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Remaining in Exhibition:

Street Cinema in Socorro (SP)

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Abstract

This article analyzes the persistence of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, located in Socorro (SP), Brazil, as a street cinema operating for over 80 years, within a context marked by transformations in film exhibition and audiovisual consumption practices. The study is based on the hypothesis that such persistence is related to the combination of technical updating, family management, and strong ties with the local community. Methodologically, the research combines bibliographic review, analysis of institutional and journalistic materials, examination of audiovisual records, and in loco observation through a site visit. The results indicate that the continuity of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi can be explained by a set of interdependent factors. These include its capacity to adapt to technological changes, such as the incorporation of digital projection and 3D technologies; the implementation of accessibility resources that expand possibilities for participation; and the maintenance of a close relationship with its audience, supported by family-based management and practices of sociability. Furthermore, the cinema is consolidated as a site of memory, articulating individual and collective experiences across generations. The study concludes that the persistence of street cinemas in small cities is linked to the convergence of technical, social, and symbolic dimensions, demonstrating that such spaces remain relevant when they are able to combine innovation, collective experience, and urban embeddedness.

Keywords

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi; Socorro (SP); street cinema; memory; cultural experience.

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Permanecer em exibição:

o cinema de rua em Socorro (SP)

Tatiana Martins Montenegro[1]

Resumo

O presente artigo analisa a permanência do Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, localizado em Socorro (SP), como cinema de rua em funcionamento há mais de 80 anos, em um cenário de transformações no setor exibidor e nas formas de consumo audiovisual. Parte-se da hipótese de que essa permanência está relacionada à combinação entre atualização técnica, gestão familiar e vínculo com a comunidade local. No âmbito metodológico, a pesquisa é composta de revisão bibliográfica, análise de materiais institucionais e jornalísticos, exame de registros audiovisuais e observação in loco, realizada por meio de visita ao cinema. Os resultados indicam que a continuidade do Cine Cavaliere Orlandi pode ser explicada por um conjunto de elementos interdependentes. Elenca-se a capacidade de adaptação às mudanças tecnológicas, com a incorporação de projeção digital e 3D; a adoção de recursos de acessibilidade, que expandem as possibilidades de participação; e a manutenção de uma relação próxima com o público, sustentada pela gestão familiar e por práticas de sociabilidade. Além disso, o cinema se consolida como um lugar de memória, ao articular experiências individuais e coletivas ao longo das gerações. Conclui-se que a permanência do cinema de rua em cidades do interior está vinculada à convergência entre aspectos técnicos, sociais e simbólicos, demonstrando que esses espaços permanecem relevantes quando conseguem conciliar inovação, experiência coletiva e inserção no contexto urbano.

Palavras-chave

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi; Socorro (SP); cinema de rua; memória; experiência cultural.

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Permanecer en cartelera:

el cine de calle en Socorro (SP)

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Resumen

Este artículo analiza la permanencia del Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, ubicado en Socorro (SP), Brasil, como cine de calle en funcionamiento desde hace más de 80 años, en un escenario marcado por transformaciones en el sector de exhibición y en las formas de consumo audiovisual. Se parte de la hipótesis de que dicha permanencia está relacionada con la combinación entre actualización técnica, gestión familiar y vínculo con la comunidad local. En términos metodológicos, la investigación articula revisión bibliográfica, análisis de materiales institucionales y periodísticos, examen de registros audiovisuales y observación in situ mediante una visita al cine. Los resultados indican que la continuidad del Cine Cavaliere Orlandi puede explicarse a partir de un conjunto de factores interdependientes. Entre ellos se destacan la capacidad de adaptación a los cambios tecnológicos, con la incorporación de proyección digital y tecnología 3D; la adopción de recursos de accesibilidad que amplían las posibilidades de participación; y el mantenimiento de una relación cercana con el público, sostenida por la gestión familiar y por prácticas de sociabilidad. Asimismo, el cine se consolida como un lugar de memoria, al articular experiencias individuales y colectivas a lo largo de distintas generaciones. Se concluye que la permanencia de los cines de calle en ciudades del interior está vinculada a la convergencia de dimensiones técnicas, sociales y simbólicas, lo que demuestra que estos espacios siguen siendo relevantes cuando logran conciliar innovación, experiencia colectiva e inserción en la dinámica urbana.

Palabras clave

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi; Socorro (SP); cine de calle; memoria; experiencia cultural.

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Introduction

Over the past decades, film studies have shifted part of their attention from individual films to exhibition practices, distribution circuits, and audience experiences, which is a line of inquiry consolidated within what is known as the New Cinema History (Biltereyst; Maltby; Meers, 2019). This emphasis, in Brazil, has taken on distinctive contours in research on cinemas, moviegoers, and memories associated with film exhibition, as systematized by Freire and Ferraz (2018). Thus, cinema is understood as a situated cultural practice, shaped by local habits, social interaction forms, and concrete access conditions. Nevertheless, much of this scholarship remains concentrated in capital cities and more prominent urban centers, while experiences developed in small towns receive comparatively less attention in academic debate. This study is situated in this very gap.

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi in located in Socorro, in São Paulo State inlands, and provides a relevant case. Founded on June 24, 1942, the cinema has accompanied different phases of Brazilian film culture and currently remains in operation as one of the few surviving traditional street cinemas operating in a small town. According to institutional materials, journalistic records, and accounts compiled in a documentary, its operation is linked to its longevity, to the symbolic value attributed to its past, and to concrete management decisions, technological investments, and sustained efforts to maintain strong ties with the local audience.

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi characteristics help explaining its permanence. The building was originally designed to operate as a cinema, rather than being subsequently adapted for that purpose. Over time, the venue has undergone renovations that have modernized its sound and projection equipment, introduced digital technologies, improved auditorium comfort, and incorporated accessibility features, including resources for people with hearing and visual impairments. Family management remains actively involved in the cinema's daily operations and directly participate in customer service and screenings' organization. The venue also develops initiatives aimed at bringing together different audiences, such as school screenings, including those for students from rural areas, as well as efforts to ensure that the experience can be shared more equitably among spectators.

These aspects take on greater significance when one takes into consideration the trajectory of Socorro City, itself. Over time, the municipality has undergone different economic organization forms, ranging from an agricultural base to the knitwear industry and, subsequently, the strengthening of tourism through initiatives associated with leisure and accessible tourism. This trajectory has helped to development a city that seeks to value cultural experiences, recurring visitors, and entertainment-related activities. As Bessa and Oliveira Filho (2014) observed, "the place where a film is exhibited influences, reflects, adds to, and modifies the

cinematic experience." Accordingly, the continued presence of a street cinema can be understood as part of a broader set of local practices that remain relevant through ongoing adaptation without severing their ties to historical identity.

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi trajectory also provides an opportunity to assess the association between tradition and technological updating based on other aspects. The cinema's longevity has been associated with the adoption of significant changes, including the transition to digital projection, the introduction of 3D technology, improvements in sound quality, and the reorganization of the physical space, including the creation of a second auditorium. These transformations were decisive in restoring audience attendance after periods of crisis, mainly in the face of changes in audiovisual consumption, such as VCR's popularization and, more recently, digital streaming platforms.

This article addresses the following question: how does a street cinema located in a town of 40,000 inhabitants (IBGE, 2022) in the interior of São Paulo State remain in operation amid technological changes, transformations in the film exhibition market, and new forms of audiovisual consumption? The hypothesis guiding the analysis advocates that Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation regard the combination of technological investment, family management, and ties to the local community, within a city whose own trajectory has involved ongoing economic adaptation, and leisure, tourism, and accessibility processes.

The aim of this study is to analyze how Cine Cavaliere Orlandi has sustained its presence as a street cinema in Socorro (São Paulo State) by taking into account its historical trajectory, strategies for technological updating, and relationship with the local audience. Methodologically, the study draws on the New Cinema History (Biltereyst; Maltby; Meers, 2019; Freire; Ferraz, 2018), as this field investigates film exhibition and audiences by combining sources of different kinds. The scarcity of academic material and records concerning Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, whose trajectory remains poorly documented beyond the film Cine Cavaliere *Orlandi: o legado de uma paixão familiar* (2021) - 24 minutes in length, produced by Octo Works led to the collection and cross-reference of different source types. The research combines a literature review, analysis of institutional materials produced by the cinema itself, journalistic records, and information provided by Socorro Municipality, the examination of the aforementioned documentary, and direct observation conducted during an in situ visit to the cinema on January 30, 2026.

The visit took place during a school-holiday weekend, when children's screenings were at full capacity and there was a significant presence of families, which enabled observing the cinema in full operation. On that occasion, the researcher attended a screening, toured the lobby, auditoriums, and façade of the building, and documented it through photographs, video, and field notes about the 1942 identification plaque and the historic projector displayed in the lobby. These materials provided a basis for

the analysis developed in the following sections.

By addressing a research object that remains relatively unexplored in academic scholarship, this article seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of film exhibition practices in inland cities, particularly with regard to the association among memory, technology, accessibility, the market, and collective experience.

Socorro and the creation of a culture and leisure space

Understanding Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation requires examining the city it is situated in. Socorro is located in São Paulo State inlands and has undergone successive economic and social transformations that, altogether, help explaining the relevance of certain cultural institutions within its urban fabric. The municipality's origins date back to the 18th century, when its economy was primarily based on agricultural activities. Over time, these activities were replaced or supplemented by other production forms. The introduction of the knitwear industry from the late 20th century onward marked an important economic development phase that created more job positions employment and consolidated a regional productive identity (Oliveira, 2005). Later on, tourism embodied a significant role in shaping the city's economy, mainly after Socorro's recognition as a hydromineral resort (as part of the Circuito das Águas Paulista) and, subsequently, as a destination for adventure and accessible tourism (Cantorani, 2013).

This trajectory reveals an important aspect of Socorro. The city has built its relevance by valuing experiences, attracting visitors interested in shopping and health tourism, and offering a range of leisure-related activities. Thus, cultural spaces are part of an extensive network of practices contributing to the city's social life and local economy.

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi emerged in this very context. It was launched in 1942, during World War II, by João Della Maggiori Orlandi. The cinema was established in a building specifically designed for film exhibition from the outset, and it already indicated the importance gven to this activity at the time of its establishment (Minidoc [...], 2021). According to a plaque displayed at the site itself, it was the first building in the city specifically designed to operate as a cinema, a feature that reinforces its historical significance within the municipality.

Figure 1: Cine Cavaliere Orlandi identification plaque (1942)



Source: The author's archives (2026)

The presence of a cinema in a small inland town, particularly in the mid-20th century, should be understood as extending beyond its entertainment function. According to studies on film exhibition practices, going to the cinema is a social experience involving routines, encounters, and specific urban space occupation forms (Biltereyst; Maltby; Meers, 2019). Cinema becomes a point of convergence for collective life, where social ties are forged to levels beyond the film screening, itself. Ferraz (2012) demonstrates how memories of going to the cinema are organized around encounters, affective experiences, and relationships formed in movie theaters, in the Brazilian context, and they work as reference points for the social life in neighborhoods and cities. This is precisely the kind of memory reflected in André Orlandi's account in an interview with Alessandra Lontra (2023). He is the current manager and grandson of the cinema's founder. Orlandi emphasizes that many moviegoers "dated at the cinema or met each other here. As a result, many marriages came about."

Accounts of the early Cine Cavaliere Orlandi years indicate that screenings were social events characterized by a certain degree of formality, with patrons elegantly dressed (Figure 2) and significant participation from the local population (Minidoc [...], 2021). This practice is consistent with a recurring pattern in the film culture at the time when cinema occupied a prominent place in cities' social life,

including communities located far from major urban centers (Freire; Ferraz, 2018).

Figure 2: Moviegoers at Cine Cavaliere Orlandi in the 20th century: formal attire and elegant clothing as a social status marker



Source: Screenshot from the documentary Cine Cavaliere Orlandi: o legado de uma paixão familiar (Minidoc [...], 2021)

The cinema presence in the city can also be related to its residents' social conditions, particularly following the knitwear industry consolidation throughout the 20th century. As Oliveira (2008) points out, the knitting machines introduction and the textile production expansion generated new labor dynamics featured by repetitive activities often carried out at the domestic sphere involving substantial female participation. This context helped establishing a continuous work routine, according to which, leisure time became an increasingly valued resource.

Dumazedier (1976) understands leisure as a set of activities to which individuals may freely devote themselves to, whether for rest, entertainment, or for the development of their social participation, after being released from professional and everyday obligations. Therefore, cinema can be understood as one of the possibilities for collective enjoyment outside the productive environment. In Socorro, going to Cine Cavaliere Orlandi was an experience of temporarily stepping away from the work routine, allowing for social encounters, rest, and participation in an urban sociability form.

Over time, cinema's prominent role was affected by transformations in audiovisual consumption patterns. According to Simis (2016), the crisis faced by the

film industry in the 1980s, associated with VCR's popularization, had a significant impact on the exhibition sector. As for Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, this process forced the venue to be closed for more than a decade, and it highlighted the difficulties faced by traditional cinemas in maintaining their operations due to the new forms to access films (Minidoc [...], 2021).

The cinema's reopening years later took place in a different context, both technologically and in terms of audience expectations, as it involved the venue's reconfiguration and changes in its role within the city itself. Upon reopening and undergoing modernization, Cine Cavaliere Orlandi came to occupy a position at the historical continuity and technological updating intersection, and engaged with a city that had likewise undergone reorganization processes, over time.

This relationship between cinema and the city can be understood through the idea that cultural practices are in close connection with the spaces they take place at. As Mantecón (2017) emphasizes, the experience of going to the cinema involves not only engaging with the film itself, but also moving through the city, choosing the exhibition venue, and interacting with others along the way. These aspects acquire particular characteristics in Socorro, insofar as the cinema is embedded in a city whose social dynamics place value on opportunities for social interaction.

The cinema can also be understood as an element of the urban experience itself. As Almeida (1999) observes, the relationship between the city and cinema involves an interplay of images, mobility, and ways of perceiving urban space. As individuals move through the city, they construct visual and narrative interpretations linked to the cinematic experience as it set connections between everyday life and projected images. Thus, as cinema becomes embedded in the city, it also participates in shaping how it is lived, perceived, and imagined.

> Cinema is both an image of and a product of urban life; when we speak of the city, we are simultaneously speaking of cinema. Urban dwellers see themselves and allow themselves to be seen in images projected above their heads onto a screen before them. They could not make sense of these images if cities had not, for a long time, been fashioned as moving settings, and their inhabitants as characters in narratives authored by distant and anonymous agents: capital and the state, self-appointed narrators of the fiction of the Polis (Almeida, 1999, p, 158).

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi can be understood as an integral part of Socorro's cultural landscape. Its presence over time is related both to its own trajectory and to the characteristics of the city and its residents. That is what fostered the longevity of cultural practices grounded in physical presence, social interaction, and shared experience.

Cinema, comunidade e experiência: a permanência como vínculo social

Although Cine Cavaliere Orlandi trajectory underscores adaptation processes over time, its operation cannot be only explained by technical or structural factors. The relationship it has built with the local community, which extends beyond the consumption sphere and the shared experience, is an important element in the cinema's longevity.

Unlike large cinema chains, where going to the movies tends to follow more standardized patterns, Cine Cavaliere Orlandi keeps a close relationship between management and audience. The family-run administration is involved in customer service, in organizing the screenings, and in interacting with moviegoers. This continuous presence fosters a familiarity and recognition atmosphere, according to which, the cinema becomes a space for social interaction. This element can be related to Arendt's (1994) notion of public sphere, which is understood as the space where individuals become visible to one another through action and speech. As owner Rina Orlandi describes in the documentary *Cine Cavaliere Orlandi: O legado de uma paixão familiar*:

> it became an addiction. We're here every day, in the morning, in the afternoon, at night... It's not about supervising the staff—they handle everything perfectly well. It's simply that we really enjoy this interaction, this constant activity. [...] What makes our cinema different is that we're always downstairs. One of us is always among the people, either helping out or welcoming them (Minidoc [...], 2021).

The cinema is a place where individuals encounter one another, recognize one another, and make themselves present to others by sharing experiences that extrapolate the content projected on the screen. This characteristic brings cinema closer to cultural practices grounded in collective experience (Biltereyst; Maltby; Meers, 2019). Thus, the Orlandi family has historically occupied a social and spatial role in Socorro as they are relevant agents within the city's "urban network" (Corrêa, 2011, p. 93).

This context contrasts with contemporary audiovisual consumption forms associated with the streaming services that favor experience individualization and home-based access convenience. As Lipovetsky and Serroy (2009) observe, recent audiovisual culture has been characterized by increasingly personalized consumption, because viewers choose when, where, and how to watch, which reduces the need for displacing and collectively sharing the experience. Although this model facilitates access to content, it also reshapes the sociability forms associated with cinema by shifting the experience into the private sphere and reducing opportunities for face-to-face encounters.

Putnam (2000) points to a pronounced process of weakening social ties in contemporary societies by highlighting the decline of collective practices and

shared spaces. Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation acquires a particular significance as social continuity form supporting an experience type that involves presence, interaction, and mutual recognition. The cinema establishes ties with different segments of the population, including rural residents, in Socorro. It happens through school screenings and initiatives aimed at expanding access to the venue. According to André Orlandi, "on Sunday evenings, you see people coming in with their feet covered in mud, all children who live out in the countryside and dragged their parents along because they want their parents to see what they saw" (Minidoc [...], 2021).

These initiatives are entry points for new audiences and help developing cultural habits and establishing an ongoing relationship with cinema. This dynamic can be understood in light of audience development, herein understood as a gradual process individuals become acquainted with and engage in cultural practices sustained by recurring and socially mediated experiences (Rosas Mantecón, 2017).

In addition, according to accounts in the documentary (2021), the Cine Cavaliere Orlandi experience is associated with the formation of affective memories across generations. Families who have attended the venue for decades and spectators who return to the cinema as part of their routine reinforce the idea that its long-term presence is also supported by human bonds.

Contemporary cinema venues are spaces of experience where memory, perception, and participation are entangled. As Bessa and Oliveira Filho (2014) discuss, even amid the new audiovisual consumption models, street cinemas remain relevant for setting close relationships with spectators and for bringing them closer to the aesthetic experience in sensory, affective, and shared ways. Memory emerges as a dynamic process shaped by impressions, affects, and lived experiences, as suggested by Tarkovsky (1990).

Therefore, it is possible understanding cinema as a place of memory, where personal experiences become intertwined with broader narratives about the city. Over time, Cine Cavaliere Orlandi has become part of Socorro's lived experience as it is a point of reference for different generations of residents. As Nora (1993) suggests, lieux de mémoire emerge when particular spaces come to concentrate meanings exceeding their original function, becoming repositories of affective significance.

Research on Brazilian street cinemas reinforces this understanding. Musse, Avelar Neto, and Henriques (2017) show, in their investigation of cinemas in Juiz de Fora (Minas Gerais), how these venues became points of reference for social bonds formation and for the construction of collective memories that persist even after many cinemas have closed. This process linked the experience of going to the movies to the city's own affective history.

This symbolic dimension manifests itself in the building's materiality itself, whose façade preserves characteristic features of the time it was built. Cine Cavaliere

Orlandi façade (Figure 3) reveals elements associated with the Art Deco style, which is featured by emphasis on geometric forms, vertical lines, symmetry, and restrained ornamental composition.

Figure 3: Preserved façade of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi



Source: Official website of Cine Cavalieri Orlandi (Cine Orlandi, c20--?)

According to Correia (2008), this style was closely associated with Brazilian cities' modernization in the early 20th century, when buildings were designed to express progress, architectural rationality, and urban identity. In Socorro cinema, these characteristics remain visible in the façade organization, mainly in the vertical arrangement of the volumes, in the design of the pilasters, and in the symmetrical composition structuring the building. The architecture of this cinema venues itself was part of this experience. As Vieira and Pereira (1982) note in their study on cinemas in Rio de Janeiro, the architectural design of exhibition venues, from their façades to their interior spaces, sought to lend distinction to the act of going to the movies and to situate spectators within a space conceived as exceptional. Cine Cavaliere Orlandi building was designed from the outset specific for film exhibition, ad it highlights this intention into Socorro's urban landscape.

Endurance through innovation

The Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation is also related to its ability to respond to contemporary demands that go beyond film exhibition, in the strict sense. These processes include incorporating accessibility resources and accommodation forms that broaden the opportunities for audience participation. This aspect is particularly relevant because it shifts the discussion of the cinema's operation toward

a broader perspective, according to which, access to culture is understood as a significant condition for participation in social life.

Taking accessibility in to account in cinema means recognizing that cultural participation depends on the concrete conditions enabling individuals to engage with it. As Canclini (2015) observes, access to cultural goods involves unequal appropriation, mediation, and participation processes shaped by economic and social barriers. In the case of cinema, such barriers also include sensory and communicational limitations that may impair certain audiences' access to the audiovisual experience, including deaf communities. According to Decree n. 5,296/2004:

> cinema venues shall be equipped with assistive sound systems for persons with hearing impairments, electronic systems that enable real-time captioning, or special arrangements to accommodate the physical presence of Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) interpreters and guide-interpreters, with the interpreter's image projected onto the screen whenever the distance prevents the interpreter from being seen (Brasil, 2004).

Implementing resources aimed at people with hearing and visual impairments at Cine Cavaliere Orlandi, together with the provision of spaces for wheelchair users, are efforts to adapt the venue in ways that broaden its social reach. Adopting an accessibility kit to enable spectators with hearing impairments to follow dubbed films in any screening, without having to rely exclusively on subtitled versions, is these initiatives. This is complemented by audio description for people with visual impairments and it enables them to apprehend the film's narrative and visual elements (Minidoc [...], 2021).

The provision of adapted areas for wheelchair users also ensures physical access to the venue. Altogether, these resources indicate that accessibility in cinema means creating effective conditions for participation, for allowing different audiences to experience cinema in a more autonomous manner. This particular aspect meets broader discussions on culture and citizenship. Sarraf (2018) emphasizes that cultural accessibility should be addressed as a policies and practice aimed at democratizing culture. The presence of accessibility resources at Cine Cavaliere Orlandi reinforces its role as a cultural space committed to expanding participation.

This is even more significant when on bears in mind the history of Socorro itself, as the city has established itself as a reference point for accessible tourism. As Cantorani (2013) explains, the municipality's prominence in this field stems from public authorities articuçation, private-sector initiatives, and the requalification of practices associated with leisure and accessible tourism.

> The tourism sector experienced substantial growth in Socorro. The main driving force behind this growth was the Socorro Acessível project. The city has invested heavily in accessible tourism. The major catalyst for this structural and economic development was the Aventureiros Especiais project. This initiative marked the beginning

> of the involvement of both the private and public sectors in preparing the city for what Socorro termed "Tourism for All." Thus, following the success of the *Aventureiros Especiais* and subsequently *Socorro Acessível* projects, Socorro was selected by the Ministry of Tourism as one of the ten benchmark destinations for tourism in Brazil (Cantorani, 2013, p. 96).

Cine Cavaliere Orlandi engages with a local culture attuned to inclusion issues and it helps explaining why accessibility has become a relevant component of its continued operation. The cinema aligns with a characteristic already observed in Socorro's urban life. At this point, Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long-term operation depends on its ability to remain as a meaningful space for the city. Such recognition also involves its capacity to welcome diverse audiences.

Adapting to new technologies has also become a challenge for traditional street cinemas. In the 2010s, the cinema in Socorro underwent a modernization process aimed at adapting the venue to the contemporary demands of the exhibition sector. Implementing the digital 3D projection technology, structural renovations to the screening rooms, and expansion of the physical space were among the main changes to be implemented (Minidoc [...], 2021). These interventions sought to improve film exhibition technical conditions and to make the experience more competitive in relation to other audiovisual consumption forms. It indicates the effort to adapt to transformations in the market.

However, there is a tension between the introduced digital technology and the preservation of these spaces' traditional features. As Bessa and Oliveira Filho (2014) point out, such innovations tend to change characteristics historically associated with street cinemas, and it redefines the ways of viewing, occupying space, and relating to the image. The transition to digital formats, screens multiplication, and the emergence of interactive practices give rise to new spectator profiles, which are less closely tied to a stable collective experience and more closely associated with fragmented dynamics. The modernization of street cinemas raises an important argument: while ensuring the conditions for their longevity, it may also help diluting 5he aspects that have historically formed their distinctive character.

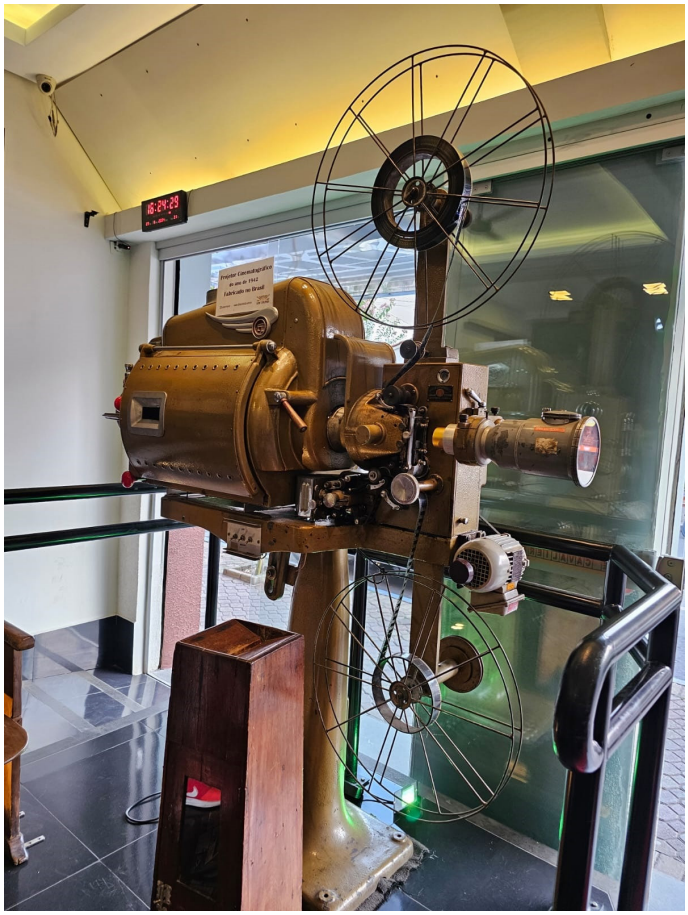
This movement is a negotiation process in the case of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi. The introduction of new technologies coexists with the preservation of sociability practices and presence, which distinguishes the cinema experience in the city. However, the authenticity of street cinema alone is not sufficient to keep the venue in operation. From the owner's perspective, "with this 3D machine, I learned so much. And what do people want? The best that exists in the world. And we learned that if we have the best quality, if we have the best cinema, everyone will want to come" (Minidoc [...], 2021).

André Orlandi's statement reinforces the idea that preserving traditional characteristics, although important, is not sufficient, *per se*. The cinema's long lasting operation also depends on its ability to provide technical conditions matching

contemporary audience expectations, mainly when it comes to image and sound quality, and environmental comfort. Technological updating should not be regarded as opposed to tradition, but rather as a condition to ensure that tradition can currently, continue to exist in a meaningful.

The association between continuity and innovation is also visible in the space's materiality. The presence of a film projector used during the cinema's early years of operation in the entrance hall, which is now displayed as an element of memory, highlights a conscious choice to preserve its technical and cultural trajectory, and to make it visible (Figure 4). The equipment ceases to operate as a tool and instead becomes a symbolic mediator between different temporalities after being removed from its original function and transferred to an exhibition setting. This new profile allows the old and the new to coexist within the same space and jointly contribute to the audience's experience.

Figure 4: Historical film projector displayed in the entrance hall of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi (Socorro, São Paulo, Brazil)



Source: The authors archives (2026

The presence of the equipment within the cinema's circulation space encapsulates the memory and modernization convergence featuring the Cine

Cavaliere Orlandi trajectory. By making its own technical history visible, the cinema preserves a material evidence of the past and incorporates it into the audience's contemporary experience, which reinforces the its cultural function over time. It is precisely this ability to reconcile technical quality, accessibility, sociability, and memory that underpins the distinctive character of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi in the contemporary audiovisual landscape.

The analysis confirmed the hypothesis introdiced at the outset of this study. Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation has been supported by mutually reinforcing factors: technical investments have kept the venue compatible with the current requirements of the film exhibition sector; family management has ensured an ongoing sense of proximity to moviegoers; and its ties to the community have preserved the cinema as a space for social interaction that extends beyond film consumption. In addition to these factors, one finds the cinema's location in a city that values leisure, tourism, and accessibility. These conditions have provided a favorable environment for the venue's continuity for more than eight decades.

Final considerations

Throughout this article, we sought to understand how Cine Cavaliere Orlandi has remained operational as a street cinema in a city in São Paulo inlands for more than 80 years, despite the transformations in the film exhibition sector and in the audiovisual consumption forms. It was possible observing that the cinema's trajectory is closely related to the broader transformations inherent to the cinematic field and to the specific characteristics of Socorro City. An examination of the urban context enabled situating the cinema within a local dynamic characterized by leisure and tourism appreciation. These aspects help maintaining cultural practices grounded in physical presence and shared experience.

At the same time, the analysis applied to Cine Cavaliere Orlandi showed that its long lasting operation is associated with its capacity to adapt to technological and market changes, as well as with the establishment of consistent ties with the local audience. Family management, the close relationship with moviegoers, and initiatives aimed at broadening access to the cinema reinforce the understanding that the existence of this space depends on a relationship that extends beyond consumption and approaches social interaction forms.

Accessibility, in turn, emerges as a fundamental element for understanding the long-term operation of Cine Cavaliere Orlandi in the contemporary context. The cinema responds to technical demands while reaffirming its role as a cultural space open to diverse audiences by investing in resources that expand opportunities for participation. Cine Cavaliere Orlandi is located in a city that has established itself as a reference point for accessible tourism, so the cinema has become part of a local

dynamic that values access to culture as a social life dimension. Its longevity is also associated with its ability to accommodate different presence and experience forms to reinforcing the notion that remaining in operation also means remaining socially accessible.

The technological dimension is a core axis to understand Cine Cavaliere Orlandi long lasting operation in the contemporary context. The adoption of resources such as digital and 3D projection, in combination with structural improvements to the screening rooms have shown that technological updating is a condition for film exhibition continuity. Technology, far from representing a rupture with the past, is as an element enabling the cinema to remain as a socially situated experience.

The study on Cine Cavaliere Orlandi allowed for better understanding street cinema in smaller inland cities as an active cultural presence form capable of enduring through specific adaptations and social relationships. Finally, by addressing a case that remains relatively academically underexplored, this article helps broadening the debate on film exhibition practices in inland cities by highlighting the importance of considering technical, social, and affective dimensions in an integrated manner when seeking to understand the long lasting existence of these spaces.

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