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Broken bodies praise the indiscernible: deviant aesthetic experiences in contemporary audiovisual production

Corpos quebrados elogiam o indiscernível: experiências estéticas dissidentes no audiovisual contemporâneo

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ABSTRACT: *This article aims to examine a segment of contemporary queer audiovisual production in Brazil. In light of the growing plurality of queer works today, we question how they shape their narrative and aesthetic quality, as well as how their images and sounds engage with phenomena of contemporary capitalism, particularly those of a technological and aesthetic nature. Through the film analysis of two works by the collectives Anarca Filmes and Chorumex, we propose the "praise of the indiscernible" as a possible interpretative key for this audiovisual production.*

Keywords: *queer audiovisual*; *aesthetic experience*; *body*; *contemporary capitalism*.

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RESUMO: *Este artigo recorta e analisa parte da produção audiovisual queer contemporânea no Brasil. Ao observarmos a crescente pluralidade de obras queer nos dias de hoje, questionamos de que formas elas modulam sua narrativa e concepção estética. Também, como suas imagens e sons podem dialogar com fenômenos do capitalismo contemporâneo, especialmente de ordem tecnológica e estética. Por meio de análise fílmica de duas obras dos coletivos Anarca Filmes e Chorumex, enunciamos o "elogio ao indiscernível" como uma chave de leitura possível a esse audiovisual.*

Palavras-chave: *audiovisual queer; experiência estética; corpo; capitalismo contemporâneo.*

Introduction

What is a "broken body"? Can it, in its poorly arranged pieces, be intelligible? In this text, the "broken body" is a poetic, not a conceptual, figure. It is an expression that, subtly inspired by Guacira Lopes Louro's "strange body" (LOURO, 2004), encompasses both the bodies of dissident subjects and the audiovisual bodies animated by them. It is a poetic way of evoking a strange, dissident, queer body. More than LGBTQIAPN+ bodies per se, the "broken body" is one whose dissidences of gender, sexuality, performance, and ways of being generate discomfort to the so-called "normal ways," to the hegemonic heterosexual culture, and to contemporary capitalism. This refers to discomfort that is aestheticized in audiovisual works that do not care about being formally and aesthetically integral — works that are stylistically deconstructed, fragmented, sometimes even precarious, rudimentary, "badly made." These works and bodies that are of interest to us are discussed here in the articulations between communication and aesthetic experience, between aesthetics and politics.

This "broken body" is embodied in many ways in audiovisual media. Increasingly, LGBTQIAPN+ individuals are mobilizing narratives and aesthetic experiences through audiovisual technologies. Filmmakers, multi-artists and artistic production collectives are currently gathering around thinking about and forging new stylistics for images and sounds, in works that do not fear the rudimentary, but embrace it in their experimentation. It is this layer of dissent that we seek to observe here, to think about possible aesthetic-narrative procedures and keys to reading audiovisual productions, in their social, political and cultural context. In this endeavor, we propose to think about "communication, media and consumption" beyond the anesthetizing logic of the market. By considering such productions from the perspective of aesthetic experience and the "sharing of the sensitive" (RANCIÈRE, 2009), of the tension between affects and affectations, we are challenged to think about "communication without anesthesia" (BARROS, 2017).

Queer audiovisual not only seems quite aware of current phenomena of capitalism, but also seems to appropriate them and, through their interludes, stage images and sounds that pervert and play with these phenomena — and that, in doing so, rehearse new forms of sensitivity possible for the present time. It is an audiovisual that understands well that we live in an "aesthetic era" (SODRÉ, 2006), in which the productive logics of capitalism are remodeled by operations of an essentially aesthetic nature, with the purpose of observing and controlling the sensitivity of bodies to meet the current demands of the market and capital. In this context, sensitivity is the target of economic and political interest, and for this very reason, it is the target of a series of technologies that are integrated into the body, into people's sensitive apparatus. The semi-infinite array of images and sounds, audiovisual media, luminous screens and their endless consumer offerings laid out to exhaustion before our senses: all of this is present in the body. But how can the body appropriate and comment on these technologies? Provocations like this are what we observe in part of today's queer audiovisual production.

Many Brazilian queer artists seem aware of capitalism's interest in the body and sensitivity, and it is this awareness that they use when appropriating audiovisual technologies and lending them the dissidences of their own bodies. Works such as those by the collectives Anarca Filmes and Chorumex, both from Rio de Janeiro and founded in 2014, are good examples, and it is the works of both that we will use here. The two collectives mobilize diverse audiovisual experiments in different formats and screens, not limiting their circulation and exhibition to classic movie theaters, but taking part in the internet, thematic exhibitions and circuits organized by themselves, such as parties in LGBTQIAPN+ spaces, and political and artistic resistance. By observing aspects of the works and their dialogue with phenomena of contemporary capitalism, we raise the question: in what ways does this audiovisual comment on these phenomena through aesthetic means? How are their strangeness, dissidence, and "brokenness" constructed stylistically in the films?

This question is part of broader qualitative research (WLIAN, 2025) that analyzes how Brazilian queer films promote aesthetic experiences and affective regimes that comment on contemporary capitalism and propose "perversions" to it, as well as new sensibilities possible for being in today's world. In this small excerpt, however, we seek to make a brief analysis of two films — Usina-Desejo Contra a Indústria do Medo (2021), by the collective Anarca Filmes, and Os Anos 3000 Eram Feitos de Lixo (2016), by the collective Chorumex — to enunciate through it a possible key to reading the contemporary queer audiovisual, here named *praise for the indiscernible*. We also return to the problem addressed in the article *Narrativa cuir, experiência estética e política na luta pela paz: notas sobre o curta-film Negrum3* (BARROS; WLIAN, 2023).

Thus, we use a theoretical review to support the proposed reading key, as well as film analysis, with segmentation of specific scenes from each work. However, we refrain from an analysis displaced from traditions based on narratology and representation (AUMONT; MARIE, 2004) to prioritize an analysis that privileges body and affection (RAMALHO, 2012). Thus, we emphasize the dynamics and expressiveness of bodies: the bodies that perform on stage, the materialities in the frame and the images themselves, their framing, movement, cadence and the way in which one shot touches another, considering how these elements are points of corporeal encounter and produce affections.

The interest of this work is markedly aesthetic in thinking about contemporary phenomena through the lens of audiovisual, above all, in thinking about how they can be aesthetically present in audiovisual works. Aesthetics is understood here as going beyond the formal quality of images and sounds or the modulation of audiovisual language to constitute certain styles and sensory effects. Although this understanding is also present, we think of aesthetics through the lens of aisthesis, aesthesia, and sensitivity. In other words, aesthetics as a possibility of expressing sensibilities; or rather, as the constitution and opening

of sensitive universes, in which bodies can reverberate affections in one another. Therefore, in addition to thinking about how audiovisual works stylistically use their images and sounds — although this is something central — we also seek to think about how they can open bodies to a sensitive experience, in which dissident sensibilities can recognize themselves, engage, express themselves, and give vent to their ways of being and feeling.

The indiscernible

To better scrutinize the "broken body" and understand what its indiscernibility is about, it is worth briefly reviewing a metaphor that is quite appropriate for contemporary queer audiovisual media and is present in both films to be analyzed: the cyborg. The figure of the cyborg, enunciated by Donna Haraway (2009) and skillfully reinterpreted by Preciado (2017), is one of the greatest metaphors for capitalism, body, and technology of our times. The cyborg is a post-industrial body whose materiality goes beyond its limits, becomes contiguous with technologies, changes itself, and, in this way, conceives a new sensitive dimension. Evidently, this crossing of boundaries between body and technology has well-defined political bases and power strategies, especially when we think of a capitalism for which sensitivity is a target of interest. However, Preciado (2017) seeks to point out precisely ways to tarnish and pervert hegemonic power strategies. The queer author helps us to undertake a political investment in technology, instead of its mere "demonization". After all, the cyborg is not a closed mathematical and mechanical system, but rather "an open, biological and communicating system" (PRECIADO, 2017, p. 167). In this sense, the cyborg can help us to conspire a slight perversion of dominant strategies of power: bodies are regulated and produced by technology, but they are also capable of altering it; they also become embedded in it and transform it; they also make "rational" technology an embarrassment, a living flesh with its "excesses of intensity", its share of "indiscernibility".

Let us explore this body a little further, asking in what ways this "indiscernibility" can come to the surface, especially if this body is dissident — and it is at this point that we think of this body as a "broken body". In addition to being queer, the "broken body" is a body contiguous to technologies governed by capitalism, but whose functioning tests bugs in the "rules of use", constrains the dictates and parameters for which the body-technology connection was a priori established, like a "broken machine", a device that does not work well, that has breakdowns, unexpected functioning, but that, precisely in its inadequacy, produces something new. If technology was imposed on the body as a means of observing and manipulating its sensitivity, as a means of governing this body to make it perform better, the body can also lend its affects, its powers, its embarrassments — or "breaking" technology. It is this body that lends its embarrassments to technology and, in doing so, forges some lines of flight, which here we call "broken body". A body whose powers constrain, to some extent, the hegemonic power imposed on it and disobey it. This body is useless and makes no sense from a hegemonic point of view. It is embarrassing, noisy, and has no well-defined function. For the hegemonic, heterosexual culture, it is as if this body were missing things or as if its parts were not in the "correct" place. That is why it is, in some sense, indiscernible, and it is to its own indiscernibility that it pays tribute. It is from this that it uses to produce presence in the world.

When we use the term *indiscernible*, we infer that which is impossible to understand, to grasp, or that which, when seen, is understood in a confused, strange, fragmentary way, like broken bodies, barely intelligible to the understanding of what it means to be "normal" or "useful" to the current hegemonic economy. Indiscernible is also that which, to some extent, escapes language and discourse, and, precisely for this reason, perhaps can escape to the same extent from hegemonic control and utilitarian interests.

By proposing the *praise of the indiscernible* as a key to reading, we understand that the "indiscernible" can take on different features and

appearances from one audiovisual work to another. In other words, it can be translated, materialized and embodied in different ways, in terms of sensitivity and aesthetic experiences. What underpins and connects the praise of the indiscernible is its experimental character, the form and procedures of its narrative and image-sound constructions, which we will explain below.

Audiovisual is technology, and as such, it is something to be disputed. Being a sensitive technology, the best locus of dispute is in the field of sensitivity itself. If the hegemonic audiovisual project is to walk in a straight line towards a telos — to be widely understood and, thus, consumed —, queer audiovisual tries to disrupt this telos, shakes up the path, makes curves. It encourages us to make some deductions about these curves.

We believe that the praise for the indiscernible occurs through a double procedure of queer appropriation, of a narrative and aesthetic order. In short, it occurs through a speculative and exploratory mobilization between two aspects: *teleological deconstruction* of the narrative and vertiginous stylization of images and sounds. By teleological deconstruction, we infer a fragmentation and decomposition of narrative precepts of "cause and effect", which shake up the understanding and intelligible comprehension of the audiovisual narrative. By *vertiginous stylization of images and sounds*, we evoke an intense mobilization of visual, auditory, tactile, sensory properties, etc., in an underlined way, which pays more tribute to itself than to the narrative trigger, and which we read through the conceptual key of excess, especially an *excess of attractions* (BALTAR, 2012).

We engage with Teresa de Lauretis's (2011) understanding of what a *queer text* would be. The author tells us:

> For the purposes of this discussion, I can provisionally call queer the fictional text—whether literary or audiovisual—that not only works against narrativity, the generic pressure of all narrative toward closure and completeness of meaning, but also that which clearly disrupts the referentiality of language and the referentiality of images (DE LAURETIS, 2011, p. 244).

In other words, queer works would be those that operate against narrative or that, at least, disturb its completeness, its referentiality. To state this, certainly, is not to say that queer audiovisual works do without narratives, but that their narratives are constructed in other terms, in different ways and that they tend towards a fragmentation, a "shuffling" of "cause and effect". "It is not that there is no plot, because there is a narrative, but the syntactic and rhetorical density of the text, its unusual lexical choices and the kaleidoscopic narrative embedded in its elliptical narration frustrate both narrative and referential expectations" (DE LAURETIS, 2011, p. 244). According to De Lauretis (2011), a hegemonic text would fulfill some requirements for its readers and/or viewers, such as comprehensibility, referentiality and identification. Therefore, if the requirements expected in a work are, precisely, those governed by a thread that leads to the understanding of "what is happening in the story" or to "identification" with that story, it is these requirements that will be fragmented and shaken in a queer work, which generates "difficulty" in relation to the text.

Barbosa (2017) argues that the issue of "text difficulty" could also be attributed to other cinematographies, which are not exactly dissident. "Modern" or "avant-garde" cinemas would be examples of works that are also "difficult", with narratives that expand and challenge "cause and effect" and easy readability by their viewers. However, while these cinemas, elevated to a "cinema of life and truth" (BARBOSA, 2017, p. 113), point to a "future" or to an "essential humanist teleology" (BARBOSA, 2017, p. 114), queer works dispense with such teleological concerns, and do not even bother to reveal any "human essence" or "redemptive" futuristic proposal. The "difficulty" in queer works would be, roughly speaking, an exercise in exploring and taking advantage of the "difficulty" itself, of the noises and discomforts in their narratives, without great "heroic" commitments beyond disturbing and criticizing hegemonic demands. For this reason, precisely, queer works would be "affective excesses" (BARBOSA, 2017, p. 117).

Let us move from the narrative scope to the image-sound construction of works. If teleological deconstruction leads to the fragmentation of narrative precepts and to "difficulty" in works, excess does the same, but this time animated by a specific and highly stylized use of images and sounds. Already widely theorized in film and audiovisual studies, excess can be analyzed in many ways. Let's take the approach of Mariana Baltar (2012). When discussing the concept, Baltar (2012, p. 126) says that excess is "an aesthetic and political procedure of dialogic incorporation of stylistic marks". According to the author, excess would be a procedure that, through images and sounds, would invest a reiterative and saturating rhetoric in audiovisual narratives. It would not be enough to tell about a "cry", one would have to "show the tears". It would not be enough to tell about a "wound", one would have to "show the blood" in a privileged way. This "showing", this "privileged exhibition", not only comes in the wake of a growing desire to see in Western modernity but also incorporates values — moral and social — spearheaded by this modernity. In Baltar (2012), excess would be linked to a moralizing pedagogical project linked to the processes of modernity, a project that aimed to educate large social masses sensorially and sentimentally, through vision and spectacle. According to the author, we can infer that sensitive strategies, or even a special interest of capitalism in the sensitivity of bodies, is something that has been around for a long time and that is intensifying today. The modern project advances and takes on other contours in a contemporary "hypermodern" context.

However, still in the footsteps of Baltar (2012), we can perceive other modules of force, other possible modes of excess. Despite being part of a pedagogical procedure linked to a capitalist project, excess would not be merely reiterative or a pure expression of hegemonic values. The author presents us with at least two different procedures linked to excess: reiteration and saturation. In the first, a coherent excess is identified, in which symbols converge to the same field of meaning; in the second, a saturation of elements is

identified that are not necessarily related to each other and that do not point in the same direction or to the same cohesive meaning. Baltar (2012) argues that reiteration and saturation present distinct aesthetic behaviors, and proposes an *excess of attractions*, using the concept of *attraction* discussed at length by Tom Gunning (2006) and other theorists. Attraction is inspired, in the first instance, by Eisenstein's *montage of attractions*, fundamental to the theory of cinematic montage. "The term already had, in the writings of the Russian thinker, three correlated conceptions: the performance dimension, the association of ideas and the capacity to provoke agitation (excitement) in the spectator" (BALTAR, 2012, p. 136). It is from these conceptions of Gunning (2006) that Baltar (2012) develops his ideas about attraction, reflecting not only on the First Cinema — a historical landmark of a "cinema of attractions" — but also on the performance dimension and the production of "emotional shocks" in several other forms of cinema.

The excess of attractions would appear as "shock and saturation *inserts*" (BALTAR, 2012, p. 138). These inserts, these image-sound insertions in the middle of film works, would occur:

> 1. As an allusive incorporation of narrative traditions of the mode of excess (the genres of the body itself), with the aim of exacerbating the sensorial experience.
>
> 2. As an "ecstatic", saturated and dizzying insertion/association of images and sounds (BALTAR, 2012, p. 138).

Baltar (2012) calls the most "traditional" procedure of excess linked to a reiterative — and moralizing — character, namely *narrative excess*. The other procedure, which although different would not be totally opposite, and could even coexist with the first, would be the *excess of attractions*. The second, which interests us more now, would operate in two ways: direct allusion to privileged narratives of excess (narratives in which excess has historically been widely used); and saturated and dizzying insertion of images and sounds. In this way, the excess of

attractions has both an allusive aspect — to a "cinema of excess" — and a saturating and dizzying aspect.

Along with the teleological deconstruction explained above, we identify the excess of attractions as a praise of the indiscernible in contemporary queer audiovisual. It is, in fact, through the pair *teleological deconstruction* — based on the ideas of queer text in De Lauretis (2011) — and *excess of attractions* — as expressed by Mariana Baltar (2012) — that we base the praise of the indiscernible, conceived as an aesthetic-narrative procedure and a key to dissident readings of audiovisual production.

The praise of the indiscernible would not be an affect or aesthetic regime, but rather a propitiator of aesthetic regimes, which can vary from film to film. It would therefore be a procedure for modulating films, and this modulation is generally conscious on the part of those who make it. The affects that emerge from these modulations, these, yes, shape aesthetic regimes and can go beyond what was previously modulated. Perhaps it is precisely this "beyond" the "precious stone" that the praise of the indiscernible seeks to speculate. In this sense, such a procedure is expressed and can be identified through the way in which *queer text* and *excess*, especially *excess of attractions*, are articulated with each other. Such articulation can generate affects of discomfort, confusion, abjection — as in the films we analyze here —, among others. However, what connects them and makes such a procedure recognizable is the way in which the films "disrupt" their own teleological development so that such aesthetic regimes are expressed, so that the affects they mobilize emerge and engage us, so that images and sounds are displayed in their qualities, in their stylization, in their excess.

The greatest mark of praise for the indiscernible is non-teleology, the "disrupting" of the chain of cause and effect in favor of the affective intensity of images and sounds. Thus, it is perceived in a narrative that does not progress properly to its end, in events "disturbed" by excessive images and sounds — sometimes random —, which are not there to necessarily make the film "move forward". Films that praise the

indiscernible do without well-defined beginnings, middles and ends. As much as these are there, they are not exactly what matters most. What really matters is what the images and sounds, in their excess, can perform, as well as the feelings they can bring. It is an excess, as already said, often dizzying, that does not want to be edifying, "deep", revealing a "truth" beyond the images. On the contrary. It is an excess that tends to make the images shallow, superficial, ornamental, jocular. In short, an excess that plays in a "perverse" way with the images and sounds independently of the film's narrative. This non-teleology is expressed in a filmic cadence interspersed with moments of "suspension": the scene seems to stop in itself and in what it performs, with a fragile concern about its narrative role within the filmic fabric. Sometimes, there is no narrative role whatsoever. It is as if the film were suspended so that the frame could show us the performance of what is staged — and it is this performance that can bring about affection and that will tell us about the aesthetic regimes with which the film engages.

Films that praise the indiscernible are, in a certain way, fragmentary — and for this very reason, also broken bodies — in which the narrative always seems, on the one hand, to "lose something" to the affective power of the images and sounds in their excess; but, on the other hand, to "gain something" that escapes the narrative itself and lends it a strange and singular face. The main marks of this *non-teleology* are the effect of suspension — of "spins" in the present of the images —; a sense of narrative "dehierarchization," in which the film does not necessarily privilege the figure of a protagonist, but rather revels in and "takes time" with other characters, other bodies, other images and what they can show us; a sensory engagement that mobilizes in us affections that go beyond the film's narrative — perhaps even distancing us from it, in some way — but which are, independently, what will provide the tone of the film and its proposed aesthetic experience.

All these non-teleological marks "strange" the film, make it something "confusing", perhaps something "difficult to understand", something whose engagement is markedly different from what we are accustomed

to, due to a hegemonic way of narrating in cinema and audiovisual media. They are marks that seem to pay tribute, precisely, to that which cannot be understood, to that which escapes comprehension and, for this very reason, perhaps escapes the clutches of capitalism, even if temporarily. It is this exploratory and speculative invention, operationalized as an aesthetic-narrative procedure in audiovisual media, that we understand as *praise for the indiscernible*, which is "praise" in the sense of being a tribute: film works are not necessarily, in their entirety, indiscernible or unintelligible, impossible to understand and enjoy; however, they animate, play with, pay tribute to indiscernibility, to that which escapes language, to that which is confusing and difficult to explain, to that which cannot be easily grasped.

Anarchic cyborgs and odysseys

It could be said that both Anarca Filmes and Chorumex are cyborgs that build broken bodies. The works of both collectives, of a multimedia and frankly experimental nature, do not shy away from shattering any supposed integrity of the image-sound technologies they appropriate. By challenging hegemonic production schemes, they produce works with a very low budget, with rudimentary resources and, at the same time, quite creative. Works that modulate the theme of sexual and gender dissidence, among others, in their own formal conception, their use of images and sounds. Also challenging hegemonic distribution schemes and the frequent rejection in festivals, circuits and more "traditional" spaces, these works are shown in various windows: projections on walls, in warehouses and in party spaces, in addition to the many online windows. Founded by Amanda Seraphico, Clari Ribeiro, Lorran Dias and Mariana Cavalcanti, the Anarca Filmes collective excels in production and distribution in spaces of LGBTQIAPN+ political, cultural and aesthetic resistance. Having produced works since 2014 between Rio de Janeiro and Recife, the collective is launching its first interactive film in 2021, *Usina-Desejo Contra a Indústria do Medo*. This is a short film made especially for the

digital platform, and it is the collective's first film to allow audience interaction, allowing them to choose between three alternative endings.

There is much to be said about *Usina-Desejo*, in terms of *queer text*, *excess* and cyborg bodies, contiguous with technologies, especially in its three alternative endings. The film begins when the characters Bill (Lorre Motta) and Penelope (Amanda Seraphico) seek advice from Oracle (Max Wíllà Morais), a YouTuber tarot reader, a body that does not fit into "male" or "female" gender categories. Oracle then literally "pulls" the characters into the computer, into the "strange world of the internet," where they are trapped, where their biological flesh becomes part of the proliferating virtual images. Here, the cyborgs Bill and Penelope, bodies connected to audiovisual technology, are literally "pulled" and "swallowed" into it, turning their matter into pixels that mix with the many displayed on the screen that was previously in front of them. Then, behold, the viewers are invited by Oracle to interact, to choose between three possible endings for the narrative. Three screens are displayed for us to click on.

We click on a path and are led to yet another sea of convulsive and overlapping images. We see Bill and Penelope's heads amalgamated with other bodies. Their faces embody memes — they embody contemporary pop divas in fragments of music videos. Here we see a profusion of images reappropriated from the internet. An excess of attractions opens up as these images and sounds take over the fabric of the film without worrying about a clear teleological line, in a rather dizzying, saturated way, which revolves much more around the display of images and sounds themselves than a causal and explanatory relationship of this display. Here, the images and sounds enjoying their own appearance and cadence, in themselves, are more valuable than what will come later, in narrative terms. An electronic sound, similar to that of video games, accompanies the confusing digital adventure, which seems to end when Bill and Penelope cross another threshold, a "curtain of algorithms". When they pass through the portal, they fall into another reality. They believe they have returned to the "real world", but they realize that they have

returned as "miniatures" of themselves. "We look just like Chapolin, man!" The opening chords of the Mexican series' opening song play, and we see Bill and Penelope next to a "giant" cat. The image refers to the shrunken version of the character Chapolin in the television series. Funk chords begin to play, revealing a remix of the series' song by MC Drika and MC Maycão: Chapolin Corobaile. The film ends.

We click on another path, and another cyborg experience begins. We enter a new scene, dark, reddish, with localized lights, which reminds us of a film studio. Ring light reflectors and tripods are arranged in the space. A film projection takes place on a wall. Bill and Penelope enter the frame. There is a table with a large piece of meat next to what appears to be a cylinder of salt. On a tripod, a fixed cell phone reveals the image of an eye that seems to be spying on the action of the characters exploring the space. A high-pitched sound startles them, and Bill and Penelope run away. A man, played by Lorran Dias, enters the frame, walking around the table and heading towards the piece of meat and the cylinder of salt. He slowly mixes them together. The "salted meat" is placed on a tripod, between two reflectors. The man then begins to film and photograph that scene, which is projected on the wall in the background. A saturating profusion of images takes over the scene. The "spying eye" on the cell phone, on different scales. The flesh. The eye and the flesh. The eye, the flesh and its virtual images. Moving, dancing. The rings of light, the tripods, the salt thrown on the floor. Everything is in flux, with no specific order, no destination. The characters' voices verbalize clues about the excess of attractions we see in the scene, as well as comments on the aesthetic and technological capitalism in which those bodies and technologies are inserted: "terror and wonder, excess and delirium [...], prey and predators fighting over worlds [...], we distrust the light of the cave, the traps of visibility". Images are juxtaposed: the flesh and the image of the flesh; the image of the eye on the cell phone and the image of the cell phone with the image of the eye; the flesh between the light and the camera, the projected image of the face, in close-up. The film ends.

We click on the last path: A room. A cyborg body in the center, delicately sitting on the floor. A shape of digital spines hovers in the air. A computer is open on the floor. Wires and devices. A high sound frequency is tuned in by the body in the center, which looks at us while manipulating the equipment. Bill and Penelope enter the frame and observe the actions. Their bodies are affected by the sound frequencies, and they begin to dance, moving around the space to the rhythm of the noises produced. Penelope, with a fixed and apathetic tone of voice and expression, dances as she speaks, holding a cell phone at ear level. Bill emits a sound tuned to a device. Tense sounds, noises in increasing frequency. Penelope's shaking. Once again, an excess of attractions mediated by a dizzying display of images and sounds that tell us little or explain to us, and more sensitize us and hook us with their own qualities. The large black eyes of the cyborg body stare at us, and the film ends.

The three paths, which lead to different endings for the film, have many things in common, but perhaps the main one is: none of them lead to an ending. There is no narrative ending. Narrative expectation is broken, destroyed in favor of the power of the images and sounds themselves. Cause and effect are left aside in favor of the affections provided by the saturating and dizzying display of images and sounds. In other words, a queer text combined with an excess of attractions. Each alternative ending shows us a different adventure in an odyssey of frenetic images and sounds, with little or no causality, unconcerned with a coherent and teleological narrative line. Images and sounds whose power resides in themselves, in their affective power, in their ability to hook and provoke us. Here, we are not dealing with a narrative that seeks to make itself understood, that seeks to provide solutions to the problems proposed. The moment Bill and Penelope cross the portal and are pulled into virtual reality—which confirms and expands the cyborg status of their bodies—everything there becomes an image. The "zone of indiscernibility" created by the conjunction of the characters' bodies with the technology that swallowed them generates dizzying images that do not require established narrative stages, images that are not very legible

for hegemonic aesthetic-narrative standards and demands. It is a wave of images that generates a kind of "alternative plot" based on a certain refusal, including, of hegemonic demands. Nothing is there to be properly understood in a linear way and consumed, nor to point to a hopeful, redemptive future. The narratives are offered to the aesthetic perception of the spectator, without anesthesia, who can interpret and understand them in the light of their "cultural mediations" (MARTÍN-BARBERO, 1997; 2004). In its dizzying and non-teleological saturation of images and sounds, the film jokingly celebrates such images and sounds, in a superficial and, as André Antônio Barbosa (2017) would say, frivolous way. However, it is this very superficiality that becomes strange and noisy. The confusion mobilized by the images does not attempt to explain itself or have deep meanings. It is an image-sound confusion that is staged here to take advantage of itself, as well as how it uses audiovisual technology to "bug" it, to make it not "work properly". This is where its praise of the indiscernible lies. *Usina Desejo* is a "broken body" that uses its intense stylization — modulated by queer text and excess of attractions — to play with the contiguity of body and technology, to play with the cyborg status of contemporaneity and to rehearse on it strange sensibilities, somewhat unproductive to the interests of capitalism.

Something similar can be seen in the Chorumex short film. The Rio de Janeiro collective does not shy away from dissimulating its cyborg status, openly assumed in the bodies of the characters in the short film *Os Anos 3000 Eram Feitos de Lixo*, who present themselves as "cyborgs". The collective appropriates audiovisual technology in all its works to undertake an experimentation, just like the previous collective, "anarchic", anti-capitalist, post-humanist. It uses a dizzying excess of images and sounds that underpin its noisy and marginal status, which makes no effort to compromise with any hegemonic dictate whatsoever. On the contrary, it composes broken bodies that pride themselves on "functioning poorly", on consuming and regurgitating "trash", on "feeding on leftovers" and from there conceiving an "aesthetics of the rest", of the "disposable" and the "discarded", of what has been thrown away

by the hegemonic economy. If "leftovers" and "trash" are materials discarded by the dynamics of capitalism, they are also, in some way, indistinguishable from these dynamics — hence their preciosity. It is by collecting this preciosity that Chorumex modulates its images and sounds into saturated, "fried" and "scatological" parodies of contemporary times, a time that brings no teleological hopes and promises of the future except, as the title of their short film suggests, "trash".

The short film by Ana All, Cleyton Xavier and Clara Chroma presents a futuristic and parodic cyberpunk scenario, set in the 3000s, in a dystopian society governed by an anarcho-believer power. The city — which, in the past, was a beautiful and tropical Rio de Janeiro — is now a jungle of leftovers and trash. On the margins lived cyborgs, who made crime their way of life. The crime: producing and trafficking experimental works of art. For this reason, they are pursued by an undercover agent of the anarcho-believer government.

Once again, we see the modulation of a queer text, narratively fragmentary, and an excess of attractions that are based on the power of images and sounds. We can say that not only are the bodies of the characters in the scene cyborgs, but the film itself is. A human-machine contiguity full of embarrassment, which seems to pulse the "zone of indiscernibility" of this encounter to its ultimate degree.

The images play with technology by forging a futuristic technology that, in fact, makes direct reference to "retro" technologies: the video game of the 1980s, the VHS video, old computers. The film begins with the words, in an intertitle with digitized letters that refer to old video games: "after the swine apocalypse, robots and machines gain freedom from human slavery". These machines, the cyborgs that "free" themselves from hegemonic power — represented by humanity, which had built them for its own benefit and its whims —, stage an inversion of contemporary hegemonic technologies, which, in turn, also mobilize technology, but in a perverse way, with little logic and utility for hegemonic standards. Images and sounds are a kind of counter technology that animates a module of force contrary to hegemonic technologies.

A counter technology that aims to break the humanist and teleological character of audiovisual technology in favor of the power that the body — the bodies on stage and the filmic body itself — has to show us. Cyborgs are bodies dressed in various accessories and paraphernalia, with a plastic texture and cheap material, with a "trash look". In a post-apocalyptic society where everything is trash, where people hydrate themselves with sewage, trash becomes something of value, and is reappropriated by cyborg bodies, which immerse themselves in the remains of VHS tapes and feed on them.

The colors are saturated, and nothing in the scene seems to have a concrete materiality. Everything is digital images, which do not shy away from showing themselves as such. More than digital images, they are flawed images, which digitize, fragment, crack, and break. They are broken bodies. The bodies of the cyborgs, the "main characters," almost always framed in a medium shot, oscillate between the plastic texture of the trash that adorns them and the texture of the pixels that underlie their images. The criminal cyborgs traffic in amateur-experimental art, which, in its context, was something serious, a threat to the given hegemonic power. The short film certainly plays with its own status as an experimental amateur film, which appropriates contemporary hegemonic technologies, but which at the same time are a threat, because they distort them and make them something meaningless, something that goes against the interests of capital.

In the film, the cyborgs take care of all the stages of production of the art they create: production, distribution, and consumption. By openly mocking widely known production schemes in the audiovisual market, the short film twists them from the inside in a sequence of images that overlap in a saturated way, like attractions. In the consumption stage, experimental arts, like "drugs," are devoured by cyborgs. They put them in their mouths and eat them. In the dystopian future, trash is the greatest currency of exchange, and the cyborgs' pleasure is precisely to capture this trash, the remains of capital, and manipulate it in their own way, modulating their own images and sounds. This is what the film by the

Chorumex collective itself intends to do: to appropriate "remains" of the images produced by hegemonic media technologies and to fray them to the point of ignorance, unproductivity, and indiscernibility. The cyborgs find remnants of obsolete technologies in the trash on the streets, and with them they create their experimental art — which is, at the same time, their food and their weapon against the given hegemonic power. In a pixelated, cracked, evanescent, depthless and purely image-sound rhythm, the film continues in a profusion of fast, ultra-colorful and dizzying images, until its end.

The 3000s Were Made of Trash, as well as *Desire-Factor Against the Fear Industry*, are broken bodies that praise the indiscernible. Cyborgs that have bugs, are fragmentary and have no aesthetic-narrative integrity — and it is precisely their fragmentation that they use to communicate. They are works of visual and sound experimentation, of sensory investigation and speculation about the dissident bodies that are mobilized by them. His praise of the indiscernible, translated and embodied in image-sound constructions based on queer text (DE LAURETIS, 2011) and excess of attractions (BALTAR, 2012), is in fact a praise of the powers of what a body can do beyond what is contained and saved by the dictates of capitalism.

Non-ending considerations

The "broken body," the poetic figure that walks through this text, without anesthesia, is not afraid of its cracks. Instead, it leans into them to extract power from them, perhaps something new to be felt in today's times. The praise of the indiscernible is about exploring something that is, to some extent, incomprehensible, or even useless, from a hegemonic point of view. It is about twisting the limits of language, something that we believe we find in the speculative and experimental work of contemporary queer collectives, such as those analyzed here.

By enunciating the praise of the indiscernible as a key to reading queer audiovisual objects, we seek to demonstrate how part of the contemporary

audiovisual made by dissident subjects mobilizes images and sounds that, in addition to not paying tribute to the coherence required by a hegemonic narrative economy, play with sensibilities that can pervert and fray hegemonic interests.

If power in contemporary times is exercised over the body and sensitivity, it is on the body and sensitivity itself that queer audiovisual works will focus. If capitalism uses the contiguity of body and technology — the cyborg — to produce, manage, control and save, queer audiovisual works play at perverting this economy, they want to investigate what the body is capable of, what it can do that is embarrassing. It is embarrassment — and, perhaps, what is indiscernible about it — that can shake up something in today's hegemonic dictates. This is what we believe we find in the works, a kind of speculative essay that, in its fragmentary texture — its "broken body" —, stages frankly strange images and sounds, which do not lend themselves to hegemonic intelligibility. That is why these works praise the indiscernible, and it is in this that they seek new aesthetic possibilities.

Far from assuming a status that is traditionally understood as "political," queer audiovisuals recognize themselves as a product of capitalism, but a strange and perverse product, whose purpose is to hinder understanding and legibility for utilitarian interests, a product modulated so that it "doesn't work properly." Queer artistic works are not redemptive, they have no intention of being so, and they will clearly not overcome capitalism. However, they can use their strange and dissident fabric to stage commentary on it, to rehearse other sensibilities for the here and now.

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