Platformed audiovisualities on the strategies by female independent musicians

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Abstract

Questo articolo discute le riflessioni di una ricerca riguardante il concetto di *platformed audiovisualities* nelle strategie delle musiciste indipendenti di Porto Alegre (Brasile) e di Milano (Italia) durante la pandemia di Covid-19, considerando le loro pratiche di resistenza in questo periodo attraverso gli usi e le appropriazioni della tecnologia. In base alla ricerca qualitativa con l'utilizzo del metodo cartografico (Canevacci, 1997), abbiamo mappato le musiciste (compositrici, cantanti e strumentiste) e i loro video. Abbiamo anche intervistato queste artiste. La nostra analisi mostra due tendenze relazionali, costellazioni (Canevacci, 1997) che illuminano le informazioni raccolte, rendendone possibile la comprensione e l'analisi attraverso il collegamento e l'elaborazione dei dati empirici, in un processo interpretativo che custodisce il senso luminoso della conoscenza: 1) la narrazione costruita attraverso le tappe di divulgazione; e 2) la rete articolata con il pubblico e con altri musicisti. Considerando le loro strategie, la nostra ricerca evidenzia l'artivismo presente nelle loro azioni. In questo modo, nell'attualizzare le audiovisualità, essendo donne e impegnate in pratiche di resistenza, possono aver anche attualizzato l'*ethos do-it-yourself* in entrambe le scene musicali indipendenti.

This article discusses insights of a research regarding the platformed audiovisualities on the strategies by the female independent musicians of Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Milan (Italy) during the Covid-19 pandemic, considering their practices of resistance in this period with the usages an appropriation of technology. Based on qualitative research using the cartographic method (Canevacci, 1997), we mapped female musicians (composers, singers and instrumentalists), and their videos. We have also interviewed these artists. Our analysis shows two relational tendencies, constellations (Canevacci, 1997), which illuminate the information gathered, making it possible to understand and analyse it by means of the empirical data connection and edition, in an interpretative process which holds the knowledge's luminous sense: 1) the narrative built on the divulgation steps; and 2) the network articulated with the audience and other musicians. Considering their strategies, our research highlights the artivism which is present on their actions. With that, when actualising the audiovisualities, being women and into practices of resistance, they might have also actualised the do-it-yourself *ethos* in both independent music scenes.

Introduction

On 11th March 2020, the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 as a pandemic. Three days before, a lockdown was determined in the city of Milan (Italy), in order to contain the spread of the virus. In Porto Alegre, the capital city of the most southern state of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul, the virus containment measures started to be defined, based on the experience of Milan, a place with whom it has many similarities, starting from the size of the city. Also, the first case of Covid-19 in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, registered on 9th March, was the detected in a person who came from a travel to Milan.

With the necessary containment measures, in which public places as cultural centres, restaurants, concert venues, among others, had to remain closed, scheduled concerts had to be cancelled. Therefore, the cultural sector has undergone financial difficulties during those times. For independent musicians, that is, those who do not hold a contract with a major recording label, concerts are an important source of income, by means of selling tickets and also their products (such as t-shirts, CDs, pins etc), as well as an opportunity for networking with other members of the scene and for growing their audience (Zoehler Giorgis, 2016, 2017a; Tarassi, 2018).

Considering the difficulties already faced by women because of gender inequalities in our societies, which increased during the Covid-19 pandemic and hold specificities in the music environment, it is possible to visualise how these were challenging times for the independent female musicians. Nevertheless, a number of them was able to release new music projects and to divulgate them, using various video formats on their online strategies. Our research comprises female musicians who released singles, albums and EPs between 8th March 2020 and 31st August 2021, using videos on online platforms for their divulgation. Thereby, this research focuses on strategies and practices of resistance on the independent female musicians' work in this period.

Existing research discuss technoculture (Shaw, 2008), platformisation (Djick et al., 2018; Bonini and Gandini, 2019), digital literacy and the digital divide (Gran, A. et al. 2021), the do-it-yourself *ethos* in the independent music scenes (Bennett et al., 2021), gender and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) and its relation to music (Sá, 2019), and the independent music scenes of Porto Alegre (Zoehler Giorgis, 2016, 2017a) and Milan (Tarassi, 2018). We understand there is a gap on research field regarding an approach on female independent

musicians and their platformed audiovisual strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic, which we believe we contribute to fill with our study.

Based on qualitative research using the cartographic method (Canevacci, 1997), we mapped female musicians (composers, singers and instrumentalists), and their videos, and interviewed these artists. We also mapped female professionals involved with each one of both music scenes and projects which aim to give visibility to the female musicians' work and interviewed them. These interviews were based on the life report method (Bertaux, 2005).

The intuitive method (Bergson, 2006; Deleuze, 2004), was used to define the research question, or "the composite", split in two tendencies: the "virtual" and the "actual". Based on that, the research question, or the "composite", is how the audiovisual processes into audiovisualities are actualised by the female musicians' audiovisual strategies, considering "the audiovisual processes into audiovisualities" as the virtual, and "the female musicians' audiovisual strategies" as the actual. The objective is to understand how their strategies actualise the audiovisual processes, in its relation to technoculture, gender and intersectionality.

This article presents in its sections the methodological moves regarding cartography and its findings, the theoretical approach, the current results of this research and the conclusions related to them.

Cartography

The first move of cartography is *flânerie* (Kilpp, 2010), inserting disorientation inside the researcher's own horizons and remapping in search for defamiliarising from what is usual, in order to overcome it in a logical and empirical way, under the inspiration of Walter Benjamin (Canevacci, 1997). *Flânerie* is a way of drifting that comprises a random transit guided by the affections of the researcher (Kilpp, 2010), which starts with the definition of an initial territory and a strategy for the first steps. In this research, it was conducted on digital media, in order to map the following profile: independent female musicians from Porto Alegre who play musical instruments, are singers and composers, who released music products on streaming platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic, between March 2020 and August 2021, doing it through digital strategies using videos.

Therefore, the initial territory defined was Google, starting with a combination of search terms: "artistas mulheres música Porto Alegre", in Portuguese (in English: artists women

music Porto Alegre). Continuing this process, other eight combinations of terms, in Portuguese, were used related to Porto Alegre. The same move was made regarding Milan, with the combination of terms in Italian. The variations included, translating them to English, words as "independent artists", "independent singers" "independent singer-songwriters", "independent bands", "DIY", "composers", and "independent music labels".

On the results pages, filtering has been done to select the links that were pertinent to what was sought. The searches in Portuguese resulted in 165 selected links to be accessed, and the searches in Italian resulted in 83 links. These links were clicked on and, inside the pages opened, other contents were accessed, such as websites, social network platforms and PDF files available for download.

We decided to use Google for the searches related to the mapping, considering it is a widely used platform for the purpose of seeking information on the Internet, but also having in mind that it is an algorithmised structure. The different combinations of terms used and the action of clicking on other contents inside the links found were a way to try to reach the largest and deepest number of information possible.

When visiting these links and moving forward on other links inside the accessed pages – that is, doing *flânerie* on these territories –, it was possible to find artists, who were listed: from Porto Alegre's independent music scene, Gabriela Lery, Clarissa Ferreira, Bel Medula, Bianca Obino, Dessa Ferreira and the Três Marias group; from Milan's scene, Emanuela Drei, Francesca Incudine, Guendalina, Marianne Mirage and Micol Martinez. During the process of *flânerie* and the systematisation of the findings, the music releases by the artists were also listed, together with information about their type – album, single, music video, live stream – the product's name and its link. It allowed us to make decisions towards the definition of the corpus.

Next up it is possible to see their releases, as well as main audiovisual strategies and screenshots of their videos.

a) Gabriela Lery has released the album "Arquipélago", and the singles "Teletransporte" and "Tamborim", the latter included in a compilation album edited by the Panapaná collective. Here we can find screenshots of her audiovisuals related to these projects, with Instagram and YouTube videos, including live streams, a lesson on how to play one of the songs, interviews, Spotify Canva, and a commented audition and a n online concert in Zoom.
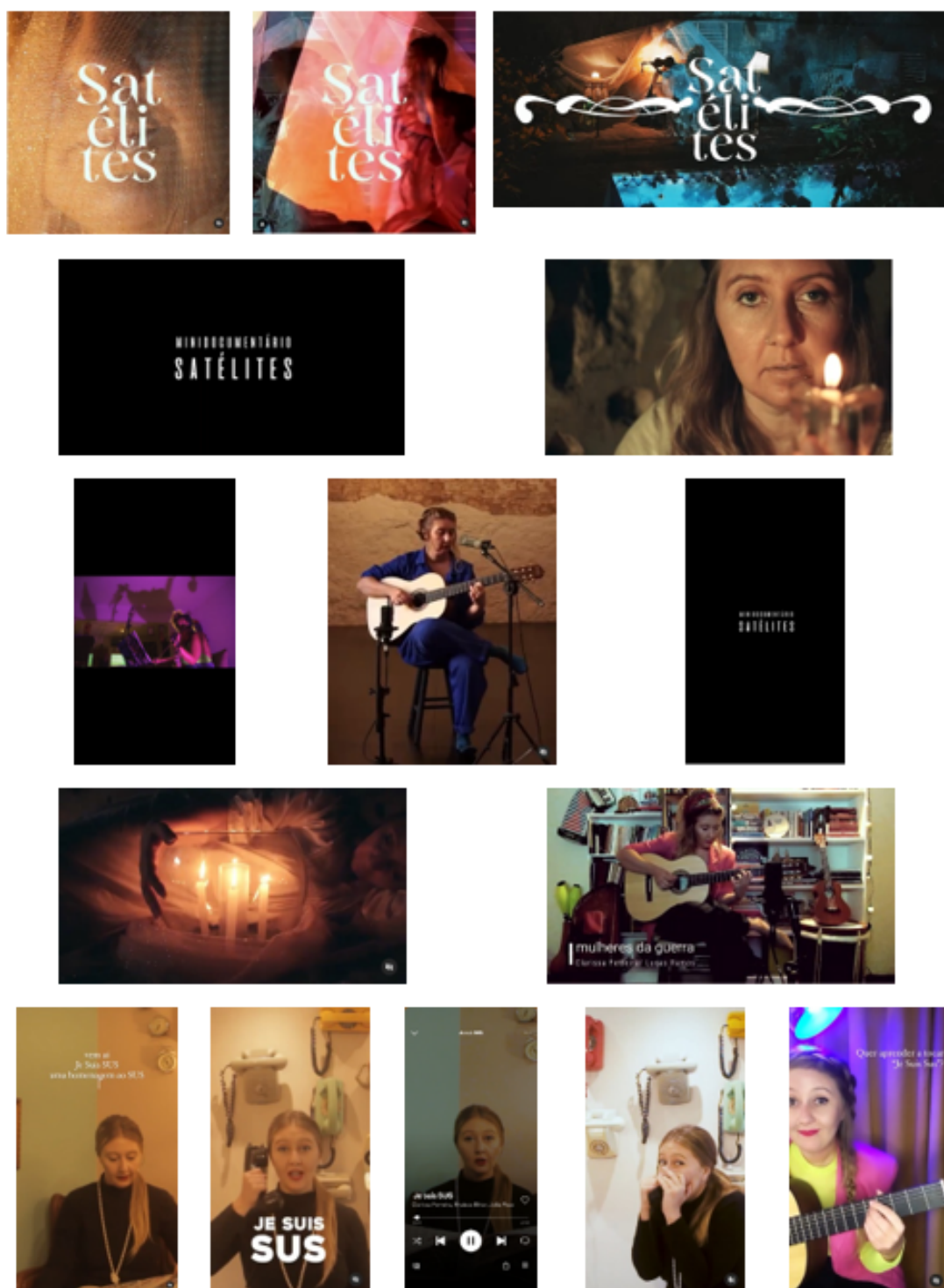
Fig. 01. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Gabriela Lery

b) Clarissa Ferreira released the singles "Satélites", "Mulheres da Guerra" and "Je suis SUS". Below we can see screenshots of her audiovisuals, with Instagram, YouTube, TikTok and Twitch videos, including live streams, a mini documentary, interviews, a lesson on how to play one of the songs, videoclips and Spotify Canva.

Fig. 02. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Clarissa Ferreira

c) Bel Medula released the albums "Semente", "Luna", and "4x4", the single "Na quarentena até as casas astrais têm parede", a video performance and a video poem, with Instagram and YouTube videos, including concert and interview live streams, videoclips and Spotify Canva.
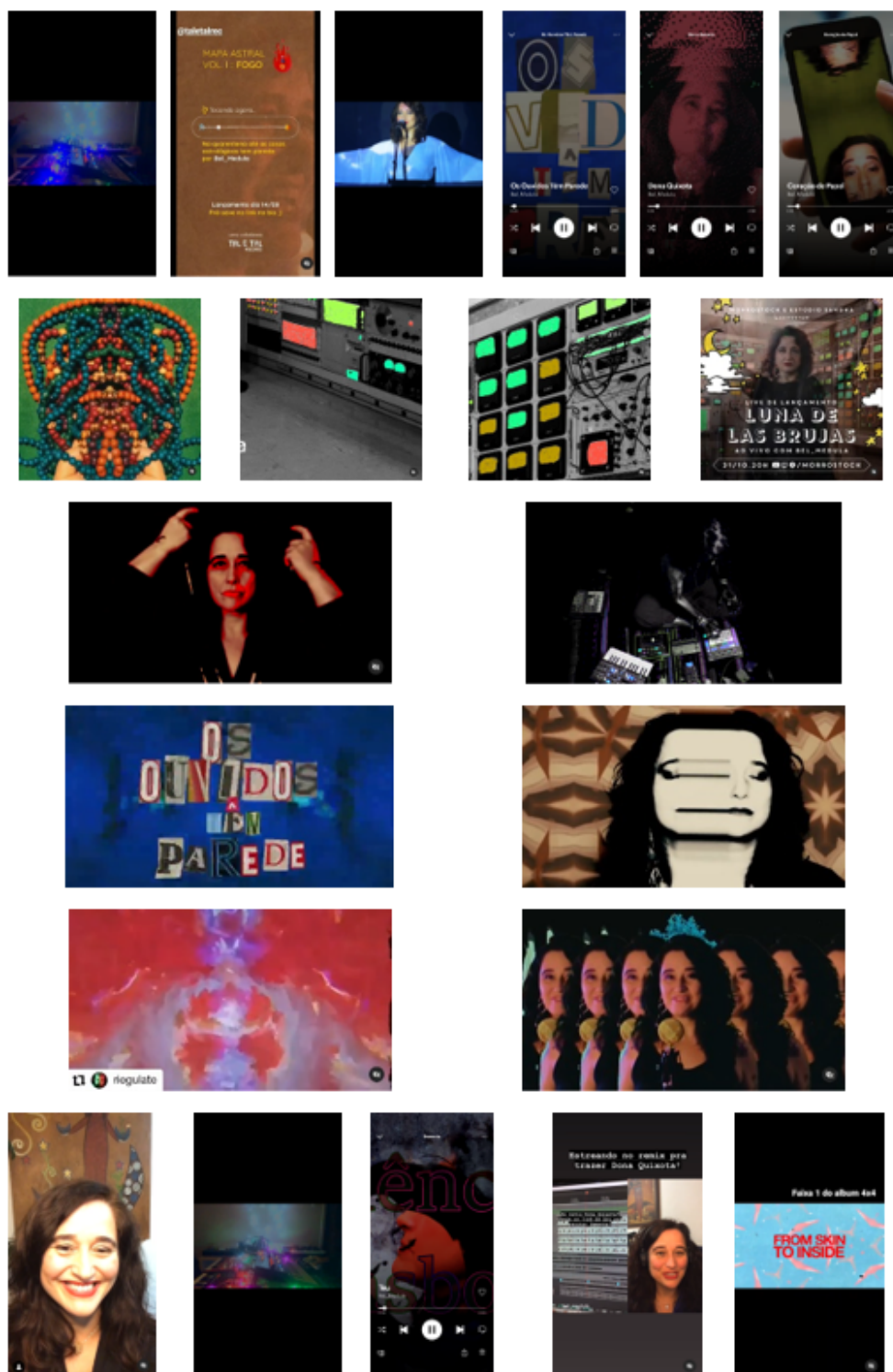
Fig. 03. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Bel Medula

d) Bianca Obino released the EP "Volta ao mundo de dentro", the singles "10.000 vezes" and "Volta ao mundo de dentro remix" and the "Slow art identity" project, with Instagram and YouTube videos, including videoclips, lyric videos, interviews on live streams, and Spotify Canva.
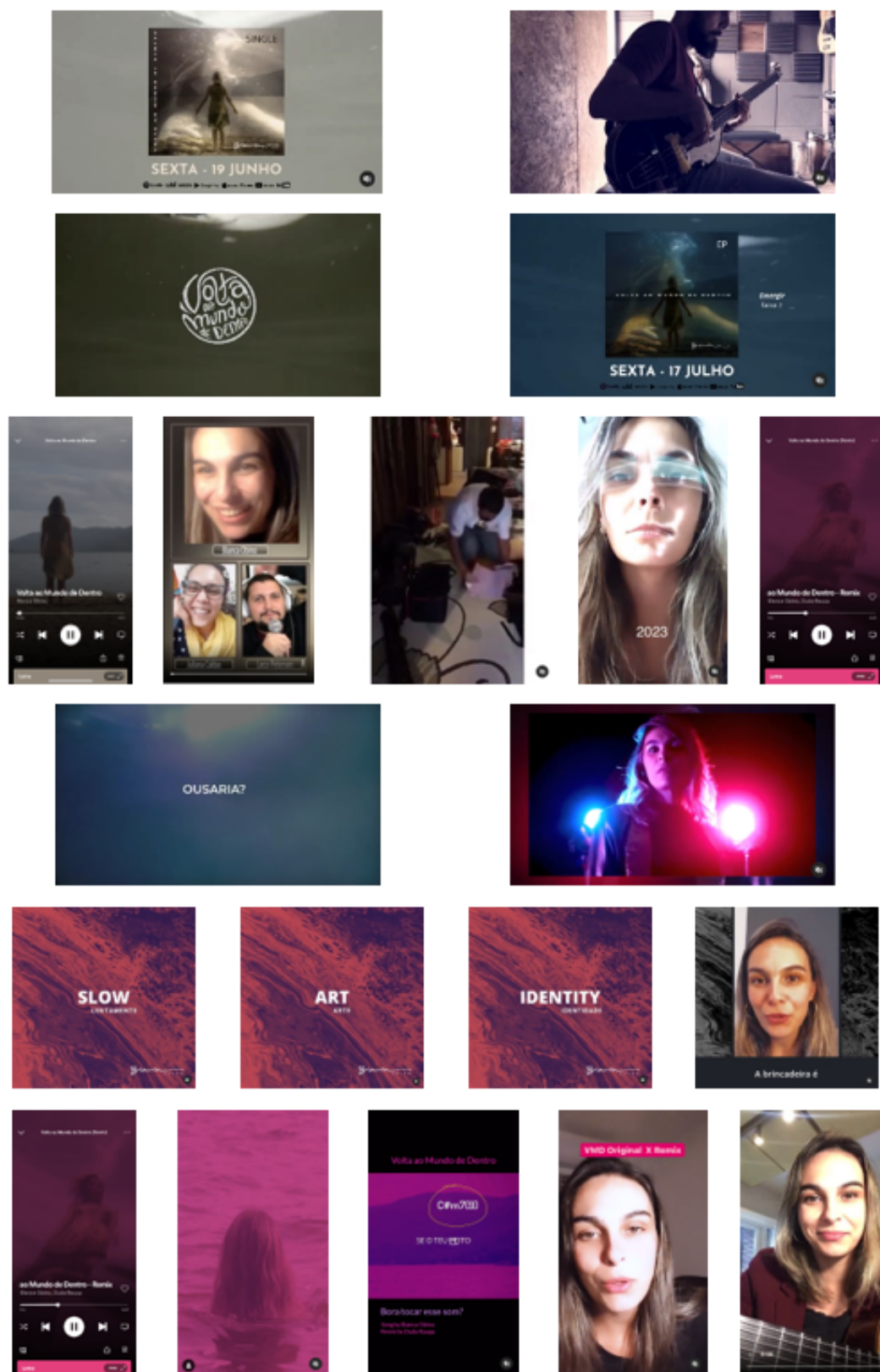
Fig. 04. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Bianca Obino

e) Dessa Ferreira released the single "Pulso", with a series of Instagram videos, including backstage images, a videoclip and a YouTube live.
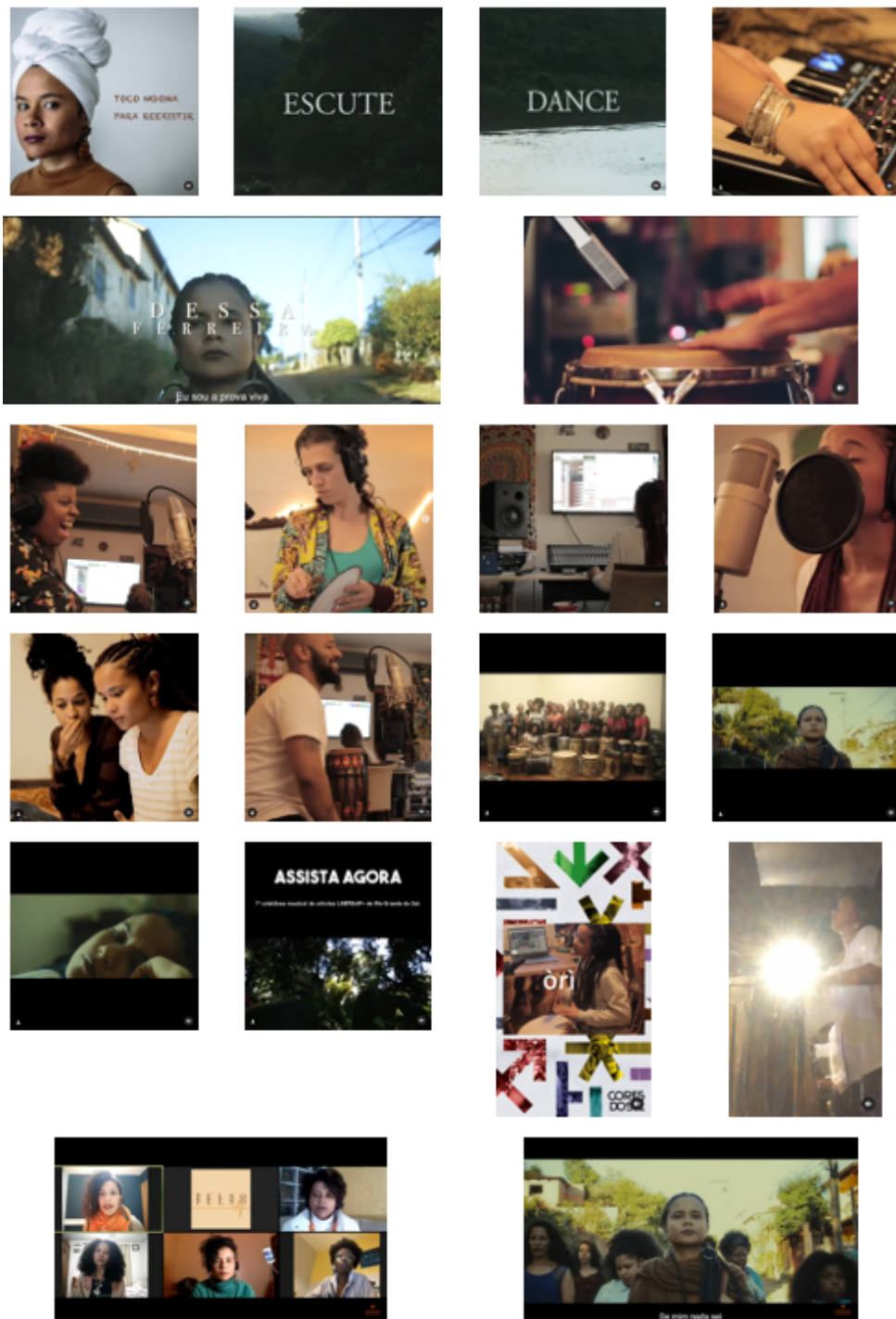

Fig. 05. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Dessa Ferreira

f) Grupo Três Marias released the single "Santo Festeiro", with Instagram and YouTube videos, including a videoclip and a mini documentary on the backstage process.
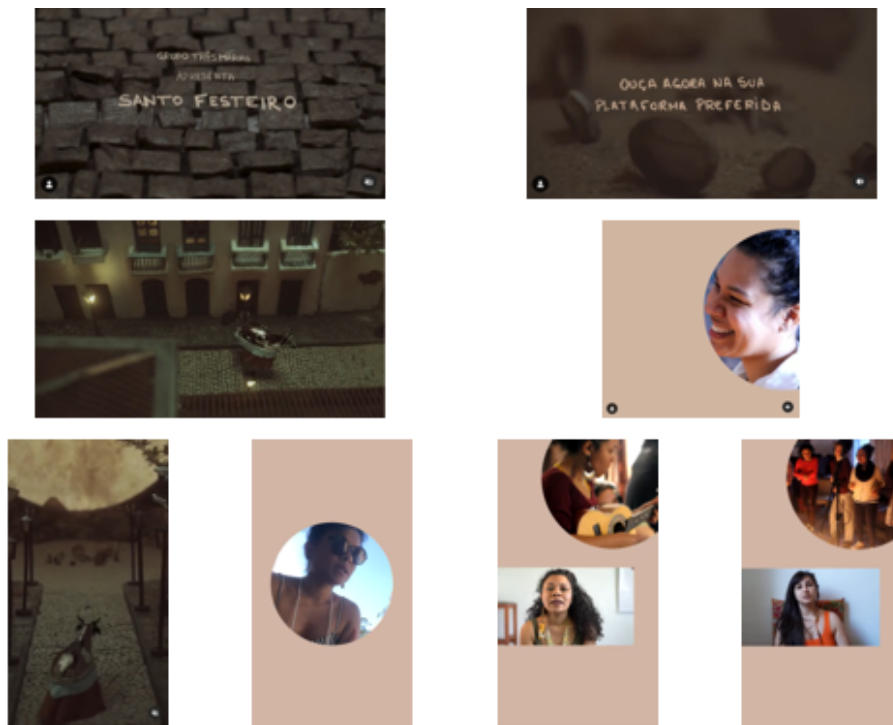
Fig. 06. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Grupo Três Marias

g) Micol Martinez released the album "I buoni spropositi", with a video explaining that considered the possibility of postponing the date of release because of the Covid-19 pandemic situation but thought that the songs could bring people some hope.

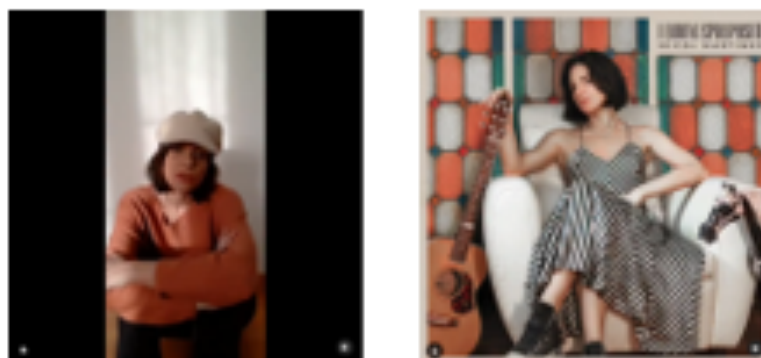**Fig. 07. Set of screenshots of an audiovisual by Micol Martinez**

h) Giungla released the singles "Walk On The Ceiling", "CTR", "Turbulence", "Jump", and an EP called "Turbulence", with YouTube and Instagram videos, including lyric videos, and Spotify Canva.

Fig. 08. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Giungla

i) Francesca Incudine released the singles "Non è finita" and "Zinda", with YouTube and Instagram videos, including one explaining the origin of a song and videoclips.
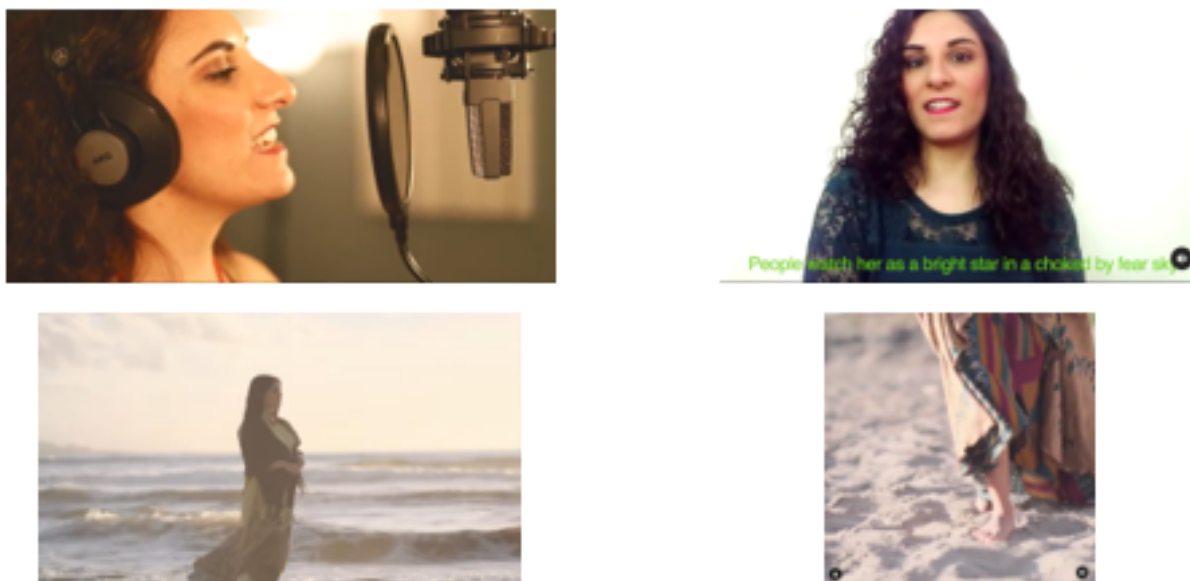
Fig. 09. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Francesca Incudine

j)   Guendalina released the singles "Veluto Rosso", "Fuoriposto" and "Impressione", with YouTube and Instagram videos, including a videoclip, lyric videos and Spotify Canvas.
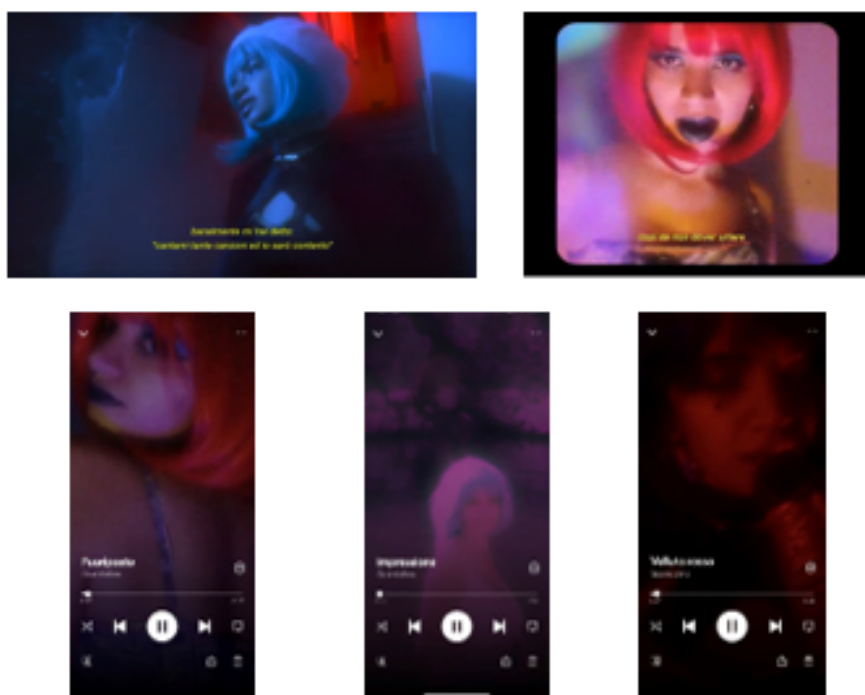

Fig. 10. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Guendalina

k)   Marianne Mirage released the single "Vulnerabili" and the album "Mirage", with Instagram videos, singing and being interviewed, and Spotify Canvas.
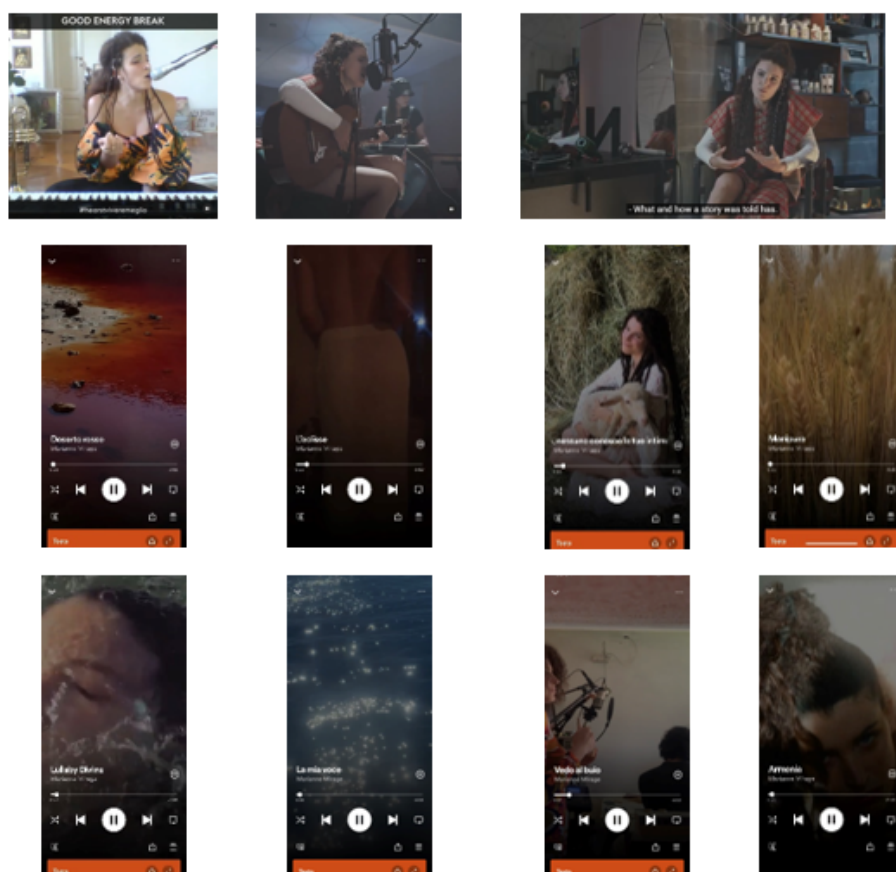
Fig. 11. Set of screenshots of audiovisuals by Marianne Mirage

On the following table, it is possible to visualise the quantitative of audiovisuals mapped, by artists/group of each music scene. Because of the already expressive amount of material, we have considered videos published on social media platforms pages, profiles and channels, on feed or as live streams subsequently published, as well as Spotify canvas, and we have not taken in account ephemeral content such as Instagram stories and other similar media.

Music scene	Artists/group	Audiovisuals
Porto Alegre	Bel Medula	56
	Bianca Obino	65
	Clarissa Ferreira	29
	Dessa Ferreira	21
	Gabriela Lery	22
	Grupo Três Marias	7
Milan	Guendalina	11
	Giungla	48
	Francesca Incudine	7
	Marianne Mirage	12
	Micol Martinez	1

Tab. 01. Quantitative of audiovisuals mapped, by artist/group

The subsequent methodology moves regard the construction of the collections (categories for analysis), which, related to the strength of the audiovisualities found on the musicians' online strategies on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Zoom, TikTok and Twitch, and considering audiovisual processes, are divided in categories regarding strategies and relationship communication goals with their audience and other members of the music scenes. The categories are: "Check out what I am creating"; "See what's coming on"; "Have you already checked out this new release?"; "This is the mood of this release"; "Come to know more about this release"; and "Thank you for your support!".

Alongside with that, based on the life report method (Bertaux, 2005), interviews were conducted so far with Gabriela Lery, Clarissa Ferreira, Bel Medula, Bianca Obino, and Dessa Ferreira, from the music scene in Porto Alegre; and with Guendalina, Giungla, Micol Martinez and Francesca Incudine, from the music scene in Milan. We also interviewed the following professionals related to the music scenes: Alice Castiel, who leads the female artists music project "Projeto Concha" in Porto Alegre, which includes concerts, workshops and artistic residencies; Luiza Padilha, who works as an executive producer, photographer and designer, involved in many projects related to female independent musicians in Porto Alegre, being herself a DJ; Marian Trapassi, who leads the project "Because the Night" in Milan, a monthly concert with female singers, instrumentalists and songwriters, being also herself one; Silvia Tarassi, researcher on the independent music scene in Milan and currently consultant for cultural projects of the local city hall; and Letizia Angelini, a professional of Italia Music Lab also involved in the Keychange project, which supports artists for promoting gender equality in the music environment. On the continuity of this research, our objective is to interview all the artists and the group mapped, as well as other professionals related to both music scenes. This methodological move aims to understand their stories, the choices that were made during the time period covered on the research and the context of the independent music scenes of Porto Alegre and Milan.

On the next section, we will present the theoretical approach for this research, as well as the analysis.

Audiovisualities, technoculture and platformisation: entanglement with the female independent musicians' strategies during the Covid-19 pandemic

Considering the audiovisualities perspective, audiovisual is understood as a virtuality which is actualised on media as well as transcends it (Kilpp, 2010). Our approach occurs from

technoculture, an interdependence between culture and technology (Shaw, 2008) and the possibility of the emergence of alternative cultural forms, as the audiovisual and its potential experimental tendencies, together with the different media practices through usages and appropriations, and its aesthetics and techniques, in a feedback loop between technologies.

In relation to that, the circumstance that many economic sectors and life spheres are permeated by digital platforms is defined as platformisation, which impacts the processes of practices reorganisation and cultural imaginaries (Poell et al., 2020). Platforms are structures powered by data, which is organised and automatised by algorithms and interfaces, as well as acquire formalisation from property relations, that are guided by business models and regulated by terms of usage (van Dijck et al., 2018). They are algorithm machines, then based on output produced by the processing of instructions and data, by means of steps that are structured in sets, which are the algorithms (Gillespie, 2014 apud Kitchin, 2017), and that shape an expressive amount of tasks and practices of everyday life (MacCormick, 2013 apud Kitchin, 2017). This means that platforms' technological and economic features contribute to shape their users' behaviour and also social standards. These aspects are related to technocultural issues regarding the usages and appropriations for production and consume and that derive from the platforms' features, and include the audiovisualities in this context.

Algorithms have a transformative effect in domains they are deployed, with implications in their labour market (Kitchin, 2017), and also in the mediation of relationships and content producing (Anderson, 2011 apud Kitchin, 2017). Therefore, the discussion on strategic usage of platforms related to audiovisualities implies on dealing with their algorithmic logics, acting through planned actions (Inghan, 2018, apud Bonini, Gandini, 2019). On platforms, in which videos are usually distributed by the streaming technology, we find editorial human action combined with algorithmic logics, permeated by power relations and determinative for digital music curation, in a process that could be named as "algo-torial" (Bonini, Gandini, 2019).

It is important to consider the power and the effects of algorithms, which are not modes of operation or forms of knowledge which could be seen as impartial and neutral, whose work is apolitical and impassive (Kitchin, 2017): the way we understand the world is shaped by them (Kitchin, Dodge, 2011, apud Kitchin, 2017), which are profoundly performative (Mackenzie, Vurdubakis, 2011 apud Kitchin, 2017). Thus, critical attention must be focused on the algorithms' effects, that shape life chances with hidden and opaque source codes (Kitchin, 21017).

The recommendation systems based on machine learning algorithms, at the same time as, by means of identification and possession, are able to establish a stronger relation, also create segregation when are updated by similarity of new and previous data, as well as trigger the user reactions towards predictive behaviour (Chun, 2021). Thereby, these systems reduce the collective diversity possibilities, understanding identity categories as non-authentic latent factors that cross a category boundary and using race, gender and sex orientation information for discriminatory purposes (Chun, 2021).

The way algorithms work impact fundamentally and unequally people's lives, beyond the categories of digital divide such as usage, general benefits, skills and access, in unequal and fundamental extents (Gran et al., 2019). This circumstance also includes the awareness on the functions and influences of algorithms on platforms, which implies in a digital strength that is distributed differently between people. It consists in a very important knowledge in order to enable people to interact in a critical and conscious way with these technologies (Gran et al., 2019). Consequently, it is a matter of digital literacy.

Algorithm awareness might vary according to demographic factors. Therefore, considering geographic location, education, age and gender, it is possible to find that these variables cause a gap, in a strong way, regarding this skill (Gran et al., 2019). We believe that, beyond what is shown on these researchers' study, which points that the awareness is lower on women, on people least educated and of a higher age (Gran et al., 2019), that the issues related to the digital divide between the Global North and the Global South, considering levels of development and opportunities, directly related to social and historical processes, are highly relevant. With this, we observe the geographic location factor in a broader way, deeply connected to the technoculture regarding usages and appropriations of technology and their impact on culture.

The platformisation of cultural and creative industries is a phenomenon in process way before the Covid-19 pandemic, which was dramatically increased during this specific period. For example, platformed live music concerts and the consumption of musical contents such as videos on online platforms were part of the changes in cultural practices (Valiati et al., 2021). Personalised recommendation systems and algo-torial logic are also present on music streaming platforms, what led artists to create strategies as the pre-save campaigns and to divulgate them, many times, with videos. In the context of social media and the meeting platforms, different video formats are used aiming on that, such as stories, reels, live

streams, longer videos, online meetings and others, depending on the new features often released by the platforms. They were used by the artists for interviews, for playing their songs and being in touch with their audience – and also trying to make it grow – as well as performing concerts, and to show their videoclips – in parts or entirely. The objectives might be divulgating a teaser for a new release, informing about an upcoming live stream of online concert, showing new songs, being grateful to their audience or also reminding them to watch the videos and to listen to the songs.

We can see these platform logics aspects on the strategies by the mapped musicians, with all their divulgation actions in that period of time and their usages and appropriations of audiovisual. These factors are also present on the discourse of all the professionals already interviewed, considering the musicians and the other members of the scene that were heard by us. Dealing with the algorithms' logics is an important theme on all their actions on platforms, trying to understand the functionalities and to manage them in order to make their work in music happen and succeed. It holds a close relation to the aspects regarding the circumstances of independent music scenes.

Independent music scenes and the DIY ethos in the context of creative industries

Considering that, we can relate how technoculture entangled with audiovisualities goes through a transformation and a feedback loop between technologies, temporalities and what holds specific senses and is recognized in the context we are observing. Therefore, we can observe the symbolic codes in relation to music scenes, which dialogue with urban contexts and typify socialising spaces (Gelder, Thornton, 1997, apud Bennet et al., 2021). Lifestyle in a local community reflect new tendencies of a society and the do-it-yourself or DIY practices (Bennet et al., 2021). It is deeply entangled with the usages and practices and appropriations of technologies in an independent music scene.

We propose a sight regarding a relation of technoculture and audiovisualities through a transformation process which leads to a feedback of technologies, temporalities and which, considering the specificities of the Covid-19 pandemic time, hold specifics senses and logics, as well as is recognised. Together with that, the DIY *ethos*' characteristics unfolded in resistance moves seeking to maintain the authenticity and the sustainability of the independent work in music build a set of networked cultural practices entangled with

sociability patterns articulated from common interests. The DIY practices have developed a socioeconomic and technology transformation from the popularisation of creative digital technologies (Bennett et al., 2021). Therefore, it is possible to visualise a nearness between the usages and appropriations that transform and then actualise the technology and, thereby, the technoculture in the independent music scenes during the pandemic.

A music scene might be defined by a music genre, location or social activity, which are related to a search for interests, to sociality, to collective identities which take shape and to experimental and innovation actions in cultural life (Straw, 2013). It is articulated to affinities and interconnections, funded in a cultural consuming ethics (Straw, 2006). An independent music scene is the one composed by artists who do not hold a contract with one of the major recording companies, which are currently Universal Music, Sony Music and Warner Music.

Independent music scenes hold two main characteristics: entrepreneurship actions mobilised through networked relations, the multi-tasking activities of their members, who work with different attributions in order to make that scene happen, beyond their activity as musicians (Tarassi, 2018). This also relates to the entanglement between practices on digital media and sociality on music scenes, that are part of the cultural digitalisation processes which increased during this century (Sá, Janotti Jr, 2013).

The digital environment demands technical, aesthetical and economic actions by the members of a music scene, that imply also on this scene's identity, through a complex process. Therefore, the digital environment might also be central for the constitution of a scene, which can also be understood as a sociotechnical network (Sá, 2013). Although the work in an independent music scene is not necessarily sustainable or rewarding from an economic point of view, its members seek to structure satisfactory professional trajectories (Threadgold, 2018 apud Bennett et al, 2021; Tarassi, 2018). To achieve that, they combine key roles, so, beyond being musicians, singers and composers, they might also be music producers, educators, cultural producers, press officers and concert venue owners, among others (Bennett et al, 2021; Tarassi, 2018).

This plural activity makes the work in music viable, as well as foster the sociality and articulation networks, which might make it stronger (Tarassi, 2018), but, as many times at least part of this work in voluntary, the way it unfolds impact the sustainability of a music scene in the medium and long terms (Terranova, 2000 apud Tarassi, 2018). On the independent music scene of Porto Alegre, for example, during the first two decades of this

century, the usages and appropriations of digital technologies enabled this scene to grow (Zoehler Giorgis, 2017a), but usually their members had other paid jobs not directly related to music. Those with professional experience related to communication usually used this knowledge to promote their work in music. The need for dedicating time to other kinds of work in order to be able to make a living, nonetheless, impacted on their articulation in the scene and the continuity of their work in music (Zoehler Giorgis, 2016).

In the context of the independent music scenes, a significant strength of the scene's articulation happens by means of concerts, which are an important source of income for the artists, also because they usually sold their products in the venues, as well as got in touch with their audience and other members of the scene (Zoehler Giorgis, 2016). When we transpose it to the reality of the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the needed restrictions in order to contain the spread of the virus, when these articulations had to happen practically only online, other issues arise.

The creative industries where one of the economic areas most affected by the pandemic. This sight comes from a European point of view, but is surely useful when we observe that with the spread of the pandemic, also the crisis followed this move, remembering this process started before in Europe and then in South America. Some reasons are the opportunity for visibility and the relationship with the public, and their economic characteristics (Benghozi, 2022).

Situated between the social and the economic, music is a form of art and at the same time a creative economy sector (Ferrareli, 2021), thus being part of the creative industries. Informal work is a fundamental characteristic of the music professionals' reality, which affects the measurement of their impact on the local economy (Núñez, 2017 apud Ferrareli, 2021).

Regarding to music scenes in the context of the creative industry, the pandemic period catalysed transformations, as those related to the appropriation of digital technology. Therefore, it was at the same time a crisis and an opportunity that resulted in strong resilience (Benghozi, 2022), being the challenges of creativity at the heart of the capacity to survive, that is, the characteristics of the cultural and creative industries that are innate (Salvador, 2022). Alongside with that, cultural and creative activities played an important role to people who stayed at home during social distance procedures and lockdowns, who consumed more

cultural products, what showed how the cultural and creative industries could bring a positive contribution to everyday life in societies (Salvador, 2022).

In a survey conducted about the work in music in the context of the creative industry of Rio Grande do Sul (the state in Brazil of which Porto Alegre is the capital city) during the pandemic, in which 67,9% of the respondents have declared to be men and 32,1% to be women, 89,3% declared to be white, 37,5% informed that during that time were not producing authorial work, 28,6% claimed that their creative production was affected and 50% affirmed they were not doing musical live streams. That is, the profile observed was of a majority of white men from Porto Alegre and region, as the study informs (Ferrareli et al., 2021). Interestingly, this kind of research was not able to detect what female independent musicians of Porto Alegre were creating and producing, when they compose, play, and sing their songs, as well as release musical products such as albums, EPs and singles, and doing videos, live streams, online concerts and commented auditions to divulgate them. There are no register of similar research focused on music as part of the creative industry regarding Milan during the pandemic.

Circumstances as those inform that, besides doing the work in music, women still have to deal with the invisibility produced by the misogynist context of our society, the creative industries and the music scenes. Being a woman, even more in the independent music scenes during the pandemic, being creatively productive, considering the social context which silences women and at the same time demand them for much more work – paid and unpaid –, and also finding ways to make this creative work visible, definitely constitute a kind of activism. This will be more discussed on the following parts of this study.

Therefore, to face the new reality during the pandemic, the female artists needed to amplify their multitasking skills, now related not only to audiovisual but also to digital communication and live streaming. Even with the possibility of counting on other members of the scene for help, the technocultural viability and what was adequate in that sense community many times included the need to avoid physic presence, because of social distancing procedures and the inexistence, at that time, of anti-Covid vaccine. Therefore, the DIY skills of these artists were transformed during this period, also considering the circumstance that, from a certain point of view, they became digital content creators, using for that an amount of time that could be used for their musical skills improvement (Chioccarello, 2020).

We can see on the mapped musicians' strategies and also on their discourse on interviews the aim not only to divulgate their work, but also to empower the relations and, consequently, the music scene. With multi-tasking activities and building relationships with other members of the scene, they sought to make their work in music happen, as well as to give visibility to other artists and professionals, dialoguing with the notion of a collective. The usage of audiovisual strategies, possibly in a way to manage the issues related to the absence of physical presence, was a very important factor in this matter.

Gender and intersectionality issues related to music

These aforementioned aspects are related to gender and intersectionality issues. We propose that based on the need of more complex articulations between music and gender, with the deployment of the more recent feminism waves, crossed by postcolonial perspectives (Sá et al., 2019) as well as the emergence of a research field relating music and gender, as a counterpoint to the constant exclusion and silencing process of women in music, a filed which is predominantly androcentric, male, white and Eurocentric (McClary, 2021; Zerbinatti et al., 2018).

The movements to include women in the music environment still need to build and amplify spaces for them as instrumentalists, composers and singers, considering their representativity and the space for their voices and to what they have to say (McClary, 2021). In relation to that, there is also a discussion about the representation of women in compositions written by men (McClary, 2002; Zoehler Giorgis, 2017b). The act of giving visibility to women's work in music, including composing and playing instruments, beyond singing, contributes to the construction of multiple histories and to the existence of models of women who create and compose, being a reference and an inspiration for other female musicians (Nogueira, 2019).

In this context, the constitution of collectives, festivals and organisations are crucial for women's professionalisation in music, which include mutual support and knowledge exchange, are network articulated and enable them to build strategies for visibility and space (Polivanov, Medeiros, 2020). Nevertheless, it also implies with other nuances, as those who consider the global south and the global north, the differences between the reality of women based in other inequalities and their entanglement with the DIY's *ethos* and practices (Guerra,

2020), which might also make that some women to feel excluded from movements because they did not identify with those who lead them (Polivanov, Medeiros, 2021).

We can visualise on this the relevance of the intersectional perspective, as an analytical sensibility to think identity and to discuss its relation with power. The exclusions made visible by intersectionality refer to class oppression, sexism, transphobia, racism, ableism, which unfold on vulnerabilities faced, for example, by women on immigration moves, people of colour in LGBTTQIAP+ movements, people with disabilities fighting against police abuse, trans women in feminist movement, among other situations and circumstances (Crenshaw, 2015).

As the conceptualisation of gender discrimination was funded centred on the experience of white women, this is a speech that reinforces the black women's exclusion, in a process that counts on the white women privileges, also those of domination. Therefore, the discussion that led to coin the term "intersectionality", the sum of racism and sexism, as well as other aspects, is minor than the intersectional experience (Crenshaw, 1989).

For this reason, we believe that an approach in relation to women must always take into account the other characteristics that traverse their existence. In this study, when we observe the strategies by female independent musicians, we consider the crossings regarding gender, class, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, colour/race, geographic location, their social and historic context and the circumstance of being of not people with disability. In this process, we see that the difficulties faced by women in our societies also unfold on their activities in the music environment, where they are entangled with discriminatory actions in their work context, which lead to work overload, besides sexual and moral harassment, making their careers harmed by the gender inequality (Mulheres, 2019).

These difficulties for women were increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the unequal division of domestic work and family care, which became more severe during these period, led women to multiple work shifts, in a processed that harmed their music careers, also because of emotional overload (Segnini, 2014; Pichoneri, 2011; Requião, 2020; Barros et al., 2020; Data Sim, 2019 apud Sandroni et al., 2021). In addition to that, the lower income and less work opportunities due to gender prejudice, as well as urban and domestic violence – the latter, intensified and more difficult to detect because of the social distance. All these aspects have made women even more vulnerable.

This led UNO Women, yet in April of 2020, to recommend measures to ease the impact of the pandemic on women (Bublitz, 2020). Together with that, a study published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in February of 2021 points that there has been a reduction of women's participation in the work market, and that the dependence of families on the unpaid female work, which leads women to leave other activities to be in charge of their houses, children and elder people. The study concludes that the setback caused by the pandemic in work condition for women will be of more than a decade (Ferreira, 2021).

Considering the discussions here presented regarding gender and music issues, in dialogue with the enhancement of the platformisation processes during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is possible to observe how they are entangled with technoculture and audiovisualities. It also happens in the context of the independent music scenes in the creative industries, like the ones we are focusing on in this research.

Other elements and discussion

With all the aspects already discussed in this study related to platformisation, technocultures and audiovisualities, alongside with the Covid-19 pandemic context, creative industry and independent music scene, and gender and intersectionality, it is very interesting to observe the capacity, empowerment, creativity and resilience (Benghozi, 2022; Salvador, 2022) of the female musicians we mapped. They were able to compose (McClary, 2002; Zoehler Giorgis, 2017b; Nogueira, 2019), record, play, sing and also to create many divulgation and relationship strategies (Guerra, 2020; Tarassi, 2018; Zoehler Giorgis, 2016; Bennett et al, 2021; Sá; Janotti Jr, 2013) using the resources available in very challenging times, building possibilities for them, for other women and for the other professionals involved in the music scenes (Straw, 2006; Straw, 2013). Therefore, we see that the mapped artists have built and found ways to deal with the difficulties faced by them as women (Mulheres, 2019; Polivanov; Medeiros, 2020; 2021) during the pandemic (Segnini, 2014; Pichoneri, 2011; Requião, 2020; Barros et al., 2020; Data Sim, 2019 apud Sandroni et al., 2021; Bublitz, 2020; Ferreira, 2021), in the independent music environment and in a platformed context.

The digital divide (Gran, A. et al. 2021) is also present on the consequences of the different kinds of discrimination which resonate in their lives: it is an intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989)

circumstance that relates to gender, geographic location, age, ethnicity and other factors, supplemented by the algorithmics' logics we are immerse on (Kitchin, 2017; van Dijck et al., 2018; Poell et al., 2020; Bonini, Gandini, 2019; Chun, 2021). Interestingly, the musicians of Porto Alegre, the capital city of the most southern state in Brazil, an underdeveloped country in the Global South, notably have released more music projects and have published more videos than the ones of Milan, considered to be a very creative and important city, not only in Europe but in the whole world, located in a developed country. This, for us, shows interesting elements related to uses and appropriations of technology, therefore imbricated with technoculture (Shaw, 2008) and audiovisualities (Kilpp, 2010), as well as changes in cultural practices in the creative industry (Valiati et al., 2021; Benghozi, 2022; Salvador, 2022).

Reflections considering also the interviews conducted might indicate this as an effect regarding the resilience capability, the ability of building artistic networks between women and other professionals that could collaborate for the projects, and motivations such as financial survival, seeking to be in contact with the members of the scene and the audience, and the importance of speaking their minds about their feelings, their reality and the whole situation people were going through.

This does not mean that the musicians from one or the other place were not resilient, able to build networks or interested in bringing out their voices: we understand that the difference between both contexts implies also in cultural aspects, which impact the modes of existence and the musicians' discourse, in their songs, videos and also during the interviews. Nonetheless, we must bring on and analyse what is present in the data collected. Despite these differences, we rather prefer to focus on the importance of their actions of resilience through art as women in societies in which their existences, lives, and professional work are already challenging as a consequence of gender inequality. This, for us, is evident artivism.

In what regards the strategies related to the divulgation of music releases, for example, we could also observe during the interviews that the musicians of Porto Alegre expressed more concern related to the platforms' environment, the algorithms and their effects. The same was not evident in the discourse of those of Milan, what led us to start to ask them if this was an important factor for their strategies, but their algorithms awareness has not showed to go much further. This might also be an issue related to a likely lack of discussion of this theme in the Italian society, and not only among women. So we have here other nuances

of the idea of algorithms' awareness and the digital literacy and the digital divide (Gran, A. et al. 2021), also related to intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989).

When we consider the collections, "Check out what I am creating"; "See what's coming on"; "Have you already checked out this new release?"; "This is the mood of this release"; "Come to know more about this release"; and "Thank you for your support!", it is important to observe that not all musicians had videos included in all the categories. Mainly the ones of Porto Alegre have audiovisuals in most of them, and sometimes they were included in more than one category. We could see these categories as divulgation steps, but we prefer to see them as relationship building steps, in which the music releases are a subject.

They relate to strategies and relationship communication goals with their audience and other members of the music scenes, therefore working as a way to foster the DIY *ethos*, transforming it by means of giving visibility, in challenging times, to what was being produced and communicated by musicians as them: women, composers, singers, instrumentalists and independent ones, all at the same time, a during such a challenging social and historical period as the Covid-19 pandemic. It seems to us as a very strategic way of dealing with the platformed logics based on algorithms, in which recommendation systems shape our world and lives.

We must observe, with that, a context in which segregation (Kitchin, 2017; Chun, 2021) is created by platforms, based on predictive behaviour considering the androcentric, male, white context of music, which creates a constant exclusion and silencing process for women (McClary, 2021; Zerbinatti et al., 2018). Thus, fostering a relationship network with other members of the music scene and the audience, by means of strategic steps using audiovisuals, which the musicians have declared on the interviews that were used as possible substitutes of presential actions, is a way to deal with the algorithmic logics, also trying to find, reach and connect to other people similar to them. This could be also a process in which they use the platforms' logics to subvert them in a positive way, and the musicians inform in the interviews they were able, with their actions during the pandemic, to expand their connections. Also these moves, for us, represent artivism in the context.

Therefore, analysis on their audiovisual strategies indicate two relational tendencies: 1) the narrative built on the divulgation steps; and 2) the network articulated with the audience and other musicians. These tendencies are constellations (Canevacci, 1997), which illuminate the information gathered, making it possible to understand and analyse it by means of the

empirical data connection and edition, in an interpretative process which holds the knowledge's luminous sense. Thus, it is possible to visualise, across these musicians' practices, the artivism which is present by means of the use of technology to keep on doing their work in music and building a network with other musicians and the audience.

Considering the gender inequalities in society, alongside with the work and emotional overload, increased during the pandemic, their artistic practices might constitute activism permeated by art and media, bringing on their art and voices as women in such challenging times. We also observe the differences, specificities, difficulties, and privileges, regarding the intersectionality in their condition as women, as sexual orientation, gender identity, race, geographical location, and class. The circumstances of the Global North and South, for example, and the digital divide and the digital literacy, strongly related to the platforms' affordances and functionalities, as well as the inequalities they might produce, considering also the characteristics of the independent music scene, in which the artists usually hold a small audience when compared to mainstream artists, are also evident.

Therefore, our research shows that the musicians, when actualising the audiovisualities, being women and into practices of resistance, might have also actualised the do-it-yourself *ethos* in the independent music scenes they integrate. Their ways of existing and producing in these music scenes might have brought new lights and possibilities for the female musicians to build a space to keep on working with music, and making their voices and speeches be heard through their relations and their songs, and also across themselves, the audience and the platforms.

Final remarks

This research aims observe the audiovisual strategies by independent female musicians of Porto Alegre and Milan during the Covid-19 pandemic, in order to understand how their strategies actualise the audiovisual processes, in their relation to technoculture, gender and intersectionality. To build and articulate this discussion, we sought to reunite a theoretical approach related to platformisation, independent music scenes, gender and intersectionality.

Doing research about platforms, music and gender, considering the platformed context, is challenging and has, of course, limitations. We believe that visiting and revisiting the contents found, as well as listening to the artists and other members of the scene through interviews is crucial to deal with them. To amplify their discourses and to build relations

between them, the context and the audiovisual that were mapped, have so far given a broader view regarding what we consider as audiovisualities and audiovisual processes in this matter.

Therefore, we believe that these artists, with their actions and in relations to the DIY *ethos*, dealt with challenging times using creativity, in a kind of artivism. Their moves and their visibility are entangled with the construction of supportive networks and representativity, which are fundamental for a fairer world in which women's voices can be heard, also across art.

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