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On line conference – Call for papers

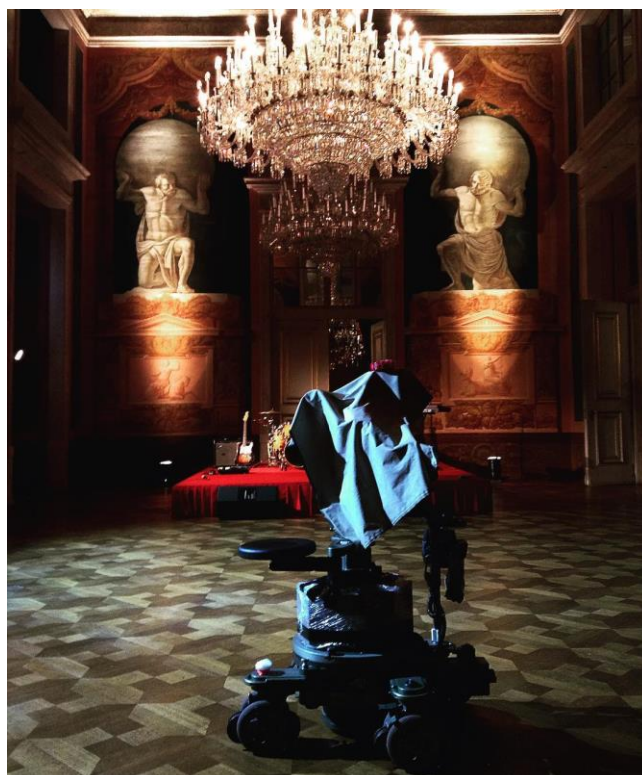
Materiality and Creative Processes in Portuguese Cinema

Google Meet platform - University of Florence
29-30 October 2020

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Paulo Cunha (Universidade da Beira Interior)

Malte Hagener (Philipps-Universität Marburg)



Following the *materiality turn* of social sciences and humanities, over the last years research on *materiality* has also intensified in the scope of film studies and media studies. If applied to cinema, the concept of *materiality* refers to different elements that interact in the making of a film: tools, objects, technology, places, spaces and bodies.

Several types of substances and materials are included in each film: everything that is filmed and recorded contains in its origin a material history that in its turn becomes part of the material history of the film. Films can be studied as material social practices at the moment when attention is focused on the different aspects on the basis of their own organization: from production to the choice of décor; from the production of the costumes to the building of the sceneries; from assembling the set to photography; from sound design to post-production.

The study of the materiality of cinema commits to observe the various elements that make up the film object in order to enhance the genesis of the creative processes involved there. By disassembling and isolating the different material components, it is possible to better understand the nature of the film as a complex object, which arises from the assembly of unique actions and concrete acts. If we analyze these elements, the history of cinema is enriched with so many micro-stories yet to be told. They are mainly stories of commons people, dedicated to objects, places and bodies that interact with each other.

Portuguese cinema is especially rich in these stories. Anchored to a stronger artisanal perspective in relation to other cinematographies, it has always given a central importance to materiality and it has often been thought of as a *materialist* cinema, despite the fact that the existing studies hitherto have privileged the author dimension. The “inter-artistic” crafts were put aside in favor of a conception that sees the director as the sole and exclusive responsible for the film. On the contrary, definitions like those of Kubelka, who defined cinematographic creation as “a tailor's work in progress”, return the deserved space to the importance of these crafts, thanks to which the stone is molded into sculpture, or shapeless fabric is cut into costume, and the sounds are arranged for the creation of voices and silences...

Therefore, it becomes important to (re)think Portuguese cinema in the light of the *materiality turn*, to investigate practices and technologies and to record the results. In 1989, during the Portuguese premiere of *Rosa de Areia*, directed by António Reis and Margarida Cordeiro, Reis himself launched the idea of an aesthetics of materials, to highlight new and deep meanings from the raw material from which the movies are made. Considered as one of the founders of *Novo Cinema*, Reis is still, today, a central point of reference for many contemporary Portuguese filmmakers. Based on this idea,

it is then possible to outline the genealogies and future projections of this *aesthetics of materials*, identifying the multiple traces not only in the experiences related to *Novo Cinema* and to the *Portuguese School*, but throughout all the material (and the materials) history of Portuguese cinema. When considering Portuguese cinema as a starting point, proposals on the following topics are encouraged, but not exhaustively:

- Historical links, cultural transfers, relations and reciprocal exchanges between Italy and Portugal in the scope of cinema and media;
- Genetic criticism and genesis of the film: from production to material practices;
- New sources and documents for the study of materiality;
- The phases of the creative process: writing, argument, story board;
- Political censorship and self-censorship;
- The actor's work and the creative process in the gesture and the covered body;
- The work on the set: sets, costumes and props;
- Sound technologies: sound design, voices, noises, music;
- Visual technologies: film, photography, lighting, new supports and instruments;
- New supports for new formats: the *video essay*;
- Materiality and gender: crafts, knowledge and professionalism in relation to gender identity;
- From material culture to visual culture: objects, bodies and devices as agents of the look.

Proposals, of **300 words**, should be sent to the email: cinematic.materialities@gmail.com together with **3 to 5 keywords** and a **150-word biography**.

The deadline for the presentation of the abstract is: **30 June 2020**.

Admission will be communicated until: **30 July 2020**.

The presentations have a duration of **20 minutes**.

The conference languages are: **English, Italian, Portuguese** and **French**.

The conference will take place entirely online through the Google Meet platform for all sessions.

Organization

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