

FESTIVAL POLITICA - ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

Maria Irene Aparício, IFILNOVA, Portugal

Ivone Ferreira, ICNOVA, Portugal

Marta Fiolić, IFILNOVA, Portugal

CONFERENCE TOPIC:

The social significance of creative industries

ABSTRACT

Festival Politica is an annual event that started in Lisbon in 2017, and over the years expanded to Braga and Evora, Portugal. Over the years it changed focus from Abstention from Vote, through Human Rights, Europe, and Ecological Sustainability to Frontiers – topics crucial for debate and action throughout our shared global society. But how does one get interested and involved when the overall sentiment is more and more apolitical each year, with alarming numbers among the younger generations – according to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance voter turnout has been declining globally for the last thirty years.

As a response to these circumstances, Festival Politica decided to promote greater political and social awareness among Portuguese citizens through debates, films, exhibitions, workshops, concerts and activities for children establishing itself as a “showcase and laboratory of the power of citizenship” (<https://festivalpolitica.pt/quem-somos/>).

This article intends to reflect upon the articulation of the concepts of activism and citizenship (Harrebye, 2016; Tascon and Wils, 2016) with the visual arts, especially in cinema and advertising videos. The case study focuses on A Troca, the advertisement video produced by FCB Lisbon Advertising Agency for the last Festival's edition in 2021 (<https://youtu.be/Ozkg-e3fzWo>) and on the winning film of the Festival, Chelas Nha Kau produced by Bataclan 1950 collective and Bagabaga Studios. A semiotic analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006; Saborit, 2012) and content analysis served as the core of the case study, complemented with an interview with Rui Marques, the organizer of the event.

KEYWORDS: activism, citizenship, advertisement, visual arts, cinema, social semiotics