

# Contemporary Audiovisual Experiences

Jair Sanches Molina Junior  
*Supervision of Prof. PhD, Almir Antonio Rosa*

Cite this article:

Molina Junior, Jair Sanches, Rosa, Almir Antonio.; 2018. Contemporary Audiovisual Experiences. SET INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BROADCAST ENGINEERING. ISSN Print: 2446-9246 ISSN Online: 2446-9432. doi: 10.18580/setijbe.2018.9. Web Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18580/setijbe.2018.9>

# Contemporary Audiovisual Experiences

Jair Sanches Molina Junior, LabArteMidia - University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Supervision of Prof. PhD, Almir Antonio Rosa [Almir Almas], University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

**Abstract** - Reflecting on real-time imagery and sounds experiences is thinking about a wide range of possibilities and experiences for humanity, from the earliest times. Because the real-time audiovisual experiences are numerous in time and space, and already widely quoted in different studies, this presentation aims to make a more restricted cut off to real-time audiovisual experiences in the contemporary cinematographic field: an art, medium and an expanding process that culminates in the existence of a semiotic phenomenon, performed mainly through experimental modes, not necessarily with the presence of performers in front of the screen, but mainly with the presence of the author(s) directing the audiovisual experience in real-time, together with the technological apparatus, the cast, and the viewers, all participants in the editing and exhibition of the audiovisual work at the same time as it occurs, in direct transmission to the cinema screen, monitors, digital screens or architectural spaces. Based on audiovisual works carried out between 2007 and 2017 we will develop a reflection and analysis of the poetic and techniques of audiovisual experiences in real-time. In order to understand with a closer look the possibilities of creation in live cinema and contribute with reflection on these forms of the contemporary audiovisual, whose means and processes are in continuous expansion of its borders. In aesthetics of the cinema, this research follows in continuity to the studies and practices of the experimental cinema, and in its vertex to the expanded cinema.

**Keywords** - Experimental Cinema, Expanded Cinema, Live Cinema, Audiovisual Experience, Real-Time.

## Introduction

The real-time audiovisual is as stimulating as it is unpredictable. The possibility of invention and communication in the present time in which information occurs, the incorporation of available technical media, the exploration of times, spaces, combinations, repetitions, colors, sounds, movements and technologies point to the emergence of new perceptions and sensations through images and sounds. All this is permeated by improvisation, where an error can become an instrument for creation and the new appears in an unpretentious way, favoring other perspectives on language.

Reflecting on real-time experiences with images and sounds is to think of a wide range of possibilities and experiences for humanity, from the earliest times. Such experiences arise in the distant age of fire with the theater of shadows. In the Middle Ages, rudimentary projectors, popularly called the magic lantern, projected images etched into glass in sequence through the light of the fire inside an iron box. In more recent times, we can consider the emergence of cinema in the late nineteenth century as real-time audiovisual experiences, when movie films were manipulated by projectionists creating different narratives in each session, as well as the sounds and music of films were created by live musicians in the projection rooms during this period. This process can be traced with projections in the theater from 1910 to 1920, and live television from the mid-1930s, as

well as the videogames that remain at the forefront of real-time experimentation and the internet that processes these arts and enables images and sounds to be manipulated and transmitted without the need for heavy load television industry, as well as other experiences such as videomapping: projecting on architectural surfaces, audiovisual performances and vjing on the music and theater scenes.

Because those real-time audiovisual experiences are numerous in time and space and have already been widely quoted in different studies, I intend in this article to cite the audiovisual experiences in the field of contemporary expanded cinema.

One reason for this is the difficulty in describing exactly what real-time audiovisual experiences are in the cinema and what constitutes this recent area of study and experimentation, also called live cinema.

In the artistic field, live cinema is unstable and associated mainly with the presence of a performer handling, mounting or remixing images and sounds near the screen in the space of the projection, but this art can also utilize the internet and the direct transmission of images and sounds via link or streaming for its realization.

In this article, the term live cinema will be understood as an art and a process in expansion that culminates in the existence of a semiotic phenomenon, realized mainly through experimental modes, not necessarily with the presence of performers in front of the screen, but mainly with the presence of the author(s) directing the experience in real-time. Together the technological apparatus, the cast and the audience, all participants in the montage and exhibition of the work at the same time in which it occurs, in direct transmission to the cinema screen, monitors, digital screens and architectural spaces.

Thus, live cinema takes place under the aesthetics of cinema and the subjective experience of the audiovisual work is realized through the confluence of the technical and poetic devices of the images and sounds created live.

## Development

The interest in this area of research is due to practical experience in this area.

In the last ten years I have participated in several scenic and audiovisual works that uses video projection on real-time. Between 2007 to 2011, I participated in the renowned group Teatro Oficina, projecting videomapped audiovisual during the theatrical plays.

Between 2011 to 2016, I was invited to join the real-time video teams for different theatrical companies, among them *Cia Falbalá*, *Cia Livre*, *Doutores da Alegria* and *Teatro de Narradores*, in all of them performing VJ and audiovisual creation and production for live stage plays.

In common with the work for these five theater companies were the various audiovisual experiences during the creative

process, presenting film proposals and complementing the audiovisual work previously performed by the artists in real-time.

In addition to my audiovisual experience in the theatrical scene, I am a screenwriter and experimental film director, with short films shown at festivals and televisions around the world, among them: *The Shortest Love in the World* (2008), *Fishing up Shit* (2009), *The Okra Planter* (2010), *Infra-Region* (2013) and *Underground Odete* (2017).

Since 2012, I've directed *Cine-Cicletada* [Cine-Cycling]: an annual film festival that takes place in São Paulo and mixes open air cinema, cycling and audiovisual experiences in real-time.

My experience with the cited crossing areas of audiovisual have led me to reflect on the linkages of images projected in live cinema, exploring modes of association of the most varied possible.

The reason for presenting this research on live cinema and contemporary audiovisual experiences in real-time in this artistic area is also due to the fact that theories of knowledge recognize that there are at least two basic modes of knowledge of reality, one obtained from its singularity and another from a practical nature.

For the formulation of a concept of experience that is related to the audiovisual in real-time and helps us to understand the present research object as a semiotic phenomenon, we will relate to the word experience always associated with poetic and semiotic issues that occur through of the senses, especially those of vision and hearing, necessary experience for the identification of the object *live cinema* as an experience in arts.

As the relationship between art and experience is well exemplified by Maurice Blanchot in his book *The Literary Space*:

In common is the idea that art is experience, because it is a research, not indeterminate but determined by its indeterminacy, and which passes through the whole of life, even if it seems to ignore life (BLANCHOT, 2011).

Amongst a color, an image, a video, a photograph, an animation and a real-time montage, there would be an existential communication that would constitute a moment that is not representative of sensation. Therefore, it would be up to the audiovisual artist to identify a kind of unity of the senses and to make a multiple figure appear. This operation is only possible if the sensation of this or that domain (here, the visual and sonorous sensation) is directly captured by a vital power that overflows all the domains and traverses them. The power found in the spectator is the rhythm, deeper than the vision, the hearing, etc.

Deleuze continues that: "the last hypothesis, therefore, is the relation of rhythm to sensation, which places in each sensation the levels or domains through which it passes" (Deleuze, 1992).

Traditionally, in cinema, history is the central element of films, and mainly produced by the technique of montage. It was the russians, led by Lev Kuleshov, who first theorized the assembly and regarded it as essential for cinematic language. Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein, a former student of Meyerhold, followed in Kuleshov's footsteps by exploring the expressive qualities of the montage, and experimented with different types of editing techniques, which he separated by mounts: intellectual, metric,

rhythmic, tonal, overtone.

Umberto Eco, in the book *The Open Work*, mentions that

to capture and to put on the air an event at the same instant that it occurs puts the audience in an montage - an improvised editing and simultaneous to the fact captured and edited. Filming, Editing and Projection, three phases that in the cinematographic production are very distinct, each one of them endowed with their own physiognomies, are identified here. This derives the identification of real-time and television time without any narrative expedient reducing the time duration, which is that of the transmitted event. (ECO, 2008)

Live cinema can be defined as trying to make visible images that are not visible. The live image here has a close relation to the sensation: it is necessary that an image is exerted on a body, on a receiver, so that there is sensation, in direct transmission to the event narrated.

The definition of "live", for example, reflects the realization of a performance, heard or seen, in the time in which it occurs, and differentiated from that recorded on film or tape. This definition reflects the need to define the concept of the term by its opposition. And the need to separate what is recorded and what is live comes after the advent of sound recording techniques in the late of 1890s. As recording technologies brought the "live" into existence, this also reinforced the primacy of existing performance modes. Live and recorded performances coexist clearly as distinct, complementary experiences, requiring particular effort to distinguish them.

According to Gene Youngblood, author exponent in the expanded cinema:

In real-time multiple-projection, cinema becomes a performance art: the phenomenon of image-projection itself becomes the "subject" of the performance and in a very real sense the medium is the message. But multiple projection lumia art is more significant as a paradigm for an entirely different kind of audiovisual experience, a tribal language that expresses not ideas but a collective group consciousness. (YOUNGBLOOD, 2001)

In audiovisual, the person in charge of the editing of a real-time experience can be considered by the functions: director of cut, director of image, editor, video operator, or VJ. As for the projected sounds, the real-time sound editor can be the sound director, audio director, sound editor, sound operator, or DJ.

These audiovisual professionals project situations in the present tense and bring a direct contact with the public in time and space through the visual, sound and rhythmic narratives that only the subtle presence of temporality and the mastery of technique reach.

The term VJ goes beyond the simple act of presenting video clips on television, a term that was popularized by MTV from the 80's. VJ's culture had already been present in the the experiences with expanded cinema and video in the 60's, and invades the nightclubs, dancefloors and raves parties in the late 1970s. Vjing is currently used as technique and poetic by visual artists worldwide who design real-time video in music concerts, electronic parties, digital interventions, virtual environments, live cinema, theatrical plays, videomapping, audiovisual performances, live

cinema, among other means and processes in real-time. Reinventing expanded cinema, but unlike the artists of the 1960s, the concern is more about providing a visual identity to the places where they present themselves, often creating narratives from the effect catalogs presented by the software.

It is within the context of expanded cinema, live television and vjing that live cinema arises and can even use the same equipment such as cutting table, midi keyboards, cameras, real-time editing software and laptops.

Among the various possibilities offered in expanded cinema in the last 10 years, we will focus on the works performed as an audiovisual experience, where we find constituent elements of this expanding art, in order to understand how the poetic and techniques of the audiovisual systems enable the existence of live cinema.

### Okra Filmes: Cine-Cicletada

The Cine-Cicletada Film Festival, has taken place in Sao Paulo city annually since 2012, mixing open air film projections, cycling and real-time audiovisual experiences in different places at the city, and it is produced by Okra Filmes – a film company focused on videomapping and filmmaking.

The audiovisual projection at this festival always looks for national and international short films and the curation is guided by social themes, such as: urban mobility, environmentalism, human rights, homage to tortured and persecuted politicians, occupation of space, indigenous land, etc...

During the editions of Cine-Cicletada in 2016, we realized beyond the national and international short film sessions, some real-time audiovisual experiences, live cinema sessions, direct broadcasts to Brazilian Cinematheque in April, and to Sesc Santana in October, which we will see in more detail below.



Figure 1: Bikers arriving at the Brazilian Cinematheque during the 1<sup>st</sup> Cine-Cicletada. Photo: Ramiro Fernandes Garcia

### 6th Cine-Cicletada, April 2016

At the invitation of the São Paulo City Human Rights Office, we held the sixth Cine-Cicletada festival on April 8, 2016, with projections in the Ibirapuera Park and Brazilian Cinematheque, we were able to explore live cinema art. That began with a projection, through a camera connected to a

cell phone via internet recording the images of the cyclists and participants starting from Paulista avenue, until the end of the route, with a stop at Ibirapuera Park for short movies screening, and also Doi-Codi, a civil police station that served as the military's torture against activists and political enemies during a military dictatorship.

This real-time audiovisual experience was projected on the external screen of the Brazilian Cinematheque, with spectators watching the on-screen experience, while the other audience of about 200 cyclists participated actively in the experience as an integral part of the dramaturgy. This was also exhibited on the internet through the IPTV website of USP, coordinated by educator Prof. PhD Almir Almas.

During this experience, I directed in partnership with Andrei Moyssiadis while filming and pedalling with the riders participating in the streets of Sao Paulo.

In the editing of the film's exhibition in real-time, Andrei Moyssiadis also made a cutting direction in the technical cabin installed in the Brazilian Cinematheque. The main editing in this case, happens during the cinematography of the cycling tour in continuous plane. The live sound was being operated by the musician Luiz Romero, and a soundtrack performed with brazilian songs remixed between different artists.



Figure 2: Live Cinema at the Brazilian Cinematheque during the 3rd Cine-Cicletada. Photo: Marcos Finotti

### 7th Cine-Cicletada, October 2016

On October 12, 2016, occurred the seventh edition of the Cine-Cicletada film festival, following the invitation of Sesc in Sao Paulo, with a theme on the occupation of public space.

On this occasion, we projected a live broadcast from the cycling to a led screen installed at Sesc Santana unity, with a duration of approximately 60 minutes. In this experience I conducted the direction with Andrei Moyssiadis. The images were being recorded live by three videographers via Iphones and streamed to an image-cutting table edited by Nando McPhild simultaneously.

With the audio we made other experiences and the musician Tatá Aeroplano made a remix of songs interpreted by brazilian and international musicians, as well as remix of jazz, blues and sounds recorded before 1940, constituting multiple sounds in references and sonorities.

During this live movie, a detail to be noted: the presence of the clown character Pilequinho, played by the actor Venicio Toledo, during an activity with the participants, transformed a direct transmission in a comic play. Every moment the clown appeared on the scene, with a performance based on mimicry, he stood out in the crowd of cyclists who accompanied the festival. And the gags, costumes, grimaces, performances and improvisations created new situations to add in the dramaturgy of the live cinema.

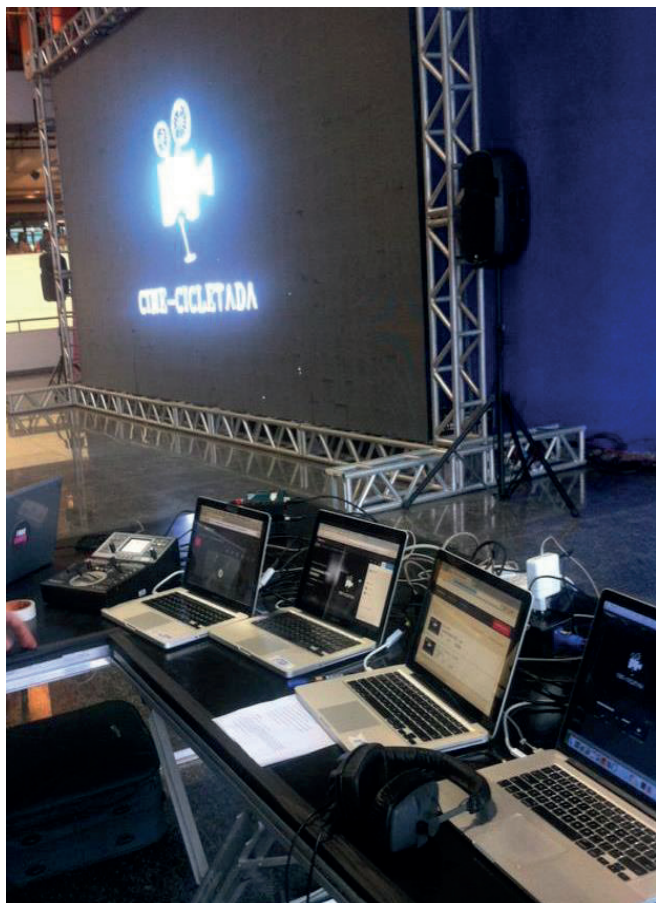


Figure 3: Broadcast at Sesc Santana during the 7<sup>th</sup> Cine-Cicletada (2016). Photo: Nando Mcphillid

The transmission began with the cyclists already near the Pacaembu Stadium, towards Sesc Santana.

This experience in October 2016 can also be considered an innovation by joining the practice of cycling, with three cyclists-cameramen, that allowed the direct transmission of the three cameras to the technical center by internet, the same to a television station, in addition to the projection with cinematographic aesthetics for cinema screen.



Figure 4: Live Cinema at Sesc Santana during the 7<sup>th</sup> Cine-Cicletada (2016). Photo: Marcelo Siqueira

## Conclusion

From the examples mentioned, we observed audiovisual experiences in real-time, which reflect a possibility of the expanded cinema, making the existence of live cinema possible, mainly by the editing in real-time, either through images in sequence planes, or with the live editing between two or more cameras simultaneously to the narrated dramaturgy.

Thus, the poetic of live cinema is applied in continuity to the theory of the montage, but in this case the three items necessary for cinematographic realization: Filming, Editing and Exhibition occur simultaneously through the direct transmission to the projection media in the physical space, through screens, monitors, led screens, computers, cameras or cell phones, or even videomapping for architectural surfaces.

The thinking capacity of live cinema is partly allocated in their equipment, since without them (and in the absence of some other equivalent technical resource) it would not be possible to design digital audiovisual content at the same time as the image and sound material was realized.

For a live film to be performed, a main path is needed: the subjective identification of the viewer with the images and sounds projected on the movie screen.

In the technical part, for the phenomenon of the live cinema to occur, most of the previous combinations are necessary between the videographers, the cast, the editor and the exhibitor. The entrances and exits of the plans can be punctuated by very specific markings, either through radio monitoring, or combinations simulating a virtual control over the images in an instant, to make the technical device (cameras, videographers, cutting table, projectors) invisible to the audience, or even showed. The relative fluency in the equipment is part of the strategy of the visual artists to master the execution of the cinematographic work.

Since it is the dramaturgy that seizes the scientific media of contemporary communication, the full development of live cinema takes place through the creative potential of the performing team, the cast, the cinematographers, the technician, the editor, the director, the vj, the writer, the producers, every one is creative in this process, with a special conduction by the autor of the play, or a collective, that can be on direction in different parts of the play in the same time.

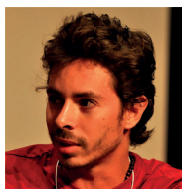
The need for experimentation by the audiovisual artists allied with technological evolution makes the *live cinema* becomes an art in construction, and has been practiced by different artistic groups, even if not yet cataloged by specific genre, since it exists in historical continuity to the expanded cinema and the practices in audiovisual contemporary field. This research in live cinema has the main objective to promote and value this kind of audiovisual practice by different artists and researchers of experimental cinema and expanded cinema in real-time all over the world.

## Bibliography

AGAMBEM, Giorgio. 2006. O que é o contemporâneo? E outros ensaios. Chapecó: Argos.

ALMAS, Almir. 2012. Televisão digital terrestre: sistemas, padrões e modelos. São Paulo: Alameda Editorial.

- BLANCHOT, Maurice. 2011. *O Espaço Literário*. São Paulo: Editora Rocco.
- BLOOD, Young. 2001. *Expanded cinema*. Canadá: Artscila.
- DEWEY, John. 2010. *Arte como Experiência*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.
- ECO, Umberto. 2008. *Obra aberta: forma e indeterminações nas poéticas contemporâneas*. São Paulo: Perspectiva.
- EISENSTEIN, Sergei. 2002. *A Forma do Filme*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor.
- EISENSTEIN, Sergei. 2002. *O Sentido do Filme*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor.
- KANT, Immanuel. 2013. *Crítica da Razão Pura*. Lisboa: Calouste Gubenkian.
- KENNEDY, Barbara M. 2002. *Deleuze and Cinema: The Aesthetics of Sensation*. Edinburgh University Press.
- MAKELA, Mía. 2006. *Live Cinema: language and elements*. Dissertação de Mestrado. Helsinki: Media Lab - Helsinki University of Art and Design.
- METZ, Christian. 2004. *A significação no cinema*. São Paulo: Perspectiva.
- NAVAS, Eduardo. 2013. *Three Juctures of Remix*. University of Califórnia, San Diego. Publicado por gallery@calit2 Exhibition Catalog.
- SALTER, Chris. 2010. "The projected image: video, film, and the performative screen". In: *Entangled: technology and the transformation of performance*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- TAVARES, Mônica. 2014. *Digital Poetic and Remix Culture*. In: NAVAS, Eduardo (org). *The Routled Companion to Remix Studie*, Routledge Companion.
- WANDS, Bruce. 2006. *Art of the digital age*. Editora Thames & Hudson.
- XAVIER, Ismail (org.). 1983. *A experiência do cinema: antologia*. Rio de Janeiro: Graal



**Jair S. Molina Jr** is filmmaker and researcher at LabArteMidia - Laboratory of Art, Media and Technologie at School of Communications and Arts at University of Sao Paulo (ECA-USP). Professor in Cinematography at University of South of

Santa Catarina (UNISUL). He obtained his B.Sc (2010) in Audiovisual at SENAC and M.Sc (2017) in Audiovisual Media and Process at University of Sao Paulo. Research Interests: Experimental Cinema, Expanded Cinema, Live Cinema and Videomapping.