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Social Media's Impact on the Creative Process: A Case Study on Brazilian Independent Filmmakers during the 2000's

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Abstract:

This research is the investigation of the relationship between social media and the creative processes of filmmakers in Brazil. The research focuses on the nuanced impacts and the boundaries that social media may impose on creative individuals. Through case studies of three Brazilian filmmakers—Anderson Bardot, Karen Suzane, and Luiz Fernando Carvalho—this research explores how social media, although a powerful tool for exposure may also be a potential disruptor of the creative process. Utilizing a decolonial framework, the research dives into the personal relationship each filmmaker has with social media, highlighting the strategies they employ to balance their online presence with their need to preserve their creativity.

To explore this topic, a culturally vibrant country like Brazil serves as the lens to analyze how social media has become a phenomenon that offers a platform for creative outputs. However, it raises questions about the creative processes behind these outputs and the specific precautions filmmakers may take to ensure their creativity is not compromised. The case studies reveal that while social media can facilitate promotion and engagement, it requires filmmakers to set boundaries to preserve their creative processes.

Two of the filmmakers, Anderson Bardot and Karen Suzane, both use social media strategically, although in different ways. Bardot focuses on promotion, sharing his film festival accolades and aspects of his creative process. Suzane, on the other hand, shares more authentic behind-the-scenes moments. Both filmmakers recognize the need to limit their time online to prevent exhaustion and maintain their creativity. Their intentional and specific approach to social media highlights the nuanced relationships between creativity and digital platforms.

Luiz Fernando Carvalho presents a contrasting case, choosing to abstain from social media to prioritize in-person interactions and avoid online distractions. Carvalho's commitment to his creative process underscores his belief in the value of human connection and authenticity. His decision not to use social media is a testament to the possibility of thriving creatively without relying on digital platforms, although it also reflects a privilege that not all filmmakers may have.

The research concludes that while social media can be beneficial for filmmakers and allow them to create community and engagement, it also requires a level of balance and intentionality to protect a creative process. The case studies show that the relationship between social media and creativity is complex and multifaceted. Filmmakers must navigate the pressures and distractions of being online, setting boundaries to ensure their creative processes are nurtured offline. This conclusion points to the larger question of how filmmakers' intentional time online may be reflective of the dangers that social media may have on creativity.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes the importance of intentional and mindful use of social media for creative individuals. While digital platforms can serve as powerful tools for creative outputs, they also pose risks that must be managed to maintain the integrity of the creative process. The research calls for a balanced approach to social media, recognizing its potential benefits while addressing the challenges it presents to creativity and self-expression.

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1 Opening Remarks

Another long day at work. You checked your phone a few times, you had a lunch that was the opposite of “Instagrammable” and now you are contemplating the commute home and how quickly you wish you could be home and doing anything but working. You’re exhausted and you’re not the only one. The bus is packed today, more than usual. Yet everyone appears to have gotten a seat except for some unlucky people. They are happy with standing, but you’re happy to have your seat because that means you not only get to rest your legs but also your mind. Now, what’s the first thing that you would do when you finally get to sit down and start your 45-minute commute home? Listen to that podcast with your favorite film critic, maybe some music, perhaps reach out to those friends that invited you to some bar later, or think about that movie script that you have wanted to get back around to. Either way, you’re going to reach for your phone and see what it has to offer you first for this bus ride home. And you of course are not the only one.

Before going into the portal that is your phone, you look around and see most people are either scrolling, attentively watching something, or sending some messages. You don’t wonder what everyone is up to since you have more important things to worry about, and now that you’re looking at your phone that includes answering those unread Whatsapp messages. Oh yeah, you also want to catch up on the latest memes that your best friend sent you on TikTok. And you have been meaning to watch that new video essay on YouTube. But also just scrolling on your Instagram feed seems alright to you too. Maybe you’ll laugh, learn about something, or post a close friend’s story about that beautiful sunset you saw yesterday.

As you text back, scroll, maybe even post, the 45 minutes have gone by so quickly and when you look up, you see the bus is still full but of different people.

You've been completely unaware of everything around you. But hey, you're almost home and almost everyone still appears to be scrolling, taking in some entertainment from their phones, and passing the time online. Even those standing seem to be scrolling throughout this seemingly bumpy commute.

You don't necessarily see a problem, but you know that you feel tired. Did scrolling and your time online make you feel more tired or was it just a long day anyway? You hope that you'll have the energy when you get home to continue working on that movie script since you have been putting it off for a few days. But you were able to see some great movie clips and reviews on your feed, leaving you inspired and yet at the same time discouraged since you know how much work there is for your own script. There's no conclusion of what you will do by the time you get off the bus, but the desire to create still appears to be there, however, the 45 minutes of scrolling may or may not have contributed to shifting that desire to feel a bit overwhelming. Was it the time spent online that was too much? Or was it the pressure that you felt from being online that made you overwhelmed to even work on your script?

The issue of how much time spent online is considered excessive, and the external pressure to produce content, are at the heart of the "creativity crisis"¹ caused by social media. Renowned creativity researcher, Runco,² has issued warnings about the negative impact of social media use, suggesting that it may lead to a decline in creativity. Runco has pointed out that these characteristics of social media could contribute to a real "creativity crisis"³ of greater magnitude than previously reported⁴. Specifically, he has highlighted how this crisis affects people by taking away time from engaging in creative activities and by subjecting them to social pressure in their creative pursuits. An example of this social pressure can be seen in the phenomenon known as "grift drift," as illustrated by the actions of pop star Russell Brand. Under the influence of external praise and support, Brand began producing content solely for the purpose of increasing his popularity, rather than staying true to his creative instincts. This kind of pressure to create content for profit and to cultivate a specific "brand" is also evident among social media influencers.

¹ Runco, M.A. (2015). Creativity and human development: The real creativity crisis. Available from: http://www.creativityjournal.net/index.php/component/k2/item/268-the-real-creativity-crisis#_VP9ot2d0v71

² Runco, M.A. (2015). Creativity and human development: The real creativity crisis. Available from: http://www.creativityjournal.net/index.php/component/k2/item/268-the-real-creativity-crisis#_VP9ot2d0v71

³ Runco, M.A. (2015). Creativity and human development: The real creativity crisis. Available from: http://www.creativityjournal.net/index.php/component/k2/item/268-the-real-creativity-crisis#_VP9ot2d0v71

⁴ Kim, K.H. (2011). The creativity crisis: The decrease in creative thinking scores on the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking. *Creativity Research Journal*, 23, 285–295.

The "creativity crisis" is concerned with the phenomenon of creating content not out of genuine inspiration, but rather with the hope of receiving external validation.

As a person, a creative, a filmmaker, and a researcher, I feel compelled to explore this crisis. My interest lies beyond just understanding how social media is possibly harming our creativity, but what that means for the long-term preservation of our creativity collectively. There is a beauty that exists through the creation of music, films, paintings, photographs, sculptures, and so on. What happens if we begin to create less of these? Will the stories that get told through these mediums cease to also exist? Who are we as humankind without the existence of the memory of such stories in these mediums?

Throughout this research, I will explore the subjective experience of three independent filmmakers to examine what it means, for each of the them, to care about the preservation of creativity, particularly the creative process, as it relates to their relationship with social media and how creatives may be mitigating the "creativity crisis". In line with my hypothesis that there is a "creativity crisis" and that SM's impact on creativity can be negative without self-regulation and intentional time online, I ask: how are each of these three filmmakers working to mitigate the "creativity crisis" through their own personal and professional choices?

2 Motivation

This research is driven by the desire to preserve creativity and self-expression at a time when our relationships with social media are significantly impacting our offline lives. My personal experiences with social media have shaped my understanding of online engagement, inspiring me to explore its impact on our ability to connect with ourselves and on the creative work that I and others value.

I focus specifically on filmmakers, as a filmmaker myself, as it provides a familiar yet interesting lens through which the effects of social media can impact a complex and non-linear creative process, considering that filmmakers tend to be multifaceted in the nature of their work. Filmmakers are known for creating visual content, but their creative process also can involve writing, drawing, creating music, among other activities. These processes typically occur offline, providing an ideal opportunity for creativity. However, considering the complexities and nuances introduced by our online time, it's important to investigate how online engagement affects these offline processes.

The impact of social media varies for each individual, highlighting the unique nature of everyone's relationship with it. My aim is to analyze the subjective experience of three individuals' relationships with social media to identify potential trends that are significant and worth noticing. Although three case studies cannot establish causation, they can reveal personal perceptions related to the "creativity crisis", emphasizing the need to examine how much time we spend online and the external pressures we face to be creative. This is in addition to attempting to understand how some creatives may be mitigating the "creativity crisis" by either limiting their time online or being aware of the social pressure.

There is also the consideration that social media remains highly unregulated and deeply intertwined with our cultural society today. Although this research cannot cover all aspects of the impact and interconnection between social media and our cultural society, it acknowledges that social media is not merely a platform for connection. Social media companies are driven by profit motives, seeking revenue through advertisements, attention retention, and audience growth. These companies operate with a capitalistic agenda and are not non-profit entities.

Authors such as Shoshana Zuboff delve into these issues, highlighting how social media sites exploit other websites to keep users engaged and active. For instance, Zuboff discusses how the site "myPersonality" became a key database for developing models that predict personality traits from Facebook data and metadata.⁵ Understanding the broader significance of social media companies' intentions, particularly their targeting of individuals like filmmakers, is crucial for this research.

This research aims to demonstrate the nuanced impact of these intentions on mitigating the "creativity crisis". By examining how social media affects the creative processes through a case study of Brazilian independent filmmakers, this research seeks to uncover the complexities of online engagement and its influence on offline creativity.

⁵ Zuboff, Shoshana. (2019). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. First Edition. New York: Public Affairs.

3 Introduction

The impact of social media on individuals has evolved significantly during the 2000s, from the introduction of new platforms to changes in the amount of time spent online.⁶ Social media has not only transformed how we interact with others virtually but also influenced our daily routines and self-perception. To understand social media's impact, it is important to refer to a precise definition of social media. For the purpose of this research, I will leverage a definition provided by Carr and Hayes, who see social media as "a medium that serves as a mediator for other psychological, relational, and communicative effects."⁷ This definition is significant as it positions social media beyond merely the platforms and time periods in which they exist, offering a broader understanding of its role.

Carr and Hayes further elaborate that "social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others."⁸ This definition emphasizes the dual nature of social media, enabling interactions with content and others while allowing selective engagement from both the audience and creators. This selective engagement can manifest in various forms, such as deciding whether to be active or passive in posting, the intentions behind sharing, and the content users choose to consume.

This research will pair this definition with the theory of decolonizing digital media, allowing for a broader focus on how social media acts as a mediator for various effects, particularly its potential impact on creativity and creative processes.

⁶ Esteban Ortiz-Ospina (2019) - "The rise of social media" Published online at OurWorldInData.org. Retrieved from: '<https://ourworldindata.org/rise-of-social-media>'

⁷ Caleb T. Carr & Rebecca A. Hayes (2015) Social Media: Defining, Developing, and Divining, *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23:1, 46-65, DOI: 1080/15456870.2015.972282

⁸ Caleb T. Carr & Rebecca A. Hayes (2015) Social Media: Defining, Developing, and Divining, *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23:1, 46-65, DOI: 1080/15456870.2015.972282

Leveraging this definition of social media, I will analyze the transformation accentuated by the digitalization of various industries in Brazil, including filmmaking and other audiovisual sectors.⁹ A crucial milestone in this digitalization process is the integration of social media as a digital technology for filmmakers.¹⁰ It has revolutionized how they promote their work, engage with audiences, and gain insights into their craft. Additionally, it has significantly altered the way audiences interact with their creations, making the work more accessible and influencing their levels of concentration and engagement.

Considering that users of social media can be both “active” and “passive” online—either by merely scrolling or actively posting—it is important to acknowledge that a user, such as a filmmaker, can engage in both behaviors. While they may be creating and promoting their work, they can also engage with other artists' works, scroll through content, or seek entertainment. This duality and complexity in filmmakers' relationships with social media are central to this research.

In addition to a nuanced understanding of filmmakers' relationships with social media, the context in which these filmmakers reside is crucial. This research will focus on Brazil. As someone of mixed Brazilian and Ecuadorian heritage, I take pride in considering myself Latina and have always admired the artists from both countries. Given that Brazil is renowned for its creativity in film, music, food, and the arts, it will be the focus of this paper. The country's vibrant creativity and cultural beauty offer an opportunity to center the Global South.

This focus on Brazil aligns with the decolonization framework underpinning this research. By centering Brazil, a country rich in creative culture and history, the paper aims to amplify voices that may be overlooked or differently influenced by social media platforms primarily originating from Western powers.¹¹ This approach seeks to highlight the unique impacts of these platforms on Brazilian filmmakers and their creative processes, which will provide a lens into how creatives may be mitigating the “creativity crisis”.

In Brazil, as in other countries, films play a crucial role in telling stories that might otherwise go untold. Pieres notes that “Brazilian film is increasingly seen as the creator of conditions for the silent actors in society to articulate their own voice

⁹ Leonardo De Marchi and João Martins Ladeira, “Digitization of music and audio-visual industries in Brazil: new actors and the challenges to cultural diversity”, *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer*, 277 | 2018, 67-86.

¹⁰ Winstead Amanda. “The Impact of Digitalization on the Film Industry.” *Raindance*, February 17, 2023. <https://raindance.org/the-impact-of-digitalization-on-the-film-industry/>.

¹¹ Poushter, Jacob. “WhatsApp and Facebook Dominate the Social Media Landscape in Middle-Income Nations.” *Pew Research Center*, March 22, 2024. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/03/22/whatsapp-and-facebook-dominate-the-social-media-landscape-in-middle-income-nations/>.

and for the 'filmless ones' to produce their own image."¹² This preservation of stories underscores the significant impact of cinema and the need for support in producing these narratives. Brazilian cinema has a rich history of addressing political and social issues, sparking conversations and debates that reflect the economic, political, and cultural structures of the country.

In "Remapping Brazilian Film Culture in the Twenty-First Century," Stephanie Dennison defines film culture in Brazil as "the cultural, social, and economic imperatives that drive the industry, the context of promotion of film culture, and the reception and consumption of films by film audiences."¹³ Dennison's definition broadens our understanding of how films can impact a country like Brazil, providing various methods to comprehend the film culture that exists there.

However, despite Brazil having the tenth largest film industry in the world, a significant portion of the population lacks access to cinemas.¹⁴ This is where social media can play a transformative role, providing new ways for people to access cinema. Harbord argues that there are many different ways that "film (can) enter our lives."¹⁵ She notes that "film culture (can) embrace the full range of films with which an audience engages, from Hollywood blockbusters viewed at the local multiplex to hastily produced short political 'documentaries' uploaded onto YouTube."¹⁶ YouTube, a prime example of a social media site, has become a common platform for consuming cinema. Even in completing this thesis, some of the short films mentioned were uploaded and available to watch via YouTube, demonstrating the intersection of social media and film in people's lives.

As mentioned above, Pires emphasized the importance of the 'filmless ones'¹⁷, in which these "silent actors" include those who may not have had the access to create art or those who have been silenced. Their creative outputs, such as cinema, can reflect social and political structures, showcasing how policy and economic shifts directly influence creative production. The financial and political support these outputs receive is crucial, as it highlights the narratives that emerge from Brazilian cinema.

¹² Pires, Vieira Else Ribeiro. *City of god in several voices: Brazilian Social Cinema as action*. Critical, Cultural and Communication Press, 2005.

¹³ Dennison, Stephanie. Introduction. In *Remapping Brazilian Film Culture in the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2020. (pg. 2)

¹⁴ Dennison, Stephanie. Introduction. In *Remapping Brazilian Film Culture in the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

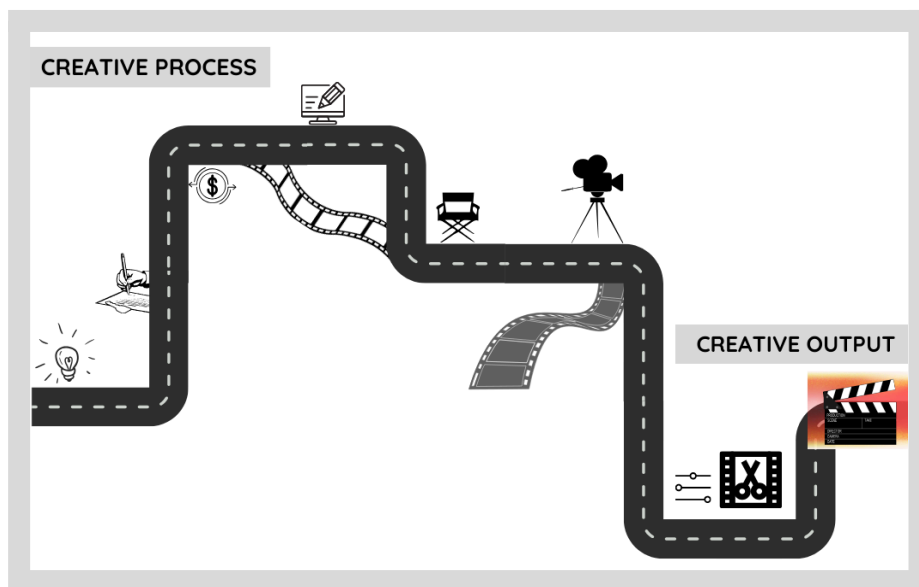
¹⁵ Harbord, Janet. *Film Cultures*, SAGE Publications, Limited, 2002. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gla/detail.action?docID=254726>.

¹⁶ Dennison, Stephanie. Introduction. In *Remapping Brazilian Film Culture in the Twenty-First Century*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

¹⁷ Pires, Vieira Else Ribeiro. *City of god in several voices: Brazilian Social Cinema as action*. Critical, Cultural and Communication Press, 2005.

Given this context, this research aims to question the effects of social media on creativity, drawing on the questions raised by Runco¹⁸ in his research on the "creativity crisis". Specifically, it will examine how social media may be diverting time away from creative activities and the social pressures surrounding these activities.

Therefore, it is essential to consider the nuanced effects of social media on individuals who utilize these platforms, whether they are active users, such as creators, or passive users, or a mix of both. This research seeks to delve into individual filmmakers' relationships with social media, particularly whether it has altered their ability to self-express and be creative, both in their creative process and in their final outputs. These outputs can include short films posted on YouTube, video essays, animations, documentaries, and more—anything that represents the culmination of the creative process. This study aims to explore the positive and negative implications of social media on filmmakers' creativity, focusing on their creative processes.



For illustration purposes: The creative process goes through a path that is non-linear and leads, hopefully, to a creative output.

This research focuses on the creative process, while still highlighting its importance in producing creative outputs. As seen in the diagram above, the creative process, though often non-linear and encompassing activities such as writing, idea

¹⁸ Runco, M.A. (2015). Creativity and human development: The real creativity crisis. Available from: http://www.creativityjournal.net/index.php/component/k2/item/268-the-real-creativity-crisis#_VP9ot2d0y71

development, and filming, is critical in shaping the final product, such as a film. Although the primary focus is on the creative process of filmmakers, the final creative outputs provide essential context to understand why the process itself is significant.

Filmmakers' self-expression extends beyond their final creative outputs and includes various ways of sharing their work within the industry, such as submitting films to festivals for recognition. This mode of promotion is distinct from social media, where visibility often hinges on an individual's presence and popularity. It is intriguing to explore the potential impact of filmmakers' experiences on social media on their creative processes and whether they need to regulate their online presence to maintain their self-expression, especially when their creative outputs are often shared online.

Creative outputs such as films travel through various channels, including film festivals, theaters, and online platforms. Considering these diverse journeys, social media can serve multiple purposes for filmmakers, such as promoting their work, inspiring themselves, or inspiring others. This research will review the journeys of both the creative process and the resulting outputs to understand how social media specifically affects creativity, impacting both the creative process and the final outputs.

This paper will focus on Brazilian filmmakers, examining how their work is changing the way stories are told on screen and how they maintain the ability to produce and create that work. It aims to explore the impact of social media on their creative processes and the measures they are taking to adapt and evolve in response to it, with a focus on sustaining their creative processes to produce meaningful outputs that reshape narratives.

To achieve this, the research will focus on three Brazilian independent filmmakers: Luiz Fernando Carvalho, Karen Suzane, and Anderson Bardot. Carvalho, who is not active on social media, contrasts with Suzane and Bardot, who are active on these platforms. This distinction provides a starting point for comparing and contrasting their experiences with both creative processes and outputs in relation to their unique relationships with social media.

All three directors focus on independent filmmaking and exhibit unique and experimental styles that readdress typical narratives with innovative twists. Their works include shorts, TV series, web series, and full-length features. They draw

inspiration from various artistic sources such as photography, poetry, and literature. This broad artistic influence underscores their identities not only as filmmakers but as general creatives, highlighting the nuanced impact of social media on their creativity.

The context of these filmmakers' creative outputs is crucial to understanding their motivations. Their films address narratives such as the experiences of Black Brazilian women, the LGBTQIA+ community, and adaptations of literary works. These outputs contribute significantly to the culture of cinema in Brazil and aim to inspire their audiences. While their outputs may not directly address social media, the content remains relevant for understanding what drives these filmmakers to produce impactful stories.

Through their case studies, the filmmakers will provide insight into their relationships with social media, detailing how it influences their creative processes and outputs and their general perspectives on social media. They may choose to engage with social media during their creative processes or limit their online time to focus on creation. However, once a creative output is ready, they may use social media to promote and share it. Recognizing the "extractive character of data flows"¹⁹—where everyday life details are captured, commodified, and sold to corporations and governments—is crucial when considering social media companies' agendas. This understanding applies to the sharing and creation of both creative processes and outputs.

By pairing the case studies of Karen Suzane, Luiz Fernando Carvalho, and Anderson Bardot with current research and literature, this study aims to provide a new perspective on the non-linear impact of social media on creativity. To prevent a "creativity crisis" and preserve creativity, attention must be given to social media's effects.

¹⁹ Couldry, Nick, and Ulises A. Mejias. 2019. "Data colonialism: rethinking Big Data's relation to the contemporary subject". *Television & New Media* 20(4): 336–349. doi:10.1177/1527476418796632.

4 Literature Review

The theoretical framework for this research is grounded in defining social media, creative processes, and film outputs through a decolonization digital media perspective.²⁰ This approach moves beyond a celebratory view of connectivity often associated with social media discussions. Schoon, Mabweazara, Bosch, and Dugmore emphasize the need for a framework that “resists glib totalizing characterizations of social media platforms like Facebook on the continent and instead notes its different adaptation and interpretation in each country.”²¹ They stress the importance of understanding how social media intersects with local dynamics and levels of connectivity in various contexts. Therefore, this research emphasizes filmmakers' specific relationships with connectivity, focusing on personal experiences rather than generalized characteristics of social media.

According to Carr & Hayes²², understanding social media in Brazil requires contextual analysis, particularly within the theoretical framework adopted here. As of 2022, Brazil had approximately 171.2 million active social media users, representing about 79.9% of the addressable demographic. From 2021 to 2022, the number of users grew by 14.3%²³. The most popular platforms include WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, with Brazil being the fourth-largest user of Twitter²⁴ and the third-largest market for YouTube²⁵ outside of India and the U.S. These statistics illustrate the significant role of social media in Brazil, highlighting why it is crucial to focus on this geographic location to understand the impact of social media.

²⁰ Alette Schoon, Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara, Tanja Bosch & Harry Dugmore (2020) Decolonising Digital Media Research Methods: Positioning African Digital Experiences as Epistemic Sites of Knowledge Production, *African Journalism Studies*, 41:4, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/23743670.2020.1865645

²¹ Alette Schoon, Hayes Mawindi Mabweazara, Tanja Bosch & Harry Dugmore (2020) Decolonising Digital Media Research Methods: Positioning African Digital Experiences as Epistemic Sites of Knowledge Production, *African Journalism Studies*, 41:4, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/23743670.2020.1865645

²² Caleb T. Carr & Rebecca A. Hayes (2015) Social Media: Defining, Developing, and Divining, *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 23:1, 46-65, DOI: 1080/15456870.2015.972282

²³ "Social Media in Brazil - 2023 Stats & Platform Trends." OOSGA, October 30, 2023.

<https://oosga.com/social-media/bra/#:~:text=Social%20Media's%20User%20Demographics%20in,of%20users%20has%20grown%2014.3%20%25.>

²⁴ Dixon, Stacy Jo. "Countries with Most X/Twitter Users 2023." Statista, September 13, 2023.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/>.

²⁵ Kyrasays: "How Many People Use YouTube in 2023? [New Data]." Backlinko, March 27, 2023. <https://backlinko.com/youtube-users>.

The book "How the World Changed Social Media"²⁶ and its sequel provide an in-depth exploration of social media in Brazil, examining its impact on various aspects of society, including politics, gender, education, and commerce²⁷. The authors define social media as "another place in which people live, alongside their office life, home life, and community life,"²⁸ emphasizing content over the platform and introducing the concept of "scale-able sociality" to highlight the importance of social interactions facilitated by social media.

These anthropologists integrate media and communication studies with social sciences, offering a culturally contextualized understanding of social media. Their approach contrasts with more generalized studies by providing nuanced insights into the role of social media in Brazilian society. The sequel, which focuses on a specific field site in Brazil, explores how social media impacts economic prosperity and reduces lingering inequality rooted in the country's colonial history. The authors question whether "social media is a force to reduce the inequality that remains such a potent legacy of a 300-year-old history of slave-based colonialism."²⁹ Spyer's sequel paints a vivid picture of Balduíno, an emerging fishing village in Northeast Bahia, illustrating these points with in-depth examples.

By contextualizing these findings within the specific field site, the research underscores the importance of understanding Brazil's cultural, economic, and social context. This ensures that the impact of social media is analyzed not just from an individual perspective but also within the broader cultural context. This nuanced understanding of social media's impact in Brazil provides a solid foundation for the case studies in this research, exploring the broader socio-cultural significance and laying the groundwork for analyzing the creative processes and outputs of Brazilian filmmakers.

Considering this context, it is crucial to recognize the significant shifts in social media during the 2000s, as they form the backdrop for the case studies in this research. "Social Media in Emergent Brazil" identifies a pivotal moment when social media became a major topic of debate due to a socio-economic shift that enabled a larger number of lower-income Brazilians to access the internet.³⁰ For instance, Orkut, a social networking site owned by Google and launched in 2004, became

²⁶ Spyer, Juliano. *Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility*. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

²⁷ Spyer, Juliano. *Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility*. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

²⁸ Miller, Daniel, Elisabetta Costa, Nell Haynes, Tom McDonald, Razvan Nicolescu, Jolynna Sinanan, Juliano Spyer, Shriram Venkatraman, and Xinyuan Wang. *How the World Changed Social Media*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. UCL Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1q69z35>.

²⁹ Spyer, Juliano. *Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility*. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

³⁰ Spyer, Juliano. *Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility*. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

immensely popular among Brazilian internet users by 2006³¹. However, a massive migration to Facebook around 2009 marked a shift in social media dynamics in Brazil, highlighting the importance of studying the impact on people who have limited agency in these platforms' design and control. Particularly that social media can be a space for the continuation of neo-colonial processes and that is why it is important to understand the individual relationships with social media.

The consolidation of social media engagement in Brazil intensified in the second half of 2013, when teenagers embraced WhatsApp, a platform that operates efficiently on less expensive Android smartphones³². Despite economic constraints and limited governmental support for purchasing computers, internet cafés in poorer neighborhoods facilitated access³³. Consequently, Facebook and WhatsApp became the dominant social media platforms, followed by YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram.

The widespread adoption of social media has profoundly influenced interpersonal interactions and the creative processes and outputs of individuals. Social media platforms have become essential spaces for sharing creative processes, outputs, and everyday life, allowing broader visibility and engagement.

Since the turn of the millennium, digital culture in Brazil has gained legitimacy among artists, merging with social media and technology to create new art forms and influence creative practices³⁴. Events like the establishment of Coleção Arte e Tecnologia Oi Futuro, a collection of digital art, exemplify this convergence³⁵. As social media has evolved over the past decade in Brazil, its impact on the creative landscape requires continuous reanalysis to capture its nuanced effects.

From a decolonial perspective, it is important to recognize that social media companies often do not prioritize the cultural contexts of the Global South. This is particularly relevant given concerns that social media platforms profit from youth users who may suffer from negative mental health outcomes, such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders³⁶. These platforms prioritize profit over the well-being of their users, a dynamic that must be considered when evaluating their impact.

³¹ Spyer, Juliano. Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

³² Spyer, Juliano. Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

³³ Spyer, Juliano. Social Media in Emergent Brazil: How the Internet Affects Social Mobility. Vol. 10. UCL Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1wc7rdn>.

³⁴ Castellary, Arturo Colorado. CREATIVITY, INTERACTIVITY AND DIGITAL CULTURE IN BRAZIL/Creatividad artística, interactividad y cultura digital en el Brasil. Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

³⁵ Castellary, Arturo Colorado. CREATIVITY, INTERACTIVITY AND DIGITAL CULTURE IN BRAZIL/Creatividad artística, interactividad y cultura digital en el Brasil. Universidad Complutense de Madrid.

³⁶ Raffoul A, Ward ZJ, Santoso M, Kavanaugh JR, Austin SB (2023) Social media platforms generate billions of dollars in revenue from U.S. youth: Findings from a simulated revenue model. PLoS ONE 18(12): e0295337. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0295337>

This research will examine Brazilian filmmakers' creative processes and outputs within the cultural significance of social media, acknowledging its potential negative effects. According to the decolonial framework, it is vital not to "simply celebrate creativity and innovation in ways that eschew the hidden global power relations embedded in the history of colonialism,"^{37, 38} as Quijano³⁹ refers to the coloniality of power. This framework highlights the hidden power dynamics legitimizing digital art through Western capitalist structures.

The creative outputs of filmmakers like Karen Suzane and Anderson Bardot, who focus on narratives involving Black Brazilian women and the LGBTQ+ community, demonstrate how social media can help tell overlooked stories. By examining their personal narratives and relationships with social media, the research will explore how these platforms impact their creative processes beyond just their desire to be online. Additionally, in focusing on their personal narratives with their relationships to social media, it allows for the research to go address and acknowledge that there is much more to their relationships than purely whether or not they want to be online. But rather the complexity of having to potentially mitigate a "creativity crisis" when thinking about a creatives' time online.

This framework is complemented by social constructionism to understand how individuals interpret and construct their social media identities and creative expressions.⁴⁰ People on social media often selectively reveal themselves and construct preferred identities or characteristics, such as emotions, personality traits, and opinions⁴¹. This perspective offers a deeper understanding of the impact of social media on creativity, delving into subjective experiences and perceptions.

A study by Acar, Neumayer, and Burnett explores the relationship between social media use and creativity from three angles: time spent on social media, the frequency and nature of social media use, and the purpose of social media use.⁴² They conclude that active use of social media (e.g., posting) is more related to creativity than passive use (e.g., reading posts).⁴³ They also find that social media can support new ideas and projects, provided its use is not excessive. This study,

³⁷ Teer-Tomaselli, Ruth. 2018. "The Four-Leafed Clover: Political Economy as a Method of Analysis". In *The Palgrave Handbook of Media and Communication Research in Africa*, edited by Bruce Mutsaers, 131–152. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.

³⁸ Willems, Wendy. 2014. "Provincializing hegemonic histories of media and communication studies: toward a genealogy of epistemic resistance in Africa". *Communication Theory* 24(4): 415–434. doi:10.1111/comt.12043.

³⁹ Quijano, Anibal. 2000. "Coloniality of power and eurocentrism in Latin America". *International Sociology* 15(2): 215–232. doi:10.1177/0268580900015002005.

⁴⁰ Vogel E. A., Rose J. P., Roberts L. R., Eckles K. (2014). Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 3, 206–222.

⁴¹ Vogel E. A., Rose J. P., Roberts L. R., Eckles K. (2014). Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 3, 206–222.

⁴² Acar, S., Neumayer, M. and Burnett, C. (2021), Social Media Use and Creativity: Exploring the Influences on Ideational Behavior and Creative Activity. *J Creat Behav*, 55: 39-52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.432>

⁴³ Acar, S., Neumayer, M. and Burnett, C. (2021), Social Media Use and Creativity: Exploring the Influences on Ideational Behavior and Creative Activity. *J Creat Behav*, 55: 39-52. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.432>

despite its limitations, opens avenues for further exploration of social media's nuanced impact on creativity.

Focusing on Brazilian independent filmmakers, this research will examine their work within cultural, ideological, and geopolitical frameworks. Shamash explains that this approach allows for a "pluriversal" perspective that critically engages films from the Global South, reframing cinema histories. The term "pluriversal," theorized by Latin American decolonial thinkers like Arturo Escobar and Walter D. Mignolo, emphasizes the significance of creative outputs and their cultural implications.⁴⁴

Even as the analysis examines the relationship between filmmakers' creative processes and their outputs, these frameworks will enable an integrated approach that recognizes the connectivity between filmmakers, social media, and their creativity. This holistic perspective ensures that the theoretical framework for researching the impact of social media on creativity is multi-faceted, drawing from various disciplines and theoretical concepts.

By adopting this approach, the research can capture the dynamic and evolving nature of social media and its influence on creativity in contemporary society, while also emphasizing the importance of decolonial frameworks. This comprehensive understanding will allow for a nuanced analysis that acknowledges the complexities of social media's role in shaping creative practices and outputs, particularly in contexts marked by historical and socio-economic disparities.

⁴⁴ Shamash, S. (2022). A decolonising approach to genre cinema studies. *Film Education Journal*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.14324/fej.05.1.05>

5 Methodology

For my primary sources, I will be analyzing the creative processes and outputs of three filmmakers as case studies: Karen Suzane, Anderson Bardot, and Luiz Fernando Carvalho. To do so, I have collected previous interview material from all three filmmakers and have conducted interviews with each of them. These interviews focused on their personal relationships with social media, their views on social media in general, their feelings towards their work with social media, and their creative processes both on and offline.

Given that Karen Suzane and Anderson Bardot are based in Brazil, the interviews were conducted virtually and initiated via social media. This method of reaching out through social media highlights their openness to being present online and connecting with their audience. For instance, I, as a master's researcher, contacted these filmmakers via Instagram direct messages. Both directors were connected to the International Film Festival in Rotterdam, which led me to reach out as I was volunteering for the festival that year. Inspired by and interested in their work, I engaged in in-depth conversations about social media and the creative process. These unique interviews form the basis of the case studies and are supplemented by my own observations of their online presence.

In contrast, Luiz Fernando Carvalho provides the perspective of a filmmaker who avoids social media entirely. To reach out to him, I had to initiate contact in person. I met Carvalho at the International Film Festival in Rotterdam, where he expressed his disdain for being online and even using a cellular device. This distinctive stance intrigued me, and after maintaining contact, I conducted an in-person interview in Paris during the 26th Annual Paris Brazilian Cinema Festival, where his feature film "A Paixão Segundo G.H." was showcased. Carvalho shared his views on his creative process, which were a reiteration of what he shared in an

interview he gave to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in "Cinema de Hoje, Olhares Críticos". Our interview, held at Café de Flore, covered topics from social media to inspirations and new ideas, reflecting his minimal online presence and the serendipitous nature of our encounter.

Another primary source for this research is the filmmakers' creative outputs. By watching several of their films—whether sent directly to me, viewed online, or seen in theaters—I gathered insights into the themes and narratives of their work. I also considered critics' reviews, audience reactions, and the filmmakers' own commentary on their work from the interviews. Although my analysis of the films is not from a film critic's perspective, the films themselves serve as crucial primary sources. This approach ensures that the filmmakers are not reduced to either their creative process or their outputs but are understood in the context of their work and inspirations, both online and offline.

Overall, this methodology emphasizes the personal effects of social media on filmmakers over time and their experiences in various contexts—online, offline, and on the big screen. This comprehensive approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the interplay between social media, creativity, and filmmaking.

That is why, the methodology for this research is done by considering the personal effects of social media on filmmakers over time and the filmmaker's own experiences with such matters just as much online, offline, and on the big screen.

6 Case Study: Bardot

Anderson Bardot: A Trailblazing Filmmaker

Anderson Bardot (she/they) is a prominent Brazilian filmmaker renowned for their distinct style and innovative approach to storytelling. Their prolific career has earned critical acclaim, particularly for films that explore themes of identity, socio-political issues, and human connection. Bardot's work often focuses on the LGBTQIA+ community, to which they belong, and they are the founder of the production company Vale Encantado Filmes. Through a bold visual aesthetic and complex narrative structures, Bardot explores Brazilian society while drawing from a diverse range of influences.

Bardot's films integrate inspirations from literature, music, and indigenous traditions, blending them with cultural richness and innovation. This fusion pushes the boundaries of traditional storytelling and invites audiences to engage with narratives on both personal and societal levels. One of Bardot's most acclaimed works, "Os Inabitáveis" (The Uninhabitable Ones), is a groundbreaking documentary-style drama that tackles the intersection of race, sexuality, and art in Brazil. The film follows a contemporary dance company preparing a performance addressing black homosexuality, delving into the personal journey of one of the dancers, Pedro, as he grapples with his identity. "Os Inabitáveis" premiered at the 49th International Film Festival Rotterdam and participated in over 80 film festivals worldwide, winning 13 awards.

Throughout their career, Bardot has shown a commitment to pushing the boundaries of Brazilian cinema while giving voice to marginalized communities. Their films not only entertain but also provoke thought and inspire dialogue about important social issues. Bardot's unique blend of artistic vision and social consciousness has earned them a place as one of Brazil's influential filmmakers, with a global impact resonating with audiences worldwide.

Originally from Espírito Santo, Bardot began studying cinema and audiovisual media at the Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Determined to produce films that went beyond typical narrative structures, Bardot's identity as part of the LGBTQIA+ community has profoundly impacted their work and process, even if not always explicitly discussed in interviews. The cultural homophobia in Brazilian society, highlighted by high discrimination rates and numerous complaints of homophobia, underscores the significance of Bardot's focus. Passamani⁴⁵ cited once that Brazilian society is culturally homophobic. Additionally, according to a survey, Brazil has one of the highest discrimination taxes against LGBT people as well as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro having the largest quantity of complaints of homophobia even though they are quite populous states.⁴⁶ The challenges remain although there are changes that are occurring such as the Brazilian Federal Supreme Court approving the criminalizing LBGTphobia in 2019.⁴⁷

Bardot's recent project, "Procuero Teu Auxílio Para Enterrar Um Homem/I Seek Your Help to Bury a Man" (2023), exemplifies their commitment to challenging the norms of Brazilian cinema. The film, which has won awards and been selected for numerous international film festivals, takes place in the Empire of Brazil in 1870. It features a queer indigenous body slowly dying on a cross, a transgender gypsy woman exiled by her people, and a soldier standing between their intersecting lives. This film underscores Bardot's dedication to meaningful storytelling and highlights their intentional approach to both their work and their online presence. This intentional act of centering around what matters for them in their work also points to the importance that Bardot feels with how their films are not only able to create a platform to change narratives, but also how they view their presence online.

Bardot's Relationship with Social Media: Navigating the Digital Landscape

Bardot has navigated the evolving landscape of social media and technology in Brazil, reflecting these shifts in their personal and professional use of social media. At 34, Bardot has witnessed the increasing prominence of social media and has found ways to manage their online presence effectively. Particularly they discuss their intentional presence that includes limiting their time online and prioritizing offline

⁴⁵ Passamani, G. (2008). Arco-Íris (Des) coberto: homossexualidades masculinas, movimentos sociais e identidades regionais – os casos de Porto Alegre e Buenos Aires. [Dissertação de Mestrado, Programa de Pós-graduação em Integração Latino-americana, UFSM]. <http://repositorio.ufsm.br/handle/1/9684>

⁴⁶ DAPP, F. G. V. (2018). Dados públicos sobre violência homofóbica no Brasil: 28 anos de combate ao preconceito. <http://dapp.fgv.br/dados-publicos-sobre-violencia-homofobica-no-brasil-28-anos-de-combate-ao-preconceito>

⁴⁷ Oliveira Santos, José Victor de, and Ludgleydson Fernandes de Araújo. "The Homophobia Course in the Life of Older Gay Men in Brazil: Their Social Representations." *Journal of Homosexuality* 71, no. 4 (2024): 958–74. doi:10.1080/00918369.2022.2160682.

creation, in addition to how they still aim to protect their creative process by considering SM's socio-economic & cultural significance.

This is emphasized when they discuss the importance of integrating social media with both their personal life and filmmaking career. Bardot explains that it is common for filmmakers to create separate social media accounts for promoting their films, keeping their creative work distinct from their personal identity. This approach leverages social media's features, such as insights on views, likes, and shares, to connect with audiences and enhance visibility.

However, Bardot emphasizes the importance of using social media to represent themselves and their work authentically. They believe that social media allows filmmakers to connect with audiences, share work, engage with other creatives, and gain visibility for their communities. Yet, maintaining a balance to ensure the creative process is not harmed by social media appears to still be crucial to Bardot.

Bardot's relationship with social media is multifaceted. They use it for promotional activities, sharing work, accomplishments, and updates on new projects. Despite the pressure to promote their work online, Bardot acknowledges the necessity of using social media for visibility. They strive for genuine interaction with their audience while recognizing the importance of protecting their creative process.

From desiring to have genuine interaction with their audience and be able to share parts of their creative process, Bardot primarily sees social media as a form of being able to do promotional activities that relates to not only having visibility for their work but also for their team and their communities. This means being active online to be able to share their work, their accomplishments in terms of film festival nominations, and the promotion of new work. This focuses on the creative outputs in which they do not necessarily reflect the creative process. However, their creative outputs which focus on community and visibility is also seen through their approach with social media as it too is socially driven to create this visibility.

When asked regarding the promotional work that needs to be done via social media, Bardot concludes that although it is not fun to have to post to be able to promote these creative outputs, "it must be done". This idea of feeling forced to be online to be able to promote, as it is a marketing tool, reflects the second part of the "creativity crisis", in which there is external pressure to be online and to be able to share creative outputs. This also emphasizes how social media may serve as a

neocolonial structure which forces this pressure onto creatives, although it appears as something that “must be done”.

This includes the pressure that there is to be able to promote your work online. However, considering that it might seem as though this pressure results in something that is negative, Bardot sees it as necessary to be able to gain visibility to their work.

Bardot's Relationship with Social Media: Creative Process vs. Social Media

As discussed, the idea of social media serving a purpose for filmmakers to be able to share their creative outputs is important, however, does that mean that Bardot is able to also show their creative process online as well? Or are they keeping that process mainly offline in order to just show the creative outputs on their social media? Or is there an intersection between their creative outputs and creative process in a hope to be able to continue to have visibility while also remaining true to who they are?

When Bardot is asked regarding their time online when it comes to their creative process, they discuss that their time offline is very important to them, almost sacred. Could it be that social media may be trying to take away from the “tradition” and “sacredness” that the time offline can provide to be connected with art? Particularly when considering the decolonial framework that is being leveraged to analyze Bardot’s experiences with social media.

Especially when it comes to certain actions that they love to do that they feel also contribute to their creative process, which includes listening to music, hand writing, and having moments with friends completely without the use of smartphones. It becomes clear that Bardot treasures their time offline and they discuss the efforts that they have gone through over the shifting relationship with social media to ensure that they are not spending more time online than necessary. Bardot treasures offline activities such as listening to music, handwriting, and spending time with friends without smartphones. These offline moments are crucial to their creative process and inspiration.

Bardot intentionally limits their online time to avoid "over-scrolling" and being overly influenced by online content. They are conscious of the interconnectedness of social media with advertising and misinformation, and they strive to maintain their creative integrity by not spending excessive time online.

Despite the challenges, Bardot uses social media strategically to promote their work and connect with others in the film industry. They find it critical to associate their creative outputs with their brand while maintaining a balance between online promotion and offline creativity. Bardot aims to share genuine content, offering behind-the-scenes glimpses and creating a sense of intimacy and authenticity with their audience.

Bardot explains this further through discussing the intentionality of using social media as a form of being able to not only share their work but also collaborate and innovate with others in the film industry. This means connecting with fellow filmmakers, artists, and industry professionals and perfecting the ways in which the platform can aid in bringing visibility towards their new creative outputs. This means that aside from all the roles that Bardot undertakes with their filmmaking, they also are constantly aware of how to be able to manage it all from the standpoint of marketing. This is where social media comes into play and Bardot speaks about how critical it is to being able to associate your creative outputs to your 'brand'. As mentioned, this is not an uncommon practice and quite the contrary is what is encouraged from online influencers and marketing tactics using social media. With a particular focus on distribution, Bardot has found that social media is critical to promoting their creative outputs and being able to add to the marketing that they need to be able to continue to excel in their career as a filmmaker.

Considering that social media has served a large purpose when it comes to the creative outputs of Bardot and other filmmakers alike, Bardot's particular use of Instagram is more nuanced. It is not only a promotional tool, but Bardot also sees it as an opportunity to share some behind-the-scenes glimpse of their creative process, offer some insights into what their inspirations may be, and create a sense of community for their followers. Through their sharing of alleged genuine content, they are aiming to create a sense of intimacy and authenticity that will resonate with their audiences. Additionally, Bardot expresses the specific desire to share the accomplishments that they are achieving when it comes to their work and being proud to share it online. Bardot's creative process could be impacted with a focus on sharing the creative outputs and trying to be as genuine online as possible, while at the same time, knowing that social media is also a form of being able to maintain connections for your career as well.

Although social media has empowered Bardot to be able to push and experiment with how to distribute and gain visibility for their creative outputs, that does not necessarily mean there is no challenge for their creative process. There are intentional decisions that are potentially allowing for the creative outputs to be created meanwhile actively needing to protect and preserve the creative process throughout. When asked regarding this, Bardot expresses that their relationship with social media is not without its challenges. Particularly ensuring that although they have an active online presence, they are also able to intentionally ‘unplug’ and try to manage the expectations of what they can share with their audiences. Particularly when it comes to having a pressure that requires you to post, while simultaneously not necessarily wanting to be online. Having to navigate the complexities of digital promotion, especially when you are connecting your work with your image, Bardot discusses the importance of boundaries.

These boundaries that Bardot mentions echo within the realm of their creative process and the importance of protecting and maintaining some things as purely private. This includes the moments where Bardot may be listening to music, hearing a favorite podcast, hand-writing, and so much more. These moments Bardot discusses as intimate and critical to their creative process, yet those moments Bardot discusses will never be shared online. Mainly because it does not interest them to share those intimate moments. Aside from that Bardot mentions that they specifically try to not be on their phones when they are with friends, which is similar to the idea of being ‘unplugged’. By focusing on maintaining limits with social media, Bardot reflects that they are aware of how social media can reflect the way you understand yourself and due to that, it is important to have limits that you know you can maintain to be able to not let yourself engage with content that is not relevant or useful to you.

Bardot's Relationship with Social Media: Nuanced Role of Social Media

This theme of limiting the time online, being conscientious in some way regarding how a person is online, and what the perceived value of your profiles are, all interconnect with Bardot’s journey. They discuss how they are aware of when they have too much information at one time and are unable to be able to process it in a way that’s genuine and that is why in terms of their scrolling time, they try to become aware of when it is time to stop being online. Bardot tries to strike a delicate balance between being digitally engaged and their artistic authenticity on and offline. By

doing so, intentionally, Bardot is able to tailor their relationship to social media in order for it to not detract from their creative process and rather enhance the creative outputs that get shared online.

Being able to preserve their creative process through these intentional limits, while at the same time being asked to specifically create content online, Bardot offers an interesting glimpse into the nuanced relationship between creativity and social media. Particularly the double sided nature of it being able to be a tool for creative outputs, while also being something that needs to be limited and taken in with control to not affect a creative process that at times will never be able to be fully seen online. This journey further highlights the ways in which Brazilian filmmakers are navigating the complexities of the online landscape in order to be able to maintain their creative process while also giving visibility to creative outputs that have the capacity to shift narratives and give people new ways of looking at the world. Are Brazilians participating in social media a potential act of decolonization? Or is it an instance of being forced to participate thanks to neo-colonial structures? Either way, can this lens of viewing Brazilian filmmakers be a way of understanding the larger trends that creatives may be dealing with social media.

As explored in the case study of Anderson Bardot, their experiences reflect the changes of digital platforms and their integration into our personal and professional worlds, particularly within filmmaking. Bardot's relationship with social media can serve to show the challenges that come with leveraging online platforms to promote, have strong audience engagement, all whilst trying to be as authentic as possible. Authentic as possible while engaging with a media that does not necessarily allow you to be fully authentic? Potentially considering that it is a neocolonial structure that is not necessarily purposed for just personal use but rather also capitalistic purposes.

Notably, Bardot's relationship with social media includes the integration of personal and professional identities on their profiles. Bardot discusses how there are other filmmakers who may opt for separate accounts to be able to promote specific creative outputs, such as films. This means that Bardot is specifically choosing to intertwine their personal and professional personas to be able to align to their own decision of trying to be as authentic and transparent as they can be. In essence, this should allow for Bardot to be able to allow their followers to get a view into not only

their creative outputs and its accomplishments, but also hints of what Bardot's personal and creative process is.

This intertwining allows people, such as myself, to have a glimpse into Bardot's work beyond the accolades that can be found online. However, that does not necessarily mean that their followers are really seeing the whole picture of Bardot's creative process. Namely, is it really possible to see anyone's full creative process online? But beyond whether or not we can see their process, is their process going unaffected by also sharing online consistently? That speaks on Bardot's specific approach that discusses the importance of balance in being able to navigate both the pressure that exists with needing to be online and sharing regarding the final creative outputs, but also being intentional in protecting the creative process that they have. Although Bardot understands the importance that being online means for them to be able to promote their work, they also discuss the need for them to limit their time online and to be able to maintain their offline moments for themselves. These offline moments help Bardot to be able to preserve their creative process needed for inspiration and reflection, which is a deliberate choice to be able to manage the first aspect of the Creativity Crisis, which is the time spent online. Through this, Bardot is committed to preserving their artistic integrity and make an effort to be conscious of not overexposing themselves to online content.

Considering Bardot's relationship with social media, it can reflect how nuanced its role can be by providing both the ability to be a promotional tool, community build, share creative outputs, and share behind-the-scenes insights with their followers. This however, comes at the expense of needing to spend a certain amount of time online cultivating those things. Which of course is in addition to Bardot's personal use of social media. This includes their scrolling time, their time spent watching educational or fun videos on youtube, and their time reading reviews on LetterBoxed, a social platform for where movie lovers can share their taste and reviews on films. Considering the pressure to maintain a consistent online presence and be able to promote accordingly, it can conflict with Bardot's own personal needs for privacy and for their creative process to not be affected. Bardot makes it very clear that this boundary is something that they have set for themselves. Namely, that they take their time online that is for professional matters seriously, but also that they make sure that their personal time online is also met with a certain level of

seriousness too. By setting these boundaries, restricting their time online, and prioritizing offline experiences, Bardot points to the delicate relationship that exists between the time spent online and the ability to maintain a creative process, which is in essence the self-expression required to make their creative outputs of films.

In general, Bardot's journey offers insights that point to the complexities that come with having to navigate a digital presence as a filmmaker for today's media landscape. However, they embrace and prioritize being as authentic, balanced, and intentional as they can. With Bardot leaning more into the features of the platform for the ability to promote and build visibility through their platform. Bardot demonstrates how social media can be a powerful tool, but it must be harnessed with care to be able to ensure that the creative process does not get harmed along the way. With them making specific choices to limit their time online, by feeling confident that they also know themselves and their boundaries, they have managed to be able to intersect their creative outputs and process through their relationship with social media.

7 Case Study: Carvalho

Luiz Fernando Carvalho: A Filmmaker's Journey

Luiz Fernando Carvalho is one of Brazil's revered and innovative filmmakers, who is distinguished by his unique approach to storytelling and visual expression. He was born in 1960 in São Paulo, Brazil, and he began his career as a theater director. This was when his sensibilities and eye for visual aesthetics began to grow. Additionally, he had various roles that he was involved in when it came to filmmaking, meaning that his experience began to be vast in terms of what it meant to produce and create a film. When he started his transition into filmmaking Carvalho already had a depth of experience and knowledge, which then paired with his unique artistic vision that did end up redefining the boundaries of Brazilian cinema.

In terms of his work, Carvalho is characterized by his experimentation, deep thematic exploration, and cultural commentary. His films aim to blur the lines between reality and fantasy, in which he often finds inspiration as he says through other mediums of self-expression, such as literature. In an IFFR panel regarding book to film adaptations, he discusses his latest work "A Paixão Segundo a G.H." (The Passion According to G.H.), based on the original novel by Clarice Lispector. Carvalho challenges the notion of film adaptations. Specifically pointing out that the word 'adaptations' can in itself be limiting to the work that he has done. This is due to his hopes of blending realism, raw human emotion, and the collaboration and artistic cinematic experiences to create something visually stunning while at the same time intellectually interesting.

Another of Carvalho's most renowned films is "Lavoura Arcaica" (To the Left of the Father), which is based on the novel by Raduan Nassar. This film follows the story of a young man's struggle with his conservative family's expectations and his desire for freedom and self-discovery. Carvalho's stunning visual storytelling and thematic depth earned "Lavoura Arcaica" critical acclaim and international

recognition. Again, he questioned and challenged the idea of an “adaptation” and went on to create a film that was unique and positioned in its own category.

Another notable work by Carvalho is "Capitu". This is a miniseries adaptation of Machado de Assis' classic novel "Dom Casmurro." Carvalho's interpretation of the iconic Brazilian literary character delves into themes of jealousy, betrayal, and societal expectations, while also exploring the complexities of memory and perception. His work, although not socially motivated, appears to be focused on the creative innovation of seeing how far to push through typical definitions of what “adaptations” can be. These works all are notable but also are underlyed by his success as a GLOBO director as well.

As the director for GLOBO, Luiz Fernando Carvalho held a significant position within one of Brazil's largest and most influential media companies. In this role, he was responsible for overseeing various aspects of television production, including creative direction, content development, and project management. As such, he is not only just a filmmaker, a creative, but also a major figure in the industry in Brazil. Which leads to the question as to what his platforms are being able to be used for and what his intentions are with either being or not being present online.

Carvalho's Relationship with Social Media: Rejecting the Digital Landscape

Considering that his accolades are quite impressive, the acclaimed Brazilian filmmaker who stands as a figure in the realm of cinema in Brazil, has a relatively low profile online. This stands in line with his apparent opposition to being present on social media. This is unlike other filmmakers who still have profiles online, even if they are not that active, and promote their creative outputs through these platforms. However, Carvalho appears to not even have an Instagram account nor a Facebook. In essence it would appear his presence online is very private, which includes WhatsApp.

Similar to the other filmmakers mentioned in this research, Karen Suzane and Anderson Bardot, as up and coming filmmakers have lived through the age of changing and shifting popularity of social media and technology in the context of Brazil. Luiz Fernando Carvalho too has seen these shifts. However, while Suzane and Bardot were younger filmmakers who were in undergraduate universities when these platforms began to become more popular, Luiz Fernando Carvalho, an older and more established filmmaker, was already more into his career during these shifts. When initially asked regarding social media, he expressed his opinions clearly.

He disliked being online and rather seemed quite opposed to the idea of having to have an online presence. It seemed as though he hated it and despised it. Why is that? Was he still online in some way? After quick Instagram searches and trying to dig for his profile, it was apparent that he was not online. But yet at 63 years old, it didn't seem too odd. Particularly, what was the point of being online if you already have had the ability to grow your career offline and don't need the platform for showing your creative outputs? Besides showing your creative outputs, was there any need for Luiz Fernando Carvalho to be online? Possibly to connect with friends and family perhaps and stay in contact?

Carvalho's minimal social media presence was confirmed to be attributed to his focus and commitment to the craft of filmmaking and for wanting to be deeply focused on his creative process rather than the distractions of being online. It was clear that his intentional approach to not being online, such as Bardot, was also related to being able to protect their creative process and limiting their time online. Although it is socio-economic and culturally significant to be online, it is curious that Carvalho specifically chose to still not be online. Additionally, when analyzing the creative outputs that Carvalho creates it appears that his specific relationship with not being online can also be linked to his desire to push the boundaries of creative styles with an intense focus on process.

When discussing this during the interview, it did seem as though his motives were quite clear on the idea of maintaining a low profile but mainly on his creative process. However, while this would be in line with his perspectives on his creative process, it also hints at the privilege that comes with being able to reject social media and still maintain acclaim. Namely, is the ability to be offline and reject social media also part of his desire to have his creative process be solely his own? And is that desire really distinct and unique to him? Do most artists also want their creative processes to be private?

His choice to not spend time online makes reference to the first point of the 'Creativity Crisis' by Runco (2015), which focuses on the time that is spent online versus that of being able to actually do the creative work, such as filmmaking. Carvalho's creative process appears to be centered around not being online. Considering that his approach to filmmaking is very focused on attention to detail and in his interviews he discusses his dedication to artistic expression, integrity, and qualities that are not necessarily aligned with the superficial nature of social media.

This is echoed in his interviews regarding his creative process with his team, where he encourages how important it is to be disconnected from the world that you are within and be able to deeply focus on the craft of creating, specifically within the world that the film is in.

Moreover, Carvalho's desire to not be online does not necessarily only seem to be an intentional choice of ensuring that his creative process is maintained, but it also can relate to wanting to preserve the mystique around his creative outputs as well. In a time where most creative outputs of filmmakers and artists are more easily accessible online and shared quite often, Carvalho's selective use of these platforms can serve as a way to build exclusivity or potentially to make it appear as "above" the projects that are being shared online. By not necessarily allowing himself to enter into the pressure of being online constantly, which is the second point of the 'Creativity Crisis' by Runco, he also is able to avoid allowing his creative outputs to be a part of the pressure that comes with sharing online. In addition to not allowing them to be influenced by the pressure to create something in line with what may be considered interesting or special via social media. This allows Carvalho to then remain fully immersed in the creative process and similarly allow his creative outputs to not have to face the distractions of public scrutiny or expectation via social media.

While one perspective is as simple as that he may not want to be affected by the 'Creativity Crisis' through his minimal approach on mainstream social media channels, it is important to note the context of that. Specifically, throughout his journey of choosing to not be online and pursuing his career of filmmaking, he also did not feel the pressure to 'need' to be online as it was not as culturally important during the time that he was beginning to transition to filmmaking. He specifically states that on the contrary, social media sites appeared to be too fickle at that time and seemed quite underdeveloped. Combined with his perspective on social media not necessarily being in line with what he believed to be material and real, he decided to not be online. This is an important note, since this can now be looked at as some sort of privilege to not necessarily have had to have been 'online' to be able to make it to the global stage of cinema. Particularly, when we think about the context of who was in the global stage of cinema when Carvalho first began creating and the content of what he was creating.

Particularly focusing on his debut feature film, "Lavoura Arcaica" (To the Left of the Father), which was released in 2001. His film has gotten critical acclaim both

domestically and internationally for its poetic storytelling and evocative imagery. The film explores themes of familial bonds, tradition, and rebellion against societal norms, showcasing Carvalho's ability to infuse profound philosophical depth into his cinematic narratives. However, his work also does not have outstanding themes that focus on reshaping narratives or necessarily on large social issues but rather appear to be more focused on style. Throughout his interviews he does not necessarily place an emphasis on a social cause but rather more focuses on the creative process and style that he uses for his work. This is interesting to note as this, although not directly related, provides a context to understand how the relationships with social media relate also to the work that one does. So while his work is not necessarily socially driven, it is focused on creating a new style, which relates also to his social media relationship of trying to focus on this style.

His first feature film, released in 2001, was created, released and shared not throughout social media. During 2001, the social media platforms that are present today, as explained previously, were just at the starting point of gaining popularity. In terms of Carvalho's presence online, it was non-existent, yet his work was still able to gain popularity due to marketing that was not necessarily completed by him. This was mainly due as Carvalho points out to film festivals. These film festivals presented the main platform for a person's work to be able to get noticed from.

Considering Carvalho had gained some success during the release of his first feature film, Carvalho went on to create subsequent projects that continued to raise the bar for his own artistic vision and integrity. However, as mentioned, his decision to remain offline during his career, appears to have not been as simple as the rejection of social media, but rather the privilege to have also not have had to have been online. Although Carvalho sees it more as a choice. By choice, he describes that the virtual world did not and still does not align with his beliefs. Meaning that he prioritizes the "real world". Particularly, he notes that his method and creative process is integrated with his ability to be present in the "real world" rather than virtually. He values in person interactions, or as he refers to them, encounters, as they are what he feels is the essence of not only his work but his personal self. He describes that he could have also joined social media at the point that everyone else was joining, but for him, he did not and still does not feel as though it can represent him.

Being that he was able to become an established filmmaker before social media became a perceived cultural necessity for most filmmakers, it appears to be easier to understand why Carvalho chooses to not be online. Some filmmakers and artists today would love for the ability to not have to be online to promote their films and rather be offline. Specifically this idea of resisting this online world and just being within the “real world”. However, how “real” is this distinction when the online world also is now becoming more and more a part of our day to day world. This means that besides the virtual world being of course distinguishable because of a screen, can it really be distinguished from the impact it has on us? Namely, even if you are offline, there would still be an impact on how the online world impacts you. This can be seen in Carvalho’s work still making its way around the online streaming platforms even if he directly is not involved in sharing it. Therefore although it is not necessarily his “real world” to be virtually engaged, the online world is still directly related to his “real world”.

Carvalho’s Relationship with Social Media: Preserving Creative Processes

Carvalho reiterates the importance of preserving his creative process and that for him that means not being active online, only with private messages and intentional contact, which means his “team”, which includes a PR agent must be able to handle most of what is circulating about him online. This is important as having a PR agent can entail some kind of ability to be able to afford to not have to deal with all the intricacies of being his own brand manager. Which, as mentioned, also still means that his work would still be seen in the virtual world. However, he states that these choices of a PR agent and marketing come more from the distribution companies of his films rather than necessarily his own choice. This means that his team are able to determine the approach to be able to handle his presence online rather than necessarily relying on him to be able to get the details.

As such, Carvalho’s relationship to social media is able to maintain non-existent, preserving his creative process. However, his creative outputs on the other hand are still forced to circulate online. As stated this is not being done primarily by him but rather by people and agencies such as his PR agent and other social media platforms that include film festival accounts and cinema focused pages. This makes his approach quite different to social media as he is more focused on his creative process and the outputs themselves rather than necessarily the marketing that is entailed with his creative outputs. Although he may not be online, the

mentions of him and his work cause him to still have a presence online, even if indirectly.

Considering this, Carvalho represents the relationship with social media that is completely against being online. Meaning that Carvalho's boundary for their screen time and for what it means to be present on social media is strong due to the idea that their creative process puts a priority on being present in the moments that exist in person rather than online. He finds that the virtual world doesn't affect us in the same way that the real world does. Describing even the image of a computer and the screen to be off putting to him. This comes down even to the texture that a screen and image has, meaning that for him he doesn't want to watch YouTube videos and does not find the idea of being online to be interesting whatsoever.

When considering his creative outputs, this idea of the texture and the quality of image is something that he considers strongly with his relationship to social media. As in, he does not want to necessarily put his creative outputs or versions of it online if they are not able to maintain the quality in which they were meant to have. He compares this idea of seeing a plain image with no body and no texture online being almost equivalent to this idea of having friends and relationships online. He sees them as similarly dangerous as it makes it seem as though those relationships and images are able to be accessed virtually, when in reality, those images, similar to those relationships can be fabricated. Be that with a filter, it being interlinked with propaganda, or simply not having the whole context. This can be the same for an image as well as a relationship, as you may only have bits and pieces of an image or person when you consider how much they are able to truly "share" online. Be that an image that is out of context or with a person who only shows you the "happy" side of their life. This brings Carvalho back to the idea that being able to be in person and in the "real world" offers something that virtually is not possible.

That being real contact with others. This contact allows for there to be collective rituals, which for Carvalho is critical in the idea of making a film. However, Carvalho also discusses the idea of making a film with the use of technology and makes a clear distinction that he is not against the use of technology but rather finds that social media itself is causing the discouragement of real contact with others. Being as such, Carvalho also notes the democratization that social media has had in also being able to allow for access and production of content. However, that is dependent on how people use it. He explains that due to the institutions and

capitalist structures that exist around social media, he observes how difficult it must be able to be online and also maintain a creative process that is not filled with anxiety. This is reverberated with the framework that is being used to analyze this case study as it shows the neo-colonial processes that exist with social media. Additionally, the “creativity crisis” may be getting mitigated through a creatives’ limiting of time online as seen with Carvalho, however, that does not necessarily mean that they can fully escape it’s necessity in terms of socio-economic need.

He points out that even with his crew, he encourages them to put the phones away, to be in the present when working on a project together, to be able to be in a sacred world together. Realizing that this is difficult, Carvalho points back to the anxiety that exists with being online and the constant pressure that can exist with being connected. By trying to be in the present and be forced into entering a sacred world of working together, he encourages his crew to be able to step away from the anxiety that they may feel to be online and rather focus their energy on creating. This relates to him concluding that even though he is not online, Carvalho points out that if he did have accounts of social media, he would still make sure to not necessarily be “present”.

This idea of not being “present” in that world, especially considering that he has observed this behavior with the anxiousness that can come with being connected. Carvalho explains that this is not just virtually but also with the everyday world that one is within. He describes that being able to step away from your day to day, whether or not that is online or not, allows for the space to reflect and learn more regarding what you may be inspired from. That means that being able to “unplug”, be there from your phone or just your day to day life, can encourage a creative process to flourish.

Being as such, then why is it that social media seems to encourage people to be plugged in at all times, even in those moments where you could be “unplugged” and finding creative inspiration and expression? Does the idea of being “unplugged” really impact someone’s ability to create? Either way, the idea of being “unplugged” is in essence a boundary that a person would put up to ensure they are not present online or on their phones. Being as such, Carvalho shows the importance of boundaries when it comes to preserving his creative process.

In conclusion of this case study, Luiz Fernando Carvalho's lack of social media presence reflects his commitment to the craft of filmmaking and his desire to

preserve his creative process as well as outputs in an increasingly digitized world. Although that desire was able to be fueled due to the context in which social media did not necessarily define his career, he also makes it clear that he does not want anything to do with social media. He believes that what social media is doing is not good for artists and he has chosen to not be a part of the 'Creativity Crisis'. This of course comes with the knowledge that he has a certain amount of privilege to be able to make that decision, stand by it, and as some may say "escape" the trap of social media. Outside of detesting social media, it is clear that Carvalho's work has an impact on the landscape of contemporary cinema that is undeniable and still serve as an inspiration to aspiring filmmakers worldwide.

8 Case Study: Suzane

Karen Suzane: A Trailblazing Filmmaker's Journey

Our last filmmaker is Karen Suzane (she/her), who stands in a category where her cinematic artistry is blooming. Pairing her creative ingenuity with her technical background that has primarily focused on audio sound and production, Suzane has been able to captivate audiences worldwide with her unique storytelling and visually striking compositions. Considering her technical finesse and evocative storylines, Suzane's journey from independent cinema to the global stage shows the boundless possibilities that are yet to come, as she continues to direct and work on her first feature film.

Suzane's current rise to prominence in the film industry is backdropped by the shifting landscape of cinema in general. Being that traditional narratives are constantly being challenged and boundaries expanded, Suzane's work can reflect the commitment to explore deeper the complexities of not just the human condition, but specifically racial and gender traditional narratives. She explores these narratives that are nuanced and challenging such as identity, belonging, love, and loss. Suzane as a Black Brazilian woman, looks to center her identity and community within her films. By exploring these themes with sensitivity and poignance, she invites her viewers to engage with narratives that are beyond the expected.

This can be looked forward to in her first feature film, *Quatro Meninas*, which deals with slavery in Brazil in the 19th century. "The film centers on the meeting of four enslaved Black girls and their mistresses who together escape a boarding school in the hinterlands of Brazil. They shelter in an old farmhouse, where they explore their desires and individualities, developing new relationships and ways of living."⁴⁸ Director Suzane discusses that the project is a "celebration of love, friendship, hope, nature and connection" in an interview with the International Film

⁴⁸ "BOOSTNL Interview: Quatro Meninas." IFFR, July 9, 2023. <https://iffr.com/en/blog/boostnl-quatro-meninas>.

Festival of Rotterdam (IFFR). As mentioned, Suzane centers identity and under-represented communities in her work to “decide to tell a history they (Suzane) believe has been erased.”⁴⁹ “We don’t learn about history from a Black perspective; you don’t hear the voices of those who changed the country”⁵⁰, says Suzane. To highlight these voices, Suzane uses the medium of cinema, to make those voices heard and show their narratives on screen.

During Suzane’s formative years in film school, she was able to begin to create her artistic vision further. This included beginning to draw inspiration from a diverse variety of mediums, including literature and poetry. These various inspirations seem to have led the way to the defining features of Suzane’s cinema that push the boundaries of storytelling through multiple forms of self-expression. Or rather, as she explains, this interest in these various forms of self-expression further developed through her creation of films. As she continued to explore through her work, she began to find new passions of expression as well. Specifically, poetry. The inspiration of literature and poetry shines through Suzane’s work as either dialogue or cinematic shots. For example in her film, “A Mulher Que Eu Era” (The Woman I Was), which included an incredibly poetic scene. As such, Suzane, as a creative, can mix and bring forth her eclectic inspirations, which can include poetry to create nonlinear narratives and experimental cinematography, all while challenging audiences’ perception of what “should be ” on screen.

Suzane’s Relationship with Social Media: Journey Online

Outside, or in parallel to her artistic achievements, Suzane has also created a presence on social media platforms. While some directors may use social media as a promotional tool, others, including Suzane appear to not just approach it with this mentality. Rather, she also sees these platforms as an extension of her artistic vision. Suzane sees social media as an opportunity to connect further with her audiences. This idea is not necessarily new as many influencers speak on how they aim to be able to connect with their audiences further online and want to be as genuine as possible. This includes the ability to use the social media platforms as a form of extending their artistic vision for who they want to be perceived as and who they perceive themselves as. This echoes the approach that Bardot and Carvalho have in which their relationships online also reflect the creative outputs that they

⁴⁹ “BOOSTNL Interview: Quatro Meninas.” IFFR, July 9, 2023. <https://iffr.com/en/blog/boostnl-quatro-meninas>.

⁵⁰ “BOOSTNL Interview: Quatro Meninas.” IFFR, July 9, 2023. <https://iffr.com/en/blog/boostnl-quatro-meninas>.

have in terms of trying to connect and create either socially driven connection or stylistic differentiation. As with Suzane, they see it as a way to be as genuine as possible, which is also their aims within their creative outputs. Particularly in creating community and extending their vision of themselves and others.

Specifically on a personal level filmmakers like Suzane can share behind-the-scenes clips and also share regarding other creative processes she's involved in, such as her poetry. Suzane echoes this in an interview regarding her presence on social media, specifically how it can provide the ability to share with her audience in a way that's unique, distinct, and genuine. However, how did she come to the point of feeling this way regarding her presence online? Namely, how does her presence online translate beyond the opportunities that social media can bring for her career and sharing her creative process but rather her creativity and self-expression offline? As the interview continued, it was clear that the journey to arriving at the point in which social media feels productive in terms of her career and as an extension of her vision all the while not interfering with her creativity, was not linear. She too reiterated the idea that she ensured she was spending intentional time online in order to be able to protect her creative process as well.

The popularity of the social media platforms in Brazil is consistent with that of what Suzane also uses. Including the major shifts that occurred from Facebook to Instagram for example as well. When Suzane recalls her time at the Faculdade de Cinema in Rio de Janeiro being the starting point of when she began to be actively online, she mentions Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Given that during that time Suzane was in film school, where she began to engage more with social media, these platforms were already more prevalent. Suzane discussed that she maintained the strongest engagement with Facebook and YouTube during that time.

Talking through her journey during her time at university, she was beginning to not only learn more about cinema, which she loved but also find where she belonged in the industry. This led her to focus primarily on audio technical work, which appeared to be the niche that she could fit into in the industry. This meant getting involved in gigs where she was not directing but on sets and working on projects that gave her a first glimpse into what it meant to be within the film industry. This also meant learning outside of the classroom, which is where YouTube came in. Considering the importance that YouTube has in being able to not only share your work and videos but also in being able to be inspired, learn from, and connect with

work outside of what you would typically be exposed to in film school. As such, Suzane began a YouTube channel during this period to be able to start to begin to share her learnings.

Suzane's YouTube channel was filled with her creating and uploading videos of interviews and reviews, all within the realm of cinema. She would take inspiration from her coursework, her interests, being on set, and her desire to create, which were all then translated into videos. These videos were inspired by the likes of other YouTube creators who were actively uploading reviews, interesting critiques, and content that all revolved around cinema. The YouTubers that inspired Suzane included Lully de Verdade and Carol Moreira, who both had a large following online and were beginning to gain more traction during the time that Suzane was actively on YouTube.

The YouTube videos that Suzane uploaded, as she described, were inspired by these other YouTubers but also by her desire to share and learn more about the film industry. In her interview, she speaks about how during that time she would go to a set and work in one role but during her breaks, she would go around interviewing and filming her colleagues to learn more about their roles and be able to then upload these interviews to YouTube. These YouTube videos that she uploaded may all have had 300-500 views each, which was quite low if compared to the millions of views that some of the videos of her favorite YouTubers had. For Suzane, this comparison of her work with that of the other videos and their popularity ended up being one of the contributing factors to why her videos are no longer able to be accessed today. Even though she remembers one of her professors asking her about her YouTube channel and reiterating how it was beginning to make an impact, she decided to delete all her YouTube videos.

She recounts her decision to delete her YouTube channel and how she wishes that now she could go back and see all the videos she used to post. Although Suzane may want to go back and not delete all the content, rather allow it to be archived or let it live on the internet, she reflects that the choice to delete all her videos was a personal and necessary one at the time. Considering this, why would someone want to fully delete their social media account when they are potentially starting to gain traction, providing new content, and expressing themselves online?

Suzane's Relationship with Social Media: Break Of Social Media

Digging deeper into that moment of Suzane's life, she recalls the feeling of not wanting to get pigeonholed to being a "YouTuber" especially since her dream was in fact to be a director of cinema. During the period when Suzane was on YouTube, it was becoming more and more popular for vlogging and content creation to be more than just a hobby and potentially even defining. This concept has only grown since then and now "YouTubers", TikTok stars, and Instagram figures, all tend to be considered under the term of influencers.

Outside of not wanting to be pigeonholed as a "YouTuber", Karen mentions that another motivation for her deleting her content was the idea of comparing her videos and her works online to those that were more popular. This included the YouTubers that she looked up to. This comparison is not uncommon when thinking about social media and its connection with self-image, anxiety, and self-confidence. In a study that more focuses on anxiety, the results showed that "social comparison increased one's social anxiety. Social media users often compare themselves with others' appearance, ability, popularity, and social skills"⁵¹. Such comparisons trigger strong psychological responses, particularly when others selectively present more positive information⁵². These concerns are similar to what Suzane expresses when she discusses her motivations for deleting her YouTube content, but she also reveals that she deleted all her Instagram pictures as well.

The concerns that Suzane expressed revolved around the content's reach in terms of views and popularity, as well as the content itself. She discussed that she was comparing herself and putting pressure on herself to be able to create content at a level that would not only be more popular but also fit into the vision of what she wanted to be as a creator. She enjoyed creating these videos, however, she felt a fear of potentially saying the wrong thing or her content not aligning with her vision for herself and her career. Specifically when she would post, there would be this feeling of being "seen" and that this was a risk of showing yourself and in essence potentially being "exposed". This meant that she wanted to ensure that her social media presence was aligned with what she wanted the world to see her as. This also included making her content consistent in terms of what she posted on YouTube with what she posted on Instagram. Suzane describes that her pictures on Instagram appeared to her to be so distinct and different from what she was posting on

⁵¹ Feinstein B. A., Hershenberg R., Bhatia V., Latack J. A., Meuwly N., Davila J. (2013). Negative social comparison on Facebook and depressive symptoms: Rumination as a mechanism. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 2, 161–170.

⁵² Yang C., Robinson A. (2018). Not necessarily detrimental: Two social comparison orientations and their associations with social media use and college social adjustment. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 84, 49–57.

YouTube that it made her also choose to delete her pictures there as well. Although she too liked editing these pictures, she found the idea of being “seen” in these ways was not aligning anymore with her and she decided it wasn’t worth the risk of posting content unless it was aligned.

This sentiment that Suzane refers to has also been described in the literature as people “on social media, often selectively reveal themselves and construct their preferred identities or characteristics (e.g., emotions, personality traits, opinions)”⁵³ online. This reiterates the feelings that Suzane had during that time to want to construct her preferred identity at the time and not necessarily feel as though she was on the right track. When we discussed this time period in her life, she began to realize that a part of her wanting to delete this content may have also been from the very personal perspective of not necessarily feeling as though she was more focused on discussing film rather than necessarily doing the film. This meant that she felt that she needed to step away from her content creation to be able to reorient not only her online presence but also her day-to-day actions to be able to begin to focus on her own goals and creative processes for being a filmmaker. This points to Runco’s point in the Creativity Crisis regarding the external pressure to create and how this pressure also can potentially lead to discouragement to create in a way since of the comparison.

Considering that she wanted to focus more on her own goals and herself, Suzane specifically discussed that her self-image and her confidence were something that she wanted to work on outside of being online and actively posting content. That meant taking active steps towards being able to gain self-love and confidence outside of the likes and views that YouTube or Instagram may bring. Suzane discusses that she was already involved in therapy before deciding to take a break online, but she explains that therapy outside of being online made her realize more of how social media may be getting in the way of being able to construct her identity on and offline.

Therefore, to focus and take care of herself offline, her YouTube channel along with all her Instagram pictures were deleted. However, she did keep her Instagram account, Facebook, and WhatsApp. In addition to closing out her account and deleting these pictures, she also continued to take very specific and intentional actions to be able to gain the self-love she needed outside of being online including

⁵³ Vogel E. A., Rose J. P., Roberts L. R., Eckles K. (2014). Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 3, 206–222.

therapy. This did not mean that she necessarily was no longer online at all, but rather that she was no longer being active in the way that she was previously. This means that for her, a shift in how she interacted and her relationship with social media had to change to not only protect herself offline but also to continue to pursue her dreams within cinema. Just because she was not necessarily creating content for YouTube, did not mean that she was not watching content there. Suzane specifically mentions the importance that YouTube has on her being able to learn about various topics and follow themes that she may never have gained knowledge about if it weren't for a platform such as YouTube.

She mentions that she still kept up to date with some of her favorite YouTube accounts and others that continuously inspired her such as “Every Frame is a Painting” and “Nerd Wright”. Their videos led her to understand different themes within cinema and inspired her within her work. She felt similarly regarding other platforms, however, she noted that on YouTube it felt different than that of Instagram and Facebook since it almost feels like you could go to “YouTube school” and be able to learn about topics in depth.

It was however interesting that for Suzane although she found YouTube very helpful, she also wanted to change her relationship with it. But in reflection, she also states that now, she could see herself as not only one thing but back then it felt as though if she was considered a “YouTuber”, that was all that she could be. Now, she states that she feels as though she could be a director, a “YouTuber”, a writer, and an audio technician, among many other things. This intersection of realizing her potential as creative outside of being online has been reflected in her new approach to using social media now.

Suzane's Relationship with Social Media: Suzane 2.0

When Suzane decided to continue to be active online she decided to do so on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Although she did mention that she still would consider the idea of her getting back on YouTube in terms of time investment and costs she stated that she would have a certain vision for what her videos would need to be to feel proud to upload them. When she decided to go back online, she specifically noted that her relationship with being online shifted, including valuing it in the way that it was culturally important to be online. Which, goes back to the “creativity crisis” and how she also then aimed to mitigate it as well. Additionally, she felt as though throughout therapy she was able to come to the conclusions she

needed to be able to come to terms with herself offline before being back online. This also meant her focusing on her creative process offline to be able to continue to work towards her goal of directing her films.

Suzane described her “updated” relationship with social media, which I call for the matter of this research Suzane 2.0, that she is not 100% of the time creating content nor 100% of the time online. She specifically talks about how she shifted her moderation of being online and that rather than spending 4 - 6 hours online, she has tried to reduce the timing to 2 - 3 hours. She describes her approach, while at the same time mentioning that she specifically does intentional blocks to be able to not necessarily be given content that for her feels irrelevant and uninspirational. This includes her blocking posts or feeds that for example mention the Globo show, “Big Brother Brazil”. Although she aims to not see this content by specifically blocking out the words, she states that at times she still is being given this information based on her algorithm. This is important to her as then it makes her time online more intentional and will limit her from potentially seeing content that she finds irrelevant or unnecessary for her to see.

This for her reflects on the issues that social media can have in terms of trapping people from having confidence in things that may be a lie online. Which, to her, goes against the approach that she aims to have online. When discussing it, she states that now her time online has a lot to do with her also understanding who she is and how she can authentically show it. That is when she actively is sharing content, she rather have her posts reflect a real expression of herself and be able to “Traducir a vida e traer lo que e verdade/Translate life and bring what is the truth” to what people see in her profile. She discusses that this also is only possible as she continues to work on her self-confidence where she could begin to express herself more online. This included her focus on her craft and her creative process offline to be able to then feel as though she understood herself more to be able to share it via her social media platforms. Another part of being online is not only about being true to herself, but also about the fact that sharing her interests, her achievements, and her life online can also bring about opportunities for her work that she could not have imagined before. This is when Suzane speaks on the positives of what social media has done for her as a vehicle of branding.

These opportunities include connecting with other people within the film industry through social media which could never have been done before there were

these communities online. This included a group chat that Suzane was added to in WhatsApp that was being run by the directors of *Cidade De Deus* (City of Gods), one of the most globally renowned films from Brazil. This group chat allowed her to participate in a web series where she was able to learn more regarding various topics, as well as connect with other filmmakers. This group chat eventually resulted in her being able to connect with a filmmaker from online in person to assist with her short film.

These types of connections make Suzane smile in reflection of how wonderful and important they have been in not only formulating her career but also in expanding her horizons beyond what she thought was possible. She realizes that even if she was able to create all the films that she wanted and was able to reach a point of success in which she no longer may need to put herself out there for branding purposes, she would still want to be able to keep making content to share with her followers and friends that is still authentic to her. However, she also wouldn't mind having a team that would help her to create content so that she could ideally spend less time thinking of marketing and be able to focus on the part of her job that she loves the most, which brings us to her creative process.

Suzane's Relationship with Social Media: Creative Process Preservation

When asked how social media intersects with her creative process, she refers to her moderation and how she tries to be as intentional as possible online. Which, as mentioned above, means limiting content that may not make sense for her to view, ensuring that she is not overly spending time online, and trying to make her time online feel as genuine as possible by sharing what feels personal to her. She talks about the fact that even though she may be sharing online, that doesn't necessarily mean she is online, and when she is online she may feel inspired at times but she also views Instagram and these platforms as tools to be able to gain visibility and to try to help other people as well. Her creative process is not just filmmaking, but also writing, remaining inspired, being focused, and being her brand manager, among other things. Is it possible to see all these processes on her social media?

When she discusses this, she states that perhaps her "branding" online may not necessarily be seen as a "typical" film director. Although, from the outside it appeared to me that she did make it clear in her profile that she was a filmmaker. However, I could understand that she didn't only center her posts or information

online about her filmmaking and that is why to her it may seem atypical. When asked why her branding did not appear to be as clear about her being a director, she thought about how there may be pressure perhaps that comes with wanting to show the process most genuinely. Suzane questions if it is valid to show her creative process online and if she can have her content reflect the depth of it. Specifically, the depth of the creative process, which includes not only her processes but also it means the collective team that she works with. This may lead to exposure that is unwanted in terms of her colleagues and those whom she creatively works with. Considering this, she states that due to her intentional relationship with social media, she has been able to manage her time online to not interfere with her process as well as to protect the processes of those around her. This means that her creative process is being influenced by social media and that she specifically is taking moderation and precautions to prevent it from ruining her process. This comes from her awareness of how social media can impact her and her time specifically. This speaks to Runco's first point in terms of the Creativity Crisis and the time social media can take from one's creative process.

Now when considering her film output and her updated approach to social media, it reflects her belief in the power of community and dialogue in shaping the human experience, which is reflected in the work she produces. By actively engaging with her audience online, she fosters a sense of intimacy and connection that transcends the screen, transforming the act of watching one of her films into a shared journey of exploration and discovery. This can be sensed when taking a look at one of her recent Instagram videos which is her reciting one of her poems via a selfie video. When watching this Instagram video, we are seeing her show us a creative output that we can actively engage in as followers of her Instagram. As mentioned, her short film "A Mulher Que Eu Era", has that same poetic feeling. Without knowledge of her presence online, it may be clear that poetry was an influence on this film, however, when reviewing her presence online, it became clear how this powerful medium was also a passion of Suzane. When asked regarding this connection, Suzane mentions that through the film she was able to begin to discover her passion for poetry and began to feel more connected to writing. Sharing these outputs online began to feel simpler than sharing an entire short video that may take far longer to be able to share.

This spoke to the importance of the distinction between sharing the process versus that of the creative outputs that she works on. Specifically being able to exist as not only a director but also via other forms of self-expression. This went back to her ideal vision of being able to be her most genuine self online and when it comes to her creative outputs, beyond just films, it includes her poetry. However, that still does not necessarily mean we are seeing the process of her writing this poetry but rather the final output. This is an important distinction as Suzane mentions that she still wants to remain balanced by not being online too much to be able to manage her time in general and continue to be able to preserve her creative processes for her creative outputs. Which she still would like to share online.

With an intentional balance of Suzane's time online with that of her work, which is not just her directing a film but rather an entire creative process. That means that she can distinguish when her time online is being used to do branding work versus when she is personally going on to catch up with friends or be able to see the latest on the news of other filmmakers in the industry. Through her films, we see the inspirations that are transcending her profile and see the intersection between the themes that inspire her and also her creative works. Her creative outputs and her creative process are both impacted by social media, however, Suzane decides to be in control of what that means to her now. Which, I have noted, did not come linearly but rather as a journey of understanding herself, her needs, and her process offline first.

As explored in the case study of Suzane, it is clear that social media platforms have and continue to revolutionize the way that individuals not only interact with each other but also how they express themselves and their identities. Scholars and literature, as reviewed, have begun to focus more on social media's influence, particularly regarding self-image. Considering the impact that art, culture, and creativity can have on individuals, the idea of preserving the creative process and allowing for it to have the space to lead to creative outputs that not only impact people's lives but also have the power to change the way we think is important. Especially, when thinking about the context of what cinema can do in changing narratives. As seen in the case study of filmmaker Karen Suzane, this research explores the nuanced ways that social media has impacted her creative process and creative outputs by looking closely at her shifting and still changing relationship with social media.

9 Discussion

To effectively discuss all three case studies, it is essential to consider why these case studies delve deeply into the filmmakers' personal interactions with social media. Specifically how they all are mitigating the “creativity crisis” in their own specific ways with their relationships online. With the lens of the context of the case studies, although not reflective of all creatives or creative processes, allows for a discussion that can point to larger trends of how social media’s effects may be negative unless they are mitigated intentionally and with nuance. Being that this research has seen a common thread through the case studies of Brazilian filmmakers intentionally limiting their time online, protecting their offline creative processes, and the interconnection between their creative outputs and their relationships online.

This depth of analysis is driven by the decolonial framework being used. While there is a particular focus on the creative processes of these filmmakers, the outputs they create are equally relevant in this context. Additionally, by considering the evolving landscape of Brazilian social media over the last decade, I can analyze these case studies with the nuance that social media analysis, I argue, requires. However, gaps remain in this discussion, as it does not necessarily address issues such as race, gender, and socio-economic perspectives.

The case study of Anderson Bardot illustrates a strategic approach to being online, which includes promoting, engaging, and branding themselves. This might involve sharing snippets of their final creative products, such as Bardot’s film festival accolades, or parts of their creative process, such as a trip to another city for inspiration. Sharing both personal and professional content exemplifies the shifting role of digital platforms in shaping the filmmaking landscape and illustrates a filmmaker’s persona beyond the screen. Bardot’s approach focuses more on promotion, while Suzane’s appears more centered on sharing authentic

behind-the-scenes moments. However, the intersection of their online relationships primarily concerns how social media impacts their creative processes. Both set specific boundaries on content intake and online time, recognizing that excessive online engagement can be exhausting rather than beneficial.

Their intentional and specific approach to being online to preserve their creative processes highlights an interesting intersection in these case studies. It underscores the nuanced relationships between creativity and social media. Bardot and Suzane both harness the power of social media to amplify their voices and reshape narratives on and off the screen. They belong to a generation that has witnessed the evolution of social media and recognizes its significance as a cultural phenomenon. Their decision to be online and leverage such platforms also points to the question of those who choose to not be online.

What reasons might someone have for choosing to be offline? Are they non-adopters, or are they making a deliberate choice to remain offline? Just as Suzane and Bardot define their online boundaries, do others opt to stay completely offline due to these self-imposed boundaries? If so, are these individuals considered ghosts in the virtual world, or does their absence not matter if their work still finds an audience or platform outside the digital realm? These questions bring us to Luiz Fernando Carvalho, a filmmaker who has deliberately chosen not to have an online presence. Does Carvalho's ability to remain offline represent a deliberate choice, or is there some form of privilege associated with his ability to stay offline?

Luiz Fernando Carvalho's choice to abstain from social media demonstrates a commitment to preserving the creative process. His decision stems from a desire to prioritize in-person interactions and distance himself from online distractions. Given the growth of social media over Carvalho's career, this choice is highly intentional. He values human connection, authenticity, and creativity through in-person encounters, showing that creative processes and outputs can flourish outside the realm of social media. However, his path also reveals a distinct journey that thrived without social media being a seemingly "necessary" part of a career. Beginning his career without social media and then choosing to remain offline highlights the nuanced relationship with social media and its varying significance to different individuals.

A key aspect of Carvalho's decision to avoid social media is his commitment to his creative process. For him, filmmaking is a sacred endeavor that requires his

full attention. He views social media primarily as a distraction that detracts from the ability to connect and feel in person. By intentionally avoiding online time, Carvalho emphasizes his preference for tangible, real-world interactions that fuel his art. This decision, though aligned with the idea of a creativity crisis fueled by excessive online time, raises the question of whether the “real world” can truly be separated from the online world today. Are online influences inescapable even for those trying to avoid them?

Carvalho’s stance against social media and its potential impact on creativity and self-expression, especially concerning human connection, further explores this idea. He observes the younger generation’s dependence on online interactions and stresses the importance of in-person connections and setting boundaries to disconnect and nurture creativity.

An interesting aspect of Carvalho’s story is his ability to maintain a career in the arts without relying on social media. Traditional promotion and engagement avenues, such as film festivals and word of mouth, remain powerful tools. While these tools may not directly consider social media presence, they do not operate in isolation from it. Film festivals still leverage social platforms for promotion and engagement, and word-of-mouth promotion often occurs through social platforms like WhatsApp. These alternative promotion methods must be viewed within the broader context, particularly in Brazil, where social media engagement is high.

Considering this, social media is intertwined with metrics and algorithms and is closely linked to film promotion. However, Carvalho is clear that he does not want to be influenced by concerns over the popularity of his films. Instead, he focuses on his creative process and work. Like Bardot and Suzane, Carvalho represents a deliberate choice to prioritize creativity, authenticity, and human connection, regardless of online presence. For Carvalho, maintaining no social media presence is crucial to avoid any negative influence or pressure. His example can inspire other filmmakers as they navigate their own digital connections, even though the context in which Carvalho established himself was different. He represents a steadfast boundary he has not crossed, which, like Suzane and Bardot, is inspiring.

Comparing Bardot’s, Suzane’s, and Carvalho’s distinct experiences and relationships with social media reveals common themes in how social media impacts their creative processes and outputs. All three filmmakers deal with the pressures and anxieties of online visibility in different ways. Suzane’s journey illustrates the

challenges of comparison and self-doubt exacerbated by social media, leading her to protect her creative process by being offline. Bardot navigates social media with a focus on intentional sharing, while Carvalho rejects digital distractions to maintain artistic autonomy.

Although Suzane and Carvalho have both rejected social media at times—Suzane by deleting content and Carvalho by never engaging with it—both recognize the platforms' value for sharing their work. This aligns with Bardot's use of social media to promote creative outputs. However, all three emphasize preserving their creative processes to produce authentic and relevant work.

With that consideration, it shows that the social media world is filled with metrics and algorithms and is also interlinked closely with promotion of films but Carvalho makes it clear that he wants no part in thinking about whether or not his film outputs will be popular. Rather he is focused on his own process and his work in general. In essence, Carvalho, similar to that of Bardot & Suzane, represents a deliberate choice to prioritize creativity, authenticity and human connection irrespective of whether or not online. However, for Carvalho, his relationship with social media should remain where it is, which is none, in order to steer clear of any negative influence or pressure that may come from being present online. As filmmakers in general think about their own ideas of being digitally connected in today's day in age, Carvalho's example can serve as a beacon of inspiration, even if the context in which Carvalho established himself was different. He represents a deliberate choice of a boundary that he has not crossed and this, likewise to Suzane and Bardot is inspiring.

When comparing Bardot's, Suzane's and Carvalho's distinct experiences and relationships with social media, they do all appear to share common themes in how their relationships with social media impact their creative process and outputs. Namely, all three filmmakers are dealing with the pressures and anxieties that come with having online visibility, although it is in different ways. This reflects the need for the decolonial framework that considers their individual relationships to be able to capture these differences and nuances. While Suzane's journey shows the challenges that come with comparison and self-doubt that can be further triggered via social media and can lead to the need of protecting one's creative process by being offline, Bardot traverses through social media by focusing on the intentions of

what they want to share, meanwhile Carvalho specifically chooses to reject these digital distractions in order to have more artistic autonomy.

Although both Suzane and Carvalho have rejected social media at some point, Suzane by deleting her content, or Carvalho by continuing to not have social media accounts, both also are aware of how social media platforms serve a purpose for their creative outputs. Specifically to be able to share their work with a wider platform, even if they are not the ones actively sharing online. This is aligned with how Bardot uses social media, as they more explicitly use social media's platform to be able to promote their creative outputs. However, all three of them in order to create these creative outputs state how it is still important to them to be able to preserve the creative process that goes along with that creation.

Being so, all three case studies offer interesting unique perspectives on what the connection and relationships are between creativity and social media in filmmaking. Considering that each of these filmmakers navigates their relationship with being online distinctly and therefore are able to shed light on the different opportunities and challenges that come from using social media on their creative outputs and process.

This is further exemplified in Anderson Bardot's relationship with social media. Where he uses and embraces social media as a tool to promote their work while also being as authentic and balanced as they can be. They attempt to integrate both their professional and personal identities via their online platforms, which creates a deeper connection to being able to have insight into the creative outputs but also the person behind those outputs. They emphasize the importance of knowing themselves and being able to set the boundaries correctly, while also trying to make sure they can promote and display not only their work for themselves but for the communities they represent as well. Outside of that, the boundaries that Bardot sets display the nuance between social media and creativity, drawing back to the idea that the creative process must be preserved especially when there may be access to social media.

This is similar to Karen Suzane's journey, which illustrates the impact that social media can have on a creative process but also in its shaping. The opportunities and challenges of having a relationship with social media includes the grappling with pressure and comparison that can come from sharing creative outputs online. In addition, that also allowed Suzane to be able to focus on her creative

process outside of being present online. This creative process included not only her own goals for what she saw for herself as a filmmaker, but also being able to prioritize her own mental well-being. This combined with her desire to be as authentic as possible display yet again the nuance of the relationships that formulate with social media and their impact for both the creative outputs and processes.

All three of these case studies can point to the complexity that exists between social media's impact on creativity, namely displaying the importance that preserving a creative process can mean for their creative outputs. Each filmmaker approaches online engagement differently, however, they all still underscore the idea of remaining as authentic and intentional regarding their own creative processes. Particularly when it comes to how they are able to maintain their relationship or non-relationship with social media. Ultimately, all three of these case studies can serve as a reminder of how social media may provide tooling for creativity and displaying creative outputs, that does not necessarily mean that it will naturally aid in a creative process unless those people particularly put boundaries and intentions for their presence online.

Looking particularly at Suzane's creative process, Suzane's engagement with social media initially allowed her to spark her creativity by being able to begin to create with the purpose of sharing her passion for cinema and connecting with other similar-minded individuals. However, after she encountered pressure and comparison in specifically creating creative outputs for social media, it led to the deletion of her YouTube channel and her Instagram content. This action of deletion and removal of content is quite common since creators of creative content for social media can experience anxiety and self-doubt when they begin to compare to the perceived success of others who are online.

Additionally, Suzane's specific decision to prioritize her self-esteem offline sheds light on the psychological impact that social media can have on individuals' self-image. This self-image is a critical part of the creative process, as it can provide the confidence to feel as though you want to create and that what you create is also important and relevant. However, considering the constant exposure that can happen on social media with curated content and with metrics such as likes, views, etc, it makes it difficult to feel adequate and can instead hinder the creative process. Suzane's experience and journey can highlight the importance of being able to

establish boundaries and prioritize preserving the creative process to be able to have creative outputs that are fresh, relevant, and genuine.

Considering that Suzane may have had challenges with her relationship with social media earlier on when she decided to eventually re engage, she was much more intentional and moderated. This approach included limiting her time online, curating her content consumption, and focusing on sharing more authentic aspects of her life and creative process. Her shift in how she handled her relationship with social media can reflect the growing awareness that there is in balancing an online presence with that of your creative integrity and personal well-being.

Being deliberate with her time online, Suzane aligns with the first point in the 'Creativity Crisis' by Runco, since would like to ensure that her screen time is not causing any detrimental effect on her creativity. By reclaiming her control over her online content, interactions, and identity, Suzane demonstrated a proactive stance in trying to mitigate the negative impact that social media could have on her creative process.

Although Suzane's creative process is seen online at times with some behind-the-scenes stories via Instagram or a snippet of her writing, what most people tend to see is the creative outputs that Suzane can create. So while social media may pose challenges to the creative process, it also has served as a powerful platform for showcasing creative outputs. Suzane can leverage these platforms to be able to share her films, poetry, and other forms of expression with a far larger audience than imagined. By sharing online and creating a presence she can foster intimacy and connection with her audience beyond the screens, which enriches the viewing experiences of her films.

This connection to her audience also includes myself. Considering myself, who had found Suzane's filmmaking inspiring from afar, read her interviews with the IFFR, and then found her social media profile (Instagram), I was surprised at how much I found a connection between her filmmaking and her online presence. From her sharing additional short films that she had worked on, I was immediately captivated by how much I felt I "knew " Suzane just based on her online presence before even having one conversation. It is common to have "online friends' ' now and that was how the relationship with Suzane felt. We didn't necessarily know each other in person but her photos, her videos, and her stories online all felt as though they helped me understand the context of her creative outputs. As an audience

member, this is also something that marks me with curiosity to continue to engage and watch her creative outputs.

Moreover, Suzane's goal to be authentic and transparent online contributes to the cultivation of being able to continue to provide a platform for her creative outputs and to continue to collaborate within the film industry. Therefore, social media is also catalyzing, amplifying, and connecting Suzane's creative outputs along with the expansion of her professional network. Although appearing to be contradictory, social media illustrates through Suzane's journey the potential to enhance creative visibility and impact, while at the same time posing a challenge to protecting and preserving the creative process that must exist to have those creative outputs.

This case study of filmmaker Karen Suzane offers valuable insight into the multifaceted relationships that exist between social media and creativity. While social media can present opportunities and challenges for creators, Suzane's journey can show the importance of having intentional engagement and moderation for online use in order to preserve the creative process. Additionally, their journey points to the criticality for the creative process to exist and be able to thrive for there to be creative outputs that can then have a platform online. Without one there is not the ability to have the other, so if a filmmaker such as Karen Suzane moderates their time online and is conscious of the impact it can have on creativity and self-expression, then does that highlight the importance of limiting our time online to conserve our creativity?

If Suzane prioritized mental well-being, authenticity, and creative integrity in an effort to continue to navigate the digital landscape with resilience and purpose, this underscores the need for individuals, who may or may not consider themselves as creative, to assess the impact of social media on their creative process and outputs. In the hopes of striving for a balance between an online presence and offline well-being, Suzane's journey can serve as a reminder of the power that creativity can have in shaping human experiences, online and offline.

10 Conclusion

Throughout this research, it is evident that social media has become a global phenomenon, particularly in culturally vibrant countries like Brazil, where it serves as a powerful platform for creative individuals. Social media provides exposure and connection to diverse types of filmmaking and filmmakers, but also can impact the creative processes behind these outputs. Although there were only 3 case studies in this research, the way that the filmmakers have taken specific precautions to preserve their creative process amid the pervasive influence of social media can show the importance of mitigating the “creativity crisis”.

While literature suggests that social media can positively influence creativity, these case studies helped to reveal a more nuanced picture. Previous studies connecting creativity and social media left many opportunities to explore the potential interconnections, effects, and nuanced impacts of social media on creativity. This research aimed to fill those gaps. Particularly considering the use of the Brazilian context and filmmakers to bring a more specific view into how the “creativity crisis” is relevant and underway.

Considering that “social media platforms only offer loose approximations of specific human actions and relationships, such as interactions with friends.⁵⁴⁵⁵ When an interaction on social media is reduced to platform-specific actions such as a like or a favorite, it can obscure the richness and nuance—in short, the messiness—of the social experience”.⁵⁶ This also applies to filmmakers' creative processes and outputs, where online interactions cannot be reduced to mere online presence but must be understood in the context of their offline lives.

While these filmmakers may or may not use social media for various reasons, their approaches emphasize that creativity and the creative process are not

⁵⁴ Brabham DC (2015) Studying normal, everyday social media. *Social Media + Society*. Epub ahead of print 11 May.

⁵⁵ Marwick AE (2012) The public domain: social surveillance in everyday life. *Surveillance & Society* 9: 378–393.

⁵⁶ Hall, J. A. (2018). When is social media use social interaction? Defining mediated social interaction. *New Media & Society*, 20(1), 162-179. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816660782>

necessarily sparked by social media. For example, the filmmakers' work does not directly stem from social media, yet it would be inaccurate to claim there is no influence at all. All three filmmakers set specific and intentional boundaries to minimize their online time, underscoring the importance of nurturing their creative processes separately from their online activities.

This raises the question: why do creative individuals, who might benefit from social media, need strict boundaries and restrictions? This relates to the concept of the "creativity crisis", which discusses the impact of excessive online time and the pressures of being constantly connected. By creating these restrictions, creatives are mitigating the effects of the "creativity crisis". However, not all filmmakers can easily achieve this balance. Suzane's journey, for example, illustrates the trials and tribulations involved in finding that equilibrium. Each case study highlights the pressures of sharing online and the distinct methods that these creatives use to manage this.

These case studies suggest that addressing the Creativity Crisis requires a solution that considers individual relationships with social media to understand its holistic impact on creativity and self-expression.

In conclusion, combining these case studies with existing literature encourages intentional online engagement. Being mindful of how social media affects our offline creative processes is crucial. While social media platforms can enhance creative outputs, the pressure to share and participate online can also potentially hinder the creative process.

In conclusion, the case studies combined with the literature that is referred to, allow for us to move towards a time where we are intentional with how we spend our time online. Being mindful of how it does in fact and can impact our creative processes offline. Additionally, while these social media platforms can serve as tools for the creative outputs, the pressure that exists to share and be involved online can also potentially impact a creative process.

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