

The background of the cover is composed of large, expressive, overlapping brushstrokes in various shades of teal and blue. A dark, textured square is positioned in the center-right area, overlapping the brushstrokes.

COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA

DEL ORIGEN DE LA MODERNIDAD A LA ERA DIGITAL

eug

The background is an abstract composition of swirling, layered brushstrokes in various shades of teal and dark blue. A prominent, dark, textured square, resembling a piece of fabric or a woven material, is positioned in the center-right area, overlapping the swirling patterns.

COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA

DEL ORIGEN DE LA MODERNIDAD A LA ERA DIGITAL

TOMO I

eug

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del origen de la modernidad
a la era digital

TOMO I

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(EDS.)

COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA

del origen de la modernidad a la era digital

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Architecture Film Festivals: Audiovisual Narratives, Protagonism and Activism in Contemporary Urban Space

Festivales de Cine de Arquitectura: narrativas audiovisuales, protagonismo y activismo en el espacio urbano contemporáneo

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Abstract

Este artículo discute el papel de los festivales de cine temáticos en el espacio urbano contemporáneo, centrándose en el Festival de Cine de Arquitectura-Cinema Urbana en Brasília, Brasil. Este festival muestra películas documentales, experimentales, animadas y de ficción con la arquitectura como protagonista. Explorando la intersección entre cine, espacio urbano y arquitectura, el festival promueve el diálogo interdisciplinario y la comprensión de las colecciones arquitectónicas. Los festivales temáticos también facilitan la restauración de películas y fomentan la participación de la comunidad a través de exhibiciones, talleres y debates. Estos eventos tienen un impacto más allá de la simple exhibición de películas, ya que promueven el activismo en favor de nuevas formas creativas, patrimonio y sostenibilidad. Al conectar a personas de diferentes regiones y países, los festivales temáticos amplían el conocimiento del cine en relación con otras artes visuales. En definitiva, estos festivales juegan un papel importante en la comunicación y movilización en el espacio urbano contemporáneo.

This paper examines the mobilization and communication processes shaped by thematic film festivals in contemporary urban spaces, with a focus on the Architecture Film Festival-Cinema Urbana in Brasília, Brazil. This festival showcases documentary, experimental, animated, and fiction films, placing architecture at the forefront. By exploring the intersection of cinema, urban space, and architecture, the festival fosters interdisciplinary dialogue and enhances understanding and appreciation of architectural collections. Thematic festivals also contribute to film restoration efforts and engage the community through exhibitions, workshops, and debates. These events go beyond film screenings, promoting activism in support of new creative approaches, heritage preservation, and sustainability. By connecting people from different regions and countries, thematic festivals broaden awareness of cinema's interface with other visual arts. Ultimately, these festivals play a significant role in mobilization and communication within contemporary urban spaces.

Keywords

Festivales de cine y arquitectura, arquitectura, cine, espacio urbano, Brasília
Architecture film festivals, architecture, cinema, urban spaces, Brasília

Introduction

The objective of this article is to examine the mobilization and communication processes employed by thematic film festivals in contemporary urban spaces. These festivals are characterized as temporary and situated pop-up interventions that showcase the use of participatory technologies to engage citizens in localized conversations. Furthermore, they serve as significant platforms for presenting audiovisual products and content related to urban environment and social issues, thereby contributing to the development of urban governance by providing citizens and local communities with a voice in the city-making process.

Film festivals not only act as catalysts for organizing, promoting, and activating culture but also facilitate meaningful interactions between communities and filmmakers. These festivals foster an engaged audience through exhibitions, workshops, courses, lectures, and post-screening debates, often resulting in the publication of reflections that perpetuate their impact. Miriam Alencar¹ underscores the significant role of thematic film festivals and exhibitions, including those centered on black cinema, environmental cinema, cinema and literature, cinema and music, and more. They play a crucial market role by facilitating the dissemination of audiovisual products to diverse audiences, creating opportunities for individuals from different regions and countries to connect, exchange ideas, and expand their knowledge. This hybrid approach offers unique possibilities for engaging with citizens through temporary situated experiences, and interventions that transform public spaces².

Since the 2000s, architecture and city culture have emerged as central themes in film festivals around the world. However, the desire to capture the essence of vibrant cities has been present since the very beginnings of cinema. As a result, cinema has had a profound impact on the urban landscape, not only through the construction of buildings for production and exhibition purposes but also through the development and dissemination of concepts and images of cities on a global scale³. According to Edgar Morin⁴, cinema, as an art form, offers viewers an immersive experience that bridges the gap between the body and consciousness, triggering both mimetic and transformative processes. Everyday events and the city itself have propelled the evolution of cinema, aiming to construct mental spaces capable of shaping our existence in the world and establishing connections between individual and collective experiences in physical or imagined realms.

¹ Miriam Alencar, *O Cinema Em Festivais e Os Caminhos Do Curta-Metragem No Brasil*, Cinebiblioteca Embrafilme (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Artenova, 1978), 5.

² Joel Fredericks et al., “Blending Pop-up Urbanism and Participatory Technologies: Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive City Making”, *City, Culture and Society* 12 (March 2018): 44–53, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2017.06.005>.

³ Liz Sandoval, “Brasília e Cinema: Paisagens Cinemáticas” (PhD Thesis, Universidade de Brasília, 2022).

⁴ Edgar Morin, *O cinema ou o homem imaginário: ensaio de antropologia* (Lisbon: Relógio d'Água, 1997), 120.

Authors such as Leo Charney and Vanessa Schwartz⁵ assert that the depiction of the city in cinema creates an atmosphere that is intricately intertwined with modern life. Early film productions and experiments, such as Lumière's *La Sortie des Usines Lumière* (1895) in which the camera traverses the cityscape of Lyon, or the short film *Regen* by Joris Ivens (1929), poetically capturing the changes in the urban landscape of Amsterdam through moving images of vehicles and bustling crowds, exemplify how the emergence and growth of cities captured the attention of filmmakers. Productions like *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927) by Walter Ruttmann further highlight the role of the city and architecture, not only as inspiration but also as the foundation and support for the emergence of cinema and the cinematic experience. Furthermore, within the realm of preservation, thematic film exhibitions and festivals play a crucial role in advocating for the significance of film collections and audiovisual memory, while also supporting film restoration efforts. In this realm, the communication of architectural concepts is intricately connected to the heritage discourse, encompassing the management of various aspects of architectural memory. This includes discussions on the role of architecture archives, foundations, and institutions in conveying architectural knowledge to the audience. The transformation of architecture and its production extends beyond design and construction, encompassing an expanded epistemological field. Both the physical structures and the urban landscape, along with other forms of archival media, serve as mechanisms for representing immaterial fields. Beatriz Colomina⁶ proposes considering architecture as a medium akin to design, photography, written texts, advertising, and cinema. Drawing on Colomina's perspective, the concept of archives within the field of architecture should be expanded.

This article analysis focuses specifically on the Architecture Film Festival-Cinema Urbana⁷, an annual event held in the capital of Brazil. Brasília, renowned for its modern urbanism and architecture, has become a prolific source of audiovisual material that explores the lived experience within this "experimental" urban environment. Since its inception in 2018, Cinema Urbana has organized an annual event that features a diverse array of documentary, experimental, animated, and fiction films, all centered around the theme of architecture and city. The festival's interdisciplinary approach to contemporary architecture and the

⁵ Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz, "Introdução", in *O Cinema e a Invenção Da Vida Moderna*, ed. Vanessa R. Schwartz, trans. Leo Charney (São Paulo: Cosac Naif, 2004).

⁶ Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1994).

⁷ Cinema Urbana receives an average of 200 film submissions for each edition of the festival, with approximately 35 films selected for programming. The event attracts an audience of around 1,000 people per year. During the two editions of the seminar, Cinema Urbana receives an average of 50 article submissions, with around 25 articles presented and subsequently published in a proceedings book. Each edition of the festival features at least four keynote speakers and invited filmmakers. The festival receives public funding amounting to 150,000 Brazilian reais (approximately 30,000 USD) to produce each edition. See: "Cinema Urbana", *Cinema Urbana*, n. d., www.cinemaurbana.com; Liz Sandoval, Carolina Pescatori, and Tania Montoro (eds.), *Cinema Urbana: Memórias em Construção* (Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 2020); Carolina Pescatori et al., "Editorial-Cinema Urbana: Sobrevivências Poéticas Na Arquitetura, Na Cidade e No Cinema", *Paranoá: Cadernos de Arquitetura e Urbanismo*, n.º 24 (March 14, 2020): i–vi, <https://doi.org/10.18830/jissn.1679-0944.n24.2019.01>.

city has attracted growing interest, recognizing the power of moving images as potent tools for fostering dialogue, understanding, and appreciation of architectural collections among the wider public.

By examining the dynamics of the festival this article seeks to elucidate the broader implications of thematic film festivals in fostering citizen engagement in contemporary cities. Therefore, this article explores the processes of raising awareness and imagination and its activist potential and protagonism, through a case study that focuses on three key elements: cinema, urban space, and architecture. The first section provides an overview of film festivals, highlighting their role as platforms for exhibition and their direct impact on public space related to the questions they raise for debate.

The second section presents a case study that examines the relationship between the city of Brasília, cinema, and the four editions of the Cinema Urbana Architecture Film Festival. This study aims to foster discussion rather than provide a conclusion. It argues for the city's prominence in cinema, the role of cinema in public spaces, and the significance of films and film festivals as protagonists, as they act as catalysts, provocateurs, and archivists of architectural and film history.

Architecture Film Festivals: audiovisual narratives on urban spaces

Ismail Xavier⁸, one of the most important theorists in Brazilian film studies, conceptualizes thematic film festivals as structured initiatives comprising exhibitions and screenings that promote audiovisual products, in various formats, genres, and mediums, as artistic manifestations within specific themes, adhering to a regular schedule. These events extend beyond the mere presentation and dissemination of films, deriving their significance from activism that fosters new creative approaches and engages in discussions on heritage, sustainability, citizenship, and other relevant topics.

In 2022 Cabral and Figueiredo⁹ held an exploratory research survey and compiled a comprehensive collection of architecture film festivals worldwide, with emphasis on the Architecture and Design Film Festival, which pioneered this festival format in North America in 2008. This festival, held in New York, had the primary objective of facilitating discussions on audiovisual productions by architects in architecture schools within the region. It provided platforms such as panels and conversation circles that focused specifically on architecture. By forging connections between architectural thinking and urban spaces, the festival engaged audiences through panel discussions that sparked fresh reflections on the topics addressed in each edition. The Architecture Film Festival Rotterdam (AFFR) deserves mention as one of the first festival in Europe to recognize the connections between architecture, urban development and city culture. The city of Rotterdam, as the host of the film festival, has a special relationship with architecture due to its role as a hub for

⁸ Ismail Xavier, *A Experiência Do Cinema: Antologia* (Rio de Janeiro: Edições Graal: Embrafilmes, 1983).

⁹ Barbara Cabral and Lorena Figueiredo, “Festivais de Cinema e Arquitetura: Micropolíticas de Uma Cartografia” (article, Seminário de Arquitetura e Cinema-Cinema Urbana, Brasília, August 2022), www.cinemaurbana.com.

architectural innovation and design. The initiative was formed in 2000, in preparation of the European Capital of Culture. Next to classic feature films as *The Fountainhead* (King Vidor, 1949) and *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982) or documentaries about architects as Louis Kahn or Frank Gehry, the festival screens films about the influence of media on the city, the depiction of cities in film and outstanding set design. Various European cities recognized the significance of this theme and introduced their own formats of architecture film festivals. In 2008, in Hungary, the Budapest Architecture Film established itself as an event that promotes tourism and curates reflections on the relationship between society and space.



Figure 1. ArqFilmFest, Architecture Film festival in Lastarria district (Santiago, Chile), 2015. Source: ArqFilmFest.

Since the emergence of ArqFilmFest in Chile in 2012, Latin American countries have experienced a significant cultural trend with the rise of architecture film festivals such as Cinetekton! in Mexico, Habitante in Ecuador, Ciudades Reveladas in Buenos Aires, and Fecciarq in Nicaragua, Archcine in Rio de Janeiro and Cinema Urbana in Brasília. These festivals actively incorporate contemporary thought and address issues related to local urban spaces in their events. In the Latin American context, the RIFCA collective was created –the Inter-American Network of Film and Architecture Festivals– consisting of representatives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Mexico. Motivated by exchanges and connections, the rhizomes of these festivals are based on creating content, activities, and research about the specificities of the Latin American urban space. The aim is to generate multiple perspectives with a global reach, promoting more equitable visibility and constructions of cities.

Often the parallel activities promoted by these festivals are related to contextual themes where the festival take place. In this sense, the connection with the city can occur both through the films, when there is an effort to establish a relationship with the immediate context, and through the parallel activities, which involve exploring the city or discussing it. As an example, the ArqFilmFest, held in Santiago, is incorporated into the city’s cultural landscape. All editions have been held in the same neighborhood, Lastarria, which is a cultural hub, housing theaters, cinemas, art galleries, museums, restaurants, and bars (fig. 1, fig. 2).



Figure 2. ArqFilmFest, Architecture Film festival in Lastarria district (Santiago, Chile), 2018. Source: ArqFilmFest.

These events serve as platforms for the active participation of numerous countries, unveiling new values, ideas, and cultures. By exploring the intersections between film and urban disciplines, connections among urban residents can be strengthened within public spaces. As Edgar Morin highlighted, cinema has the power to convey real and symbolic narratives, preserving memories, emotions, and the intricate relationship between the tangible and the imagined.

Brasília, architecture and film

The construction of Brasília attracted considerable attention from photographers and filmmakers, leading to a wide array of films capturing the city’s unique qualities, with more than 500 films registered and a strong fascination with its photogenic and cinematographic aspects¹⁰. Despite its relative youth, Brasília encounters challenges typical of contemporary cities and experiences ongoing transformation, reflecting the broader process of urbanization.

¹⁰ Liz Sandoval, “Brasília, Cinema e Modernidade: Percorrendo a Cidade Modernista” (Masters Thesis, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de Brasília, 2014).

Recognizing the significance of culture¹¹ is crucial for advancing urban planning and development, especially in Latin America, where the culture of informality is prevalent¹². Despite Brasília has been shaped by numerous regional, landscape, urban, and architectural plans, informality has always been ingrained in city's landscape and culture.

The Architecture Film Festival of Brasília-Cinema Urbana¹³ was established in 2018 with the aim of exploring and to discuss with the community about their perception of the city and its various structures, including social, cultural, and architectural aspects, using cinema as a medium. Through a carefully curated selection of films that are rarely seen in theaters and other festivals, the festival prompts reflection on citizenship, emphasizing active engagement, informed participation, and the collective construction of culture, politics, and public spaces. The significance of this case study event lies in its ability to bridge entertainment and academic/scientific domains, intersecting cinema, architecture, and the city, within the context of the iconic architectural city of Brasília.

Each edition features a curated theme that permeates the entire program, including parallel activities, and experiences held across various locations throughout the city. Over the course of its four editions, Cinema Urbana has presented an extensive selection of films, featuring over a hundred works from more than 70 countries. These films encompass various genres, including documentary, fiction, and experimental, with a common focus on architecture and cities. In addition to film screenings, the festival program includes a variety of activities such as lectures, seminars, panel discussions, tributes, guided tours, and outdoor screenings. This diverse range of offerings ensures that attendees can immerse themselves in a multifaceted cinematic experience that explores the dynamic relationship between film, architecture, and urban environments.

The first two editions of the festival took place in the Setor Comercial Sul (Southern Commercial Sector, SCS), an urban area in Brasília that has sparked discussions about its

¹¹ Human societies possess distinct shapes, purposes, and meanings, which find expression through institutions, arts, and learning, all rooted in cultural values. The term “culture” encompasses norms, values, interpretations, and modes of behavior that define societies and other social entities. F. Fukuyama, “Culture and Economic Development: Cultural Concerns”, in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. by Neil J. Smelser and Paul B. Baltes (Oxford: Pergamon, 2001), 3130-3134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/04584-8>.

¹² The centrality of culture to the survival of urban societies highlights that the functionality, goals, and modes of operation of urban areas reflect cultural value priorities. Culture is a fundamental dimension of urban development, and thus the success of urban planning is significantly influenced by both formal and informal cultural values within society. Throughout Latin America, informality represents the urban culture as it embodies a way of life characterized by the widespread production of informal housing and settlements. Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad (eds.), *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia* (Lanham, Md., Berkeley, Calif.: Lexington Books; Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 2004); Patrick Brandful Cobbinah, Michael Osei Asibey, and Naomi Baffour Gyau, “Resonating the ‘Culture’ Debate in Urban Planning”, *City, Culture and Society* 23 (December 2020): 100369, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2020.100369>.

¹³ The festival is made possible through resources from FAC/DF –the Cultural Support Fund of the Federal District– as well as the Graduate Program of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Brasília, among other partner institutions.

potential in a city characterized by segmentation. In SCS, planned architecture and informal elements coexist in the daily life landscape. Despite facing degradation due to limited public interest, the central location of SCS has led to its transformation into a thriving cultural hub, attracting diverse art and cultural initiatives that contribute to the economic and social dynamics of the region. However, the sectorization of the area limits its utilization during non-business hours. In the evenings and on weekends, the sector becomes occupied with parties, festivals, and cultural events, as well as by a homeless population utilizing the vacant spaces. During the festival, an outdoor screening was organized on the facade of a building in the Setor Comercial Sul (SCS), accompanied by an intervention in the nearby square and staircases, effectively transforming the area into a sprawling open-air movie session (fig. 3). These activities prompted discussions centered around housing, culture, and social life, highlighting the importance of creating spaces that embrace diversity and foster coexistence among different communities. By occupying the streets, alleys, and cultural centers in downtown Brasília, the festival encourages interaction between the audience and the local community, including street vendors, cultural producers, artists, and other community members. This unique identity is shaped by the experiences in this specific area of the city, as well as the partnerships predominantly driven by the academic community and the thought-provoking debates that arise during the programming.



Figure 3. Cinema Urbana Architecture Film Festival (Brasília, Brasil), 2018. Square and staircases transformed the area into a sprawling open-air movie session in Southern Commercial Sector. Source: André Zimmerer.

In 2018, the festival's inaugural edition sought to expand and update the discourse on the city and its pluralities, exploring the emergence of multi-layered processes within contemporary urban contexts. These processes constantly reorganize themselves, transcending

the boundaries and centralization traditionally associated with cities. The festival shed light on new cities and diverse forms of urban aggregation and dispersal, which rapidly multiply, form networks, expand borders, weave territories, and extend horizons beyond the conventional distinctions between architecture and the city. It encompassed the interstitial spaces of metropolises. The guiding question for the curation of the event and the accompanying activities was: “How can the narratives expressed through cinema contribute to the discourse on how we inhabit and shape our urban spaces?” Although each film and territory possessed its uniqueness, shared similarities enabled them to be grouped and associated with particular trends and orientations.

In 2019, the festival embraced the theme “Building Memories”, exploring the ongoing production of spaces in cities and the processes of museumization influenced by ongoing globalization. The concept of heritage as a real or imagined territory, which contributes to the construction of landmarks representing the relationship between the past, present, and desired future, was also examined. The aim was to reflect on how we presently experience and narrate our cities (fig. 4). In this regard, cinema served as a medium to present cities and their landscapes in narratives that shape imaginaries and contribute to the collective memory and history of these urban environments¹⁴.



Figure 4. Cinema Urbana Architecture Film Festival (Brasília, Brasil), 2019. Poetic sonorous guided tour in Southern Commercial Sector. Source: Dinho Lacerda.

During the period of COVID-19 restrictions, Cinema Urbana was postponed, and the selection for the event in the following year, 2021, was prepared. Guided by the theme “Learning from Brasília”, inspired by the book *Learning from Las Vegas* by Venturi, Scott Brown and

¹⁴ Pescatori et al., “Editorial-Cinema Urbana...”

Izenour, the aim was to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the capital city. Brasília was constructed in a challenging and sparsely inhabited environment, far from the major centers of the country. It has become a city that continues to inspire discussions about utopia, futurism, and modernity, while also shaping and transforming the ways people inhabit and experience urban environments. After 60 years since its inauguration, the festival sought to explore if it is possible to envision Brasília beyond a fixed understanding of heritage, which may still be influenced by a certain pioneering pride. Brasília is an ongoing construction project and learning from it means going beyond the debate of whether its utopian aspirations were successful or not, and instead understanding its functioning in the context of its unique urban design. As Eduardo Rossetti states: “The city needs to continue living its normal life, experiencing its urban everydayness despite the monumental and the media... When dealing with such a unique city, designed with such optimistic and utopian perspectives, it becomes necessary to recover the inherent everyday sense of a city¹⁵”.

The most recent edition of the festival took place in 2022, under the theme “Imagining Possible Worlds,” which guided the film selection. The event carried a sense of resistance, with cinema and culture prevailing during difficult years marked by the pandemic, scarcity, authoritarianism, misconduct, and, for Brasília, aggression against its UNESCO-listed heritage. It stood as a testament to resisting for our cities, which were undergoing rapid transformations. The edition focused on deeply understanding the connection between cinema and the city, exploring how their imaginations intertwine and nourish each other, allowing for the creation of new worlds or realities. The program encompassed a diverse range of activities, providing opportunities to explore, see, feel, and hear about cities, architectures, architects, and city inhabitants from various parts of the world.



Figure 5. Cinema Urbana Architecture Film Festival (Brasília, Brasil), 2022. Oscar Niemeyer's building Cine Brasília. Source: André Zimmerer.

¹⁵ Eduardo Pierrotti Rossetti, “Brasília-Patrimônio: Desdobrar Desafios e Encarar o Presente”, *Arquitextos* (August 2013), <https://vitruvius.com.br/revistas/read/arquitextos/14.159/4845>.

For the first time, Cinema Urbana occupied the model blocks of the Neighborhood Unit proposed by Lucio Costa for Brasília, where the Cine Brasília and Renato Russo Cultural Center are located (fig. 5). The distance between both locations allowed for a pleasant walk, and along the way, participants could visit the modernist-designed church by Oscar Niemeyer, the school- class, the kindergarten building with Athos Bulcão's artistic panel covering its facade, the gardens designed by landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx, and the apartment blocks designed by Marcelo Campello and Sérgio Rocha. Additionally, at the shores of Lake Paranoá, Cinema Urbana occupied the cobogó facade of the Museum of Art of Brasília (MAB) (fig. 6). Using images from the selected films, two invited architects created an experimental visual and sound narrative performed live, resulting in a site-specific experience that expanded cinema beyond the confines of a darkroom and blended it with the architecture of Brasília.



Figure 6. Cinema Urbana Architecture Film Festival (Brasília, Brasil), 2022. Projection on the Art Museum facade. Source: André Zimmerer.

The Cinema Urbana event's cultural activism functions as a potent political force, propelling transformative change within the realm of culture and its influences. This festival converts ideas into tangible action, giving rise to movements and initiatives that profoundly impact the city's cultural landscape. Over the years, it has successfully organized a diverse array of activities that offer fresh perspectives on the city and its culture. One notable example is the creation of an event featuring open-air cinema sessions, engaging debates, and custom-designed furniture tailored specifically for the occasion. These endeavors are made possible through partnerships with public educational institutions. Moreover, the festival orchestrates a thought-provoking journey through the city center—an area marked by conflicting interests and diverse usage—. This immersive experience enables participants to identify urban design and experiential issues that define the territory and its mixed modernist and informal landscape. Notably, students at different educational levels actively participate and

gain valuable insights into heritage and environmental education. The festival also organizes workshops and discussions that address vital topics like heritage, preservation, and recycling, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for these subjects.

Architecture on films: protagonism and activism

Thematic architecture film festivals, where cinema, urban space, and architecture intersect, vividly illustrate the dynamic processes of raising awareness, nurturing imagination, and fostering activism. These festivals showcase the potential for protagonism, which represents an active response to oppression, discrimination, social segregation, and the denial of diversity. Protagonism emerges through mediating action, propelling the inherent political dimensions of such actions and permeating various spheres of social life, including culture. As proposed by Edmir Perrotti¹⁶, cultural protagonism encompasses multiple dimensions, inviting a comprehensive perspective, and involves resistance, combat, and confrontations arising from the physical and social world, affecting individuals universally.

Protagonism, at its core, is a social concept that encompasses behavior, attitude, and a way of existence that extends across all aspects of human life, including culture as a product of human creation. Taking a position becomes a mobilizing force for transformation and implies assuming initiative and instigating movement, as highlighted by Hannah Arendt¹⁷. Protagonists embrace the ongoing struggle for construction and creation as a fundamental attitude towards the world.

The case study of the Cinema Urbana Film Festival in Brasília exemplifies the pivotal role of film festivals as platforms for exhibition, exerting direct influence on territories, cities, and public space. This relationship underscores the significance of the city in cinema, the prominence of cinema within public spaces, and the role of films and film festivals as catalysts, provocateurs, and archivists of architectural and film history.

Thematic film festivals, rooted in the principles of architectural and cinematic protagonism, actively engage with their respective fields to foster a deeper understanding of architecture and city culture. These festivals play a vital role in disseminating knowledge, informing citizens, and facilitating decision-making processes. By addressing the challenges posed by rapid and unplanned urbanization, they aim to empower communities by sharing information and promoting discussions on environments, spaces, territories, and ways of life. Through their carefully curated content and immersive experiences, these festivals contribute to a collective understanding of urban issues and inspire individuals to actively participate in shaping sustainable and inclusive urban environments. Thematic architecture film festivals, like the Cinema Urbana event, provide a platform for cultural activism, promoting dialogue, raising awareness, and inspiring transformative action within the realm of culture and its influence.

¹⁶ Edmir Perrotti, “Sobre Informação e Protagonismo Cultural”, in *Informação e Protagonismo Social*, ed. by Henriette Ferreira Gomes and Hildenise Ferreira Novo (Salvador Bahia: EDUFBA, 2017), 15.

¹⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago - London: University of Chicago Press, 1958).



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