

Herald Cafe



CELEBRATING LUÍS DE CAMÕES: GOAN ARTISTS PAY TRIBUTE THROUGH ART AND POETRY



FEAST OF ST ANTHONY CELEBRATED AT ST ANTHONY CHAPEL, DEUSSUA

DANCING WITH DRONES: How Goa's festivals are going high-tech and high above

Once grounded in traditional rituals, Goa's festivals are now embracing the digital age. From drones painting the sky to projection mapping on temple walls, drone operators offer a fresh perspective on capturing these vibrant celebrations

Ojal Gaitonde

SPOTLIGHTING THE QUIET AMID CHAOS

Avinash Gonsalves blends technical mastery with poetic storytelling. "A great shot doesn't just show a celebration it draws you into it," he says. "I look for contrasts: light and shadow, tradition and tech, celebration and solitude." Using DJI Air 3 and Mini 4 Pro drones, Avinash excels at capturing both sweeping festival shots and up-close emotions. "The goal is the same — capture truth and texture." During the Goa Carnival 2025, instead of filming the floats, Avinash focused on a lone performer adjusting his costume. "It was a quiet, almost sacred moment," he recalls. "That image got more love than my wide parade shots. It reminded me: spectacle fades, but emotion stays. And sometimes, the most powerful stories are told in silence."



FRAMING FAITH FROM GROUND TO SKY

Siddesh Mayenkar, a seasoned photographer and documentarian, has spent over a decade chronicling Goa's cultural soul. "Festivals are not just performances, they're living traditions," he says. Using a Nikon setup with a 35mm and 70-200mm lens, Siddesh adapts to each festival's unique demands, even turning to his phone when discretion is needed. His drone work, however, has unlocked a whole new visual language. "From the sky, you see the choreography of the crowd,



the fire rituals, the spiritual geometry, it's powerful," he says, recalling viral shots of Shenil Uzo and Veer Bhadra from above. Based in Goa, he makes it a point to arrive early and honour cultural boundaries, especially around sacred rituals. "Some moments aren't meant to be captured they're meant to be felt." For Siddesh, photography is more than art, it's cultural preservation. "Goa is not just beaches and nightlife. My lens aims to show the Goa that breathes tradition."

FROM TOY DRONES TO FESTIVAL MASTERY

Long before drones became trendy, Joy D'Souza was building them from scratch. "I started with toy drones and RC cars, fixing them myself with my knowledge of hobby electronics. Back then, it was all manual no GPS, no auto-pilot. You had to read the wind and fly by instinct," he recalls. Joy's journey took him from childhood tinkering to flying for major events like the International Bike Week in 2014 and motorsport races with FB Motor Sports. "I couldn't afford my own drone, so I joined crews as a drone pilot. I just wanted to make people say 'wow' to see their world from above." Though he now flies licensed drones with modern tech, Joy's approach is still rooted in wonder. "Festivals were so raw and natural back in 2018. Fewer buildings, more trees. I try to preserve that charm capturing not just the action, but the environment and emotions wrapped around it." His favourite moments? "The ones no one else notices."



CAPTURING THE SOUL BENEATH THE SPECTACLE

For Suhas Naik, storytelling is more than capturing fireworks, it's about revealing the soul of the celebration. He says, "While the crowd and chaos are part of the spectacle, I look for stillness, a child's quiet wonder, a dancer's deep breath before performance. These moments carry the soul of the festival." Armed with a Sony mirrorless camera, a set of versatile lenses, a gimbal, and a drone, Suhas balances intimacy with grandeur. He believes aerial footage isn't



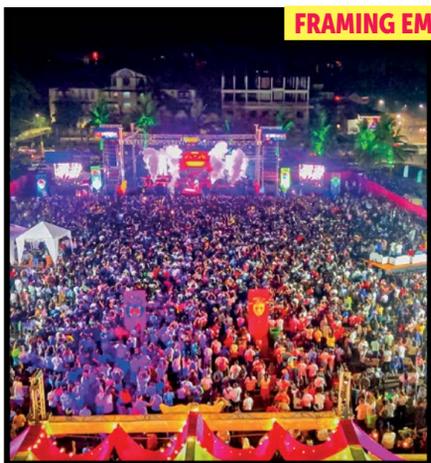
just eye-candy, its narrative. "Drones help me show the geography, the patterns of celebration you'd miss on the ground," he adds. One of his most talked-about projects was during

Goa's Narkasur night. "Instead of just filming the burning effigies, I followed a group of young boys making their demon figure. Their raw pride and teamwork gave my film an entirely different emotional centre."



TRADITION REIMAGINED, NOT REPLACED

The rise of drones, LED walls, 3D mapping, and cinematic edits have undoubtedly changed the festival landscape. Age-old rituals now glow in RGB light, centuries-old stories are told through projection mapping and edited into viral reels. While some argue that festivals are becoming "too performative," these drone artists insist the technology doesn't erase meaning, it reframes it.



FRAMING EMOTION FROM THE SKY

For 25-year-old Raia-based drone pilot Valdron Illario Savio Fernandes, authenticity is key. "I try to capture the real feelings behind the celebration, not just the lights and colours. Laughter, joy, nervousness these are what make a story breathe," he shares.



Valdron's trusted gear includes a Canon R8 with a 24-105mm lens, a DJI Mini 4 Pro drone, and a compact Godox LC 500 mini light for low-light settings. One of his most memorable shoots was at the Goa Carnival. "Everyone was filming at eye-level, but I flew my drone above the floats. The sweeping view showed how much effort went into every detail, the choreography, the design, even the crowd's reactions. People told me they felt like they were seeing the event for the first time." That, he says, is the power of perspective.

SWIPE RIGHT

Nicholas Galitzine unveils new costume look of He-Man

Filming has wrapped on the latest 'Masters of the Universe' adaptation, directed by 'Bumblebee's' Travis Knight and based on the iconic Mattel toy line and animated series. Nicholas Galitzine stars as He-Man, the heroic defender of Eternia, battling the villainous Skeletor, portrayed by Jared Leto. Galitzine shared a silhouetted image of himself in costume, writing, "Well, that's a wrap on Masters of the Universe. It's been an honour playing Adam and He-Man. A role of a lifetime—I gave it everything. I'm incredibly proud of what we've made." The cast also includes Camila Mendes (Teela), Alison Brie (Evil-Lyn), Idris Elba (Duncan/Man-at-Arms), and Morena Baccarin (The Sorceress), among others.



Fatima Sana Shaikh recently posted pictures from a photoshoot on Instagram, wearing a black printed mini dress, with the caption: "Madhumakhi ke sauteli behen hoon main." She will be seen in the upcoming film 'Metro... In Dino', opposite Ali Fazel

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