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Goan teenagers learn the art of filmmaking documenting neighbourhood stories

Goan teenagers who would love to try their hands at filmmaking were presented a unique opportunity to create short films based on the theme, 'Our Neighbourhood Stories' which was organised through the second edition of the Filmmaking Workshop for Young People by Fundacao Oriente. Today, September 21, their documentaries will be screened at Fundacao Oriente and the top three projects will be awarded





Who doesn't love watching films and how exciting it must be to create a film? The medium has the power to educate, and to bring out different emotions through a single frame on film. The youth of Goa are well aware of the beauty of films and documentaries and were now presented with the opportunity to learn about filmmaking and create their own documentaries of stories that they would love to bring on screen.

Fundacao Oriente recently concluded its second edition of the Filmmaking Workshop for Young People and the students will showcase their documentaries on the theme, 'Our Neighbourhood Stories', today, September 21, from 5 pm to 6:30 pm at Fundação Oriente, Fontainhas, Panjim. The jury will select and award the top three best documentaries. However, the efforts of the students will shine through their work as well as motivate them to look at filmmaking through a new perspective. The workshop received entries from 20 students but only 12 finally made it to the course, which was held from July 20 to September 7. The 12 youngsters include Rachel Nazareth, Samuel Lobo, Vedh Naik, Aari Teresa, Shlok Pandya, Rayyan Mussa Shaikh, Gianna Alvares, Isabel Rebeiro Fernandes, Alvaro Furtado, Vedant Chodankar, Blasio Furtado and Maheen Shaikh.

The students from Class 9 to 12, were guided by Anjali Monteiro and KP Jayasankar, who retired as professors from the School of Media and Cultural Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, in 2020. They are involved in documentary production, media teaching and research. They have been commissioning editors and mentors for over 100 documentaries by students and early career filmmakers. Their documentary films, which have been screened across the world, have won 33 national and international awards. Their most recent award is a Commendation of the Jury for 'A Delicate Weave' at the 16th RAI International Festival of Ethnographic Film, 2019.

Paulo Jorge da Silva Gomes, director of Fundação Oriente in India says, "This idea arose last year from the desire to bring to the Goan youth a workshop where they can develop skills to create and edit films and documentaries. Due to the success of the



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documentaries with the teachers support through the journey.

However, unlike last year, this year, the students can showcase their work to an audience. “We decided to have a public ceremony to allow the students to present their documentaries to their families, guests, all who would love to view it. We are talking about youth from 12 to 18 years, and despite all of the skills that they developed during the workshops, this is very important, because through this workshop, they now know better about Goa, about their village, about their communities, about its people,” explains Paulo.

He further adds, “They had to shoot and interview Goans, which was the main theme, our neighbourhood and they have their own particular documentary. This connection between the youth, the land, all the people, the elderly who participated in the documentaries, will be great, and I'm sure that they are creating good documentaries. This is a competition and a jury selected by Fundação Oriente, will select the first place, second place, and the third place.”

Rachel Nazareth, a Class 12 student at Sharada Mandir School, Miramar says, “It was an amazing experience. Right from the start, our mentors, Anjali and Jayshankar told us that besides learning, we should have fun and that's exactly what we did. We learnt all the aspects of making a documentary such as breaking down a scene, camera operations and conducting interviews. With the newfound knowledge, they prepared us to shoot our first ever documentary, making sure that each step of the way was an easy one. They helped us throughout and gave us so much of their time and energy. I'm so grateful to Fundacao Oriente for conducting this fabulous workshop as I learnt so much and had so much fun and made lovely friends. If I could turn back time, I would totally do this all over again.”

Following the theme of the workshop, ‘Our Neighbourhood Stories’, her group worked on a documentary about any story that is present in the neighbourhood. “My group worked on a story about a fisherman from the village of Nerul. His story of simplicity and humility is so inspiring. The duration was a 10-12 minutes but all of us wished that it could be more because there is a lot to capture and so much to tell. Our film is titled, ‘Nirmoha’ which implies a person with a deep understanding and connection with the



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Rachel has always been drawn towards cinema so she felt that this workshop was literally made for her. “I was introduced to documentary style of filmmaking which was a breath of fresh air from all mainstream films. This new style fascinated me just as much and I definitely will be making documentaries someday,” assures Rachel.

Speaking about the shooting process, she says, “The shooting process was not at all easy. We faced so many hurdles, unavailability of the protagonist, camera issues and even days when everyone is free to come shoot. Despite all this, with our mentors' help, we pushed through and managed to shoot the full film in two days. We had to keep in mind lighting, camera angles and all the tiny details that we were taught about. Sound was another important factor too. Nevertheless, amidst frustration and hopelessness, we held on and are fully satisfied with the outcome. The struggle was totally worth it.”

Class 10 student of The Rosary High School Bambolim, Shlok Pandya was part of a team including Alvaro and Blasio Furtado. He is a cinephile who enjoys every genre of the art. “I'm inspired by a lot by movies from the mind bending stories and plots of Christopher Nolan to the deep characters of Martin Scorsese to the unique cinematography of Stanley Kubrick, sets and outfits by Sanjay Leela Bhansali, story and VFX of SS Rajamouli, to the music by Damien Chazelle in ‘La La Land’ and ‘Whiplash’. I live to watch movies and watch movies to live, that's a quote I follow,” says the youngster.

He shares his experience of attending the filmmaking workshop, “It was different than what I had expected. I had always thought about filmmaking in a way that's only about the looks but Dr Jayasankar and Dr Anjali brought a whole new experience. They taught me the art of storytelling. Their way of teaching is quite beginner friendly and they showed us a few of the films they made and they helped us throughout the whole making of the film. They kept checking up on us and provided a lot of helpful information about how to make a film. I have learnt quite a lot from them, in terms of cinematography and documentary styled filmmaking.”

The three boys worked on a documentary titled, ‘Bombay to Goa’. “It talks about the



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and grateful as possible. It was quite a challenge for us because of the sound disturbance, but as the mentors recommended, we did a sound check before we started and constantly checked the sound for any errors,” says Shlok. The team also acknowledges the efforts of Fran and Althea.

Would Shlok pursue a career in filmmaking? “I would love to, but the typical Indian society believes that there is no scope in it. However, with the support of my family, friends and mentors, I would love to pursue it,” he quickly replies.

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