

#OLIVE TREES

Timeless Giants

The World's Oldest Olive Trees!



Olive trees are renowned for their longevity and resilience, often living for several centuries and even millennia. Among these ancient trees, the title of the oldest olive tree in the world is a subject of fascination and mystery. Various olive trees across the Mediterranean region claim to be the oldest, with some dating back thousands of years, making them living witnesses to human history and culture.

What Makes Olive Trees Special?

Olive trees (*Olea europaea*) are hardy and adaptable, able to thrive in poor soil and harsh climatic conditions typical of the Mediterranean basin. Their ability to regenerate from old roots, even

The Contenders for the Oldest Olive Tree

Several olive trees around the Mediterranean claim to be the oldest in the world, but exact dating is challenging due to the difficulty in determining the age of very old trees accurately.

1. The Olive Tree of Vouves, Crete, Greece

One of the most famous ancient olive trees stands in the village of Vouves on the Greek island of Crete. This tree is estimated to be between 2,000 and 3,000 years old. Still producing olives today, it is a revered natural monument and an important part of local heritage.

2. The Olive Tree of Al Walaja, Palestine

In the West Bank village of Al Walaja, an olive tree is believed to be around 5,000 years old, which would make it potentially the oldest olive tree in the world. This ancient tree has survived through millennia, witnessing countless historical events and human civilizations.

3. The Olive Tree of Spain (Souto de San Xulián, Galicia)

Spain also hosts ancient olive trees, with some specimens believed to be over 1,000 years old. These trees contribute to Spain's rich tradition of olive cultivation and olive oil production.

Why Are These Trees Important?

Beyond their age, these ancient olive trees are living symbols of human history, culture, and nature's endurance. Olive trees have sustained civilizations by providing food, oil, and wood, and they feature prominently in religious texts, mythology, and art.

The oldest olive trees connect us to our ancestors and remind us of the importance of preserving nature and heritage. Many of these trees are protected by local and international conservation efforts.

"Yeh duniya agar mil bhi jaye to kya hai..."

Guru Dutt, being a Karnataki, was an ardent fan of two Bs, one Bimal Roy and other Bengalis. Incidentally or accidentally, Geeta Roy was then beautiful and a fabulous singer. So, it was inevitable and Guru married Gita in a typical Bengali way. Alas, the ending was similarly very bad. Waheeda and Guru were not involved in a scandalous affair, but there was obvious affection between the two. The kind where people around them could tell that something was brewing, but no one dared ask them anything about it. They cared for each other, but they never declared their love from the rooftops.



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Senior Journalist &
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with them, the memory of a cinematic genius, Guru Dutt. As we mark his 100th birth anniversary on July 9, 2023, the world of cinema came together to honour not just a filmmaker, but a visionary who transformed Indian film into an art form of lyrical and emotional resonance.

Born in 1925 in Bangalore (then part of the Madras Presidency), Vasanth Kumar Shivashankar Padukone, who would later become known as Guru Dutt, was much more than a director or actor. He was a poet of the screen, a craftsman who carved cinema with light and shadow, silence and music, longing and despair.

Early Life and Entry into Films

Guru Dutt's journey into cinema was marked by an early exposure to art and performance. After studying at Uday Shankar's dance academy in Almora, he began working in various capacities in the film industry, including choreography, editing, and acting. His early collaborations with Dev Anand and

involvement with the studio Navketan Films led to his directorial debut in *Baazi* (1951).

Even in these early years, his style began to show: moody lighting, introspective characters, and a strong integration of music and narrative, a template that would evolve into his signature style.

Pyaasa (1957): The Voice of the Rejected

Guru Dutt's 1957 classic *Pyaasa* remains one of the most powerful commentaries on the disillusionment of artists in a materialistic world. He played the role of Vijay, a struggling poet whose verses are scorned until he is presumed dead.

The film's soul-stirring songs, written by Sahir Ludhianvi and sung by Mohammed Rafi, like "Yeh Duniya

Kumar's portrayal of the tragic Chhoti Bahu is legendary, but it was Guru Dutt's sensitive production and atmospheric framing that elevated the film into a classic. It won the President's Gold Medal for Best Feature Film and was India's official entry to the Oscars that year.

The Auteur and His Art

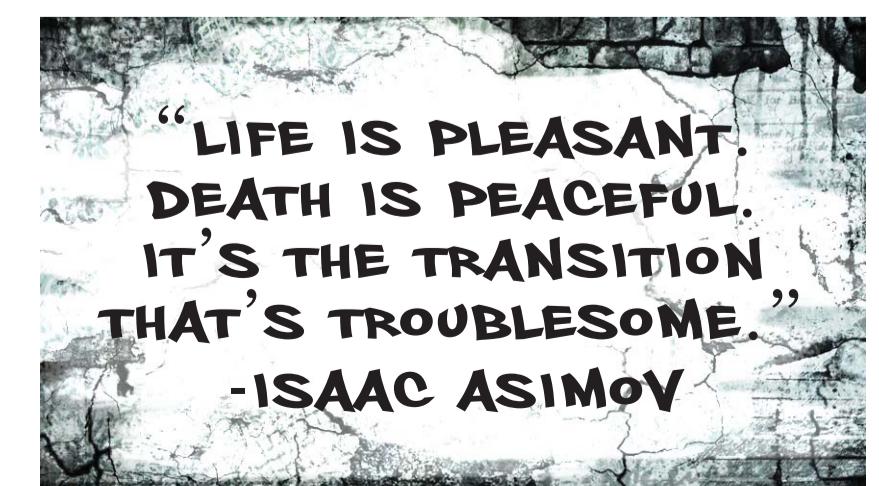
Guru Dutt was not merely a filmmaker, he was an auteur in the true sense. His films were not products of formula, but deeply personal expressions of thought, sorrow, and beauty. He was heavily influenced by Bengali literature, European cinema, and the neo-realism movement, yet his storytelling was unmistakably Indian, rich in emotional texture and cultural nuance.

A Life of Inner Turmoil

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THE WALL

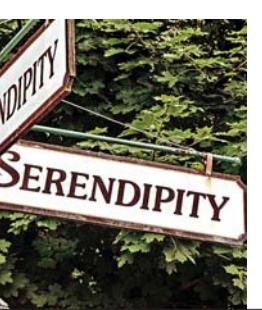


BABY BLUES



Embracing Life's Happy Accidents

Serendipity Day celebrates the joy of unexpected discoveries and happy accidents that enrich life in surprising ways. Observed annually on August 18, it encourages people to remain open to possibilities rather than rigidly following plans. The term 'serendipity,' coined by Horace Walpole in the 18th century, refers to finding something valuable while not specifically seeking it. On this day, people are reminded that chance encounters, unplanned events, and unforeseen opportunities can lead to meaningful connections, creative ideas, or personal growth. Embracing spontaneity, exploring new paths, and welcoming surprises are central to honouring the spirit of Serendipity Day.



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Guru Dutt dropped Waheeda like a hot brick

It was during the shoot of *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* that Guru and Geeta's relationship hit another rough patch as Guru learnt that she might be having an affair. As soon as he suspected Geeta, he 'dropped' Waheeda like a hot brick.

Guru Dutt had dropped Waheeda like a hot brick. He made the sacrifice to assuage his hurt male ego. Abrar recalled and shared that he asked Guru why he was abandoning Waheeda 'for no real reason.' After they parted ways, Abrar wanted to call Waheeda to the studio one more time, for a final shot in *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*, but she just wouldn't agree. "I will not step inside that studio," she declared. He persuaded

Legacy: A Timeless Influence

Todays Guru Dutt's films are studied in film schools across the world. Directors like Martin Scorsese, Satyajit Ray, Mira Nair, and Anurag Kashyap have cited him as an influence. His blend of poetic narrative, strong female characters, and visual brilliance has made his work timeless.

The BFI (British Film Institute) ranks *Pyaasa* and *Kaagaz Ke Phool* among the greatest films ever made. His style is emulated, his music still cherished, and his themes remain deeply relevant, be it the loneliness of the artist, the exploitation of women, or the crumbling of old moral orders. As we commemorate 100 years of Guru Dutt, we are not merely remembering a filmmaker; we are celebrating a philosopher of cinema, a painter of emotion, and a poet of human experience. His films continue to hold a mirror to society, asking the uncomfortable yet necessary questions: What is success? What is love? What does it mean to be human in a world that often rewards cruelty over compassion?

Guru Dutt's last day was October 10, 1964, when he was found dead in his Mumbai apartment at the age of 39. The cause of death was officially ruled as a combination of sleeping pills and alcohol, though whether it was suicide or an accidental overdose remains a subject of speculation according to some. Guru Dutt had a history of depression and had reportedly attempted suicide before. His personal life was marked by his marriage and career setbacks, which contributed to his struggles. His final hours involved a meeting with Dev Anand to discuss a potential film, and a phone call with his estranged wife, Geeta Dutt, about their children. The unfinished film *Baharen Phir Bhi Aayengi* was later completed by his brother, Atma Ram, and Dharmendra.

His traumatic relationship with his wife Geeta Dutt, and the birth of his daughter, who was desperate to come back to him, as his wife had deserted him over many real and unhappy issues, was his last conversation. He had rung up Geeta and warned her: He wanted her to bring back their daughter, and had said to her, "Bring her back with you or you'll see my dead face tomorrow." Distraught Geeta had repeated this the next morning after receiving news of his death. But, Guru Dutt lives on, not only in celluloid but in the hearts of all who yearn for a cinema that speaks to the soul.

reflecting the devotion, artistry, and cultural values of the time. The Chauhan rulers were known for their contributions to architecture and religious institutions, and the Shri Narbadehwar Shiva Temple stands as a lasting testament to their patronage.

The temple traces its origins back to the mid-18th century when it was constructed under the patronage of the Chauhan king of the OEL region between 1860 and 1870. This period of construction links the temple to a significant era in local history,

#TEMPLE

Shri Narbadehwar Shiva Temple

A Unique Spiritual Landmark in Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh

The temple embodies a harmonious blend of art, devotion, and history, serving as a living repository of ancient beliefs adapted to local contexts



Established in the Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh, the Shri Narbadehwar Shiva Temple stands as a singularly unique and culturally significant religious site in India. This temple is renowned for its rare and extraordinary depiction of Lord Shiva seated on the back of a frog, a representation unparalleled anywhere else in the country. Complementing this exceptional iconography is the figure of Nandi Maharan, the sacred bull who is Lord Shiva's traditional mount, depicted in a rare standing posture, which further distinguishes this temple from others.

What makes the Shri Narbadehwar Shiva Temple particularly fascinating is its unique spiritual symbolism and artistic expression. Typically, Lord Shiva is portrayed seated on a tiger skin or a bull, but here, the choice of a frog as his seat offers a profound insight into localized religious traditions and beliefs. Frogs, often symbolizing fertility, transformation, and connection with water bodies, might have held special significance for the community, suggesting a syncretism of nature worship and classical Shaivism.

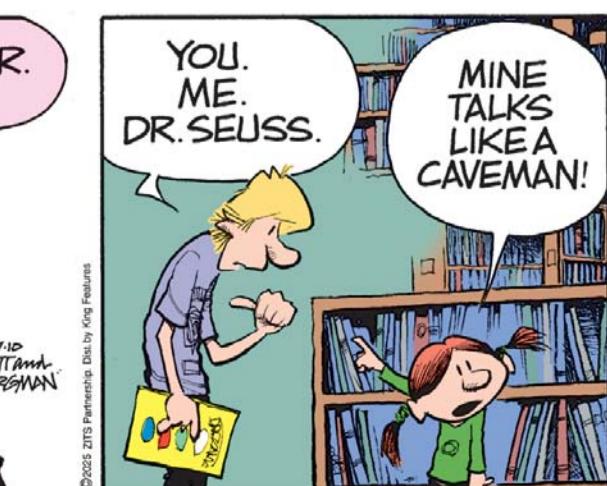
In addition to Lord Shiva's unusual seat, the presence of Nandi Maharan in an upright standing posture is rare in itself. Traditionally, Nandi is shown reclining or seated, calmly gazing towards Shiva. The standing form here perhaps symbolizes vigilance, readiness, and a dynamic aspect of devotion, inviting devotees to witness this unique interpretation of a sacred figure.

The temple's location in Lakhimpur Kheri makes it an important spiritual destination for locals and visitors alike. Pilgrims come not only to offer their prayers but also to marvel at the temple's distinct iconography and architecture. Its serene atmosphere and historical significance create a spiritual ambience that continues to inspire faith and reverence among devotees.

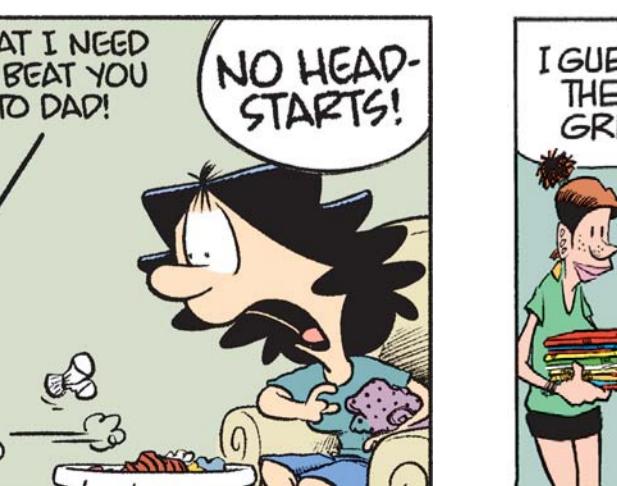
Over the decades, Shri Narbadehwar Shiva Temple has retained its status as a cultural and religious landmark. It highlights the rich diversity of India's religious heritage, demonstrating how regional traditions can create distinctive and meaningful forms of worship. The temple embodies a harmonious blend of art, devotion, and history, serving as a living repository of ancient beliefs adapted to local contexts.



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



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