

THE

PEACOCK

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My Friend Anthony

BY DAMODAR MAUZO

Yes, his name was Anthony Gonsalves, and he belonged to my village, Majorda, on the beautiful coastline of South Goa. Until the 1970s, Anthony was less known amongst us than his father José Antonio Gonsalves, who was respectfully referred to as José Mestre, as the Choir-Master at the Māe de Deus church. Many of the young people of our village benefited from his teaching.

Anthony was brilliant at playing music right from his childhood. He left Goa for Mumbai in his tender years to join other musicians from our state, who were pursued by the burgeoning film industry due to their understanding of western musical notation. To his credit, my friend realised his limitations, and tried to learn and absorb as much of Indian classical music as possible as well. For Anthony, whether eastern or western, music was music. Soon he cracked the codes, and made an outstanding attempt to fuse the symphonies of his Goan heritage with Indian melodies in Bollywood music. It turned out to be a huge success. Many years later, his devoted student Pyarelal Sharma (of Laxmikant-Pyarelal fame), paid tribute to his teacher by giving his name to Amitabh Bachchan's unforgettable character in Manmohan Desai's hit *Amar, Akbar, Anthony* (1977).

Back home in peaceful Majorda, José Mestre had a large family. Anthony was the second of his seven children. His two daughters, Flaviana and Aida, were close friends of my eldest sister, Datti, who was twelve years elder to

me. Anthony was also seventeen years older than me while his youngest brother Eugenio was closer to my age. Flaviana and Aida would fondly call me Dud-Bhav. The reason I came to know much later, when they recalled the incident to me. I would love to share it with all of you here, as it also speaks volumes of the harmony that prevailed during that time in Goa.

Anthony's family was quite close to ours. Every Sunday morning, his

mother would pass by my house to reach the church to attend Mass. That time often matched with my mother's routine for gardening. They both would exchange niceties and later became good friends. The incident I would like to recount happened when I was less than a year old. On one of the usual Sundays, my Aai could not tend to her garden work as she was down with fever. Mrs. Gonsalves, who was returning after attending services, was

looking for my mother when she was told that Aai was unwell. She entered the house to say hello, and heard the child inside, that was me, crying loudly and persistently. When the visiting lady was told that the baby was crying, as Aai was not in a condition to feed him, Mrs. Gonsalves, who had also recently given birth to a boy, immediately took the child in her arms and nursed him.

My Mom felt relieved. This incident, at that point of time, wasn't of much significance, and my family also took it as normal. But today, in the times of rising religious tensions, I feel the need to highlight this incident to underline the harmonious situation prevailing in those days.

Anthony went to the USA in 1965 at the invitation of Syracuse University in New York, where he taught music, and only returned to India in the late seventies. In the early eighties his ancestral house in Goa was badly damaged when a huge banyan tree came down heavily upon it. He had to spend a lot of time to raise the house again, which prompted him to return to Goa and the village to which we both belong. Thereafter, for reasons best known to him, he preferred to live in seclusion. Yet I was always welcome to his house. He invariably offered me a glass of wine brewed by himself, and we would have long chats. He had taken upon himself a project to write notations for Indian classical music, which he could not complete. I am not sure if any other musician has worked on these lines. Laxmi, his daughter, who lives with her mother in the Gonsalves house, has parts of the script. But sadly no one is coming forward to complete the task. No book nor any biopic has been made on his life. It is high time that this is done.



Illustration by Nishant Saldanha

I've been learning a lot about the practical aspects of film-making, like raising funds and meeting people.

Aditya Watts
Film-maker
Delhi

I've been coming here since 2009, so I'm a regular. The nicest thing about Film Bazaar is that I get to catch up with old friends and meet new film-makers.

Beth Sanders
Producer
London



The film I'm most excited for is *Eureka* by Lisandro Alonso. I love this festival because you can tell it was done for the viewers.

Dren Zherka
Director
Berlin



I'm most excited for the atmosphere at IFFI—it's giving me a lot of energy to see all these people come here for films. There are great facilities too.

Clara Ho
Manager
Paris

"India has so many faces"

BY PRAGYA BHAGAT

Helen Leake was fifteen years old when she attended her first film festival, where she saw "an early Polanski film about a teenage girl who's confused about her sexuality." The Australian producer and member of the international jury at the 54th International Film Festival of India tells *The Peacock*, that it was the moment she realised the power of cinema. "My goodness. This is what cinema can do. It's a very complete way of telling stories, if done properly." Her role as a producer is to ensure perfection in this process. "I'm there at the beginning and I'm there at the end. If you create the right team, you're off to a really good start. Casting is critical."

Leake finds the project management element of production "very satisfying." The seed of these skills was sown in the early years of her professional life, when she worked as a computer programmer and went on to run a business as a systems analyst. Currently, she runs two production houses: Duo Art Productions, set up in the nineties, and the more recent Dancing Road, set up with a younger producer. Leake narrates the origin story for the name of her latest production company. "We are going on this road and there will be lots of potholes. We have to be light on our feet, like dancing."

When we met Leake, she was wearing a feisty dress printed with chili peppers. "I love spicy food. It brings more flavour." Naturally, this is one of many reasons she's excited about being in India, which she last visited on a backpacking trip with her son: "India has so many faces." This time, as part of her jury duties, Leake spends most of her time watching films. "It's such a delight. I'm honoured to be here." Speaking about Goa, she says "there's a warmth and a lovely atmosphere. People here are generous. They make it easy to do the job."

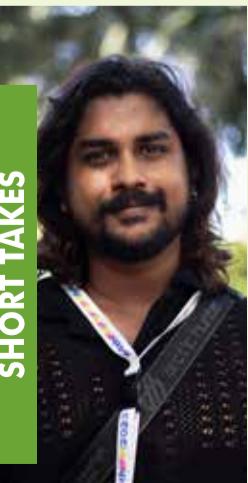
Leake is also celebrating the co-production treaty between India and Australia, through which the two countries will work together on cinema projects. "Such an agreement allows for a sharing of stories and technical resources." The treaty, she says, was ratified on November 21, 2023, coinciding with her time at IFFI. "But a word of caution. The story has to fit the co-production as a natural partnership."

Leake was the CEO of the South Australian Film Corporation from 2004 to 2007. Her vast repertoire has been selected for more than thirty international film festivals. In 2020, she was inducted into the Order of Australia, which recognises Australian citizens for outstanding achievement and service. In 2021, she was appointed to the Board of Screen Australia. The project that she is most proud of is *Black and White* (2002), based on a real life legal case "where an indigenous person was found guilty of a crime on insufficient evidence. It divided the community." Her film portrayed both the innocence and guilt of the protagonist. Leake is all praises for the aboriginal actor, David Ngoombujarra. "It was one of his best performances."

"I can't keep what I know in my head," Leake chuckles, "it's no good staying there. So I'm trying to mentor and encourage younger people in a changing technological landscape." She cited an example from her personal life. Earlier, she had to "write to preserve memory. Now, my phone does more than a whole room can." These changes must be embraced by everyone. "Creators and actors need to be part of the food chain," Leake says. "We have to adapt to new circumstances." Leake remembers the time when video cassettes came out: "People thought well now, cinema's dead, but that didn't happen. Then DVDs, now mobile streaming. I hope we'll be able to say, that didn't happen." Festivals like IFFI will ensure cinema continues to thrive, she says in conclusion.



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni



SHORT TAKES

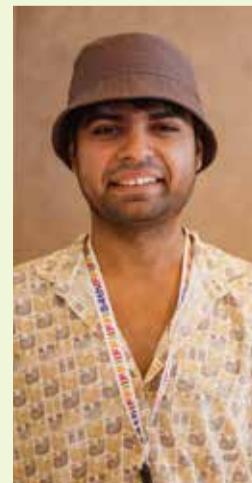
My favourite film so far is *Mountain Onion*. It was cute, wholesome and you could feel an emotional connection with the characters within the first 20 minutes.

Jagan B.
Art Director
Bangalore



I'm excited about the extreme variety of movies. I'm late so I haven't seen a film yet, but I'm enjoying the tea.

Danielle
Dijkema
Neuropsycholo-
gist
Amsterdam



I enjoyed Hoffman's *Fairy Tales*. The use of hand gestures and the symbolism in the film was amazing.

Kabir Arora
Asst. Director
Delhi



The Indian audience was very receptive, we got a lot of questions and I think it went really well.

Daria Smirnova
Production
Assistant
Moscow

"Resist the template!"

BY SAACHI D'SOUZA

R.V. Ramani is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, cinematographer and teacher, based in Chennai. He spoke to *The Peacock* about his preferred genre and its relevance.

From a background in Physics, how did you arrive at documentary filmmaking?

I became interested in photography during an assignment for my cousin's wedding, and the whole experience was very empowering. This was my first time using a film camera, and later I realised all the rolls I had used turned out blank. But this is really where my learning started. I became a photojournalist in Mumbai for a few years, and during my first feature film experience, I witnessed the work of cinematographer Navroze Contractor, who inspired my journey. He had a similar trajectory, from still to moving images, and I decided to study at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).

What is unique about this form of storytelling?

There was a period when I was migrating from Mumbai to Chennai, a big lifestyle change, especially for a filmmaker, and I started to think about migration as a larger cultural process. I used to sit in the last compartments of the Mumbai local trains to understand why some people sang *bhajans* and others participated. I learnt that it

was about an innate need to belong to a city that has its own rapid rhythm, and where so many people are migrants. That's when I started filming rural and urban Maharashtra to build a narrative about the rhythms of migration, and that first film became a personal enquiry on how to make a film. My first film itself was avant-garde, and so were the responses to it. But that is when I knew this was what I wanted to do. Documentary filmmaking is personal, it's about my understanding of people, my connections with them, and my vision. It allows you to own your narrative.

What do you think is the role of documentaries in today's India?

Documentaries are cinema narratives and should be kept in that place. I don't think they need to make grand statements about society and politics, just like no one expects that from feature films. I'm not making a statement, I'm telling a story, and it's personal to me. While you can do applied documentaries (make films on specific themes), I don't like templates. I don't write scripts. The story just flows. I truly do believe that this is the way films should be made.

There's always criticism of films for channelling a wrong 'gaze.' How do you navigate this?

I appreciate the way painters do this. They don't illustrate a person based on how they 'should', but instead, illuminate their essence, their soul. Of

course, a camera lens is more disruptive, right from the start. But ultimately the gaze is about questioning your position, constantly. It's an internal process. No matter what film you make, ask yourself, are you introspecting? Sometimes the gaze is affected by the form itself. Linear storytelling often expects a structure that leaves little room for nuance. I've often found that films that try to portray social issues fall for the basic clichés - the poor remain poor, the exploited violated. I've faced this challenge right from the start, how do you film someone with empathy, even affection?

How do you go about funding?

I don't make my films with large budgets in mind, nor are they commissioned. Of course, I do things on the side, I'm a cinematographer and I teach. But I have power over my work and that's really important. One has lived the way they want to, and it's all good. Maybe one day I'll have to become less possessive of my films and my process and think about distribution in a larger way, but right now that's not a priority. I'm making what I want to. For me, originality is vital. It is about finding your own unique voice, and letting that reflect in your filmmaking. Resist the template and go to a blank canvas with an empty mind. I truly believe that if you're interested in making work that is new, different, and even crazy, do it. It will stand the test of time.



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni



I'm excited for the international movies; particularly Italian and French films because those are the languages I speak.

Diana Linda
Designer
Saligao



My favourite film so far is *Revenge: Our Dad The Nazi Killer*. This movie focuses on human relations and what went wrong to get to that point.

Krish Solunke
Sawri
Software
Engineer
Pune



I've met some interesting directors, had a few good conversations, and engaged with new ideas.

Elisha Lepcha
Model
Goa



Films are important because they are a gateway into new cultures.

Manjeet Singh
Film-maker
Mumbai

Beyond Tourism: Russians in Goa



Elena Remizova, Svetlana Kabanova and Katerina Mikhaylova were photographed by Assavri Kulkarni

BY AJAY KAMALAKARAN

In November, when grey skies, cold rain and snow descend on the vast northern Eurasian landmass, many Russians dream of getting on a flight to Goa and its sun-soaked beaches. Russian speech is now common in many parts of India's smallest state, but in Panjim this week a lot of the talk is about the world of cinema, as there's a sizable presence from the Russian entertainment industry at IFFI and the Film Bazaar.

A delegation of 15 companies, led by the Moscow Export Centre, is looking at ways to expand cooperation in films between Russia and India. "Our delegation comprises of production houses, localisation companies and casting platforms along with other companies connected with the film industry," Samvel Gazaryan, an executive with the centre told *The Peacock*. "We are essentially looking for new partners in India, but also hoping for some co-production projects and to have Indian filmmakers shoot in Russia, and create a bridge between

two countries."

Among the companies in the Moscow Export Centre delegation is Cyrillica, which specialises in content localisation. Its South Asia content head, Sergei Iaroshinskii – who is a fluent Hindi speaker – sees a lot of potential in Indian films being dubbed and screened in Russia, a country where subtitled movies are otherwise not well received generally.

Joining this delegation is Roskino, a government organisation that promotes Russian films around the world. This year, representatives from the Russian Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad, the cultural capital St. Petersburg and the Khabarovsk territory, near China, are meeting Indian filmmakers and hoping to attract them to shoot in these gorgeous locations. Aware of the success of countries like Spain and Switzerland which successfully managed to do so, the Russian government is banking on Hindi and other Indian language blockbusters being shot in the country and creating an Indian tourist boom

Russian filmmakers are also exploring the possibility of using Goa as a location. "Seeing it with my own eyes, I realise that Goa has a unique culture and some other vibes, and it attracts a lot of people from across the Russian film industry and it's great to start communicating. I see a lot of potential here," Svetlana Kabanova, PR Director of Roskino told *The Peacock*. "Of course, we are here to promote our locations, but we are also interested in different locations like Goa. We are open to different forms of cooperation and we have quite a few Russian filmmakers here who are looking for co-production opportunities."

Katerina Mikhaylova, the founder of Vega Film and co-founder of the Association of Russian Women Producers, is among the most enthusiastic Goaphiles in the Russian delegation. "The people of Goa are the best treasure you have," she said. Mikhaylova is hoping to release her film *The Liar* in India next year. "I have spoken to a few sales agents here, who have shown interest in the film,

because Julia Trofimova, the director of *The Land of Sasha*, which we made together, was received well in the 2022 Berlin International Film Festival," she added.

At the forefront of efforts to promote film cooperation between Russia and India, and Goa in particular, is Elena Remizova, Indologist and Director of the Russian Cultural Centre in Mumbai who has visited the state a few times. "I think Goa is absolutely an ideal place to shoot films; the climate, nature and friendly locals make it conducive for Russians to make films here," she said. "I would also like filmmakers from Goa and Maharashtra to come and make films in Russia. Moscow would make for a good base to explore different parts of the country. Films are a great way to connect peoples and cultures."

Hoffman's Fairy Tales (2023), the feature debut of director Tina Barkalaya is the only Russian film being screened at IFFI 2023. Roskino is optimistic about including more Russian films in future editions of the annual festival.



I really liked the opening film, *Catching Dust*. The setting, the lighting, and the location made for a close space and I felt inspired. Also, the acting was great!

Elyne Borne
Student
Lyon



I'm excited to see *Fight Like A Girl*. A couple of friends directed it and they're really talented guys, so I recommend people see it.

Nick Camecho
Film Producer
Panaji



I noticed that this year's films contain a lot of LGBTQ+ content. Film is a big influence in culture and it's nice to see this kind of progress in India.
Lorraine Phillips
Film Distributor
Taiwan



I'd love to see more films, but it's quite difficult to get tickets! But the vibes here are fantastic! There's no space like this.

Pranav Kothi
Sound Designer
Mumbai

BY SUDIPTO MULLICK

An imposing house, constructed entirely with earthen material in the heart of Guwahati, is a veritable icon of Assamese history. On the occasion of it turning a century in 2023, award-winning journalist and film critic-turned-filmmaker Utpal Borpujari has reconstructed its history through archival film clips, memories, and photographs, in his latest documentary *Baruar Xongxar* ("The House of Baruas").

Constructed by engineer Chandranath Barua, this house has been home to some of Assam's most famous icons.

The Peacock spoke with the filmmaker, who is known for his award-winning feature film *Ishu* (2017) and documentaries like *Memories of a Forgotten War* (2001) and *Songs of the Blue Hills* (2013).

Making a documentary on a house is a rather unusual choice - how did the idea come about?

I was born and brought up in Guwahati, and this iconic house was nearby to where I lived. This house is part of our consciousness because it has given Assam many popular film, music, and sports personalities. The Baruas are Assam's first film family. I always wanted to make a film about some of the people who lived there. But while researching, I felt that all of them are big personalities. So I decided to do the documentary on the house itself.

Usually, a documentary or feature is about a subject who inhibits a certain space but here, the space itself is the character.

We knew that we were going to portray the house through the stories of the inhabitants because there are lots of them to be told. But, the biggest problem was that since every inhabitant was so illustrious, they merit individual documentaries of their own, which, of course, is not possible. We had to do it within a certain duration and it became very tough during editing with all the talking-head memories and weaving in film clips and photographs, while maintaining a cohesive storyline.

"Old houses are like books"



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni

and popular culture. And this collective nostalgia contributes to the city's greater stories.

This iconic house is now facing an uncertain future. What do you think should be done?

Though it's a private property, it's our heritage. The ultimate call resides with the family members but like all Assamese, I would like this house to be preserved by the government. It is a great example of the Assamese style of architecture.

After doing this documentary do you get the feeling that a house, especially old ones, are no different than a book?

It's a very interesting thing you said. There are a lot of old houses like this

that exist in several parts of Assam and there's a fascinating Facebook page called Ancient Houses Of Assam where people contribute with pictures and stories. Old houses have these characters and stories like in a book. So, I think there are so many interesting houses on which films can be made.

You started with journalism then turned filmmaker. Was it by design or by accident?

I began to find out many stories that can't be told through journalism. Coming from the Northeast we have so many untold stories, and people still have an information gap about that place. So, I decided to turn to the audio-visual medium to bring those stories onto the big screen, and I deal in both fiction and non-fiction formats.

We've met a lot of authors, and the panel discussions went well. Between that and the cocktail parties, I've had a good time!

Manika Verma
Talent Agent
Mumbai



Gandhi Talks had a great concept, and I enjoyed the music. I also like the cinematography and the director's vision for *Moro*.

Satya Kashyap
Composer
Hyderabad



My documentary *Nybreum – The Unsettled Shade* is about bride trafficking and the lesser-known side of Kashmir. It has got a good response.

Neha Sharma
Film-maker
Mumbai



We're hoping our movie *Toxic* will make people think about toxic relationships, and consider whether they've experienced similar things.

Stefan Vorzacek
Director
Czech Republic

How's the Josh?

BY MAAZ BIN BILAL

Josh Hurtado is a high school math teacher in Dallas, Texas, by profession, but a passionate cinephile by vocation. He has also now built a significant parallel career as a film programming and marketing consultant and festival strategist. Through his *josh* or passion for Indian cinema, Hurtado has given our industry a huge shot in the arm in the US, most notably playing a lead role in the marketing of *RRR* (2022), which, one may surmise, contributed greatly to its US success and eventual Oscar win. He is at Film Bazaar, Goa 2023, programming for Fantastic Fest, the largest genre film festival in the US.

Speaking to *The Peacock*, Hurtado explains that he became a cinephile at a young age, and begrudgingly admits to bunking high school classes as a student to watch films. Soon, he was chasing more obscure cinema, and began with Japanese and Hong Kong films, until he realized, he hadn't seen any Indian films. This threw him down the rabbit hole of multilingual Indian movies.

Screen Anarchy requested Hurtado to write on Indian films in 2010, and that's when his professional engagement with Indian cinema really took off. Writing such as his, he opines, makes Indian cinema more accessible for the West. Until recently, Indian filmmakers had only relied on diasporic South Asian or NRI audiences for business, without really investing in marketing. By writing on Indian cinema for US publications, Hurtado has helped to create a growing non-South-Asian audience for Indian movies, and led to producers and distributors to invest in overseas marketing, the lack of which was

the main reason holding Indian films back.

It all began when his review of Rajamouli's *Eega* (2012), which he "fell in love with," received attention from a French film festival. This triggered both his programming career as well as a longstanding relationship with S. S. Rajamouli. When *RRR* released, and received favourable attention from American critics, Rajamouli contacted Hurtado to explore further potential for the film in the American market.

Hurtado brought in Variance films, his own company Potentate Films, and along with the original distributors Saregama films and Rafter creations, re-released the film with a much higher number of theatrical releases in non-traditional markets for Indian cinema in the states. This led to the huge popularity among American audiences for the action extravaganza and historical drama that is *RRR*.

Hurtado is also alert to the differences across Indian cinema and wishes to fight the reductive labelling

of all Indian cinema as "Bollywood". He condemns the number of times *RRR* was categorised Bollywood in the West and identifies clear differences of story and representation in different regional cinemas of India. Hindi cinema, for example, he says, largely caters to and represents the urban middle class. Tamil cinema, on the other hand, casts its net wider. It gives us rural stories and also lower-class subjects much more frequently. It is incumbent upon him, Hurtado feels, to spread his love equally across the regions.

Towards this, Hurtado's main goal is to increase theatrical releases across newer, non-traditional territories in the US. Certain genres such as action, horror, and thriller, he feels, have a greater universal appeal, as the young fans of different genre films are more accepting and form venturesous audiences. Whereas the hesitation for Indian drama in the West comes from their cultural specificity and presumed knowledge in the spectator, genre

films such as *Tumbbad* (2018) explain those cultural specificities more organically and are liable to be more successful in foreign markets. *RRR* too attained its phenomenal success based on its slick action which made it universal while retaining enough Indianess to make it different.

No wonder then that Hurtado is at Film Bazaar curating for the genre festival, Fantastic Fest, and has been happy with the potential he has seen through various pitches. He returns to the Bazaar after six years and is glad to reunite with filmmakers such as Bhaskar Hazarika who was pitching *Aamis* then, which released successfully in 2019. He is also consulting with more established names for marketing their films such as with Anurag Kashyap for *Kennedy*, and Lijo Jose Pellissery, who, besides S. S. Rajamouli and Mani Ratnam, Hurtado feels, are some of the directors from India doing brilliant work.



Photo by Assavri Kulkarni



SHORT TAKES

Our lecturers have given us homework to watch 3 movies per day! I think it's amazing to have the festival in Goa, and I'm excited to explore.

Nimisha Kini
Student
Mangalore



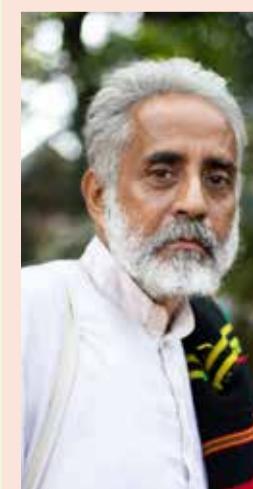
We just talked to a festival programmer who said my film *Nukkad Naatak* was really fresh and like nothing he'd seen before.

Tanmaya
Shekhar
Director
Mumbai



The best film I've seen this year was *Antarctica Calling*. The cinematography was fantastic! My daughter is in #MOG so I'm very excited to see that film.

Noelyn Santos
Manager
Panjim



I came here for *Anatomy Of A Fall* and *Close Your Eyes*; I was able to see both!

Vishnu S.
Copywriter
Bangalore

Surfing the Clouds

BY NILANKUR DAS

In the temple town of Ponda in Goa, a dynamic husband-wife duo is rewriting the narrative of live streaming. *The Peacock* met Rohir Naik, the CEO of Coderix, at the excellent Tech Media Expo being held alongside this year's International Film Festival of Goa. The tech executive was proud of being selected as the sole startup representing India's smallest state: "We must showcase our talent and demonstrate that Goa harbours potential for such enterprises. We take pride in our Goan roots. Moreover, this exposure facilitates connections with OTT platforms, content creators, cinematographers, TV channels, and more, presenting a valuable opportunity for networking and collaboration."

According to Naik, the key to streaming without any errors or glitches lies in understanding the bandwidth requirements. For individualised connections, a modest 2-4 Mbps is sufficient, but for shared connections aimed at global streaming, a robust 100 Mbps is the golden ticket. It's a testament to the fact that Coderix is riding the waves of the cloud platform to deliver seamless streaming experiences.

Their journey began in the tumultuous times of the pandemic in 2019. Armed with the insight that the market was in dire need of a reliable live streaming platform with affordable pricing and stellar services, the duo ventured into the world of Software As A Service (SaaS) solutions. Their foray into the market began with Live Darshan broadcasts from various temples across Goa, a move that garnered significant attention and laid the foundation for their success.

"It all started from Live Darshan in various Temples across Goa, which gave us good exposure in the market," Naik recounted. During the COVID-19 lockdown, when devotees were unable to visit temples, Coderix stepped in. They pulled live feeds from IP cameras, streaming them across websites, apps, and social media platforms. The pilot project with Shree Mahalaxmi Saunthan

in Bandora was a resounding success and continues to run to this day. Now they are gearing up to revolutionise live streaming further by introducing customised mini cameras and hardware solutions, simplifying the process to go live with just a single click. "We have started outsourcing with some agencies for Internet Protocol Television boxes for TV Channels downlinking over the internet," says Naik.

Finding talent in Ponda proved challenging, and to address this Coderix strategically expanded their team, by attracting new employees from Bangalore, Jharkhand, and beyond, and offering free accommodation to these out-of-town hires. Operating servers in Bangalore has also played a pivotal role in reducing downtime and ensuring reliable support. Rohir and his team are setting ambitious growth goals, aiming to reach TV channels and temples across India. Their plan for the year includes implementing a robust content delivery network capable of handling any number of viewers with reliable service and minimal buffering.

For aspiring tech entrepreneurs, Naik's advice is clear and resonant: "Surround yourself with a talented team. Build a strong network of like-minded individuals who share your vision. Seek out people who complement your skills and bring diverse perspectives to the table." His years of experience have distilled into a profound understanding of the power of perseverance and the ability to learn from mistakes. Certified by Startup India and the Start-Up Promotion Cell, Coderix is making waves in the domain of sharing live events and building brands. The term "rix" itself, a German word meaning to conquer, embodies their mission. In the world of Coderix, it's about conquering the code and soaring high, a sentiment encapsulated in Rohir's parting words to his fellow Goans: "Go, fly high and conquer."



Photo by Michael Praveen



I'm looking forward to *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* by Sergei Parajanov.

Pranamya Shetty
Student
Mangalore



I'm here to spread awareness about Maithili cinema. I'm hoping to introduce people to regional landscapes and cultures across Bihar and Nepal.

Vibha Jha
Researcher
Pune



Film-making is a collaborative process so I love that we have such a comfortable place to meet individuals.

Dr. Praveena Paruchuri
Film Producer
New York



Film can be a lonely medium so it's nice to form those longer friendships at these types of gatherings.

Uma Kothi
Graphic Designer
Mumbai

Slender Seductress

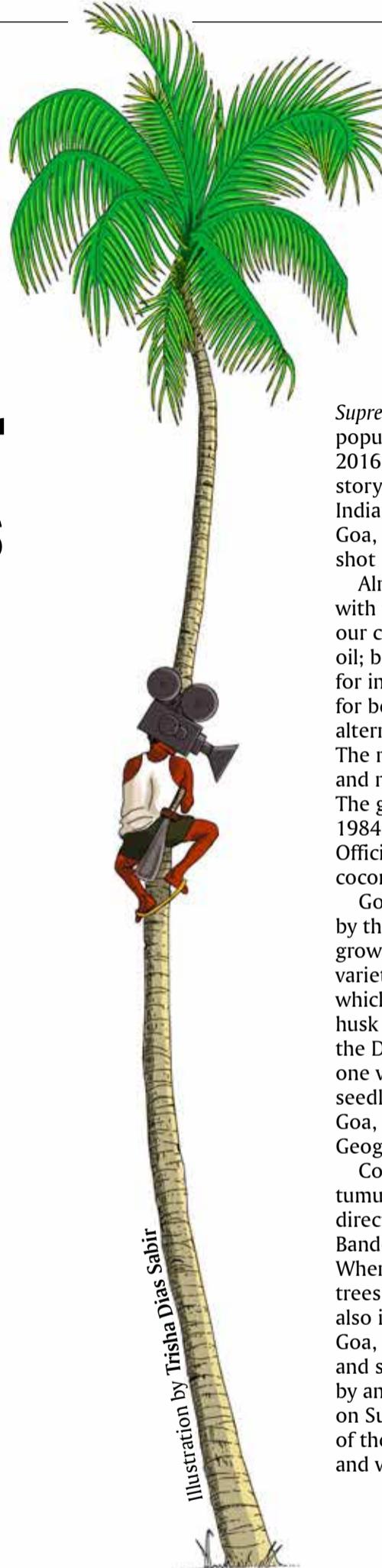
BY MIGUEL BRAGANZA

The coconut tree is integral to the image of Goa as paradise on Earth. This image has attracted tourists and filmmakers for many years. The tragic love story *Ek Duje Ke Liye* (1981) may be a remake of the Telugu film *Maro Charitra* (1978) but the visuals are distinctively different. Surprisingly, a Telugu film had an uninterrupted run of over a year in Karnataka and so I went to watch it while studying in Bangalore as an undergraduate. Keep the same lead actor, add Goa as the backdrop and one has a winner! Viewers go nuts over coconut trees.

Dil Chahta Hai (2001) was filmed near Chapora fort with a wonderful view of Vagator and Morjim beaches that are full of coconut trees, what else? The romantic thriller *Josh* (2000) was also filmed entirely in Goa and also has some dialogues in Konkani, with which lead actress Aishwarya Rai (now Bachchan) was familiar. The highest common factor in these films is the landscape with coconut trees.

The slender coconut palm swaying in the breeze, with the leaflets of its 'crown of fronds' wet and tousled like the long hair of a pretty lass after a shower, is the star attraction for the tourists who throng *Maddani* in the otherwise sleepy village of Parra during monsoons, thanks to *Dear Zindagi* (2016). Just Google the Konkani word 'Maddani' to learn more. It is a hot favourite of tourists in winter also and organically grown watermelons add flavour to their trip to Parra.

Foreign filmmakers also love Goa, and the coconut trees on the beachfronts made famous in the late 1960s by the "flower children" generation of anti-war peaceniks during the conflict in Vietnam, which has now become a hot destination for Goans. The *Bourne*



Supremacy (2004), was partly filmed in Goa and became popular enough to have three sequels in 2007, 2012 and 2016. A war movie *The Sea Wolves* (1980), based on true story of a World War II episode involving the British-Indian military action in the then Portuguese colony of Goa, is another one of the half dozen Hollywood films shot in Goa.

Almost everyone knows the tree that provides us with tender coconut water, grated coconut kernel for our curry and sweetmeats, coconut milk, cream, and oil; besides fibre for mattresses and ropes; long trunks for instant bridges over nullahs, plus rafters and thatch for beach shacks and huts. Coconut provides traditional alternatives to plastic sheets and aerated drinks alike. The midrib of coconut leaflets is used to make brooms and now the lamina is used to make drinking straws. The government of Goa amended the Goa Tree Act, 1984 in September, 2017 and it was notified in the Official Gazette on 14 December, 2017 to declare the coconut, *Cocos nucifera*, is the State Tree.

Goa has three main cultivars of coconut, known by the name of the village where they were originally grown: Benaulim, Calangute and Nadora. The Benaulim variety has five variants, with green or yellow nuts which may be round or elongated and an elongated red husk type. The CPCRI-ICAR at Kasargod in Kerala and the DBSKV-Dapoli in Maharashtra have each released one variety selected from the Benaulim (Banawali) seedling trees. This home village of the patron saint of Goa, St. Joseph Vaz, is now working towards obtaining a Geographical Indication for the Benaulim coconut tree.

Coconut trees form a wonderful backdrop to a tumultuous love story, *Mog* (2023), a Konkani film directed by Nilesh Malkar and produced by Deepak Bandekar, with songs that will move you to hum along. When asked why the film is full of scenes with coconut trees, Jojo D'Souza, whose film *Pedru Poder* (2023) is also in NFDC's Film Bazaar, says, "the film *Mog* is shot in Goa, made entirely in Goa by a Goan production house and studio. Coconut trees are what we are surrounded by and have grown up with." His film premieres at IFFI on Sunday, 26 November, at 2.00P.M. in Auditorium-1 of the Maquinez Palace, Panjim. "We want you to come and watch this film. You will surely fall in love" says Jojo.

SHORT TAKES

I started my career by making a short film, and now I have my first full-length feature film *Nadaan 3*. It's nice to watch new talent come up.
Sanjyota Hublikar
Producer
Goa



I loved *Aziz* by Majid Tavakoli. It details a man caught between his love for his fiancé and mother, against the backdrop of conservative Islam.
Suma Nagaraj
Writer
Bangalore



I like the fact that we gather together to see movies in theatres rather than on a TV or computer. Goa has such a unique atmosphere to it.
Sophie Moulin
Writer
Paris



I like to see how films are shot and directed. As an actor, I observe how actors depict various emotions.
Paras Fulambarkar
Actor
Mumbai



The Dilip Effect

BY SIDDHESH GAUTAM

As I walked on the street of Cine Mela, I felt nostalgic about the past of cinema. The breeze kissed my face, water made me shy and I walked as if I was Dilip Kumar, in style, in comfort, in love. I wish my Bhumi was here and we could talk cinema for hours. Maybe I could have acted like Dilip Saheb for her. Or, would have sang "Maang ke saath tumhaara" for her. I would have definitely told her that Dilip Saheb was awarded the Lifetime Achievement by IFFI in 2007.

When we look back at Indian cinema, we can't ignore the contribution of Dilip Kumar and his influence on the lifestyles of many. The first black and white film that I watched was *Devdas* (1955). The film did not just introduce me to Dilip Saheb, but it was also my entry to this new black and white world, and my gateway to Guru Dutt, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Marx Brothers and many more. I could see the world in grey, it was a new experience for me, for a colour TV generation kid. His talent as an artist was scintillating but apart from being the tragedy king of Hindi film industry, Dilip Kumar aka Yusuf Khan extensively participated in the struggles of the marginalised among the Muslim community; Pasmanda Muslims. This is what made him a great human being and not just a great actor.

Despite coming from an upper caste and having achieved an elite status in the country, he spent a substantial time of his late working life off the stage, participating with activists of All India Muslim Other Backward Castes Organization (AIMOBCO) for the rights of Pasmandas in Maharashtra.

When Dilip Saheb was informed about the Mandal Commission report and its application on Pasmanda Muslims and that about 85% of Muslims could benefit by the AIMOBCO movement, he shared a similar view and remarked that the balance 15% do not even need a support of reservation, as they are

traditionally quite well off. He officially joined AIMOBCO in 1990 and became actively associated with organisation activities on almost a daily basis. At the age of 68 years, he participated in more than 100 public meetings all over India. Aurangabad and Lucknow meetings became the major key-events that shook politics. He did not act as a silent participant but as a roaring vocal activist of the Pasmanda Movement. His celebrity status not only attracted a large crowd but also jolted the political class to wake up to the demands of people. He travelled all over the country and made many speeches where he actively spoke about the rights of Pasmanda Muslims.

In all public meetings, Dilip Saheb insisted that reservation should not be seen as a religious issue, in case of Pasmandas, but rather as a social means that is required for the upliftment of this socially and educationally backward community, which simply happens to be Muslims. He stressed that Pasmandas have also suffered from caste marginalisation. Due to the discriminatory categorization into occupations, they are restricted in economic mobility and social development. Therefore, reservation is a constitutional process and the marginalised communities should use the opportunity for social-economic upliftment.

Dilip Saheb often talked about his meetings with Dr Ambedkar and how their conversations opened him towards the question of caste and caste discrimination. He used his stardom for the good of the people. When today's liberal film and media personalities brag about how they protested against the Mandal commission, this superstar was using his stardom to bring affirmative action for the Pasmanda Muslims for an equal and just society.

Dilip Saheb inspires me as an artist to be more beneficial for society. He taught me that we can use our social capital for the good of the masses. He nudged me to be more empathetic about people around me. His presence wasn't just elegant and impossible to forget on screen, but off-screen too.

Maaznama

by Maaz Bin Bilal

Cinema

from Greek *kinema*,
for when the image
moves.

Camera

means room
in Italian from Latin,
where it means vault,
from Greek

kamara—

object with
an arched
roof.

The first cameras

were lucida or obscura,
reproducing images
on papers,
on roofs.

We go into theatres now,
no longer filled with bodies on stage,
and raucous spectators,
but sink into

the obscurity,

of our seats, only to be illuminated
by images formed on a screen,
made of light and its dispersion

of colour.

Photography

from Greek *graphia*—
writing, in *photons*,
in light.

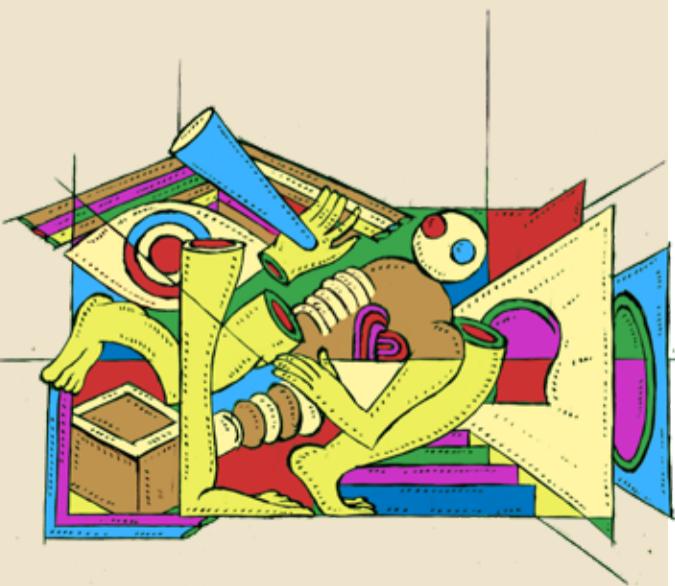


Illustration by Nishant Saldanha

Aicat Mozo Tavo

BY VIVEK MENEZES

Over a quarter century ago, an unstoppable excitement gripped the people of Goa when rumours first emerged that the iconic singer Lorna — she only needs that one name — was thinking of emerging from almost another quarter century of personal doldrums, and general cultural neglect. The whispers turned out to be true. As recounted by Naresh Fernandes in his invaluable *Taj Mahal Foxtrot: The Story of Bombay's Jazz Age*, on the fateful December day in 1996, "traffic was snarled up for kilometres as Goans swarmed to catch a glimpse of the legend. State police say that the show drew 300,000 people—the biggest crowd since the one that had gathered to celebrate Goa's liberation from Portuguese rule in 1961."

It was an indelible moment: "Cheers erupted as Lorna climbed to the stage, looking out over a choppy ocean of heads. When the hubbub subsided, Ronnie's aching piano introduction washed over the audience and Lorna began to belt out the opening tune from her comeback album. "Aicat mozo tavo," she urged. "Avaz mozo tumchea canar sadonc ishtani ravo portun aicunc mozo tavo." Hear my voice. Let the sound linger in your ears, my friend. Hear my voice."

Here at *The Peacock* — and amongst the people of India's smallest state in general — that has always been an important sentiment. Whatever the genre of music, for hundreds of years, this bite-sized territory has contributed mightily.

We appreciate how the connoisseur Rajan Parrikar has summarised it all in his landmark essay *Goa's Garden of Melody*, published in the Goa Heritage Action Group's magazine *Parmal* last year: "It is no exaggeration to say that tiny Goa's contributions to India's heritage — and to world civilization — are as prodigious as they are incommensurate with its size. From music to literature and poetry, from painting to sculpture, from philosophy to mathematics, the Goan impress is stamped on diverse realms."

Parrikar's main ambit in that essay is India's Art music, often referred to as Hindustani classical music, where Goa has produced an unbroken string of exemplars: Kesarbai Kerkar, Mogubai Kurdikar, Kishori Amonkar, Khaprurama Parvatkar, Anjanibai Malpekar, Sridhar Parsekar, Madhukar Pednekar, Jitendra Abhisheki and many more. And, of course, there's another string of classically-trained musicians who crossed over to more popular genres, including the record-making and record-breaking sisters



Illustration by Chloe Cordeiro

Asha Bhonsle and Lata Mangeshkar. To that crowd, we must add Lorna, and all the other Bombay-based Goans including Anthony Gonsalves — whom Damodar Mauzo writes about in his column today — whom Naresh Fernandes says "invented the sound of Bollywood."

Here's his evocative account: "the men who composed the scores for Hindi films couldn't write music and had no idea of the potential of the orchestras they employed. They would come to the studio and sing a melody to their Goan amanuensis, or pick out the line on a harmonium. The Goan assistant would write it out on sheet paper, then add parts for the banks of strings, the horn sections, the piano and the percussion. But the assistant wasn't merely taking dictation: It was his job to craft the introductions and bridges between verse and chorus. Drawing from their bicultural heritage and their experience in the jazz bands, the Goans gave Bollywood music its promiscuous charm, slipping in slivers of Dixieland stomp, Portuguese fados, Ellingtonesque doodles, cha cha cha, Mozart and Bach themes. Then they would rehearse the orchestras, which were staffed almost entirely by Goans. After all, hardly anyone else knew how to play these Western instruments."

PRAGYAVERSE

by Pragya Bhagat

this isn't your first rodeo

you've been here before
in this twilight zone where you high five
the mirror, and listen to junip
and play the piano and violin and uke
because it makes you feel like there's more
than one of you
like you're in a band

you don't want to be in a band
you don't want to chop and slice
and stir and fry, only to swallow
in the end, you want to wake up

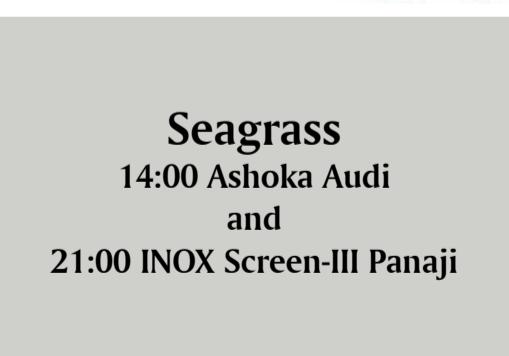
and water the plants because the plants
need you and you want to be needed
you want to stretch your limbs and cradle
the ocean, yesterday, you drew
the curtains and spun until
you grew dizzy, then you walked through
the jungle behind your house
it's not loneliness if you like it

IFFI Screening Schedule - 24th November

INOX SCREEN-I PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-II PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-III PANAJI	INOX SCREEN-IV PANAJI	MAQUINEZ PALACE	INOX SCREEN-I PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-II PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-III PORVORIM	INOX SCREEN-IV PORVORIM	SAMRAT AUDI	ASHOKA AUDI	KALA ACADEMY
DA1 GOLIATH 9:00AM - 10:33AM CW	DB1 RABINDRA KABYA RAHASYA 9:15AM - 10:59AM IC	DC1 BOSNIAN POT 9:30AM - 11:14AM ANIM	DD1 TOLDI 9:30AM - 11:14AM ANIM	DE4 THE FISHERMAN'S DAUGHTER 10:00AM - 11:43AM FK	DF1 ELEGIES 10:15AM - 11:47AM A-BD	DG1 OCARINA 10:30AM - 12:01PM ICFT	DH1 THE SUGAR EXPERIMENT 10:45AM - 12:35PM CW	DI1 HOMECOMING			
DA2 SIROCCO AND THE KINGDOM OF THE WINDS 11:15AM - 12:36PM ANIM	DB2 MALIKAPPURAM 12:00PM - 1:43PM ICFT	DC2 A HOUSE IN JERUSALEM 12:00PM - 4:35PM CW	DD2 3:15PM - 4:35PM CW	DF2 THE DRUNK 1:00PM - 3:01PM CW	DG2 THREE SPARKS 1:15PM - 2:51PM CW	DH2 A STRANGE PATH 1:30PM - 2:53PM CW	DI2 HE THOUGHT HE DIED 1:45PM - 2:56PM ANIM	DJ1 HAQEEQAT 10:00AM - 12:58PM RC	DL1 CRAFTING COMPELLING WEBSERIES FOR OTT 10:00AM - 12:11AM INTG	DK4 2:30PM - 4:00PM IN-CV	
DA3 DEAR JASSI 2:30PM - 4:53PM GP	DB3 CHUPI ROH / GULMOHAR 3:30PM - 4:59PM CW	DC3 MELODY 3:00PM - 4:54PM CW	DD3 FEZ SUMMER '55 3:00PM - 4:54PM CW	DE5 FAMILY ALBUM 5:30PM - 6:58PM CW	DF3 GATHAN (INAUGURATION 30' + FILM 26' + Q&A 15') 7:00PM - 8:11PM GF	DG3 EUREKA 4:00PM - 6:26PM FK	DH3 SIRA 4:15PM - 6:17PM ICFT	DI3 FRANKY FIVE STAR 4:30PM - 6:24PM CW	DJ2 DIVINITY 4:45PM - 6:13PM INTG	DL2 THE LAST DAYS OF HUMANITY 2:00PM - 5:16PM D-M	DK5 SEAGRASS 2:00PM - 3:56PM CW
DA4 ABOUT DRY GRASSES 5:30PM - 8:48PM MF	DB4 CHANGING LANDSCAPE / SIRF EK BANDAA KAAFI HAI 8:00PM - 11:11PM IP-F, IP-NF	DC4 THE OTHER SHAPE 6:15PM - 7:48PM ANIM	DD4 OMEN (AUGURE) 9:00PM - 10:30PM INTG	DE6 MOMMY'S LAMBIE 7:30PM - 8:50PM CW	DF4 ANATOMY OF A FALL 7:00PM - 9:30PM FK	DG4 CHRONICLES OF A WANDERING SAINT 7:15PM - 8:40PM CW	DH4 MMXX 7:30PM - 10:10PM FK	DI4 LOST COUNTRY 7:45PM - 9:30PM CW	DJ2 DAZZLING THE SCREEN 2:00PM - 5:36PM CW	DL2 SEAGRASS 2:00PM - 6:30PM IN-CV	
DA5 SHADOWS OF FORGOTTEN ANCESTORS 9:30PM - 11:10PM RC	DB5 SEAGRASS 9:00PM - 10:56PM CW	DC5 OMEN (AUGURE) 9:00PM - 10:30PM INTG	DD5 MOMMY'S LAMBIE 7:30PM - 8:50PM CW	DE5 ANATOMY OF A FALL 7:00PM - 9:30PM FK	DF4 CHRONICLES OF A WANDERING SAINT 7:15PM - 8:40PM CW	DG4 MMXX 7:30PM - 10:10PM FK	DH4 LOST COUNTRY 7:45PM - 9:30PM CW	DI4 DAZZLING THE SCREEN 2:00PM - 5:36PM CW	DL2 SEAGRASS 2:00PM - 6:30PM IN-CV		



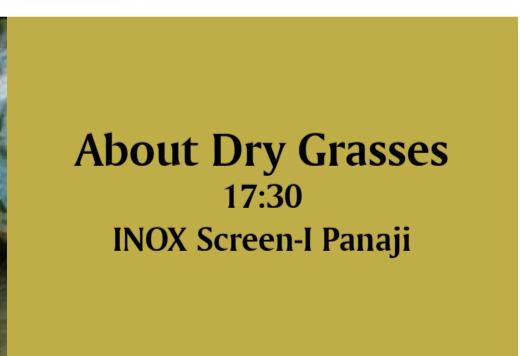
Goliath
09:00
INOX Screen-I Panaji



Seagrass
14:00 Ashoka Audi
and
21:00 INOX Screen-III Panaji



Eureka
16:00
INOX Screen-I Porvorim



About Dry Grasses
17:30
INOX Screen-I Panaji

