

Introduction

Over the past fifty years, TV Globo has dominated Brazilian television to such an extent that it has become difficult to distinguish the television network from the medium itself. Since the early 1980s, no Brazilian television director has achieved greater commercial *and* critical success than one TV Globo employee, Luiz Fernando Carvalho. This book is about the Global South's largest and most successful television network and its greatest director. More precisely, it is about the singular aesthetic and mode of production that characterizes Carvalho's work and the ways in which his work functions as both a counterpoint to and a reflection of Brazilian television fiction's past and present, and its transition into the future.

AN EMERGING POSTNETWORK ERA AND THE RISE OF THE TELEVISION DIRECTOR AND AESTHETIC INQUIRY

From the early 1950s through the mid-1980s, production and consumption of television programming in the United States were largely limited to ABC, CBS, and NBC. Media scholar Amanda Lotz contends that from the 1980s to the mid-2000s American television transitioned away from the network-centric model of production and consumption to one characterized by a proliferation of viewing options.¹ The "multichannel transition" phase, as Lotz refers to it, arose out of the confluence of technological innovations, government regulations weakening networks' control over program creation, and the emergence of "nascent cable channels and new broadcast networks," all of which expanded consumers' access to content (7–10).

By the time the multichannel transition phase had come to a close around 2005, the postnetwork era had begun to take root slowly. The characteristics of this new era are not yet fully defined, and, as Lotz herself notes, though its eventual dominance seems inevitable, even in 2014 "it remained impossible to assert that the majority of the audience had entered the post-network era or that all industrial processes had 'completed' the transition" (10). Nonetheless, it is apparent that, among other factors, incipient cable networks and Internet

companies, time-shifting technologies, Video on Demand, tablets, and Internet TVs with applications like Amazon Prime, HBO Go, Hulu, and Netflix have provided spectators with more autonomy over what, when, where, and how they watch television content. Clearly, the days are now long gone when a television spectator had no option other than to sit down on a sofa in a living room at 8 p.m. to watch one of three prime time television series or sitcoms aired by the major broadcast networks.

Media executives and producers alike, particularly in the United States, but also elsewhere, understand that in response to the current audiovisual and more broadly popular culture landscape they must find innovative ways to capture increasingly diffuse and diverse audiences. While such a task is complicated relative to the network-era reality, it potentially expands opportunities for production, distribution, and reception. In a progressively more competitive marketplace, these opportunities have helped to spur the emergence of audiovisually rich and narratively complex series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (WB, 1997–2001 and UPN, 2001–2003), *The Sopranos* (HBO, 1999–2007), *The Wire* (HBO, 2001–2008), *Lost* (ABC, 2004–2010), *Life on Mars* (BBC One, 2006–2007), *Breaking Bad* (AMC, 2008–2013), *Mad Men* (AMC, 2007–2015), *Downton Abbey* (ITV, PBS, 2010–2015), *Game of Thrones* (HBO, 2011–), *House of Cards* (Netflix, 2012–), and *Atlanta* (FX, 2017–), to name a few of the most well known and critically acclaimed. Though these series are primarily writer-driven, there has also recently been an influx of well-known filmmakers taking on television projects.

Famously, in 1990 film auteur David Lynch created and directed the pilot for what would become the television cult hit *Twin Peaks* (ABC, 1990–1991). At the time, relative to the possibilities in film, American television was largely an artistic wasteland for a critically acclaimed filmmaker like Lynch. By 2010, however, the “small screen” had become a viable creative space for directors to develop complex and rich aesthetic narratives. Just in the past five years, for example, celebrated filmmakers Lena Dunham (*Girls*), Gus Van Sant (*Boss*), David Fincher (*House of Cards*), Martin Scorsese (*Boardwalk Empire*), Steven Soderbergh (*The Knick*), and Guillermo del Toro (*The Strain*) have all worked at least as both directors and executive producers for different television series. In his year-end writeup on the “Best Stuff from 2014” for his blog *Just TV*, media scholar Jason Mittell astutely notes the rise of television directors:

This seems to have been the year when television direction began to eclipse (or at least match) its writing. There have always been series whose style and tone help distinguish them, but so many of my favorite series this year (*Fargo*, *Transparent*, *Hannibal*, *Girls*, *The Leftovers*, *Olive Kitteredge*) were notable for their innovative and striking visual and sonic sensibilities. Even series that I didn’t love this year,

like *True Detective*, *Louie*, *Game of Thrones*, *Gracepoint*, and *The Missing* (and some I haven't watched yet, like *The Knick* and *The Honorable Woman*), stood out more for their excellent direction more [sic] than writing (at least this year). It will be interesting to see how this plays out going forward, as TV's production model still privileges writers over directors, but perhaps this is shifting, as per *The Knick*. ("Best Stuff")

While television directors, even those more famous ones, still largely remain hired hands, brought in to direct a few episodes, there have been a number of pieces discussing filmmakers newfound interest in working in television. A recent article in *The Guardian* hyperbolically declares "film directors are taking over TV" (Helmore, "Silver Screen"). Other examples include "Film Directors Are Embracing TV" (Maerz, *LA Times*); "Why Are Top Movie Directors Defecting to TV?" (Susman, *Moviefone*); "10 Best TV Shows Created by Filmmakers" (Travers, *IndieWire*); "Television Is Being Taken Over by Filmmakers, and That's a Beautiful Thing" (Epstein, *Quartz*); and "Filmmakers Moving Where the Money Is: Digital TV Series" (Setoodeh and Spangler, *Variety*). One obvious reason why the developing role of filmmakers in television has been announced in this way has to do with the enormous amount of content being produced to satisfy both the existing and emerging distribution channels. Such channels, whether the original three (ABC, CBS, NBC), incipient cable networks, or streaming sites like Netflix, which has dubbed itself as Internet Television, are in search of ways to differentiate themselves and stand out among the ever-growing and competitive crowd. Signing consecrated filmmakers, then, is a means to market and qualitatively distinguish a particular program and by extension, the network itself. To this end, there has been a heightened attempt on the part of producers and distributors to appropriate and align themselves with the accumulated symbolic capital of celebrated filmmakers. In turn and in theory, the director receives a substantial budget, creative freedom, and a potentially long-term revenue stream.

Not surprisingly, during this transformative period there has been a surge in the number of scholars undertaking aesthetic analyses of television programs. Steven Peacock and Jason Jacobs's 2013 edited volume *Television Aesthetics and Style* is a clear example of this interest. With the objective of establishing the emerging field of television aesthetics, the four-part compilation deals with the conceptual debate surrounding television aesthetics while also including essays that exemplify the practical application of aesthetic analyses of programs from different television genres (e.g., comedy, drama, nonfiction, and history). Central to both the theorization and application of the aesthetic assessment of television is the question of how to evaluate a particular program's artistic worth.

In Media and Television Studies, such an endeavor is a sensitive one insofar as it evokes Cultural Studies' ideological reservations regarding value judgments (Jacobs, "Issues of Judgement and Value" 428). Sarah Cardwell argues that these reservations have resulted in a paucity of aesthetic analyses of television programs for two primary, interconnected reasons: "First, the development of television studies out of sociology and cultural studies has led to a focus on television's import in political, ideological, and socio-cultural terms, rather than in artistic or cultural terms. Second, television is still regarded as artistically impoverished in comparison with other arts" (180). However, it is precisely television's artistically marginalized position that these scholars call into question. For example, Jacobs argues, "the continued sense that the television text is mostly inferior to the film text and cannot withstand concentrated critical pressure . . . has to be revised in the light of contemporary television" ("Issues of Judgement and Value" 433). In other words, to borrow freely from the title of Jason Mittell's most recent book, contemporary television storytelling is a "complex" endeavor. More often than not, and in addition to questions of production, political economy, and representation, a central aspect of contemporary television fiction's complexity is an audiovisual richness that deserves the full attention of the scholar.

In the late 1980s, David Thorburn already understood the importance of analyzing television's form. Whether its focus is political, ideological, or socioeconomic, Thorburn argued that an examination of television that does not account for a work's aesthetic characteristics is an incomplete analysis (163–64, 170). According to Thorburn, who was admittedly reluctant to go so far as to distinguish television as art, a scholar "must be able to read [television's] aesthetic artifacts [to fully understand the] historical and ideological dimensions" (165, 170). Nonetheless, traditionally "Little attention has been paid to what one may call the aesthetics of television: the analysis of thematic, formal, and stylistic qualities; the exploration of questions which arise from a thinker's interest in beauty and in art; and the consequent evaluation of an individual programme's achievements in these terms" (Cardwell 180). As Mittell points out, this is in large part due to an "explicitly antievaluative approach" that "dominates American television scholarship" and maintains "that questions of value should not be on the disciplinary agenda" (*Complex TV* 212).

Despite such reservations, building on Thorburn and beginning with Charlotte Brundson's work throughout the 1990s, television and media scholars have increasingly confronted issues of judgment, evaluation, art, and aesthetics in their assessments of television fiction (Cardwell, "Television Aesthetics" 72). In doing so, they call for a reexamination of select television programming and a repositioning of its place within the broader field

of cultural production. At the heart of this call to arms is a belief that some television fiction embodies an audiovisual construction that demands to be engaged critically, and that television scholars are best prepared both to locate these examples and to take on the heavy intellectual lifting. Although much of the discussion surrounding television aesthetics in general centers on American and British television, it is also directly applicable to television production in Brazil.

AESTHETICS AND THE TELEVISION DIRECTOR IN BRAZIL'S MULTICHANNEL TRANSITION PHASE

As in the United States, albeit to a significantly lesser degree, since the late 1990s, early 2000s Brazilian television has slowly undergone a shift away from the monolithic network model toward one characterized largely by an influx of viewing options and distribution platforms (Borelli and Priolli 33–41). Of particular importance is the Lei 12.485/11 (Law 12.485/11), more commonly referred to as the Lei da TV Paga (The Pay Television Law). Following a nearly five-year contentious dispute that began as an effort to update the 1995 Lei do Cabo (Cable Television Law), President Dilma Rousseff signed Lei 12.485/11 into law on September 12, 2011. Designed to increase domestic production and competition in the audiovisual market, the law establishes quotas that require international pay television channels to broadcast a minimum of three and a half hours of content created by Brazilian production companies each week. One and a half hours of that total must come from independent Brazilian production companies. In addition to the content requirement, the law also stipulates that there must be one Brazilian channel for every three non-Brazilian pay television channels.

Due to the development of an increasingly competitive marketplace that has seen an emergence of new national and global players, TV Globo's grip over its historically faithful audiences has weakened. At the same time, there has been an uptick in demand for national content to fill the many emerging distribution channels. Moreover, Lei 12.485/11 has played a role in lowering pay television subscription prices. Consequently, during the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century, consumers' augmented access to pay television and the Internet and the financing and production stipulations of Lei 12.485/11 have all combined to encourage more frequent partnerships between networks (broadcast and cable, national and transnational) and independent production companies. In turn, these partnerships have produced some of the most aesthetically rich Brazilian television of the past decade and a half, including: *Cidade dos Homens* (*City of Men* 2002–2005) and *Som e Fúria* (a 2009 adaptation of the Canadian series *Slings and Arrows*)—both TV Globo and

O2 Filmes coproductions; *Mandrake* (2005 and 2007), an HBO and Conspiração Filmes coproduction; *Alice* (2008), an HBO and Gullane Filmes coproduction; *9mm: São Paulo* (2008–2009, 2011), a Fox and Moonshot Pictures coproduction; and *Sessão de Terapia*, a Moonshot Filmes and GNT coproduction (2012–2014). Though such partnerships have become an increasingly important aspect of networks' efforts to diversify their content and to attract and compete with pay television's growing audience, Brazil's most innovative television continues to come from Luiz Fernando Carvalho, a director employed by TV Globo.

Outside of Brazil, Carvalho is best known for his lone feature-length film, *Lavoura Arcaica* (*To the Left of the Father*), which, in addition to being widely considered a masterpiece of Brazilian cinema, was screened and won awards at a number of international film festivals. Nevertheless, nearly the director's entire professional career has been in television. Carvalho's artistic trajectory is quite interesting as it is in many ways the exact opposite of those followed by the consecrated North American filmmakers mentioned above, who first established themselves in film, moving into television only once the medium had become a viable artistic option. Spanning more than thirty years, Carvalho's time in television has seen him direct *Renascer* (1993) and *O Rei do Gado* (1996), two of the most commercially successful and critically acclaimed Brazilian telenovelas. Additionally, he has adapted works by canonical Lusophone authors such as Eça de Queirós, Ariano Suassuna, Machado de Assis, Clarice Lispector, Graciliano Ramos, and Milton Hatoum into short films, year-end specials, miniseries, and microseries (for the definition of a microseries and the other formats mentioned here, see the discussion at the end of this introduction). For all his success working in a number of different television formats, it has been in the microseries that Carvalho has set himself apart. Indeed, the cannibalistic hybridization of elements from disparate artistic fields and dialogic references to erudite, folkloric, and contemporary national and global popular cultures that characterize Carvalho's microseries *Hoje é Dia de Maria—A Primeira e A Segunda Jornada* (*Today Is Maria's Day—First and Second Journey* 2005), *A Pedra do Reino* (*The Stone of the Kingdom* 2007), *Capitu* (2008), *Afinal, o que Querem as Mulheres?* (*After All, What Do Women Want?* 2010), and *Subúrbia* (*Periphery* 2012)² have distinguished Carvalho as one of the most creative directors working in Brazil today, whether in film or television.

Despite the uniqueness of Carvalho's microseries, the recent emergence of other audiovisually complex television series, and Brazilian television fiction's overwhelming reach and socioeconomic impact both inside and outside Brazil, academic discourse in Brazil has tended to privilege film over

television, often seeing the two as diametrically opposed. As a result, little scholarly research has examined the aesthetics of Brazilian television fiction. Media Studies scholar Roberto Moreira contends that Brazilian intellectuals view television as being an “ignorant, bastard, ignoble mass medium, whose primary function is to serve power structures” (50). In practice, such a perspective marginalizes the medium’s artistic production in favor of that of film, a genre which, in Brazil, has traditionally been created by the elite for the elite (Moreira 50). Thus, the disconnect between the elitist social space occupied by the intellectual and the popular social space occupied by television helps to reproduce the type of research present in the Brazilian academy (Moreira 50).

Moreira’s comments underscore two common ideological positions among Brazilian academics writing about the relationship between film and television. First, adhering to an Adornian mode of thinking, academics widely perceive television as an ideological tool used to control the masses. That is, television is “meaning in the service of power,” churning out programs via a culture industry conceived of as being homologous to traditional industry and its methodical, streamlined production of consumable goods (Thompson, *Ideology* 7). By grouping individuals into an all-encompassing mass and equating the creation of symbolic goods with the Fordian mode of production of consumable goods, this perspective implies a passive creator and spectator. Consequently, it negates individual dispositions, quantities of symbolic capital, cultural competence, spatiotemporal settings, and specific modes and contexts of creation and reception.

Directly related to this first position, the second ideological position further marginalizes television by excluding it altogether from the realm of culture. As a result, this position inherently suggests a preconceived notion of what culture is and who determines and defines it as such. Both of these positions are implicit manifestations of a struggle in which different agents—critics, journalists, academics, filmmakers, to name a few of the most active participants—attempt to establish what they understand to be an appropriate intellectual discourse surrounding the field of audiovisual production. This struggle is made clear in practice within the academic realm insofar as scholarly inquiries into Brazilian audiovisual production disproportionately favor film over television.

Moreira’s comments also highlight an important structural distinction between the ways in which individuals produce Brazilian film and television. Whereas a significant portion of current funding for film production derives from national or local state financing mechanisms such as those outlined in the 1993 Lei Federal 8.685/93, better known as the Lei do Audiovisual (Audiovisual Law), Brazilian television production is largely private and driven by re-

venue from advertising (Caparelli 22; Johnson, *The Film Industry* 64). Within the latter model, content producers and networks have an economic stake in attracting the largest possible audiences, characteristic of a type of creation that occurs in what Pierre Bourdieu calls the subfield of large-scale production (*The Field* 113–15). The competition for state funding among film producers as the primary means for financing a film, however, reduces the economic stakes, often resulting in a mode of production created by a few for a few—what Bourdieu refers to as the subfield of restricted production (*The Field* 113–15). Thus, because it is less subject to those market motivations that drive and ultimately support television’s advertisement-driven economic model, much of Brazilian cinema has been less concerned with larger audience preferences than with producing art for those individuals possessing the cultural competence needed to understand a particular work.³

Broadly speaking, such a model has traditionally allowed filmmakers greater freedom to engage in more frequent and more explicit artistic experimentation. In contrast, since the late 1960s when the medium was becoming increasingly commercialized, Brazilian television has favored less experimental aesthetic modes of production—particularly focusing on those methods that have proven successful in the past. As is the case when determining what is and is not worthy of aesthetic inquiry, film and television’s different financing models also affect how scholars approach the two fields, leading frequently to a dichotomous perspective that situates the best of film as art, while television is generally seen as passive entertainment. However, the diversification and amplification of television offerings and the emergence of narrowcasting, the result of Brazilian television’s slow movement away from the network model, has increased articulations between television and film. Less rigid, medium-specific barriers have resulted in the more occasional experimental televisual work whose very existence complicates the all-too-common simplistic distinctions between film and television in Brazil. Conversely, further complicating such simplistic, dichotomous distinctions, Globo Filmes, TV Globo’s film division, has coproduced a number of films in the past fifteen years that appropriate both the network’s televisual aesthetic and creative talent.

Nonetheless, despite the ongoing transformation of Brazilian television, most television scholarship in Brazil—unlike film scholarship—continues to exclude aesthetic analyses, preferring to study televisual programming as merely a vehicle for mass communication. In general terms, studies of Brazilian television can be reduced to three primary areas: (1) the genealogy of the medium; (2) the formation and development of programming genres; and (3) the archaeology of reception (Freire, “Por Uma Nova Agenda” 206–07). Similarly, media scholar Sérgio Mattos organizes the academic bibliography

surrounding television studies into five categories: (1) historical aspects; (2) social aspects; (3) political aspects; (4) economic aspects; and (5) complementary information (*Um Perfil* 38–61). Glaringly absent from both lists is aesthetic analysis as a possibility of scholarly pursuit. Despite this absence, a handful of Brazilian scholars have recently argued, either explicitly or implicitly, in favor of including aesthetic analyses as a viable area for television research.⁴

As Moreira's earlier comments suggest and as João Freire Filho confirms, widespread engagement in aesthetic analysis requires that Brazilian scholars first overcome the existing generalized disbelief in any meaningful approximation between television and culture ("TV de Qualidade" 92). Rather than perpetuate a circular logic that further marginalizes television because of its already marginalized position relative to more artistically consecrated fields such as film, literature, music, and painting, Freire argues that beyond a mere appropriation and mediation of other art forms that are traditionally considered to be superior to television, the medium is capable of producing "quality television," whose own technological and intellectual merits are worthy of praise and study ("TV de Qualidade" 94). Though in line with Freire's view, Arlindo Machado takes issue with the term "quality television." Despite the fact that his book *Televisão Levada a Sério (Television Taken Seriously)* (2000) was the first in Brazil to offer an explicit evaluative approach to Brazilian and global television, Machado does not undertake aesthetic analyses of the thirty programs he elects as being the "most important in the history of television" (31). Nonetheless, Machado is clear that his objective is to move beyond the more traditional technological or economic approaches to the medium (31). In doing so, Machado argues that the qualifier "quality television" is a misconception and is unjustly placed at the feet of television as a whole. No one, he correctly contends, speaks broadly of "quality literature" or "quality film" because the terms "literature" and "film" automatically imply a quality worthy of aesthetic examination (13). Moreover, by separating certain television programs and labeling them as "quality," Machado argues, the implication is that they represent an exception to the rule (13). Thus, rather than creating an isolated "ghetto of quality television," Machado argues in favor of a practice of production and critical reception that is "contaminated by quality" so that qualifiers are no longer necessary (13).

FROM THE FIELD TO THE WORK TO THE AUTEUR AND BACK AGAIN

Any movement toward aesthetic analyses of televisual programming requires the scholar to determine an effective theoretical and methodological model. Including aesthetics, some recent Anglophone work on television has made a concerted effort to examine works from all possible angles. The way in which

Ethan Thompson and Jason Mittell organize their book *How to Watch Television* (2013) exemplifies these and other television scholars' increased interest in moving beyond the field's initial intellectual framework. Thompson and Mittell divide the book's numerous essays into five sections: (1) TV Form: Aesthetics and Style; (2) TV Representations: Social Identity and Cultural Politics; (3) TV Politics: Democracy, Nation, and the Public Interest; (4) TV Industry: Industrial Practices and Structures; and (5) TV Practices: Medium, Technology, and Everyday Life. The objective is, according to the two media scholars, to conduct close watchings that "make a broader argument about television and its relation to other cultural forces, ranging from representations of particular identities to economic conditions of production and distribution" (4).

Similarly, in *Television Studies: The Basics* (2009), Toby Miller proposes Television Studies 3.0—an analytical approach that brings the different categories separated out in *How to Watch Television* under the same umbrella. For Miller, contemporary television studies should move beyond the field's traditional barriers to incorporate, among others, policy documents, debates, budgets, laws, geographical locations, genres, scripts, and reception (148–49). Miller argues: "To understand a program or genre we require an amalgam of interviewing people involved in production and circulation, from writers and editors to critics and audiences; content and textual analyses of shows over time, and of especially significant episodes; interpretations of knowledge about the social issues touched on; and an account of [sic] program's national and international political economy" (148).

From a slightly different perspective and with an eye toward dealing with what they understand to be political economy's methodological limitations, Timothy Havens, Amanda D. Lotz, and Serra Tinic have also proposed a more holistic research methodology that includes aesthetics among its points of inquiry. In what they refer to as critical media industry studies, Havens et al. argue in favor of a framework that "emphasizes midlevel fieldwork in industry analyses, which accounts for the complex interactions among cultural and economic forces, and is drawn from our review of media industry scholarship as well as our own research" (237). Unlike in more traditional political economy approaches, Havens et al. include culture in two ways: "First, in an anthropological sense, critical media industry studies examines the business culture of the media industries; how knowledge about texts, audiences, and the industry form, circulate, and change; and how they influence textual and industrial practices. Second, in an aesthetic sense, critical media industry studies seeks to understand how particular media texts arise from and re-shape midlevel industrial practices" (237).

Thus, it is clear from Thompson and Mittell, Miller, Havens et al., and the previously mentioned work edited by Peacock and Jacobs that an increasing number of contemporary television scholars in the Global North are concerned with thinking about televisual texts in a comprehensive manner, one that necessarily includes aesthetic analysis. Though not written by a media scholar, Pierre Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) offers a useful model for a holistic examination and understanding of a text and its production and reception.⁵ In this work, Bourdieu outlines a conceptual framework for analyzing the complex process for the creation of symbolic goods. According to Bourdieu, the field of cultural production is an elaborate, structured social space comprised of unequal relationships between myriad agents who occupy distinct positions in a constant struggle for diverse forms of capital. Inseparable from these positions are what he calls *prises-de-position* (position-takings), which equate to the works or the concrete manifestations of those agents who occupy positions within a particular field (*The Field* 131–37). By considering positions inseparable from position-takings and by situating both of these within the larger field of cultural production, Bourdieu's analytical model eliminates the reductive and subjective analysis that attempts to explain a work of art in and of itself. Additionally, it excludes those analyses that rely solely on a specific sociohistorical moment or a political economy as a means of defining or explaining a specific work. Instead, following this model, a complete explanation of a symbolic good or work of art involves a break from the objective/subjective dichotomy via a thorough analysis of the entire field, which, in addition to a sociohistorical and sociopolitical contextualization, includes an examination of the relationships between other possible positions and position-takings, modes of production, distribution, consumption, and critical research and commentary.

As an intricate relational structure comprising television networks, executives, directors, producers, actors, critics, and consumers, the Brazilian audiovisual field lends itself well to Bourdieu's model. However, while Bourdieu's framework aids in establishing a sociology of cultural production by analyzing the many elements that determine the creation of a work, it does not provide a model for aesthetic analysis. Because one of this book's primary objectives is to analyze the field in which Carvalho's microseries were produced as well as to examine the aesthetics that characterize them, an in-depth investigation into Carvalho's own unique mode of production within the broader field of audiovisual production *and* the resulting artistic elements that distinguish the works in question must be undertaken. To this end, in addition to engaging in a form of what John B. Thompson calls depth hermeneutics, in an attempt to construct a "radical contextualization" of Carvalho's *oeuvre* along the lines

of Bourdieu, Miller, and the other scholars already mentioned, the analysis herein will borrow freely from literary, television, and theater criticism, while also building off of select aspects of auteur theory (Grossberg 20; Thompson, *Ideology* 277–91).

Originally conceived of during the 1950s by *Cahiers du Cinéma* journalists and later Anglicized by Andrew Sarris and Peter Wollen, classical auteur theory was a rather loosely constructed tripartite approach to the study of films. It maintained that (1) films have a guiding intentionality; (2) such an intentionality produces a common pattern across an artist's work; and (3) the intentionality of both individual and sets of films is that of the director (Hogan, "Auteurs and Their Brains" 68). As has been argued widely, classical auteur theory's emphasis on intentionality is extremely difficult to determine with any certainty. What is more, the centrality of intentionality can problematically function to reduce what are complex, collaborative creative processes to the work of a single individual.⁶ Though Chapter Two deals with some of these issues in more detail, it is important to note here that this book's examination of Carvalho's position and his work borrows from auteur theory's broad attempt to determine the creative distinctiveness of a larger audiovisual corpus as well as the central agent(s) behind it through a comprehensive aesthetic analysis of the works in question.

As I attempt to show in the following chapters, despite working within the confines of TV Globo's media monopoly, Carvalho has maintained an uncharacteristically high level of production and artistic control over the works he has directed since at least 2005. Indeed, as works of television, Carvalho's microseries are intimate, artisanal productions, and his creative mark is visible in nearly every one of their aspects—from the lighting and framing of shots to the lace on a dress worn by even the most peripheral of characters. Nonetheless, no matter how much creative control Carvalho has, all of his works—as is the case with nearly all audiovisual production—embody a collaborative effort. With this in mind, I consider Carvalho's *oeuvre* through the framework of Bourdieu's theoretical model, which recognizes the interactive, sociohistorical reality that foregrounds and characterizes production. At the same time, however, my analysis appropriates—while working to justify this choice—the centrality of the director as a starting point for examining the singular aesthetic that distinguishes Carvalho's work and is so strongly associated with his name. In short, when combined with Bourdieu's model—strengthened further by the inclusion of the cited methodologies—auteur theory can serve as a bridge that uniquely links a primary creative agent and her broader sociohistorical context of production to questions of aesthetics. This type of analysis allows us, then, to examine Carvalho's work as a reaction

to the broader field of Brazilian television production, resulting in a deeper understanding of both the director's experimental aesthetic and the contemporary state of Brazilian television fiction.

A ROAD MAP FOR THE PATH FORWARD

This book has two primary objectives. First, it seeks to engage in the emerging scholarship that examines select examples of television as works of art. While there are a number of scholars doing this type of research in the United States and Europe, this book aims to offer an example of experimental and innovative television fiction from the Global South—namely from the Brazilian entertainment market, one of the largest and commercially most successful in the world. Second, through the analysis of Luiz Fernando Carvalho's many works, his artistic trajectory, and his position as a director at TV Globo, this book also sheds light on the broader reality of contemporary Brazilian television fiction. To these ends, the first chapter's examination of Carvalho's 2010 microseries *Afinal, o que Querem as Mulheres?* shows the extent to which Carvalho is consciously aware of both his own artistic inclinations and a director's generally marginalized creative role in Brazilian television fiction. By starting with one of Carvalho's later works, the first chapter establishes the ongoing tensions between standardized and experimental television as well as between the television writer and the television director. Additionally, by reading the microseries as a metacritique of contemporary Brazilian television fiction, the first chapter offers examples of the ways in which Carvalho actively seeks to challenge the industry status quo, asserting himself as the primary creative agent and his work as an artistic counterpoint to everyday Brazilian television fare.

The second chapter takes a step back to establish the structural basis from which Carvalho works: namely his unique preproduction process. In analyzing this process, the chapter establishes how Carvalho, despite working in an overly commercial and standardized structure, assures himself a significant degree of creative control by repeatedly working with the same individuals and by putting his cast and crew through elaborate workshops and seminars before production begins.

Chapter Three focuses on Carvalho's decision since 2005 to move away from the telenovela, so as to work primarily with microseries. I situate this shorter format and the theatrical aesthetic that broadly defines Carvalho's works within Brazilian television's long tradition of the teleteatro. Additionally, this chapter connects the theoretical underpinnings of the defamiliarized *mise-en-scène* that characterizes Carvalho's work to Antonin Artaud's writings on early-twentieth-century realist theater in Europe.

A selection of the opening scenes from Carvalho's *oeuvre* over the past twenty-five years is examined in Chapter Four. This provides a deeper understanding of the ways in which they function to establish an ideological and artistic professional identity for Carvalho that characterizes his position in the field of television production. More specifically, I analyze how the director uses the opening scene as a foundational reinforcement to his other means of reimagining contemporary Brazilian television fiction: his singular preproduction process (discussed in Chapter Two) and his emphasis on the theater (Chapter Three). Together, the characteristic opening scenes and key repeated motifs—namely the color red and the self-referential theater—reveal the interrelated formal and narrative concerns that lie at the heart of the director's work.

Chapter Five examines Carvalho's concern with constructing a televisual language unique to Brazil. In this chapter, I examine the director's interest in nationalism by employing Anthony D. Smith's concept of ethno-symbolism. In doing so, I place Carvalho and his work within the context of the political and artistic legacy left by Brazilian modernism in the 1920s. I also question Carvalho's interest in constructing an ethical aesthetic, showing how in some ways it problematically mirrors TV Globo's attempts to construct, represent, and didactically communicate what it means to be Brazilian to its enormous audiences.

Focusing on Carvalho's *Projeto Quadrante* (*Quadrant Project*), Chapter Six continues with the examination of the director's attempt to construct a uniquely Brazilian televisual language. In *Projeto Quadrante*, the director takes his show on the road in what I define as Carvalho's televisual version of *mambembe*, or low-budget, makeshift traveling theater. With the *Projeto Quadrante*, Carvalho not only expands his production process beyond the confines of TV Globo's studios; he also moves beyond the historically dominant production and cultural axis of Rio-São Paulo, providing the spectator with possibilities for national engagement that transcend traditional television-viewing practice. Along these lines, this chapter briefly examines the *Projeto Quadrante* as an early example of convergence media in Brazil. It also pays particular attention to the project's decentralized production model and its use of canonical Brazilian literature as the narrative starting point for both representing and uniting the nation's dispersed and diverse television audience.

Chapter Seven analyzes one of Carvalho's most recent microseries, *Subúrbia* (*Periphery*) (2012). The analysis of this work serves two objectives. First, it further reinforces the established aesthetic and motifs that characterize Carvalho's television production by showing how he continues to develop these even into the present. Second, it provides insight into the ways in which a

more competitive marketplace, one altered by increased access to the Internet and pay television, informs TV Globo's interest in experimenting with its programming. More specifically, I show how *Subúrbia* exemplifies the changing landscape of Brazilian television insofar as it is an example of TV Globo's efforts to reach the emerging lower-middle class, referred to as the *Classe C* (C-Class).

To conclude, I demonstrate how Carvalho's aesthetic project of reimagining Brazilian television fiction has come full-circle with his return to the telenovela in 2014. The argument here is that this work, *Meu Pedacinho de Chão*, is a (anti) telenovela insofar as it is the result of Carvalho's unique mode of production developed over his long career; is decidedly shorter than the traditional telenovela; and embodies and expands on Carvalho's characteristic theatrical aesthetic accumulation.

Because the chapters are thematic and not necessarily chronological, as needed, the reader is encouraged to use the outline of Carvalho's artistic trajectory at the end of this introduction. The outline serves as a reference for each of Carvalho's works, including Portuguese titles, air-dates and times, number of chapters, the network that produced the work, whether the work was an original or adapted screenplay, and a summary of Carvalho's various roles in the works' creation. While this book does not specifically engage each of the works mentioned, the outline does include all of Carvalho's works in both film and television. Those works that serve as the object of analysis are in bold print for easier access. The analysis of Carvalho's works focuses primarily on those where he was the lead, if not the only, director. Moreover, particular importance will be given to the shorter format works in which the traditional television author was not present as a creative force. In such works, Carvalho exerts the greatest degree of control over the artistic process and final outcome. Not surprisingly, these are the director's most experimental and artistic productions.

The outline also categorizes the works by their format, and it is important to understand how those formats are different. This book frequently refers to the microseries, telenovela, and special (e.g., teleteatro) genres. In doing so, it adheres to the following definitions of each: a microseries is a fictional narrative, shot in its entirety prior to airing, and comprises four to eight chapters. Similar to a miniseries, which includes anywhere from nine to fifty-five chapters, contemporary Brazilian microseries are, more often than not, adaptations of canonical literary texts. Although microseries sometimes air daily, they tend to be shown weekly during the 11:00 PM time slot.

A Brazilian telenovela, on the other hand, is melodramatic, realist fictional narrative typically made up of 150 to 220 chapters. Unlike the microseries,

telenovela production occurs continuously while airing. As a result, telenovelas are dynamic and flexible by nature, and their narratives may be altered during filming, depending upon audience reception or other factors. Telenovelas, almost without exception, air Monday through Saturday in the prime-time slots between approximately 6:00 and 10:00 PM. Last, a special is typically a single, hour-long program, airing in a post-prime-time slot—after 10 PM. As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, Carvalho's specials were originally part of TV Globo's series *Caso Especial* (*Special Case*). The works presented in this series were generally adaptations of canonical literary texts, whether Brazilian or foreign.