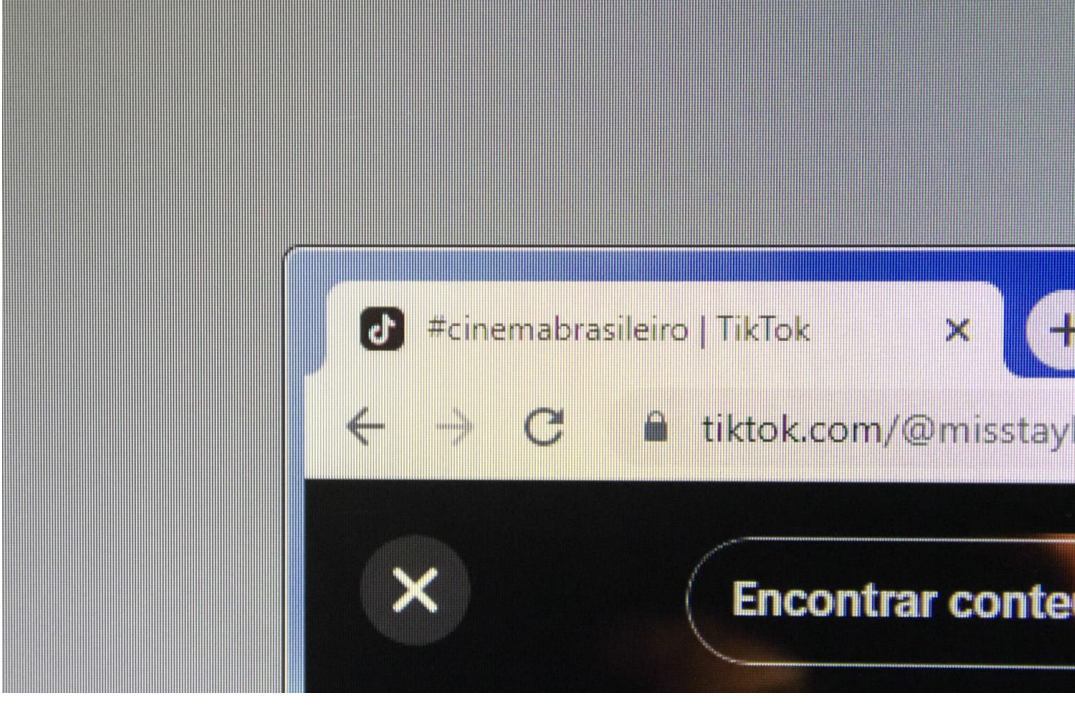


Brazilian cinema attracts new audiences through social media

Pedro Henrique Tubiana Pereira / 28 de novembro de 2024 / In English



Culture | The history of national audiovisuals and forgotten gems are being introduced to new generations through profiles focused on edits, montages, and memes

*By Pedro Henrique Tubiana Pereira

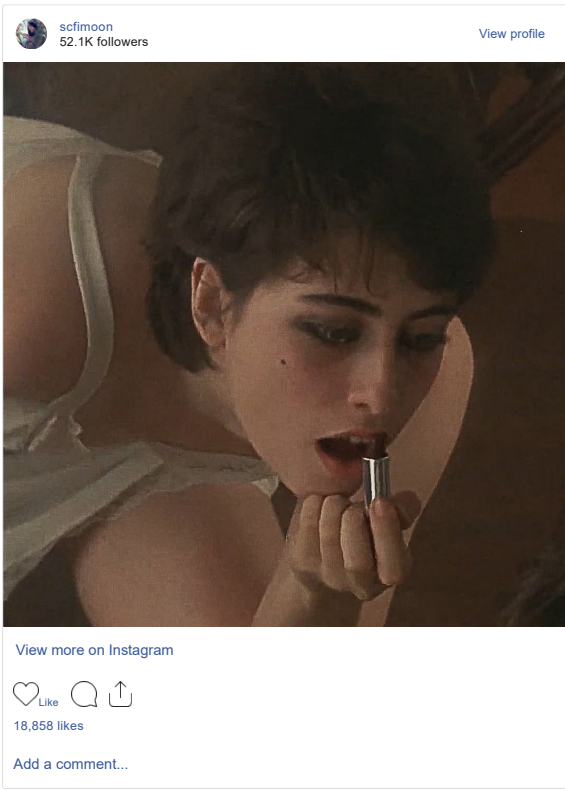
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*Photo: Through the computer, it is possible to access thousands of national

cinema contents available on social networks like TikTok and X

(formerly Twitter), but on a larger screen. (Photo: Marcelo Pires/JU)

This initial contact came through an edit that went viral on social media. An edit is a montage of images and/or videos usually accompanied by a soundtrack. It is an audiovisual material constructed from other productions.



The author of this edit, featuring Fernanda Torres in "I Know I'll Love You," is Lu, a 19-year-old freelance editor and animator, administrator of the @scfmoon profile on X, Instagram, and TikTok. Lu's first encounter with edits was in 2018: "A friend showed me, it was something very simple, it was a trend at the time called 'heart edit/heart vine,' but it fascinated me so much that on the same day I tried to do something similar, and that's how I discovered my passion for editing."

A digital phenomenon

Going to the cinema is not a habit for Lu, as the only cinema in his town closed three years ago. However, Brazilian cinema has been a part of the editor's life since childhood: "I always had some contact, but with what was available to me, usually the comedies from Globo Filmes - they were scarce, but I loved them." It was in 2022 that Lu began exploring other national films, starting with the most famous ones until he discovered the lesser-known ones: "I was discovering these films. I noticed they were rarely discussed, and my only way to reach more people was through edits."

Access to many of these national works that Lu has been discovering since 2022 came through online communities that somehow made these audiovisual productions available: "I always had to find ways to access things online because I couldn't afford to buy originals or subscribe to various streaming services... So, piracy has often helped me in this regard until today." It is important to note that many national films are not available on any streaming service.

"It's quite rare for me to go to the cinema, as I would have to travel to a neighboring city, like Belém, for example."

— Lu

Lu's profile on X has about 17 thousand followers; on Instagram, 28 thousand; and on TikTok, it reaches 30 thousand. The three pages are dedicated to edits of Brazilian films and have formed a community eager to explore this universe. Edits not only bring past featured films but also reflect the editor's perspective on those works.

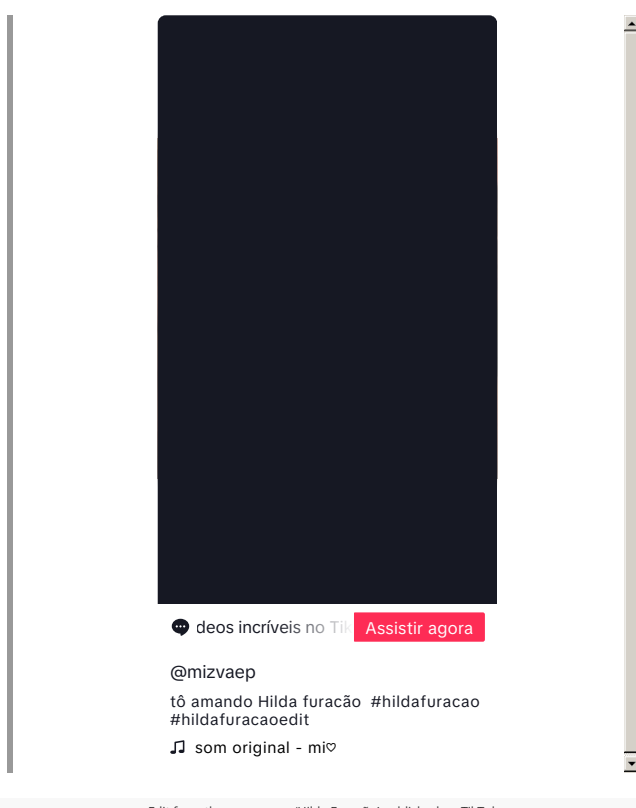


On TikTok, the hashtag #BrazilianCinema has already amassed over 11 thousand posts, allowing users to discover old films like 'Central do Brasil' through short videos. (Photo: Marcelo Pires/JU)

Another perspective

Adriana Amaral is a professor at the Universidade Paulista (UNIP) and studies consumerism and fandom in pop culture. Regarding audiovisual products like edits, she comments: "I believe it is part of digital culture practices to create this type of audiovisual material, different from traditional materials, right? We know that audiovisuals have grown a lot, and so have these other alternative forms, both closely related to the issue of virality."

Many of these edits gain strength when members of a new generation come into contact with certain productions in a different context than the originally intended. Eloy Vieira, a researcher at the Federal University of Sergipe (UFS) and for the Laboratory of Research on Pop Culture, Communication, and Technologies (CULTPOP) at the Universidade Paulista (UNIP), discusses the virality of a Brazilian soap opera, this time 'Hilda Furacão': "It had a significant impact on audiences from the 1990s and now it could return with renewed strength, serving as a renewed portrayal of a female figure and of reappropriations."



Edit from the soap opera 'Hilda Furacão' published on TikTok

A PhD in Communication from the Federal University of Pernambuco and a columnist for the Revista Fórum, Cesar Castanha comments on one of the possible reasons why the contact with Fernanda Torres in "I Know I'll Love You" intrigues new generations, since the actress is not remembered for her dramatic performances: "She is known as a comedic actress, perhaps the most well-known Brazilian comedic actress, and she also has this other side in her career, the drama."

Networked cineclubs

A cineclub is a space made up of people interested in watching films and discussing them. Thus, in most associations of this kind, collectivity, democratic access, and debate are important aspects of film screening sessions.

Yasmin Borges, a member of the Cineclube Academia das Musas, comments that an edit works like the debate proposal made at the end of sessions: "You are showing what you took from the work, interpreting it, and playing with image and sound." Yasmin adds: "It was clear that these contents boosted the search for Brazilian films and even for other directors who may not be well recognized in the commercial circuit."

If the cinephile establishes a relationship between edits and debates, Cesar Castanha draws a parallel between the pages that produce this type of content and the cine clubs themselves:

"There are whole communities formed by people who have a passion for cinema following such web profiles, followers who enjoy watching films and getting to know different productions, deciding what to watch based on what these profiles are presenting; they function almost like an online cineclub."

— Cesar Castanha

Social media and screenings

Another characteristic of cineclubs is the curatorial process that sets up a showcase and defines the sessions. The members of the Cineclube Academia das Musas publish an annual magazine discussing the films watched during each cycle. The release of each magazine issue usually takes place at the Cinemateca Capitólio in Porto Alegre, accompanied by the screening of some of the films featured in it.

In 2022, at the magazine, launch, short films by director Cecelia Condit were screened. It was Manu Couto, at the time responsible for the editing and layout of the magazine, who made the suggestion based on an edit. Although the production of edits was not as popular among lovers of Brazilian cinema, films by more alternative directors were already going viral on the internet. "I met Cecelia Condit in 2020/2021 when one of her shorts, 'Possibly in Michigan,' went viral there [on social media]. People dubbed the songs. This audiovisual production led me to another production made in the 1980s in the United States, recorded on VHS. I think that's a bit of the magic of social networks," comments Manu.

"I ended up really liking her work [Cecelia Condit]. When the opportunity arose to organize the magazine event, I thought of her, both because she fit the profile that the Cineclube Academia das Musas already appreciated, that of experimental and alternative cinema, and because she attracted other audiences."

— Manu Couto

Manu Couto has been a scholar at Sala Redenção, the university cinema of UFRGS, and usually works with cultural productions. About her work, Manu comments: "Being someone who is constantly online makes all my productions and programming have a bit of that effect of social networks and the virtual world. I like to think about what people are talking about and use cinema as a way to delve into that."

The physical space of the cinema hall

Daniela Mazzilli, director of the Cinemateca Capitólio, also considers the relationship between social networks and the programming of a cinema hall. Since the centennial space has been used as a Cinemateca for eight years, a series of films outside the commercial circuit have been regularly shown.

Despite the frequent screening of old films, Daniela emphasizes: "Our audience is mainly young - mostly ranging from 19 to 25 years old." Therefore, she emphasizes the importance of the institution in the release and updating of Cinemateca's program. "We also have an older audience of people who reach us through more traditional means, be it newspapers or announcements displayed on the wall on the side of our building," adds the director.

Regarding the virality of edits and other similar productions on social media, Daniela comments: "This piece was not produced by the director, the production team, or the marketing team. It is organic, it comes from the public. I believe that if we can reach this point, the engagement that can happen from there with the audience is magical. It allows an engagement that wouldn't happen otherwise."

The director of the Cinemateca recalls the institutional nature of the space and highlights the attempt to break with seriousness, seeing in edits and memes on social networks a possibility for this, making a self-critique: "Often, we are not so permissive to use these spaces to create this type of content. We tried to do a bit of that with Halloween, starting to rethink the space and the use of networks in a different way."

Daniela's comments highlight that materials produced by content producers on social networks has to expand the reach and recognition of certain films. They also signal a dialogue between built communities, whether engaging in these posts or attending the cinema hall - after all, edits can both direct people to certain screenings and be produced based on a session attended.

Translated into English by Lucas Eduardo Camargo, undergraduate student enrolled in the course "Supervised Translation Training I (English)" of the Undergraduate Program in Language and Literature, under the supervision and translation revision of Professor Elizamari R. Becker (P.h.D.) - IU/UFRGS.

Read in Portuguese

Cinema brasileiro conquista novos públicos por meio das redes sociais