

Art, human rights activism and a pedagogy of sensibility: the São Paulo Human Rights Short Films Festival-*Entretodos*

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Keywords: art, film festival; pedagogy of sensibility; São Paulo, Brazil; human rights education; human rights culture

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Introduction

From the perspective of Douzinas and Nead (1999), there is a powerful relationship between law and art; it is the domain of justice, citizenship and art that is the context for this reflection. We examine the role that short films can play in human rights education (HRE) processes, from the perspective of a hands-on experience of coordinating four Human Rights Short Films Festivals *Entretodos* (the 6th to the 9th, from 2013 to 2016). These festivals were organized under the auspices of São Paulo's Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship (SMDHC, São Paulo, Brazil). This experience was unique, creative and innovative, both in terms of its impact and in what it achieved for the culture of human rights. It is now possible to take this experience to a theoretical-philosophical level, and consider the importance of uniting practice with theory, and experience with reflection.

Art is an important key in promoting citizenship and a culture of rights. We must always remind ourselves of what art, image and culture can mean to many fields of enquiry, such as communications, semiotics, education and, no less importantly, philosophy and law. We have chosen a comprehensive approach that recognizes this. This paper follows previous books and papers (Bittar, 2018, 2017a, 2017b, 2011), in which the strong link between art and HRE is established, and in which sensibility and sensory experience are compelling premises for the creation of dialogical venues in which to discuss such issues.

Methodology and aims

This article has two main parts. The first part presents concrete empirical experience from the implementation of public policy in the city of São Paulo, where the Human Rights Short Films Festival – *Entretodos* is held. The focus here is on the data and on discussing how the Festival was received by the public. The second part formulates and discusses the philosophical concepts of art and emancipation. The special contribution of French philosopher Jacques Rancière is considered, and there is a discussion of how the concept of a pedagogy of sensibility can be applied to HRE. The article's two main parts constitute an organic whole. They connect an empirical dimension and a theoretical dimension, and these two dimensions converge in supporting a human rights culture (HRC). Thus, the Festival is not only presented in terms of concrete data and practical results. It is subjected to an analysis which reinforces the philosophical concepts, and makes it possible to correlate them into categories. This enables us to create a pedagogy of sensibility for HRE.

The main aim of this article is to demonstrate that the language of short films can contain aesthetic elements that foster a public knowledge of human rights. This knowledge is stimulated by an aesthetic sensibility that opens up to the understandings, comprehension and conviviality that we associate with human rights. We see that art has formative power; it mobilises and is capable of fostering humanization. Humanization is no more than the self-knowledge of the human condition, and its issues and dilemmas. The social contexts that create violations of human rights require ongoing vigilance by citizens in order to protect and secure these rights. The language of short films can be a stimulus to creating an environment that develops and strengthens HRC. This article builds upon the belief that such cultural initiatives can help to secure HRC and to disseminate essential values of conviviality in plural and democratic societies.

In writing this article, the two roles that I have played have been very important. On the one hand, I am an associate professor of the Department of Philosophy and General Theory of Law of the Faculty of Law, at the University of São Paulo. I lecture on the philosophy of law, and research HRE. On the other hand, I was Human Rights Coordinator for São Paulo's Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship (City Hall of São Paulo, SMDHC, São Paulo, Brazil). I held this position from 2013 until 2016. Here I was able to devote myself to transforming philosophical ideas and academic concepts into a public policy of HRE. This work was especially aimed at the city's public school educators.

During this period (2013-2016), the data that I collected was part of the task of organizing municipal HRE policy. It was important to ensure transparency and make available all the content of the short films at the Human Rights Education Portal (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b). This created a HRE reference source for anyone interested in accessing and reproducing free materials in an educational format. So, with all this material at hand, there was much to gain from examining it, revisiting the short films no longer as a coordinator, but as an academic, in order to study the results, their effects on the population and to better understand the significance of the whole experience. This double involvement has enabled me to reflect upon this concrete experience and its social results.

Thus, this article considers theory before practice, and then, practice after theory, and finally, theory. In this way, a connection is made between both dimensions. Since it is impossible to analyse all of the short films from the four years of the festival (2013-2016), I decided to concentrate on the selected group of award-

winning films at the 6th, 7th and 8th Festivals and the various thematic films selected for the 10 *Entretodos* DVDs (City Hall of São Paulo, 2015b) that contain the best short films from 2013 to 2015. The work of analysing and articulating my reflections about the whole experience took three years. After my role of coordinator at the São Paulo City Hall, I worked as a researcher at the Council for National Research (CNPq, Brazil), where I focused on a research project entitled Justice, Citizenship and Art (CNPq, Brazil, 2017-2020).

The implementation of this municipal public policy provides the context for linking theory to a concrete realisation of human rights, citizenship, democracy and education. The concepts discussed in the first part of this article are the results of the theoretical academic research, while the data provided in the last part are extracted from the empirical execution of municipal public policy, implemented in the period 2013-2016, from data collected from the site of the City Hall of São Paulo (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b). The meeting of these two dimensions is not only a meeting between the theoretical and the practical, between theoretical research and empirical research. It is to be hoped that this article can contribute to stimulate further reflections that go beyond the specific documentation that is presented here.

Context and the Brazilian reality: the question of human rights in Brazil

The question of human rights continues to be a serious challenge for Brazil. Since the end of the civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985), Brazil has been progressively leaning towards the adoption of human rights, moving towards an alignment of internal legislation with the international demands of human rights. We see this especially in the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Constituição Federal, 1988). However, there is still a strong cultural resistance to human rights. In the current debate, for precisely this reason, there is a tense and problematic relation between the legal validity of human rights and the concrete lack of human rights.

In spite of democracy having been restored to the country, we have seen tensions over the last three decades. Instead of an expansion of a culture of human rights, facilitating human rights in daily life, we find opposing attitudes and mentalities. We see a predominance of social practices of authoritarianism and violence (Schwarcz, 2019), as well as disrespect and sub-citizenship (Souza, 2006). These tendencies deny social practices that recognise the dignity of the human being. Therefore, central values in a culture of human rights, such as freedom, diversity, equality and solidarity, are continually under attack. It is not unusual that social media, traditional media and political actors deny, disregard or show contempt for human rights. Thus, we see a dual social trend; on the one hand, human rights are valued but, on the other, they are denied. It is increasingly difficult to make any progress.

Brazil is 79th position in an ONU global ranking of human development (United Nations Development Programme, 2019); it has a Human Development Index of 0,761. It is a country marked by injustice, social-economic inequality and various forms of violence, where a denial of rights prevents the development of citizenship (Carvalho, 2016). The society still has traces of coloniality, and this marks the nature of social conviviality that is found in modern Brazil. The facts discussed in the previous paragraph suggest a lacuna with respect to the fulfilment of human rights. There is concrete and alarming data found in Brazilian government sources that can serve as examples of the situation of human rights in the country: i) the Channel of Complaints of Human Rights of the Brazilian Government has recorded,

in the last 15 years, a total of 1,133,000 complaints, with more than 1,700,000 victims, especially children, teenagers, the elderly and the disabled (National Human Rights Ombudsman, 2019); ii) the convergence of data allows us to conclude that LGBT phobia has dramatic and fatal consequences over the whole country, and Brazil is thought to have more transsexual and transvestite murders than any other country in the world (National Human Rights Report, 2018); iii) lethal violence dramatically affects the young black male population in the outskirts of Brazil's big urban centres (*Atlas da Violência*, 2019).

The rate of human rights violations is the highest in Latin America, and is well above the global average. In May 2017, this outrageous situation led to Brazil receiving 169 recommendations in the 2nd Cycle of the Universal Periodical Review 2012-2016 of the ONU. In May 2018, this was followed by the country receiving 246 new ONU recommendations. These addressed various dimensions and spheres of human rights (poverty; inequality; gender discrimination; ethnicity; religion; disability; sexual orientation; protection of children against violence, sexual exploitation, child labour; right to land; indigenous peoples and Quimboles; excessive use of force; torture; human rights defenders). Brazil has to react by the year 2021, by the end of the 3rd Cycle of the Universal Periodical Review 2017-2021 (Ministry of Human Rights, 2017).

The city of São Paulo: challenges for the development of a culture of human rights

São Paulo is Brazil's most populated city, with 11.8 million people. It is famous for the scale of its commercial and industrial activities, which produce immense wealth. For this reason, São Paulo experiences the contradictions of the Brazilian reality more intensely than other parts of the country. It is a city that has been a magnet for Brazil's diverse population. On a global scale, São Paulo is the 8th most populated city on the planet, and its metropolitan region has 21 million inhabitants, making it the world's 10th largest urban agglomeration. This means that the challenges for the development of a culture of human rights are huge.

A map of the city of São Paulo shows a division between the central region (Centre) and the outskirts (North, South, East, West). Poverty, social inequality, a lack of public services and violence increase the further one is from the central area. Parts of the city are very impressive – geospatially, economically and politically. However, other parts stand in stark contrast to this magnificence. What we see in São Paulo are the contradictions that we find, on a larger scale, in the country as a whole.

The city of São Paulo is a privileged stage for the birth and development of the Human Rights Short Films Festival – *Entretodos*. This festival has been held since 2007. The public policy of the City Hall of São Paulo, from 2013 until 2016, was to transform the Festival so that it could meet cultural, educational and democratic challenges (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b). It was in this context, in which the importance of dedicated, innovative and creative work was recognized, that public policies were implemented. These policies, which were aimed at the intersection between education and culture, are analysed later in the article. During the process of implementing these public policies, the importance of cinema in spreading and consolidating human rights values was recognised. Cinema has an ability to mobilise verbal and non-verbal signs. It is easily accepted by large audiences and it deals with topical human rights themes. It has a particular effect on audiences and is capable of sensitising a non-specialist public. And it can reach those who are most affected by

the denial of human rights in their daily lives, the individuals who live in the outskirts of large urban centres such as São Paulo. It was these people that were targeted in the 6th to the 9th *Entretodos* festivals.

Municipal public policies concerning human rights culture in the city of São Paulo

The development of public human rights policy in the city of São Paulo, between 2013 and 2016, involved various initiatives, and the Festival was one of them. The Festival has been held since 2007, and the period that I examine here is related to my personal experience, when I was HRE coordinator for the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship in the city of São Paulo (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b).

The whole experience showed there was a gap between theory and practice which, however, can be overcome if there is an effort to develop a coherent HRE public policy whose methods, techniques and objectives are directed to enhancing human rights, citizenship, democracy and education. Theory alone is insufficient, and practice alone cannot give us a basis for formulating good policies. From this perspective, the complementary way of linking these two dimensions was the turning point in realising the public policy aims. Because of this, the experience was both exciting and fulfilling. It implied the possibility of materialising HRE as systematic and consistent public policy in São Paulo, and this included the task of mobilising art as part of the work team's strategic plan. It is only over time that the processes of absorption, acceptance, legitimacy and audience involvement can be coordinated with the aims of the Festival.

The work of coordinating human rights for the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship (SMDHC, São Paulo, Brazil) revolves around a number of axes. These include educational, public safety and cultural ones. The Human Rights Short Films Festival relates primarily to the cultural axis and will, in time, involve the other axes by providing a medium for all actions involved in coordinating HRE. The entire pilot project of Human Rights Cinema has been, therefore, a process of further transforming the intertwined perspectives of the Festival in the city of São Paulo. This envisions making a greater impact in the municipal public arena, in which art is engaged in the process of developing citizenship.

Curiously, the Short Films Festival and the coordination of HRE came into existence independently of each another. The Festival was firstly held in 2007. It was the brainchild of Jorge Grinspum and Manuela Sobral, who were supported by the Municipal Human Rights Commission (CMDH). It was organized by the Foundation School of Sociology and Politics of São Paulo (FESPSP). On the other hand, the Municipal Human Rights Commission was established and structured by the Municipal Human Rights and Citizenship Department. This was a fortuitous, yet happy coincidence. After the establishment of the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship (SMDHC), a number of policies were reassessed, including the *Entretodos* Festival, which had been inherited from a former administration and was in a state of limbo in the SMDHC.

What is most interesting is that the *Entretodos* Festival was not initially aimed at educating the public, and had never had much of a focus on the municipal public schools. The festival has existed since 2007, and the task of converting it into a powerful instrument for the benefit of education in municipal public schools became a central aim from 2013 until 2016. In the beginning, filmmakers were only regarded as artists and there was no expectation that they should interact with educators,

while educators were seen only as education professionals, without artistic knowledge. The organisers of the Festival were in the artistic camp, and the functioning of educational institutions was not one of their concerns.

Therefore, after 2013 there was a huge amount of discussion and dialogue, during which the walls between art and education were broken down. This created a heritage where artists, filmmakers and educators entered a state of dialogue and reciprocal collaboration. And this tradition established itself, slowly, over the initial period of work, especially between 2013 and 2015.

This heritage was turned into a powerful artistic instrument. It was from this point that the true potential of the Festival began to be understood as legitimate public policy and incorporated into the daily life of the city of São Paulo, reaching a wider audience every year.

Depending on the formative and sensitizing power of their images, short films were shown in a number of contexts to a wide range of audiences to foster a cultural and dialogical venue for human rights. This was successfully mirrored in the Festival's profile, as is stated in the 6th Festival Catalogue:

... actions to form and foster the culture of respect for rights, promoting knowledge and the establishment of means of fighting violence and prejudice, discrimination, oppression, inequalities, intolerance, are all at the heart of initiatives. (City Hall of São Paulo, 2013, p. 13)

A new perspective came into play after the Festival came under the auspices of the coordination of HRE. There was now a focus on HRE content in all projects, which were now spread over the city. What was once restricted to the central area of the city now reached five regions (North, South, East, West and Centre). A much broader audience was engaged and there was a focus on education in schools, especially those located in the outskirts of the city in low-income areas. The public schools situated in these parts of the city are those that, generally, serve a significant part of the poorer population who live in areas affected by lower rates of development. For this reason, municipal public policy was designed to specifically reach this public, empowering them and sustaining public policies to confront the problem of violence. The films presented at the Festival were adopted for collective and collaborative projects and have contributed to public education, public safety and culture discourses.

Gradually, gaps were bridged: between the centre and the outskirts; between education and culture; between filmmakers and informal producers; between educators and students; and between short films and human rights. When the Festival started, it was an event for the centre of the city. It became converted into an event for all of São Paulo, from the centre to the outskirts (North, South, East, West and Centre).

Thus, the aesthetic experience associated with the short film, with its specific language and strong messages, was made available in screening venues across the city. From a single isolated human rights cultural project (Culture Hub), the Festival grew to become a systematic part of interdepartmental public policy on human rights, a policy that was important for the whole city of São Paulo. With this new self-awareness on the part of the coordination of HRE in its relationship with other Municipal Departments, and through the Festival Curatorship, the Festival began to take on new functions. It intersected with other projects and lines of action,

promoting numerous experiences throughout the city. These could be short films produced by students, award-winning reflections and practices of human rights education involving film, or autonomous and spontaneous local actions inspired by the power of culture.

The Human Rights Short Films Festival in the city of São Paulo

The main themes chosen each year, from 2013 to 2016, were primarily those most closely related to the real problems and challenges of human rights in São Paulo. All of the dimensions of human rights were elaborated on, discussed and transformed into artistic language. These included themes such as the elderly, migrants, the young, children and adolescents, the right to memory and truth, urban violence, LGBT, media and human rights, decent work, the right to the city, social participation, homelessness, alcohol and drugs. Material related to these topics was freely available at the Portal of Human Rights Education (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b). The broad nature of debates relating to human rights and the immense diversity of the population in a large city such as São Paulo, meant that many themes were addressed, and clear information and objectives were provided for all cultural events. In choosing and presenting the different themes, the profiles of the public, their local needs, and what they wanted to discuss were taken into consideration.

As part of the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights and Citizenship (SMDHC), as mentioned above, the Human Rights Education Coordinator was in charge of the *Entretodos* Short Films Festival. São Paulo's administration came under pressure to address a number of strategic goals, in particular Goal 63 ('Implementing Human Rights Education in the Municipal Education Network') and Goal 39 ('Training 6,000 Metropolitan Civil Guard Officers in Human Rights and 2,000 in Conflict Mediation'). Despite the administrative pressures and difficulties inherent in municipal management, the implementation strategy of HRE kept its transformative and socializing aspects, those that empower art as an additional strategy to achieve goals and to expand HRC. There were also varying degrees of outside support (Municipal Secretariat of Culture; Municipal Education Secretariat; SPCine). In each of the four Human Rights Short Film Festivals (2013-2016), artistic freedom and autonomy of curatorship were both respected. There was complete independence in the choice of themes, and these varied from year to year, to allow several central contemporary issues to be addressed (2013, Transformations; 2014, Cultural Citizenship; 2015, Educating the City; 2016, Refugees).

The Festival included a warm-up schedule, which was followed by the actual activities. The real merit of the Festival lies in its free format, which was present from the very beginning. There was considerable freedom when it came to film-making techniques, formats, and the professional/amateur backgrounds of those involved in the projects. All projects were assessed equally, regardless of equipment or the professional competence of casts and crews. The tendering process was open and accessible, and 450 independent projects were invited to apply and participate. The short films were recorded over a set period and pre-selected by the curators (Jorge Grinspum and Manuela Sobral) for subsequent discussion and approval by members of the Official Jury.

Each Festival had a well-qualified Official Jury composed of artists, educators, curators, activists, cultural managers and journalists, and these played a crucial role in publicizing, preparing and empowering the Festival. The Official Jury assisted in the selection, evaluation and judging of the aesthetic quality of the short films

submitted for the Competitive Exhibition. Once the short films were selected, there was a week of competitions in which the films were divided into categories. The 6th Festival had 39 short films and six thematic categories: Affections; Discoveries; My Place; The Other; Streets; For Children. The 7th Festival had 29 short films and five thematic categories: Urban Voices; Possibilities; Straight Up; Fires; Insider View. The 8th Festival had 47 short films and five thematic categories: Diversities; Distances; Looks; Dualities; Extremes.

The Festival succeeded in reaching out to all areas of the city despite the great distance between them, and preparatory activities were organized by the Human Rights Education Coordinator, generally in collaboration with local teams. These preparatory activities included communication and the installation of exhibition venues for public education, local actions to promote the Festival, and the technical infrastructure for the end-of-year screenings. Thus, each Festival was preceded by Human Rights Education Workshops, which brought educational and culture actors up to speed. The core guidelines concerning the Competitive Exhibition were disseminated and, together with the public authorities, meeting places for dialogue, conversation, exhibition and debates were arranged. In this way, exhibitors and educators received guidance about the meaning and practice of the sessions, and about human rights in general.

Prizes for the designated categories were awarded after all of the films had been screened, through a democratic voting process which also involved the audience, who thus also had a say in the final outcome of the Festival. All sessions were designed to be participatory, and the public was encouraged to engage in structured activities. The types of awards given varied from festival to festival, according to choices made, audience, theme and municipal policy guidelines. In the 6th Festival the following awards were given: Best Short Film - Audience Award, Best Short Film, Social Vision, Best Screenplay, Best Educational Short Film, Best Foreign Film. The 7th Festival had the following ones: Best Short Film - Audience Award, Best Short Film, Best Screenplay, Cultural Citizenship, Social Vision, Human Rights Education. The 8th Festival had these ones: Best National Short Film, Best Short Film - Audience Award, Best Foreign Short Film, Best Direction, Urban Education, Human Rights Education.

A wide range of formative activities concerning 'Audio-Visual Media and Human Rights' involved 2,062 people and an estimated public audience of 32,000. These were held in exhibition venues (cultural and educational) spread across the city, especially in its outskirts (6th Festival, December 9th - 13th, 2013 - 43 exhibition venues; 7th Festival, November 3rd - 7th, 2014 - 43 exhibition venues; 8th Festival, October 5th - 9th, 2015 - 78 exhibition venues; 9th Festival - 20 exhibition venues). Awards were given to a total of 22 film directors and cultural producers. Exhibitions were spread across different cultural arenas in a complex and extensive network of venues, reaching audiences of different age groups in schools, cultural and educational centres, open spaces, and street events (6th Festival, 201 exhibitions at cultural, educational and street venues; 7th Festival, 277 exhibitions at cultural, educational and street venues; 8th Festival, 291 exhibition sessions at cultural, educational and street venues). The positive impact of the Festival spread throughout São Paulo, reaching Target 63 of the coordination of HRE (100%) as well as Target 39 (exceeding stipulations - 167.2%).

The human rights themes are intrinsically diverse and an aesthetic patchwork of concrete, contemporary and polemic issues has emerged from the

different Festivals. Some of these deserve mention: (i) the situation of Bolivian immigrants in the centre of São Paulo (*100% Boliviano, Mano!*, 6th Festival, SP-Brazil, 2013, 13 min., directed by Alice Riffe & Luciano Onça); (ii) Reality and social exclusion in the outskirts of São Paulo (*Canto Periferia*, 6th Festival, SP-Brasil, 2013, 04:15min, directed by Rodrigo Souza & Rodrigo Ciríaco); (iii) male chauvinism (*Lady Burka*, 7th Festival, SP-Brazil, 2014, 8 min., directed by Pablo Morales de los Rios); (iv) the condition of convicts and rights violations inside prisons (*Colônia Penal*, 8th Festival, SP-Brazil, 2015, directed by Marco Escrivão); (v) the loss of land and the situation of indigenous populations in Brazil (*Terra sem Males*, 9th Festival, Italy, 2016, directed by Enrico Masi).

The above short films are those that created the most impact. They were chosen by both Official Juries and audiences, the opinions of everyone who watched them being democratically taken into account.

The outcomes of The Human Rights Short Films Festival: participation, democracy, citizenship and education

The Festival outcomes have been very positive. There were many achievements, during the period from 2013 to 2016: i) continuity and consolidation; ii) public loyalty; iii) internationalization; iv) expansion of the audience; v) incorporation of the public in the area of municipal public education; vi) the production of short films for students of municipal public school; vii) the creation of award categories aimed at educators and students; viii) the production of permanently archived pedagogical materials for public schools; ix) training of educators, leaders, students and public servants; x) the creation of dialogical environments, where there are debates and discussions that can spread human rights values.

These points are concrete indicators of the internal transformation of the Festival. Firstly, the Festival has changed; it now has cultural and educational perspectives, both of which attract people. Secondly, the Festival holds a different significance for the city of São Paulo; people no longer view it as something that just interests filmmakers and it is now more popular than it has ever been. Moreover, it is important to recognise that the Festival has fully taken on board the strategy by which public cultural and educational policies converge to foster a humanization of the real issues of citizenship in São Paulo, Brazil and the world. In addressing universal issues, the short films have broken down local, national and international barriers. All of this played a decisive part in the process whereby the city of São Paulo converted these initiatives into public law (Decree no. 57.503, 06.12.2016) at the end of the government period, in 2016 (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016c).

If we go one step further, it is possible to affirm that the city of São Paulo created a powerful tool for citizenship and for HRC. Each session of short films was followed by debates led by educators and mediators, and it became possible to consolidate a model of approximation between HRC and HRE. This has four fundamental pillars: i) participation; ii) democracy; iii) citizenship; iv) education. The gap between HRC and HRE was narrowed, through the compelling strategic and pedagogic power of the many short films and the formative processes that they generated.

Young viewers participated in film-related extracurricular activities in public schools, and there were informed discussions. These included: i) sessions with teachers, students and families in four Human Rights Educational Centres (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016a), where the content of the short films was discussed; ii) training

in Cultural Centres (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), where films that take up themes concerning young people were discussed, e.g. *No es mi problema* (César Fuenzalida Guzmán, Chile (2013, 17 min.); iii) teacher training in the Municipal School System (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), addressing the contents of the films and discussions with teachers and educational professionals using, for example, short films with themes concerning children and teenagers, such as *Número Zero* (Cláudia Nunes, Brasil, 2010, 22 min.); iv) training of officers of the Municipal Police (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), addressing the content of the short films and discussions with officers about protecting rather than violating human rights; v) the screening of Short Film Festivals in cinemas (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), addressing the content of the short films, in which there were discussions with cultural agents; vi) outdoor screenings in the Human Rights Festival to celebrate the Declaration of Universal Human Rights Day, on December 10th (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), where the films were discussed with the citizens of São Paulo.

Since this public policy only ran as long as the governmental period, the Human Rights Education Coordinator made sure that pedagogical material was produced that could be a permanent heritage. This was donated to libraries and to specialised centres, empowering all interested parties. Copies of the original films from the 1st to the 9th Festival, including all editions, were kept and catalogued. Such material is instrumental in formative processes (audio-visual - open, public and free) at the Human Rights Education Portal (City Hall of São Paulo, 2016b), and can be used by diverse audiences (teachers, public servants, police officers, film and cultural agents).

Aesthetics, citizenship and emancipation

When we leave the area of concrete and empirical research, and begin to reflect on and analyse this experience, certain philosophical concepts emerge. The categories utilised by French philosopher Jacques Rancière can be mobilised in support of this task. In the attempt to develop and spread a culture of human rights in an unfavourable socio-economic reality, the *Entretodos* Festival of Short Films in Human Rights was mobilised in order to develop citizenship through culture. The aim was to build bridges between culture, art, education and citizenship, and, in doing so, to contribute to extending the formative practices of schools and cultural spaces, returning them to emancipation, justice, citizenship and human rights.

This concern is centrally situated within the thinking of Jacques Rancière. The concepts elaborated by the French philosopher (Rancière, 2009b, p. 12), such as the concept of *régime esthétique* and the comprehension of art as materialisation of thought (Rancière, 2009b, pp. 12-13) have a practical power. There is a meeting between philosophical concepts and concrete experience. Concrete experience serves to confirm Rancière's philosophical notions.

Jacques Rancière writes that if art contains thought, it is a language, and if art is a form of thought, then aesthetics is the field dedicated to the understanding of the role of art (Rancière, 2009b) in the materialization of this thought (Rancière, 2009b). Art and aesthetics form their own dialogue with their own objectives and, through the medium of the short film, we clearly engage with a syncretic language that encompasses images, words and sound; three linguistic dimensions that join forces to awaken sensibility. Short films are crossroads of languages, within an artistic framework. They operate, through unpretentious cinematic approaches and

everyday narratives, to influence audiences through ephemerality of image, uniformity of form and close-to-home thematic approaches.

The malleable properties of art allow it to represent an infinite number of purposes. In the words of Jacques Rancière, the indeterminate character of art exempts it from adhering to any specific rules (Rancière, 2009a, p. 34), and allows a freedom that represents and reflects social drives for empowerment. It possesses, therefore, the power to express social aspirations, through conscious actions and effective language. It is where the mundane adopts new forms to mirror feelings, thoughts and pain; art becomes a critical emissary for the mission of culture. However, this may create expectations as to the revolutionary aspect of art, its discussion of social themes or its transformative social role. This goes along with demands that it should take on a political role, and as such, react to the anti-politics of institutionalized politics.

Art must, however, not just become an instrument for causes, issues or problems. It should simply exist as art, something more than just avant-garde, and it should be freed from the responsibility of promoting empowerment, since, in the history of art, the avant-garde is but one of many possible directions that art can take (Rancière, 2009a, p. 36). Nonetheless, art continues to be present in the avant-garde and in the anti-avant-garde. The departure from established aesthetics promoted by the avant-garde does not summarize what art can do in terms of empowerment. So, it is not on the forefront of a new artistic form that we will find the power of art, but in the fact that art embodies what Jacques Rancière calls the 'aesthetic regime' (*régime esthétique*) (Rancière, 2009a, p. 37).

The aesthetic philosophy of Jacques Rancière is centred on the idea of an 'aesthetic regime'. However, the term aesthetic is a controversial one within the theoretical spectrum of Rancière: it not only evokes discipline in respect of 'beautiful' but also a vocation to make a difference. Thus, aesthetics is to think of art as thought. This means that, in the universe of languages, art makes itself present in the concrete exercise of cinema, theatre, dance, folklore, painting, and opening spaces and new grooves in reality. Thus, aesthetics has the task of thinking about what the languages of art are capable of doing, to put in place a different universe than that of reality. For this reason, art is seen here as a way of suspending reality. Art becomes an open border to freedom, capable of transporting, creating and transforming, and, in this, it opens for new capabilities, abilities and mentalities.

In trying to grasp the role of art as a means for sharing our perceptions, we are invited to explore common ground. In fact, art is not considered in terms of its emancipatory capability but for its capability to promote sharing (*partage du sensible*), and thus art may or may not be associated with socially relevant processes, such as education and training for citizenship.

The freedom to explore form and content is where the strength of art lies, essentially in the way in which it is a language. Art inspires the search for options, creates new worlds within our world and makes all conversions possible. It can therefore be both political or apolitical. Art suggest new forms of being and of doing things, eliciting time, forms and visions that are influenced by symbolic elements within the entire universe. The work of art in itself is central and autonomous, due to the simple fact that it is art. It should not be judged for its social responsibilities or even for its critical capability.

This brings us to an important connection between the aesthetics of Jacques Rancière and Herbert Marcuse (Marcuse, 2007, p. 19). The studies of both

philosophers indicate that the exercise of art is more important than its social function, and it is for this reason that art should continue to be cultivated. The ideas of Rancière and of Marcuse, in this sense, point to the same meaning. Thus, if the efforts of the Frankfurt School - as a theoretical movement of contra-modernity, in the vision of Jacques Rancière (Rancière, 2009b) - already pointed to the processes of technification and desublimation (Benjamin, 1996) of the works of art in the modernity of the 'industrial culture', then the aesthetic philosophy takes on the task of recovering the place of thought of the works of art, through sensitisation and the creation of conditions for the freedom of meaning. Here, Rancière marks his distance from Marxist aesthetics (Vieillescazes, 2016).

However, at the core of all perception it is the sensorial experience that opens new possibilities, inspiring changes through art (whether political or not) (Rancière, 2011a, p. 44) and validating the rebellion of art against political and emancipatory agents, determined to convert it into a simple instrument for their agendas. Art can be manipulated for political ends and it can even become an instrument of propaganda for certain interests; it is for this reason that its autonomy should be guaranteed. Thus, art is not political in this sense.

In the exercise of its creative autonomy, through new expressions and practices, art inspires new ways of acting and behaving (Rancière, 2009a, p. 17). If citizenship can be developed through art, it will be through the integration of art as a form of life (Rancière, 2011a, p. 49). There is great promise in the understanding that the aesthetic regime is the regime of sensibility. Herein resides the revolutionary character of the work of art: the potential to share - the *partage du sensible*.

This revolutionary aspect of art is predominantly important when we realize that the public sphere in contemporary societies has become weaker and that a lack of understanding has become the political status quo (Rancière, 1996, p. 14). Empty words are directed to those most in need of meaningful ones and common symbols are abandoned by the wayside. Politics has come into the domain of the police (Rancière, 1996, p. 49) and democratic venues have come under the exclusive control of the state, to the detriment of its citizens.

The aesthetic experience within the Festival: the *partage du sensible* in a concrete situation

Given these theoretical-philosophical concepts, what one notices is that when art is mobilised, as in the Festival, it is possible to go in the opposite direction to where predominant social meanings usually take us.

If we take, for example, the short film *Terra sem Males* (9th Festival, Italy, 2016, directed by Enrico Masi), we notice that the film, although produced by an Italian director, portrays the situation of the fight of indigenous Brazilians for respect for their land, traditions and culture. When the film was shown, it was apparent that Brazilians living in a megalopolis like São Paulo could come closer to the 'distant reality' of the problems experienced by their own indigenous communities.

This example - taken from the set of screenings of the Festival - enables us to notice that film can make us see, feel and perceive. In this respect it validates the etymological message of the term aesthetics, as understood by Rancière. If we return to the etymological meaning of the word (*aisthēsis*, gr.), one notices that it refers to perceptible sensations (Santaella, 2007). However, in Rancière's meaning, it implies feeling-with-another; in other words, a way of sharing the experience of the sensible

(*partage du sensible*) (Rancière, 2011b). For Rancière, the aesthetic experience contains a constructive dimension of life in common.

From the perspective of the Festival, which emphasised discussions about human rights (of indigenous people, women, migrants, etc.), this implied - in the experience promoted by the City Hall of São Paulo - the valuable task of making the short films language-instruments for the construction of the common values that are essential for the construction of a common-citizenship. This is what art can do - it can help to transform environments.

Thus, in a city divided between the centre (Centre) and its outskirts (North, South, East, West), Rancière's notion of a *régime esthétique* helps us to register that the Festival brought about a common experience. In other words, the language of art united the people of São Paulo. They became aware of what linked them, through a dialogical, democratic, open and shared process. The struggle for human rights is a common struggle, something we learn to build and share in the spaces of urban life.

As a result, HRE in the City of São Paulo was developed further and more deeply. There was a merging of the horizons of art and education, of experience and reflection. This made possible the construction of a language of pedagogical possibilities, and established what will be analysed in the next two sections of this article - the pedagogy of sensibility.

The pedagogy of sensibility as a methodological pillar of Human Rights Education (HRE)

If we look beyond debates about the instrumental use of art, there is no doubt that art is employed as a learning tool by educators in their everyday practice. The vision that art, culture and education can and should walk hand-in-hand existed long before art was inserted into HRE. In Brazil (Barbosa, 2012; Benevides, 2015) and in the rest of the world (Congdon, 1993; Tibitts, 2002), many voices have fought for the notions of art-education and education for citizenship over the last two decades. Here, thus, the task is to unite these two notions, so as to strengthen HRE.

The use of film images can be a stimulus to HRE and the creation of HRC. This is especially the case in the socio-historical reality of Latin-America and particularly in Brazil, with its privation of rights, social exclusion, human rights violations, poverty and violence. The rate of human rights violations, presented in the second section of this article, clearly shows how serious the situation is in Brazil. For example, the short film *Canto Periferia* (6th Festival, SP-Brasil, 2013, 04:15min, directed by Rodrigo Souza & Rodrigo Ciríaco) denounces the violence and other problems that plague the outskirts of São Paulo. Cinematic images are powerful tools in the process of sensitizing, humanizing and creating respect for our fellow citizens.

Image is instrumental, therefore, in the teaching-learning dichotomy, in that it opens our eyes and stimulates feelings and thoughts. From the semiotic point of view, the language of art is capable of making us feel, and this is an important aspect of formative processes. Images act as motivational triggers and stimuli, in raising curiosity about themes, issues, dilemmas, concepts, visions, and everyday personal and social experiences.

Short films are powerful aids to teaching and learning and hence important in the fostering of HRE. There are a number of ways in which they can play a role: i) in bringing together abstract themes through concrete situations from everyday life, where the audience can relate to characters and actors; ii) in deconstructing human rights, by exposing their universality in the contexts of family life, the city, school

environments, etc.; ii.) in materializing images (sounds and words) and philosophical thoughts that narrow the gap from public-reader to public-spectator; iv) in making psycho-affective and logopathic presentations of human rights violations, and not only rational or intellectual ones that demand prerequisites not available to audiences; v) in disturbing profound convictions (Douzinas and Nead, 1999, p. 7) through strong images, and intensifying real-life actions and feelings (Cabrera, 2006, p. 28); vi) in providing a broad access, which avoids the technical language of rights or legal language, in order to foster rights and citizenship, regardless of age, social condition or education; vii) in giving the audience a chance to walk in someone else's shoes and to understand the diversity of typically human issues, problems, situations and dilemmas (Bittar, 2011, p. 135); viii) in creating a playful and dialogical mediation of human rights issues, one that can engage a very eclectic and diverse audience, regardless of level of education, age or any other factor.

The description above is analytical, and shows all of the potentialities of using short films in teaching-learning. One concrete example - taken from the Festival - can provide a clear illustration. The short film *Dia Sim, Dia Não*, directed by Eveline Costa (Brazil, 2008, 09 min.), had a deep and powerful effect on the audience. It was filmed very informally, with a simple mobile phone camera on a noisy street. It presents an everyday scene which could have passed unnoticed, but which is turned into an incredibly sensitive work of art. It portrays the life of a poor individual, living in the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, who survives by collecting tin cans that are resold for recycling. The film follows his journey from one side of the city to the other as he pushes a wooden cart, risking his life in the nervy traffic. At the end of the day he receives less than one dollar (\$1) to survive on, and he makes this money last in order to buy alcohol.

In only nine minutes, the film delivers a really dramatic narrative of the situation of a portion of the Brazilian population, who live in conditions of what the academic Jessé Souza refers to as sub-citizenship (Souza, 2006). This short film is one of the most powerful that has been shown at the Festival when it comes to depicting the challenges of democracy and development. It has both cultural and educational relevance. Such a film does not only make human rights issues more familiar; it also has the power to engage the audience.

Therefore, HRE, through the pedagogy of sensibility, has an interesting function. It is able to unite the horizons of art and education, justice and social peace, citizenship and human rights in order to promote respect for human dignity. In contemporary Brazil and in many other countries this task has a vital importance, especially when we see the weakening of social bonds, the growth of intolerance, the derision of discourses of human rights, political polarisation, and the substitution of politics by policing. HRE can achieve the goals and tasks set out in the National Plan of Human Rights Education of Brazil: the creation of spaces for dialogue; the formation of identities; the spread of knowledge; ludic connections; an awareness of social themes; and a mobilisation of linguistic and non-linguistic signs in transforming awareness (National Human Rights Education Commission, 2003).

The pedagogy of sensibility and humanization processes

After having examined the previous topics, it is now time to reflect on them, and to present the concept of the pedagogy of sensibility. The pedagogy of sensibility is constructed on the basis of artistic language, and mobilises aesthetic signs in order to enable the central values of HRC. Humanization is a result of the pedagogy of

sensibility; this is a form of socialization structured upon the basis of the *partage du sensible*, as proposed by Jacques Rancière. The pedagogy of sensibility can be seen, therefore, as the sensory methodology of HRE.

The real challenge of HRE seems to be that of translating the contents and values of human rights contained in the Universal Human Rights Declaration (UN, 1948) into social action, social practice and everyday interactions between citizens. This task of ‘translation’ can be accomplished through the plural, open, stimulating, fertile and sensory channels provided by the arts. There are various strategies for HRE, and merely teaching human rights legislation is not enough.

The arts enable citizens to communicate with each other intelligently, directly and broadly. It is here we find thought-provoking ways to promote justice, citizenship, equality, solidarity, tolerance, diversity and peace, and to powerfully denounce violence, corruption, injustice, poverty, oppression and sub-citizenship. Such mental emancipation is brought about by conscience rather than scholarship, and by sensitivity rather than reason.

The pedagogy of sensibility can be understood as a methodology for HRE. This means that one can use the sensibility of artistic language to facilitate the ability to transmit, communicate and conduct dialogues about human rights themes such as social injustice, poverty, inequality, violence, drugs, migrants, and refugees.

The language of art is used strategically in HRE in order to sensitize learners. The efficacy of this method is based on the notion that it is important to open the sensitive heart, in order that it may talk to the rational mind. Messages are clearer and more powerful if they are addressed to people’s feelings.

Conclusions

Art freely engages the senses. The language of art has both verbal and non-verbal signs and, for this reason, it is capable of fostering thought. There are complex patterns that link artistic experience with the pedagogy of sensibility and emancipation. Art cannot be held ransom by political agendas, though it intrinsically lives and breathes politics and promotes diversity. It is not the role of art to chart the course that emancipation should take; it will, however, provide a venue for emancipation for diverse audiences.

This became evident during the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Human Rights Short Films Festivals in the city of São Paulo, between 2013 and 2016. The power of the language of short films instigated discussions about HRE issues. The hands-on experience of structuring the Festival brought about synergistic moments, many of them unexpected. The network of venues, covering different areas of the city, transformed the Festival and established it as an organic part of São Paulo’s official calendar. The Festival changed, as art changed our lives and participants prepared, produced and developed their projects.

In this sense, art affected education, transforming it, as much as education affected and transformed art. This whole process has produced a HRE that is the result of sensibility, where Jacques Rancière’s *partage du sensible* has been realised in the implementation of municipal public policy. For the audiences of the Festival, art took a central place, prompting discussion, teaching and debate in public spaces, movie theatres and classrooms. Art broke down cultural and educational barriers and distances; there was a shared arena of possibilities, in which everyone could participate. The short films were powerful facilitators in this process.

This concrete experience shows that art has an enormous formative and disseminative power, especially when it comes to short films, whose fast messages and simple narrative structures can be used to explore human rights issues. In the wake of the festival human rights education policies have gradually taken root. Today, the São Paulo Festival is in its 13th year (2020). In this context, we may quote from the catalogue of the 8th Festival:

It is understood that Education and Culture transform the perspective of people and, therefore, they walk hand-in-hand within the sensitive and aesthetic process of spreading the aims of citizenship contained in the National Human Rights Education Plan (PNEDH) (City Hall of São Paulo, 2015a, p. 19).

This engagement with sensory forms brings about a greater sensitivity towards issues of human dignity, equality, diversity, justice and citizenship. The mission of HRE is continuous, permanent and global; it seeks to humanize, sensitize and emancipate. Its gradual progress towards consolidation, implementation and expansion is of the utmost importance for the construction of a society that is fairer, freer, and more solidaric, diverse and non-violent.

Our experience shows that short films can provide snappy dialogues with strong messages. Short films have the powerful capacity to use unpretentious cinematic approaches and everyday narratives to raise sensibility towards human rights issues. The causes of human rights are not identical with the causes of art, but when the two realities walk hand in hand, HRE can be improved.

To the extent that short films may act as the messenger, and may help in the process of socialization for citizenship, we are reminded of the reflections of Jacques Rancière (Rancière, 1996, 2009a, 2009b, 2011a, 2011b), when he says that politics opens for singular subjectivation of those who are victimized or excluded by inegalitarian social orders when they attempt to assert themselves as the equals of those with privilege and power.

We believe that the language of short films has the power to reach and move audiences. Individuals involved in the cinematic process - actors, artists and cinematographers - can express and expose suffering, injustice, violence and pain. The flashing projections and spectrum of images, seen in the darkness of movie theatres, can shed light on the worlds of real people and common, shared problems.

The law, with its abstract or technical discourses, often fails to transmit, spread and communicate human rights issues to the public. It may well be that the language of art is a better means of socialization. Art, according to Jacques Rancière (Rancière, 1996, 2009a, 2009b, 2011a, 2011b), has the power to create new realities, and these can help to bring about HRC.

When we consider the positive results, it can be seen that much more has been achieved than just successfully organising a festival or implementing local government policy. What has been constructed is a model of experience, one that has brought together art, education and culture. The Festival has become a powerful tool for improving HRE.

HRE is usually understood as a teaching-learning process that takes place in the classroom. However, when we see the results of the festival, it does not need to be confined within the walls of the school; the movie theatre can also be an education space. Cinematic images, sounds and meanings can facilitate discussions that are

usually held in the classroom and audio-visual language can help to bring about new understandings and interactions, especially for younger audiences.

Thus, the whole experience that has been discussed here shows that HRE can benefit if it exploits the power of this artistic language. It may be that this model of experience – there are no prerequisites for implementing it and it can be adopted in any country or context – has an enormous potential. This model can be used in many parts of the world and with many focus groups. The results from São Paulo indicate it is a tool that is easy to use in HRE. In this sense, it is a more complete pedagogical strategy than the one of just teaching pupils and students about human rights legislation.

We also believe that the results demonstrate that the concepts behind the practical activity were able to sustain a practice that is in perfect coherence with a main aim of HRE – the transformation of mentalities. The empirical experience not only consolidated the usefulness of the theoretical-philosophical concepts that provided a starting point for the structuring of construction of São Paulo's municipal public policy. We also see the effectiveness of a methodology of HRE – the pedagogy of sensibility – and its capability to bring about humanization. In this process, the power of a form (the language of art) cannot be distinguished from the power of content (human rights); there is a continuum between form and content, and this is of benefit to HRE.

On the basis of the language of art, practices of HRE were created that enabled the development of HRC. This empirical experience exemplifies how theoretical concepts may be applied to political action, and it should be made known, shared and reproduced. We see how art and politics can be linked in cultural and educational practices, and we see that there are measurable concrete effects. These processes involve effective pedagogical techniques that are beneficial to HRE.

Notes

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