other aesthetic and technological improvements allow us to map its most vital characteristics, for instance, the unusual connection to the present. The cinema that has originated thanks to this resurrection, can be characterised by a broad variety of themes and grouping of multiple aesthetic intentions.

The contemporary Brazilian cinema can be classified with the help of some selected samples. In the last 15 years, from 1996 until now, these samples document the direction representing new tendencies and contact points in movie-making. We can say that within this cycle of national cinema and the samples presented in the article, a strong element of depiction of ordinary people. Thus, it represents certain features which were scrutinized already in the period of new wave – Cinema Novo – in the 1960s.

However, the political and historical contexts of these two periods are different, and with the new ideological standpoints to shooting, the themes like “sertão” (Brazilian inland), migration and mostly the favelas in big cities appear in the movies again, yet in other angle as it was in the 1960s. That period had appreciated the character of author who was put in the role of a revolutionary man fighting with insufficient financing, which in the end only brought him closer to the reality of the country.

Taking some movies as examples, we will be asking the question of what kind of a relationship is there between the ideological part of a movie and its style. The goal is to understand how the cinema, depicting the lives of ordinary people, incorporates the political views and how have these views influenced the origination of identity of the present cinema. The samples represent documentary movies, respectively, movies based on true events depicting everyday life in the inland and in the cities. We can find here also movies about relationships between the police and organized crime and the inhabitants of the favelas like *Town of Gods* (Cidade de Deus, 2002), *Elite Commando* (Tropa de Elite, 2007) či *Time of Fear* (Salve Geral, 2009). Also movies built on simple motives and depicting everyday life of pragmatic people looking for ways to survive in the labour market or to find their lost values, can be mentioned here, for example *The man who copied* (O homem que copiava, 2003) and *Suely in the sky* (O Céu de Suely, 2006).

The outcome for this analysis is the aesthetic and political depiction of ordinary men.

Realism and the ordinary man

How do we perceive the ordinary man in realism, neo-realism and formalism? How did (and still does) the realism contribute to new ways of shooting and thinking about movies? In the present Brazilian cinema, the aesthetic means dominate, mostly in the movies that are depicting the ordinary man. The interest in realism has led to a slow change of the documentary language. Along with documentaries based on authorial aesthetics, also actors movies emerged that were utilizing the artistic means from the documentaries and so they have reinforced the realistic aesthetics. As we will see, realism and depiction of ordinary man have created bigger space for discussion about the political and social aspects of the present cinema.

At the beginning, the central topic for analysis were the political and social dimensions of

this depiction. Ismail Xavier has emphasized the repeated occurrence of “pragmatism of the poor man” as a definition for persons living in disastrous conditions and looking for their place in the labour market. Lúcia Nagib has presented a comparative study on thematic connection between Cinema Novo and the “new” Brazilian film, where she scrutinized the questions of identity and policies of both these movements. Ivana Bentes has titled the contemporary cinema that is depicting people on the bottom of the society, as the “cosmetics of hunger” in reaction to the “aesthetics of hunger” by Glabuer Rocha. This Ivana Bentes’ expression has come to life with the movie *The Town Of Gods* (Cidade de Deus, 2002) by Fernando Meirelles and it defined the relation among aesthetics, ethics, and politics in the movies dealing with the problematics of poverty. Ten years from then, this expression is still a part of discussions and is considered a challenge that must be faced in the audiovisual creation.

The “Cosmetics of hunger” describes the aesthetic expressions of depiction of the ordinary man and is dealing with the approach towards poverty in the present cinema. It expresses and generates processes in forms of various clichés. The “Cosmetics of hunger” prettifies and romanticizes poverty, depicting it as “status quo”, respectively as an effort to idealize the troubles of the suppressed people, while it emphasizes the complexity of themes connected to hunger and poverty¹. The ordinary man is the base for creation of new aesthetics in movies.

After Meirelles’s movie, the periphery and favelas have become a simple motif in cinematography, which proves that the “cosmetics of hunger” is not only a label for some movie. By means of this term, Ivana Bentes has started a criticising dialogue and tension between the “new” cinema and the movement Cinema Novo.

Another vivid question in the field of movies is the relation between the perception of reality generated in the movie and the realistic aesthetics. Presently, discussions are being held regarding the depiction of reality and tearing down the aesthetic barriers between the documentary and the actors movie genres. Boom of actor movies utilizing the techniques of documentaries has brought a wider space talks about the relation between film and aesthetic realism as such. The ways of depicting the symbolic world are based upon its aesthetic and ethical problems. Also Paulo Meneses is one of those who are thinking about this questions. He has elaborated the conception of “representatification” based on perception of truth and its depiction in the film.

These discussed terms shall be viewed in a deeper sense upon the background of cinema’s history. The continuity and disagreement between the classic and modern cinema should be analysed from the viewpoint of depiction of ordinary man in the film and the aesthetics resulting from this interpretation. Due to a limited scope of this article, we are unable to analyse the individual periods in details, and thus we shall restrict our aim to criticising discussion on Brazilian cinema and the theories

included in this essay. We will be dealing with aspects that connect and distinguish the realism and the ordinary man. In this article, the critical discussion and analysis of realism and ordinary people in the film is based on following question: to what extent and in which ways did (and still does) the realistic depiction of ordinary man determines the direction of the Brazilian cinema?

Realism in the movie *I’m leaving because I have to, I’m coming back because I love you* (Viajo Porque Preciso, Volto Porque Te Amo)

The interest in realism in the contemporary cinema has brought new elements that allow us inspecting the relations between political and social questions and film styles. We think it is important that the “return” of realism be scrutinized with all its characteristic features and elements, so typical of this aesthetic rebirth, as the Brazilian movies utilize more and more pictures that are typical of documentaries. On the other hand, this plane is rather formal and this division only proves how the “documentary” becomes a formal question. This is also proved by the movie *I’m leaving because I have to, I’m coming back because I love you* (Viajo Porque Preciso, Volto Porque Te Amo). Most discussed was its film language, which is something between a documentary and an actors movie. Despite all that, it would probably be more favourable to think about the way in which the strategies of “documentary” shooting are overlapping with formalistic strategies and which political and conceptual development this overlapping has brought.

For a better explanation of what we are presenting here, let us analyse a short sample from the above mentioned movie. *I’m leaving because I have to* comes back, directly and indirectly, to the plot motives from folk culture in the semi-deserted inland. We can find “Sertão” in multiple movies – *Son without mother* (Filho Sem Mãe)², *Dryness* (Vidas Secas)³, *God and Devil in the Land of the Sun* (Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol)⁴ – as a mythical place that generates the picture of the ordinary man and has served as a political base upon the formation of national cinema. *I’m leaving because I have to* is bringing a mythical film tradition and with its structure, it resembles the storyline of the movie *God and Devil* – in the first two thirds of the movie, we are looking at images of the “sertão” until the topic of water gets in the foreground. However, the water does not represent any utopistic imagination of the myth that the “sertão” will change into the sea, but rather a concrete event – rerouting of the river São Francisco that causes flooding of “sertão” and destroys multiple villages. Along with that, the images of the river channel are complemented with the images of the Mexican sea at the end, which makes the question of ordinary man actual for a broader geography than the national one. These stories dealing with the contemporary topics are introducing the story by presenting the presence. But it is not about the concrete manifestation of a dream about water for the inhabitants of the inland,

made possible thanks to “progress”. The seeming perishability is not only historical but also geological and sentimental – the main character, a geologist, does not travel only to collect the data for the eventual rerouting of the river which would water the “sertão”, but also to escape from an unhappy love. The question is thus more geological and sentimental, and the main idea present in the whole movie and in the individual scenes is “open fracture”. This is how the movie begins and this is what it builds upon as well. In the beginning of the title, we can see an asphalted road at night lit only by the car headlamps. Then the space changes and the road changes into a “rupture” stretching through the inland as a great wound. A wound which will even more emphasize the dryness of the country thanks to its monotone character and hardness of the asphalt material. As we can see, “documentary pictures” are a metaphor not only in relation to the emotional past of the main character but also in relation to building up the present. And, despite the fact that the present is seemingly only an utopistic dream (efforts to turn the “sertão” into the sea), it is a part of this “fracture”. The intention behind the metaphor is only functional thanks to simple pictures – camera moving forward and to the sides, representing the character/observer’s look and a certain realistic effort to double the “real” perspective. On the contrary, short cuts connecting two sequences are bringing about astonishment, as they change a night scene into a day scene without any transition. This kind of cut can be viewed as the effort to oppose the “documentary” style of filming. The intention is not only pointing at different strategies used in “documentary” and “actors movie”, but rather to create one whole from shooting and editing that would emphasize this idea and the feeling of the “fracture”. This feeling can be found not only in terms of emotional relations, but also within the experience of the present, nevertheless, the present is not depicted in a purely objective light.

The problematic of ordinary man, being a part of the “sertão” myth on its change into a sea (which would also require a deeper analysis), is processed in various ways and each one of them overlaps with the other and so, quite a dense story is created where we do not know what is the presence and what is the past. It is the movie soundtrack, compiled of sentimental songs of folk tradition – both past and present – that deserves a greater deal of attention in order for us to understand its complexity. This is also true for the characters from the inland acting in the movie. These characters initially only complement the comments of the main character (as it is in a traditional documentary), yet they multiply slowly, become independent from the narrator and finally they take the word. In this moment, the director only pretends the documentary strategies (the monologue of the main character changes into a dialogue similar to the style of a talk). Another important point when perceiving the ordinary man in terms of realistic aesthetics is formal question – a dialogue between fairy-tale, bushy inland and its poor dwellings and the present m “sertão” full of colours, where this colour (despite the fact it was

still from the film *I'm leaving because I have to, I'm coming back because I love you*; source: Daniela Gillone's archive

4 -

artificial) sets historical frame of the location and its characters into context.

This short analysis of the movie illustrates the efforts to show what we are going to deal with in the upcoming analyses: the way in which the authors utilize realism and depict the ordinary man, as well as their relations to political intentions of these structures. Depiction of common people and folk culture in selected movies will be analysed from political, historical and social viewpoints which constitute a part of both the intended and unintended messages mediated to the audience.

We see the sense of conception of film politics in the relation between the work and its viewer who is neither a concrete nor psychological observer, he is rather a term, a presumption (and that is why the realism was considered to be only an imitation of naturalism). Jacques Rancière's theories on existing connections between art and politics (concretely, between a film as a set of experience that gives the opportunity for political expressions) are the fundament for analysis of the politics of various historic concepts of realism and ordinary man, developed in the movie.

The movies represent the social and political context that is not restricted to the contents depicted. This dimension, outreaching the dichotomy between depiction and the depicted changes the position of the ordinary man and realism in the film. As they represent one conception, it is necessary to evaluate how the picture of ordinary man is processed in this renewed realism. We should also think about which images, processes and contexts can be considered appropriate.

Moving from realism

By means of deliberation of the movie *I'm leaving because I have to, I'm coming back because I love you*, and the analysis of critical discussion, it is obvious that the contemporary Brazilian cinema shows repeated interest in "return" of realism to depiction of ordinary man. In terms of this return to depiction of reality and ordinary man, there are new styles and expressions originating in the Brazilian actors and documentary movies, and with this change, technological and aesthetic appropriateness go hand in hand.

The styles that are originating adapt to the new reality and the viewer's interest in the depicted reality. Also new forms are originating,

differing from the realism of Bertolt Brecht, from the socialistic realism of Stalin and even from the ideological discussions of the Cinema Novo, yet they follow the approaches related to the former aesthetic and political question. They are bringing certain nuances of neo-realism and post-war realism. By the connection of these influences, films are originating that combine the aesthetics of reality with the means and motifs typical of commercially successful movies. Authorial films also emerge, like the *The Marsh of the Beasts* (Baixio das Bestas, 2006) and the *Yellow Mango* (Amarelo Manga, 2002) by Cláudio Assis or the *Chronically impossible* (Cronicamente Inviável, 2000) and *The Tenants* (Os Inquilinos, 2010) by Sérgio Bianchi.

Different generations of active film makers are utilizing realism in different ways. Sérgio Bianchi gave it a sour taste, Cláudio Assis is showing its malign form, in Brant's movies it seems fresh, in the movies of Walter Salles it is full of poetry, and Jorge Furtado presents it through intelligent humour. Even the directors associated in the movements *Cinema Novo* and *Cinema marginal* (marginal film) like Cacá Diegues, Andrea Tonacci, Julio Bressani and Ruy Guerra have brought realistic motives in their movies.

Various elements are being used for building up the scenes, for instance, the shoots presented in the media. Realistic movies frequently utilize the film and television documentary instruments to tell the story. Also the novel as such has influenced the form in which realism is being presented in movies.

The Brazilian cinema has also adopted various techniques used in television. Which is more, the shape of reality in the movies was influenced by *reality shows*. Shots from security cameras have even bigger and bigger importance and are telling great portions of the stories. Thanks to this technique, a movie from Uruguay, the *Giant* (Gigante, 2009) by Adrián Biniez or a Brazilian short-footage movie *Closed Circuit* (Circuito Interno, 2009) by Julio Marti have scored on national and international festivals.

The present cinema has withdrawn from the formalistic structure in the way of understanding the scenes. While shooting docudramas and actors movies, it utilizes documentary elements that constitute images from everyday life. Thanks to these means, the story in actors movies is put in a position where it must, as the documentary language, face the eternal

question of authenticity of the images. The debates on how are these depictions captured in the film and in what way the directors prefer them to achieve authenticity and political statement in their movies are going in the direction towards the understanding of realism in the new Brazilian film.

The "return" of realism in the present cinema has brought about new features thanks to which we are allowed to research the problematic of ideologies and film style, while at the same time, it doubts the very identity and politics of the film. The return of experience and understanding the present is captured in the film as the desire to capture the everyday life with all its social inequalities. The efforts to bring reality in the new cinema resulted in various ways: In fiction stories like *The Twelve Tasks* (Os doze Trabalhos), *How angels are born* (Como nascem os anjos), *Suely In The Sky* (O Céu de Suely), in movies with documentary features like *The Town Of Gods* (Cidade de Deus), *Tiem of Fear* (Salve Geral), *The Elite Commando* (Tropa de Elite) and *Carandiru* (Carandiru), or in autobiographic movies that represent a strong tendency in the last years, e.g. *Lula, The Son of Brazil* (Lula O filho do Brasil), *Jean Charles* (Jean Charles), *Olga* (Olga) and others.

This kind of cinema utilizing realistic aesthetics is interested in historical stories and has created its own documentary language. The selection of the realistic aesthetics is also influenced by the present economic situation like bad financial conditions of the poorest class that do not allow them going to the cinema, like the growth of the movie complexes in shopping centres has increased the ticket price; or it is the politics of film production itself, forcing the movie makers to become dependent on the legislation on state subsidies. All these economic factors of production do have an impact upon the style of the movies, as well as upon the relationship between the author, the work and the audience. By means of this depiction of the social reality, the movies prove that the knowledge and criticism are able to influence social relations.

Is realism really the most suitable tool to depict the reality of social differences? Could the trustworthiness – an inspiring source of legitimacy and the basic element evoking the feeling of identification of the viewer with the work – be utilized as an agent that provoked reflection and critical consciousness? Why is realism one of the aesthetic choices of the present cinema

and what impression do the movies depicting the reality of social differences evoke? Does the realism present in contemporary film determine a specific relation between ideological questions and the style of films?

Film politics

The briefly mentioned Jacques Rancière's theories on the relationship between art and politics seem to be more fruitful to us if we apply them on the politics of the film. Rancière has classified cinema as a set of experience. This set provided space for new means of presentation of political relations. In his efforts to distinguish the politics of art from the aestheticization of politics, he gives art as an example, art that generates stories, fiction or conflicts. He shows that on the contrary to the aestheticization of the politics, the battle in situational speech known from the 1960s now continues in the field of aesthetics. He absolutely criticizes politics: "However, there is aesthetics present in politics that has nothing to do with the Benjamin's aestheticization of politics, so typical of the times of mass production." This aesthetics should not be understood as an act when the author usurps politics in his work. We should understand as Kant understood it, as Foucault said "as a set of forms that determines our feelings in advance". It is right in this "emotional" area where the aesthetic form as a political speech originates.

When inspecting the politics present in the movie by means of realistic depiction of the ordinary man as well as the way how this knowledge has influenced the development of identity of the present Brazilian cinema, we can understand that it is the emotional sphere that forms the community and determines the story environment and political manifestation. In this environment, where directors and viewers are interacting and where this relationship provokes critical discussion, an aesthetic act is present (a movie in this case) which is a set of experiences bringing new ways of feeling and new forms of political manifestation.

By demarcation of this "emotional" space that has come to life thanks to the built-up relationships between the author, the work and the audience, we can further define the subjective experience and criticism capable of influencing social relations. We could say that the political gesture of the majority of the directors is influenced by their view of depicting the



still from the film *I'm leaving because I have to, I'm coming back because I love you*; source: Daniela Gillone's archive



still from the film *The Tenants*, source: Daniela Gillone's archive

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story. It tells the stories of everyday life, full of violence and criminality, by means of the social inequalities.

In the present Brazilian cinema, there are movies bringing stories that are practically inseparable from the political fight. In the emotional space, there is a centre that forms the critical thinking. This effort to pass the experience further determines the way in which the film partakes in spreading the political knowledge. And by means of these two terms, spreading the knowledge and emotional space, we will find out what are the relations among the director, the works and the audience.

When we take a look at how a film helps spreading political ideas, we will find out that the most of directors concentrate on telling the story of everyday life that includes social inequalities, violence and criminality – simply put, the features of folk culture. Although some of the stories are bringing realistic images imitating and revealing the present, thanks to the emotional space, there is a centre that forms critical thinking. Then, it is created by means of cinematographic depictions.

Even the movies aimed at depiction of relationships and the alluring world of the youth are bringing certain political action. Roland Barthes reminds us that the whole cinema has its own political dimension, even if it isn't dealing with it directly. The movie makers of the renewed realism are responsible for the creation of cinema, directly or indirectly political, connecting various stylistic ideas. The stories of documentaries and actors movies show how do depictions of the social reality in Brazil originate. By means of this depiction of social reality, the movies prove that knowledge and criticism are capable of influencing social relations.

There is a connection between the stories and the present that is defined by Fredric Jameson (1997) as the time of the end of utopias where intellectual nostalgia and the rise of pragmatic thinking are clearly present. The topics like worries about surviving on the labour market and seeking for oneself appear here more frequently than the collective fight without criminality. Such fight is present in the movie *The Narrators from Javé* (Os Narradores de Javé, 2003) by Eliana Caffé. It describes the story of the inhabitants of Javé village who are illiterate. Despite that, they decide to tell and approve the history of their village, while the only literate local inhabitant decides to do it. The village is facing the risk of flooding and it needs an official document that would help

the inhabitants saving their place and to claim their rights.

The “pragmatism of poor man”, by which Ismail Xavier has defined the efforts of movie characters aimed at pragmatic interests (e.g. to succeed in the labour market), clearly illustrates how the revolutionary thoughts in everyday life withdraw from the films depicting the present reality. The “symbol of anger”, another from Xavier's categories, is frequently to be found within characters who are living in the past, planning revenge and are getting back to what they have already experienced – this is also another feature of this type of cinema.

This film model also knows the political situation as defined by Frederico James that is typical for thematic prevalence of “nostalgic films” depicting historical violence like e.g. the army dictatorship. This is also proven by looking back at the times of the dictatorship in Brazilian cinema – *Lamarca* (Lamarca, 1994), *Four days in September* (O Que é Isso Companheiro?, 1997), *Baptism by blood* (Batismo de Sangue, 2006) and *Citizen Boilesen* (Cidadão Boilesen, 2009) and the depiction of the past contained therein. Apart from the movie *Utopia and Barbarism* (Utopia e Barbárie, 2010) by Silvio Tendler which is bringing a little bit of presence, practically there doesn't exist any criticism on the impact of the past upon the present.

Relationship between aesthetics and politics in the present

In the history of film, since the realistic theory as a contradiction to the formalistic theory has originated, the reality and the relations between the actors movie and documentaries are a frequently discussed topic among film theoreticians and scientific workers (in another words, Krakauer and Lukács versus Brecht). The realistic and formalistic theories are the two main film teachings. The realism had originated with the coming of modern age and the interest in everyday life. The post-war realism and later the Italian neo-realism have been born as a reaction against the formalism of classic film about the Soviet montage.

In terms of realistic tradition, André Bazin, the most important theoretician of this movement, has advocated films that were dealing with the “objective reality”. This was depicted in the post-war realistic documentaries and actors movies and the works of Italian

neo-realism. We are dealing with this theory so that in future we are able to think about what does this cinema have in common with the renewal of the “realistic” aesthetics in the film. As we consider the ordinary man rather a historical conception, we should be looking at it from the viewpoint of renewed realistic aesthetics as well and we should notice if it has kept its original form or if it has changed.

The “return” of realism must also be understood within further context, as in presence, the stories of documentary and actors movie are overlapping, in contradiction to the past. The Brazilian cinema seems to be less and less formalistic in the sense of understanding the scenes. Upon story construction, it uses seemingly documentary images, which we could see in the movie *I'm leaving because I have to, I'm coming back because I love you*, where we have analysed two types of language. This has launched the debate about depicting the truth in the movie.

In the present cinema, this kind of depiction with all the forms of knowledge it is bringing has become common. The viewer is aware of the fact that these images correspond with real facts and events, yet they are set within a clearly fictive context – actors movies depicting the scenes from everyday life using documentary images.

Thanks to this deliberation, we can think more deeply about the political and aesthetic features of the film. Analysis of cinema provides more space for discussion about realism as an aesthetic tool that is being developed and expressed in the political dimension. This proves that the majority of present movies do not originate with the policy of open resistance as it was in the situational expression of the 1960s. It originates with the help of experimenting with various realistic aesthetics: from novel melodrama through bitter confession, poetic language and intelligent humour, or a stirring movie from a town and the infinite “sertão”.

On the contrary, the Cinema Novo was the political cinema due to the fact that with the prevailing allegory, it was bringing the reality of social differences and was doubting the politics of the country and oppressing relations. This cinema, connecting the problematic of ideology and stylistics using a realistic key, was enriched with aesthetic and thematic messages. The Brazilian inland, migration and favelas started appearing in the movies again. When compared to the Cinema Novo, the authors

have focused their interest on reflection and subjectiveness.

To wrap it up, the contemporary movie prefers topics from everyday life, its needs and drawbacks. Allegories and clear revolutionary language were replaced with narration preferring realistic and everyday depictions. Another important feature of this cinema are the known concepts. The poor people are mostly depicted as bad guys, dealers or oppressed people dreaming of social rise. These depictions include people living in the sense of “pragmatism of the poor man”. As we have already mentioned, this originates in connection with arts, sports or pleasures. A good example is the interest of the main character of the movie *The Town Of Gods*, Buscapé, in photographing or football playing as it was in the case of Dario in *Linha de Passe*. And, there is André from *The Man Who Copied* and his sins. This pragmatism of the oppressed people can be felt also in the movie *The Marsh of the Beasts*, where Auxiliadora is a victim of sexual abuse or in the movie *Suely in the Sky*, in which Hermila offers her own body as a prize in lottery in order to secure the freedom of movement.

DANIELA GILLONE

- 1 See: BENTES, Ivana. *Estéticas e Cosmética da Fome*. Ensaios Fundamentais. Org. Sergio Cohn. Editora Azougue. 2011.
- 2 *Son without mother* (Filho Sem Mãe, 1925) by Alcebiades Araújo.
- 3 *Dryness* (Vidas Secas, 1963) by Nelson Pereira dos Santos.
- 4 *God and Devil in the Land of Sun diabol* (Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol, 1964) by Glauber Rocha.

National Hero and Cannibals

Macunaíma is not an ordinary hero. As lazy as a dog, possessed with women from his early childhood and able to have fun with them accordingly, always hungry but unwilling to work – yet still relying on the help of various sorcerers and magic spells. Shortly, a true native as the colonial fantasy would have versed him, even with suspicious connections to cannibals.

But, compared to all the warlike Amazons, river piranhas and cannibal beings from fairytales, along with the dangerous Peruvian cannibal – the capitalist Venceslai Pietro Pietro, Macunaíma still keeps his poise. Himself, he is not a cannibal, if we don't take into account that the rhapsodic descriptions of his amusements, same as in the novel, do assume litres of blood, throwing of stones, laughter and joy caused by practices that ought to be bringing pain. And this fact that Macunaíma, always nicknamed a "hero", is not a cannibal – is one of the keys to understanding the two almost cult works of the Brazilian art, the novel *Macunaíma* by Mario de Andrade (1928) and the movie with the same title from 1969.

Like the nations from the periphery of Europe, also the nations of Latin America are originating with awareness of a certain delay as well as from the need to accept the European modernness and, at the same time, to differentiate themselves from it. Yet they also are originating with something that the Middle-European nations are still lacking: the inevitable awareness of their own heterogeneity, which the modern invention of nation tries to get rid of and to sweep it under the carpet of utopistic visions of purity.

The image of racial and cultural melange, of hybridism and ambivalence is also crucial for understanding de Andrade's novel *Macunaíma*. The subversiveness of *Macunaíma* in both literary and film versions is drawing from the logic close to Bakhtin's understanding of carnival and grotesque. Its regional specificity is further strengthened with a very specific motive – the motive of feeding in something and throwing up, frequently in direct variations on cannibalism. Both works are full of cannibalistic variations. Sometimes, it's references to beings from folk traditions of Amazonian, African or European origin, the other time references to the social situation of hungering native inhabitants, or to the cruel nature of capitalism where the strong feed on the weak. De Andrade's novel is an exemplary elaboration of the *cannibalism* manifest as a strange avantgarde artistic movement that has tried to connect the influences of contemporary European modernism with the autochthonous traditions of the Brazilian natives and African slaves – and by means of this inconsistent mixture, to return the West its colonial fantasies in a pre-chewed, mocked, lowered and dogmatism-free form. Art becomes a gesture of "cannibal" – a character that the West has invented itself and has fitted it in the place of the old Brazilian settlers.

In the context of *canibalismo* as a movement established upon the strategies of puzzling the modern rationality, apart from other things, also the fact is interesting that the creator of the Cannibalistic manifest (*Manifesto Antropófago*, 1928) is the namesake of the creator of *Macunaíma*, Oswald de Andrade. This fact is puzzling even decades after the novel creation, when the director of film adaptation of the novel becomes again a namesake of both the authors, Joaquim Pedro de Andrade. Disregarding the frequency of this Portuguese surname, his film is intentionally created in such a way so that it points to the necessity of renewing the *cannibalistic* gesture in the times of political instability and enduring racial intolerance at the end of the 1960s. As the author of multiple socially-critical documentaries from the 1950s, Joaquim Pedro de Andrade is frequently dealing with social inequality as a base for fears of the descendants of the Portuguese conquerors of the cultural specificity of the

natives. These documentaries still bear the sigil of European new waves – from the point of view of artistic form, they are still not radical enough. The film *Macunaíma*, regarded from this viewpoint, really represents a work that is almost indigestible – but it is its indigestibility that brings us back to the unfinished gesture of the *canibalists*. In 1969 it shows that not only the hegemony of imperial superpowers has endured in Brazil, but also the de Andrade's namesake novel has made it among canonic works (it has become a compulsory reading at schools and UNESCO has put it on a list of the twelve decisive works of the Brazilian literature), which has worsened its ability to support political activity. The style of Mario de Andrade, which he himself titled rhapsodic, has become too soft also due to omnipresent ellipses or metonymic shifts. So, the cult Brazilian movie that is connected with the gradual ending of the era of aesthetics of hunger (connected for instance with the films by Glauber Rocha) and with the coming of the cinematographic trend of tropicalism, it is, from the viewpoint of style as well as of keeping the storyline, it is just a free adaptation of the novel.

The basic storyline about the birth and growing up in the jungle, about the journey to the modern world, the disappointment and return back from the civilization – is preserved. But the film replaces the joyfully rhapsodic style of the novel with an irritating campy style, loud in terms of colour and sound, so characteristic for tropicalistic movies. Many (mainly the fairytale-cosmological) episodes are left out, some characters transformed. The episodes taking place in the city react to the actual situation of guerilla political fighting. Even the most fatal of Macunaíma's metresses is a guerilla fighter. The Lady of the Jungle and the leader of the legendary Amazons, Ci, with whom Macunaíma is having fun in the novel, here changes into a modern woman with a machine gun that is not killed by the Black Snake but rather her own bomb prepared for a terrorist attack. Even more interesting shifts in meaning can be found in the context of visualization of the story by the concrete actors. At the sunset of postmodernism, the film version of *Macunaíma* is playing with shiftability of generic and racial identities. For instance, Macunaíma's mother is played by a hairy man (Paulo José). The "hero" is born to him/her as an adult man of dark skin and the birth is depicted as an allusion on the process of defecation. The "black" Macunaíma played by the popular actor of samba movies by Grande Otelo is falling out of a long-haired screaming being as a weird variation of the topic of insignificance of the "lower" race.

The carnival features and the *cannibalistic* motives remain ambivalently interconnected with the criticism of colonial regulations of the "national" heritage of Brazil all the time. Grande Otelo is not the only allusion to popular movies based on popularization of the carnival *samba enredos*: also a great deal of the soundtrack is compiled of famous songs of that kind. On the other hand, the self-parodying grotesque expression of Grande Otelo is soon replaced with a more civilized expression of another actor into which Macunaíma will turn after an accidental meeting with a magic water spring (it is the attractive Paul José whom we have seen playing an ugly old Indian woman, Macunaíma's mother). The (national) hero becomes a white man – even though he was able to turn into a fair-haired renaissance prince in his childhood times when he used to become the object of desires of his

two sisters-in-law. The carnival-grotesque principle remains present through the whole movie: it is not only that the white Macunaíma is played by the same actor who also played Macunaíma's mother, but also that in the role of Macunaíma's child, begat with the white beauty Ci, the ageing "black" singer of samba songs, Grande Otelo, comes back to scene. The carnival logic combined with the logic of fairytales and archaic traditions to which both the film and the novel are referring all the time allows us to take the change of screaming black child into a white hero with a pinch of salt – so, as Robert Stam points out, the arguments of political incorrectness in the regional environment of Brazil fail and make space for slapstick.

Despite the frenetic piling-up of the low upon the high, the political sense of the film version of *Macunaíma* remains clear. The birth of the "national" hero in the jungle and his return to the jungle has a great meaning potential from this point of view. The attractiveness of the main (anti)hero, whom Mario de Andrade in his play on words from the novel subtitle called a "hero without a trace of character" is even in his "typically" Brazilian qualities – laziness, political passivity and hedonism. Macunaíma is erotically active but politically passive. He is lazy, yet still obsessed with money from his early childhood in the jungle. The story of Macunaíma – both in the novel and in the film – can be understood as a story of birth of a nation that is always coming back. A birth of a nation that may have become the basis for an idyllic "multi-culti" society, but due to the treacherous hierarchy of power it has never become that. The film *Macunaíma* so revives the subversive ability of the novel character *Macunaíma* to define the birth of a nation as something that also contains the inevitable death in itself.

The references to the formation of Brazilian identity, balancing on the edge between seriousness and parody, celebration and criticism or refusal, are visible from many motives or film techniques used. Macunaíma is born into a family of Indian mother, yet his father is unknown. In the movie, this situation has been even more emphasized, as instead of two siblings of the same colour of the skin, Macunaíma has one black and one white brother from the beginning (in the novel, the three "pitch dark" jungle brothers after meeting the miraculous spring, are graded in such a way that Macunaíma becomes completely white, Maanape becomes red-dish and as far as Jiguê is concerned, only his palms become white). Macunaíma, whom we can understand as a variation of national "heroes", is full of life enthusiasm, yet unwilling to yield to the modern rationalisation of working process – by which he reminds us of the avant-garde praising of laziness, the same as those that were floating over the Parisian bohème at the time of the novel origination. *Canibalismo* as an avantgarde stream – same as the post-colonial theories – still originates from the inspiration by the European modernism, but at the same time, it has ambitions to revive the regionally specific society.

In this context, we shall recall the exceptional self-reflecting but also a pessimistic gesture of the final where it is shown that the whole story is, in fact, told by a parrot that was taught to talk by the main hero and that was his only companion after his return to the jungle. The hero himself has not learned from his age, and while, in the novel, he runs away from the earthly life (and from the very imperative of seeking its sense) into the heavens where he turns into the Great Bear constellation, in the film, he dies with an unnecessary

death in the hands of the famous cannibal dryad from the near lake. In both cases, he disappears from the surface of the Earth and his story full of wisdom is only told by means of a weird couple of novel and the film, in a lonely way, by the two de Andrade namesakes.

Macunaíma novel and film which we are frequently meeting at academic courses dedicated to post-colonialism or even multiculturalism are still rather unknown to the Slovak readers and viewers. No wonder, as these are works that resign upon making their own country more exotic. However, it is more surprising that one of the adaptations of "macunaíman" topic has recently emerged in Slovakia. Yet it is neither a novel nor a film – it is a radio play. And I shall devote the final part of this text to the radio. Just the fact that radio play is a specific genre getting to its recipient under specific circumstances and popularity of which is not very high these days, it represents another challenge brought by the seemingly incomprehensible historical and cultural context of *Macunaíma*. The radio version of *Macunaíma*, based on the novel of the same title and directed by Eva Křížková intentionally balances between the seriousness of narration of the stories and the impishness of continuous digressions to unknown mythical beings or erotic games. The dynamics of this radio version is strong, yet it still remains a work asking more questions than giving answers.

Logically, as first these are questions related to translation and intermediality. How to translate a novel into a radio play (moreover, a novel that already has a famous filmed version)? And how to deal with the cultural translation – where is the borderline that makes the incomprehensibility of cultural realia becomes unbearable, and where is the meeting point of the degree of mystery that a certain work has provoked in its original environment and the degree of mystery achieved in the receiving environment? From the Czech version of the novel, Eva Křížková has created a play full of mysterious Brazilian expressions and titles, but also updates towards the Slovak environment and or towards the present. In the context of Macunaíma's arrival in the town and his meeting with the world of "cannibalistic" capitalism, the motive of absorption by the present phenomena related to TV broadcasting that have not even made it to the film version (although the film *Macunaíma* coincides for instance with the north-American *Medium Cool*).

However, the play by Křížková brings about another question. How do we listen to a radio play? In darkness, with our eyes closed, so that the dynamic sequence of sound effects and music or sequence of unknown words and names of unrevealed gods or magical beings from a distant *cultural* jungle get a chance to create mental images? Or shall we listen unfocused, while cooking the Sunday lunch? Excellent sound and music direction, a specific type of dynamics but also the balancing on the edge of comprehensibility of cultural realia are showing that the Slovak radio version of *Macunaíma* is truly a work that deserves untraditional space. Maybe we can expect situations when listening to radio plays will be transferred to mass listenings in culture centres. There are also other things than the classic media of mass reception.

JANA DUDKOVÁ

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still from *The Clown*, source: Brazil Visual

Brazil Visual - brazilian film festival

In the last week of February, from 25. 2. to 2. 3., for the first time in history, we will become witnesses to the first BRAZIL VISUAL – Brazilian Film Festival taking place at the KC DUNAJ culture centre.

What the organizers are bringing and what news they plan to introduce will now be revealed by the festival coordinator, Ms. Silvia Severíniová from the Portugal Institute.

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EK: Why was the festival established?

SS: Last year, as we were working on the section of Brazilian film at our Portuguese Institute website, we have realized how many high-quality movies are being created in Brazil. Despite that, only fragments of these, almost none, are shown in our country. This is, sadly, even true for alternative movies or movie clubs as well. In the last 15 years, apart from film festivals, only two truly valuable movies: *Central do Brasil* (Central Station) and *Cidade de Deus* (The Town of Gods). This is how the desire and will have originated to bring and to present something from Brazilian life, country and culture to the Slovak audience.

EK: How did you incorporate the festival in the network of film festivals, the Circuito Brazil Visual?

SS: When we started thinking about film festival, we have found one very similar in Luxembourg. We liked its programme and it fitted in our idea about what to present here in Slovakia. That's why we have addressed its organizers and that's how we got to the key person who is covering a network of such festivals around the globe. It's Mr. Alex Levy Heller, a Brazilian who had studied dramatic arts and broadcasting in the U.S. He is active as director, producer but also a consultant in the field of the contemporary Brazilian film. He also counseled us on the conception of our festival.

EK: What makes the programme specific? What can we look forward to?

SS: Apart from quality and actuality, we also wanted to bring the broadest possible range of Brazilian realia. That is why we chose the film about a former controversial Brazilian president, who came from working class and was loved and hated at the same time. Also the movies reflecting the hard sides of life in Brazil will be presented. What makes them beautiful is a very humanistic approach adopted by the director of the movie *Carandiru*, and a humorous presentation of serious things in *5x Favela, Agora por Nós Mesmos*. The fans of music and of the bossa nova will feast upon the documentary *Vinícius de Morães*. The movie is dedicated to a cult personality of the Brazilian music scene, Mr. Vinícius de Morães. Humanistic approach is also brought by the movie *The Clown*, which was nominated for Oscar in the category The Best Foreign Movie.

EK: What movie would you recommend to the viewers?

SS: All the movies we have selected are very interesting from the point of view of processing and for their testimonial value. Personally, my interest was caught by the movie *Carandiru*. It is practically set all in prison with everything it takes. As I had to translate it, inside, I was preparing myself for a tough experience. But the movie is, thanks to the character of a doctor coming to the prison, presented very humanely, it does not judge, does not criticise, it doesn't even dramatize. All the movies will be screened in their original versions with Slovak subtitles. Students visiting Portuguese language courses will thus have the chance to revise what they have learned. The Portuguese Institute organizes also Portuguese language courses and also offers courses of its Brazilian variation.

EK: What is the history and tradition of the film festival network Circuito Brazil Visual? Why was it established and what is its meaning, these questions will be answered by the Executive Director, Mr. Alex Levy Heller.

ALH: The festival network with the title Circuito Brazil Visual was created in order to support independent film festivals hosting the Brazilian film all around the world. In 2009 in Australia,

the "Brazil Film Festival" was launched. The festival was such a tremendous success that we have decided to broaden its impact and we have organized the event in the U.S., in Luxembourg, Portugal. The main goal of the Brazil Visual Company is spreading the Brazilian cinema and thus, also the culture of this colorful country across the world.

EK: What was the feedback of the audiences?

ALH: It was the feedback of our viewers that strongly motivated us to organize further festivals and shows of Brazilian films in new territories. In the last years, the Brazilian cinema has worked its way up. Movies are shot with high-quality production and modern technologies. This is proven by international awards from prestigious festivals, including the Oscar nominations. All these factors contribute to the fact that the audience starts getting attracted by Brazilian films and thus by the Brazilian culture. On the other hand, it seems that Brazil is very popular these days. Great international events are being prepared there, like the Football World Championship 2014 and the Summer Olympic Games in 2016. These are the reasons why the world's interest in Brazil as a country and its culture is growing.

EK: How do you proceed when you're creating the programme?

ALH: The programme is adjusted specifically for each of the countries. The individual nations have their specific cultures, different connections, knowledge about Brazil, and thus, also different expectations regarding the festival. We always try to select and recommend contemporary movies, reflecting the actual situation in the Brazilian film industry in a relevant way. In some cases, we try to cooperate on selection with the partner organizing the festival. They decide and say what movie they would like to screen to their audience and we make the programme together. This is how it worked in Slovakia as well.

EK: Which from the movies selected would you recommend to Slovak viewers?

ALH: I would recommend the movie "5x Favela, Agora por Nós Mesmos". This movie reflects the Brazilian reality – humorously, yet truly. The movie was created by young people coming from poor districts and it offers a view of their real lives in these communities (favelas). It was supervised by Cacá Diegues, one of the greatest modern filmmakers in Brazil.

So, if you find some time and feel like having an unforgettable cinematographic experience, visit the KC Dunaj Culture Centre in the last week of February. Do not hesitate and – together with us – dive into the life of the country above which the statue of Christ is monumentally spreading its hands.

Alex Levy Heller – Festival Network Director, TV and film producer.

Silvia Severíniová – Project manager and coordinator of the Brazil Visual film festival.

Portuguese Institute – Slovak organization with its main goal to connect Slovakia with Lusophonic countries and to spread the Portuguese language. It organizes Portuguese language courses and promotes culture of the countries where the official language is Portuguese. The institute has been dealing with film from its very establishment. In 2011, the Portuguese Institute has established a section of Brazil and Brazilian culture with the title Brazilian Centre of the Portuguese Institute, which covers the festival BRAZIL VISUAL.

THE FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

25. 2. / 19:00 / Monday

LULA, THE SON OF BRAZIL
(*Lula, o Filho do Brasil*)

d. Fábio Barreto / drama / 2009 / 128 min.

Adaptation of a novel of the same title by Denise Paraná. It depicts the life of the former president of Brazil. It captures his early times from his birth in 1945, throughout his young age and political engagement. The movie truly depicts his life in a harsh district full of poverty in the North-eastern part of the country. Lula, abandoned by his violent father, was raised by his illiterate yet determined mother, is leaving the village and comes to the city of São Paulo. In 1980, he becomes here the leader of the trade union and takes his first political steps.

The movie was nominated for the Oscar prize in the category of foreign films in 2011.

26. 2. / 19:00 / Tuesday

VINÍCIUS DE MORAES (Vinícius)

d. Miguel Faria Jr. / documentary / 2005 / 121 min.

A documentary movie about Vinícius de Morães (1913–1980), a Brazilian poet, songwriter, journalist, dramatist and also a composer and an interpreter. This key figure and a cult personality in the field of music had a great influence upon the modern Brazilian production. This movie presents his life, work, family, the destiny of friends as well as his inherent loves. Who wouldn't know the famous song "The Girl From Ipanema" (*Garota de Ipanema*), which has made the bossa nova famous around the globe. The author of its lyrics was Vinícius.

27. 2. / 19:00 / Wednesday

CARANDIRU (Carandiru)

d. Hector Babenco / drama / 2003 / 146 min.

At the Carandiru prison, the only thing more important than freedom is TO SURVIVE! Dr. Drauzia Varella was called in to Brazil's largest prison in order to start the prevention and treatment of people contaminated with the HIV virus. He got into one of the roughest prisons in the world, where he had been directly confronted with absolutely inhuman treatment of prisoners. In 1992, a series of riots outburst in the prison which mounted in insurgency that has cost 111 prisoners their lives. After this tragic event, the prison was demolished. The movie is inspired by the real events described by Dr. Drauzia Varella in his book "Carandiru Station".

1. 3. / 19:00 / Friday

5 X FAVELA (5x Favela, Agora por Nós Mesmos)

d. a group of young directors coming from the favelas in Rio de Janeiro / drama / comedy / 2010 / 103 min.

Five short-footage movies (Source of income, Rice and beans, Concert for violin, Let it be, Turn the light on) are taking place and were shot at favelas, poor districts of Rio de Janeiro. In each movie, young actors coming from the particular area are starring. The same goes for the directors of these movies – they also grew up in the community. This makes the movie a realistic portrait of everyday life in the favelas as seen by their own inhabitants.

2.3. / 19:00 / Saturday

THE CLOWN (O Palhaço)

d. Selson Mello / comedy / drama / 2011 / 90 min.

The movie tells a story of a clown from the 70s. Father and son, they own the Circus Hope and are traveling through the country. The son (played by the director himself) first revolts against the life he inherited and becomes a clerk for a while. Later on, he realizes that his happiness and sense of life are somewhere else. The Brazilian Film Academy has nominated the movie *THE CLOWN* from among 15 other movies for the Oscar prize in the category Foreign Movie.

Location of event: KC Dunaj, Nedbalova 453/3, Bratislava. More information: www.brasil.sk

Curtas Brasileiras

The intention behind this DVD compilation of short-footage films is to bring the broad variety of styles present in contemporary Brazilian cinema to Slovakia. Maybe because Brazil is a “country – continent“, its cinema was – historically seen – defined with the themes coming from different regions. From the period of silence, more exactly, from the so-called Regional cycles (Ciclos Regionais) (1923 – 1930), the movies produced in different parts of the country (e.g in Cataguases (MG), in Campinas (SP), in Recife (PE) and in Porto Alegre (RS) have defined the examples that outlined the contents of styles and themes of the Brazilian cinema. This is how the subcategories have originated informally that have separated from this kind of cinema, and the cinema of “wasteland” (north-eastern region of the country called “sertao” in Brazilian language) from the cinema of the state São Paulo or from the cinema of the southern region of the country.

It is not completely possible by means of this DVD to present the cinema of the individual regions in its whole complexity. However, we have tried to bring at least a little bit from everything. For the short-footage films by the Recife cinema, we have chosen *The Green Record* by Kleber Mendonça Filho, leading the audience through a fatalistic, tragic story, yet with humorous features. Through the character of daughter, we enter the children’s world – a world, in which dominate phantasy and surrealism, imaginary fear and the absurd. Practically put, the synopsis can be condensed into a story of a mother that gives her daughter a box full of colourful records. The daughter is allowed to listen to all of them – except for the green record. As she disobeys and decides to listen to the forbidden record, mysterious things start happening.

The cinema of the southern part of the country is represented by short-footage films *Dinosaur Eggs* by Rafael Urban and *Film Apparatus* by Cláudia Cárdenas which intentionally has no subtitles. It is a film with “Goddard-like sound“, in French, the intention of which is for the sound to function as a tool and not as clear recognition. The topic of the film is love story narration about artistic creation. In this way, it tries to reveal the film apparatus – a specific term in film theory – as the means for achieving beauty of images. Between the continuity and discontinuity of images disturbed by lamellas, human potential is inscribed. The movie *Dinosaur Eggs* is a

story of love and loss of the life partner. In this documentary, a 77-years old German lady Ragnhild Borgomanero is studying digital photography and visits courses on Photoshop and Premiere in order to keep active memories of her dead husband Guido, with whom she compiled the greatest private collection of fossils in the Latin America. This extraordinary woman is creating the image of her husband and the life they had been sharing for decades.

What we could not omit in this compilation is the cinema of the state São Paulo. We are bringing you the film *One-Way Street* telling the story of a day in the life of the police and the criminals living in the city of São Paulo. Through testimonies and everyday activities, it depicts life of those who are living in a world surrounded by walls and can see no way out. Marginality is frequently a topic of the movies produced on the axis São Paulo – Rio de Janeiro. Yet there are other styles and themes which are captured in this cinema. A good example for this are the topics of short-footage films *Shades* by Geraldo Blay and *Cane of Bitter Taste* by Paula Fabiana.

The movie *Shades* is based on the novel *On the useless in each of us* by Mario Peixot, a virtuoso film maker and aesthete of the Brazilian cinema of the silent period. This intimate black and white work begins with the slow awakening of Orlando in a house on a beach. In its principle, the movie represents the obstacles and limitations of the main protagonist in his literary creation. During the existential crisis he had been facing while writing, the reflection of writer’s mind follows Orlando up to the borders of his consciousness. In a certain way, this film is a tribute to film maker who is seeking refuge in the aesthetics of cinema of silence. An example of the tribute to the cinema of silence is also valid for the *Cane With A Bitter Taste* that was shot in Ribeirão Preto, a town in the inland of the São Paulo state. This movie addresses everyday troubles of farm workers. Its goal is to bring the reality of the rural world in the first place and too tell a story of love, betrayal and guilt.

DANIELA GILLONE

TECHNICAL DATA ON THE FILMS

The Green Record

Director: Kleber Mendonça Filho
Length: 13 min.
Year: 2004
Country: Brazil

Film Apparatus

Director: Cláudia Cárdenas
Length: 13 min.
Year: 2003
Country: Brazil

Dinosaur Eggs in the Living Room

Director: Rafael Urban
Length: 12 min.
Year: 2011
Country: Brazil

One-Way Street

Director: André Gevaerd
Length: 12 min.
Year: 2010
Country: Brazil

Shades

Director: Geraldo Blay
Length: 30 min.
Year: 2011
Country: Brazil

Cane With Bitter Taste

Director: Paula Fabiana
Length: 13 min.
Year: 2003
Country: Brazil

STORIES ONLY EXIST IN MEMORY

Stories only exist in memory

Historias Que So Existem Quando Lembradas, d. Julia Murat, Brazilia 2011

What if you’re old and you just don’t want to admit it? You don’t want to die, so you just lock the cemetery. But what if you want to die?

One of the latest echoes of Artfilm Fest 2012 is also an extraordinary debut of the Brazilian director Julia Murat *Stories only exist in memory*. This minimalistic drama is a patient prayer for the vanishing Brazilian tradition and also the tombstone of economic boom of the coffee plantages (the drama takes place in the Brazilian Paraíba valley, where plenty of “ghost cities” have originated after the decline of local coffee plantages). In the soft magic realism, also this valley seems to be full of ghosts. The old Madalena (*Sônia Guedes*) together with the other inhabitants live in their own rituals which they’ve been repeating every day and hiding behind them so that they don’t have to admit their age. The cemetery was locked by God and the inhabitants have forgotten about their finiteness. It is only Rita’s arrival that stirs this quiet aura. Rita is a young photographer who came to the valley to seek inspiration and the remnants of traditions. Apart from being the source of inter-generational friction, she also makes waves in the memories of the inhabitants. With cameras and a camera obscura, she’s recording everything she’s allowed to by the inhabitants. She is violating the order and thus she is not welcome, as she reminds them of their age. Yet with her cordiality and

bravery, she shows Madalena and the others their real faces and makes them to accept their wrinkles. They discover the last verve, pushed-out memories, reconciliation and fear of death.

Everything is recorded in postcards, the camera froze the time in static pictures with the emphasis put on aesthetic compositions similar to photographs and paintings. “We started our researching with Rembrandt and then in the post-production, we have ended up with Caravaggio“, the cameraman *Lucio Bonneli* comments on the style of shooting and problems with difficult lighting of the night scenes, frequently only with oil lamps. In their final form, the images have come to plenty of dark spaces and great contrasts.

Julia Murat mentions in her notes that the original idea about the film really came to her thanks to an image which remained in her after an experience, not directly from a photograph. In 1999, she was working as a director’s assistant for her mother at the movie *Brava Gente Brasileira* (2000, Lúcia Murat), when in a small village Forte Coimbra, she suddenly saw a cemetery that was locked. When the original inhabitants died, they must have been transported to another town, 7,5 hours away. “*That image fascinated me, and from that time, I had this desire to write a story where an old lady wants to die but she can’t, as the cemetery is locked.*”

The pace of the film is contemplative and it literally keeps pace with the life of the settlers. Together with other script authors, Maria Clara Escobar and Felipe Sholl, the director is inconspicuously building up the drama, or story if you prefer, scene by scene. It might appear that the young lady is in the foreground, seeking for something beautiful that her culture in town cannot fully offer, it might appear that Julia Murat is depicting, at

least to me a close and actual feeling, a generation feeling, even though Madalena is in the centre, her conciliation and the character of Rita is rather a catalyst of events. The viewer’s patience and perceptiveness is well rewarded with the soft culinary elements of Antonio’s ironic humour (*Luiz Serra*), the elements of magic realism so typical of Latin America (following *J. L. Borges* and *G. G. Márquez*) and the grading dramatic construction with distinctive peaks and relief.

A typical image can be the situation when Madalena and Antonio are sitting on a bench and as every morning, Madalena is drinking Antonio’s repulsively ultra strong coffee, he is eating her bread and after expurgatory acceptance of the thought of her own finiteness, Madalena says worriedly: “*I’m afraid to die.*” Antonio replies “*So don’t die, then*” and takes a sip off his coffee.

Rita’s efforts to observe, to record, to keep finds its place in the adoption of the ritual from Madalena, and also the sensitive inter-generational relationship is thus fulfilled. It symbolizes that stories (the origin of the word, historias, is in this particular sense rather closer to the term stories, history, the past) remain in that what Rita has adopted and what she is building upon. The whole film, accompanied by photographs from Rita’s camera obscura which long exposures with blurred faces and translucent bodies express the destiny of those areas, and finally, in double exposition reconciliated Madalena, naked, blends with the wall and the cemetery opens.

MARCEL HALCIN

Brazilian edition



still from film *Stories only exist in memory*, source: www.filmmovement.com



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