

Bedlam Productions and Tatu Filmes

present

Tarsila



Abaporu, 1928. Detail

Tarsila, the film

Tarsila do Amaral is one of the most iconic Latin American artists of the 20th century, and yet the thrilling and often dramatic aspects of her life are not widely known in Brazil. Equally, Tarsila is in no way as familiar a name abroad as that of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. But the vastness, richness and meaning of her art is such that hers should be a familiar name and story certainly in Brazil, and ideally abroad as well, especially given a rising interest and curiosity about Brazil internationally.

To do justice to her story, we must revert to the power of film, we need to revert to the power and magic of film to bring her life story to the general public around the world.

For who would not be interested in a woman born in the late 19th century who broke all norms and conventions of her society by pursuing an education in the best schools in Brazil and abroad. Then by choosing to leave her first husband, following a disastrous arranged marriage. Then by moving to Europe with her only daughter to be trained as an artist in the most renowned studios of Paris? Who would have thought that this privileged young girl would become a celebrated artist with an artistic salon that welcomed famous icons of the 1920's like Picasso, Stravinsky, Chanel, Satie and Milhaud, among others.

Not to mention the fiery, passionate love affair she embarked on with the modernist poet Oswald de Andrade, a seminal literary genius in Brazilian culture with whom Tarsila agitated and shocked the cultural scene of Brazil, but who later broke her heart when he left her for Tarsila's friend. Or the third husband Luis Martins, with whom she had a loving relationship for twenty years before he, in turn, left her for her niece, forty years her junior. What about the double tragedy of her only grand-daughter's death by drowning at the age of 15, followed by the death of her only daughter from diabetes?

If this is not drama enough, there is always the mystery behind her painting Abaporu, which went down in the history of art in Brazil as a depiction of a distorted figure of a male cannibal that inspired an important modernist movement?

There is no doubt that Tarsila should be seen as an icon. And perhaps, with this production, she will attain the status she deserves.

Tarsila



Auto-retrato de corpo inteiro, 1922



Tarsila, 1926

Tarsila do Amaral, better known to the world as Tarsila, was a Brazilian modernist artist who gave Brazilian and Latin American art a new direction. She was a strong woman who lived ahead of her times on her own terms and conditions. Tarsila's paintings were adapted reflections of surrealism and cubism - the vivid colors and extraordinary images she painted, manifestations of the bright Brazilian way of living, in turn influenced by a deep connection to African roots. Reflecting her times in Europe, the Soviet Union and mostly in Brazil itself, Tarsila's paintings were life stories.

Tarsila do Amaral's childhood and early life

Tarsila do Amaral was born in Capivari, São Paulo, Brazil, on September 1, 1886. She was born into an affluent family of coffee farmers and landowners and spent most of her early life on the farm. Although girls from rich families were rarely educated beyond primary years, Tarsila was supported by her parents in acquiring an education. She studied in São Paulo, and then in Barcelona, Spain. While there, she began experimenting with painting.



Tarsila, left, with her siblings

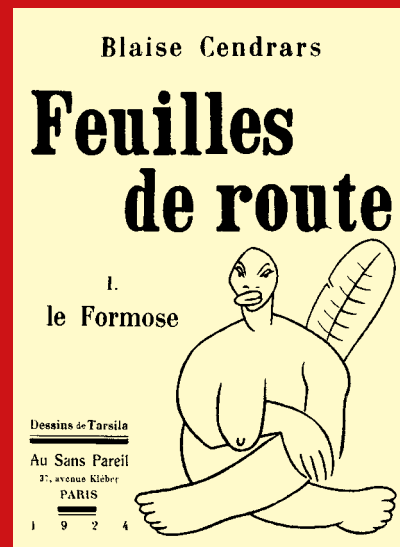
Development years

Tarsila studied sculpture from 1916 onwards under Zadig and Montavani, and took lessons in drawing and painting at the studio of Peter of Alexandria in 1918. This is where she met Anita Malfatti, also from São Paulo, who became a close friend. In 1920, she moved to Paris and studied at the renowned Académie Julien under Émile Renard.

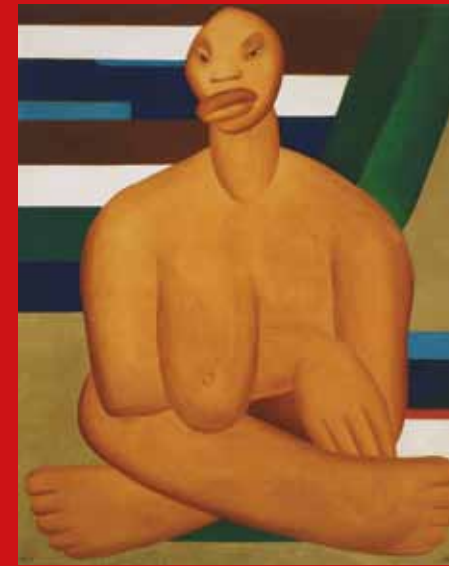
Tarsila returned to Brazil in June 1922, where Anita Malfatti introduced her to Oswald de Andrade, Mario de Andrade, and Menotti del Picchia. Before her arrival, the group had organized the "Week of Modern Art", which had effectively placed modernism onto Brazil's artistic map. Tarsila and the poet Oswald de Andrade developed a deep passion for one another and together visited Paris in 1923. While in Paris, she studied under André Lhote and Albert Gleizes, famous cubists, but it was under the supervision of Fernand Léger that she painted the iconic "A Negra" (The Black Woman). Léger was inspired by her work and invited other students to contemplate it. "A Negra" was a connection to Tarsila's childhood, and depicts a black slave who served as a wet nurse. With this creation, Tarsila undoubtedly contributed to the flourishing of modern art in Brazil.

The Pau Brasil period

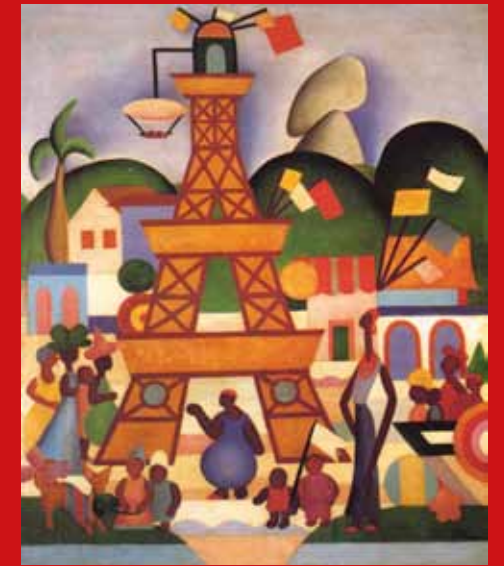
Tarsila and Oswald travelled throughout Europe and returned to São Paulo at the end of 1923, accompanied by their good friend Blaise Cendrars, the Franco-Swiss avant-garde poet. Together, the three explored the historic towns of Minas Gerais and its Baroque architecture. "I found in Minas," Tarsila wrote, "the colors I had adored as a child. I was later taught they were ugly and unsophisticated". Oswald wrote poetry during their travels and Tarsila illustrated these poems, which were to be published in 1924 under the title "Pau Brasil". Inspired by her trip, Tarsila began to paint in a new style: a mixture of local naïve art and the Cubism she had learnt from Léger. 'Carnival in Madureira', 'Morro da Favela', 'EFCB', 'The Papaya Tree', 'Sao Paulo', 'The Fisherman', represent well the paintings of this period.



Cover made by Tarsila for Blaise Cendrars's Feuilles de route, 1924



A Negra, 1923



Carnaval em Madureira, 1924



Cover made by Tarsila for Oswald's book, Pau-Brasil. 1925



Dona Olívia Guedes Penteado, Blaise Cendrars, Tarsila do Amaral, Oswald de Andrade Filho (Nonê) and Oswald de Andrade at the farm Santo Antonio, Araras, São Paulo, 1924



Oswald de Andrade, Tarsila do Amaral, Yvette Farkou, Fernad Léger, Constantin Brancusi and unidentified friend. Paris ca. 1926



Oswald de Andrade and Tarsila. Rhodes, 1926



From left to right: Pagú, Anita, Benjamim Peret, Tarsila, Oswald de Andrade, Elsie Houston, Álvaro Moeyra, Eugênia Álvaro Moreyra and the same unidentified friend. 1926

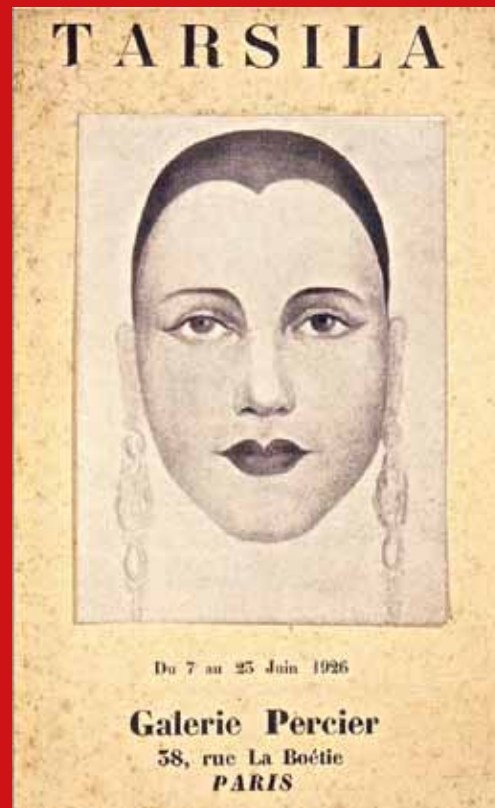


Anthropophagy

In 1926, Tarsila and Oswald were married and together travelled to Europe and to the Middle East. In 1926 she held her first solo exhibition in Paris, featuring her paintings 'São Paulo' (1924), 'A Negra' (1923), 'Lagoa Santa' (1925), and 'Morro de Favela' (1924). The bright colors and vivid images portrayed caused a deep impact in Paris. By 1928, Tarsila had moved towards a more sophisticated style, which proved to be the start of her most creative period: known later as the Anthropophagic or Cannibalist phase. The movement gained its inspiration from "Abaporu", painted by Tarsila in 1928 as a birthday present to her husband. Oswald and his friends saw in the image a symbol of the Brazilian primeval man, a cannibalistic noble savage who visually represented their belief that Brazil needed to return to basics. They named the painting "Abaporu," which in native indian tupi-guarani means "man who eats human flesh". It inspired Oswald to publish his Anthropophagy Manifesto in 1928, which in turn, inspired the Anthropophagy Movement in art, music, and literature. The central tenet of Anthropophagy to the Brazilian modernists, was a call to devour

European artistic influences in a cannibalistic way, absorbing those elements that were innovative while expelling those that were irrelevant to Brazilian culture. The movement was intensely nationalistic and urged Brazilians to look to the future by first re-discovering their roots – without European ethnocentric influences.

Later in 1929, Tarsila painted Antropofagia (1929), a syncretic fusion of the cannibal figure Abaporu with the figure of The Black Woman. "A negra". Other paintings from this period included 'Sol Poente', 'A lua', 'Cartão-postal', 'O lago'. They were an amalgam of pictures, imaginary landscapes and strong colors.



Cover of her solo exhibition catalogue. Galerie Percier. Paris, 1926



Tarsila at Galerie Percier, 1926



Morro da favela, 1926



Antropofagia, 1929

Petite Galerie



A caipirinha, 1923



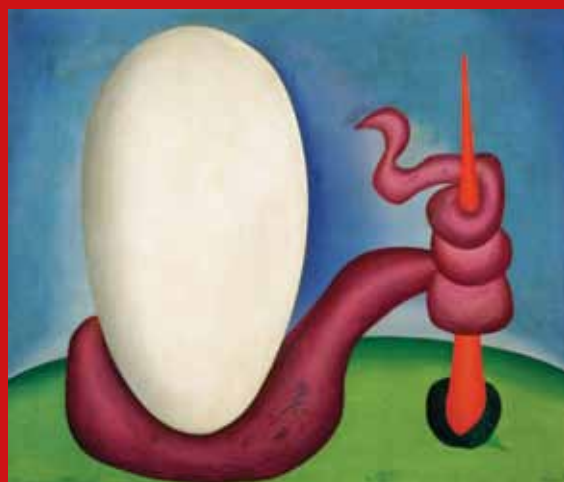
A cuca, 1924



EFCB (Estrada de Ferro Central do Brasil), 1924



Paisagem com touro, 1925



O ovo ou Urutu, 1928



A lua, 1928



Cartão postal, 1928



Idílio, 1929

1930's Revolution

Tarsila had her first solo exhibition in 1929 at the Palace Hotel in Rio de Janeiro, and another at the Salon Gloria in São Paulo. This year saw the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange and the decline of coffee markets around the world. Europe and America were in crisis, and this had deep effects on Brazil. Political unrest caused by the economic crisis led to the so-called Revolution of 1930, which ended Brazil's first Republic, and in effect ended the hegemony of the coffee lords and their oligarchic ruling system. The revolution would culminate in a coup declared by Vargas in 1930 which established him as a dictator. Society underwent change by way of an accelerated process of urbanization and greater participation of the bourgeoisie in political life, rising industrialization with a growing working class and with many government policies initiated by Getúlio Vargas, aimed at urban workers and their inclusion in the industrial workforce. In 1937 he declared another enduring coup, the Estado Novo, or New State, which established an anti-communist government characterized by nationalism and authoritarianism which would last until 1945.

Later career

By 1931, Tarsila had divorced Oswald de Andrade and had found a new partner in César Osório, an active Communist. Together, they travelled to various cities and historical places in the Soviet Union and captured the plight of the Russian People. In 1932, Tarsila returned to Brazil and joined the São Paulo Constitutional revolution and was imprisoned for a month for her involvement with the Communist Party. In the mid 1930's, Tarsila ended her relationship with César Osório at the age of 47 and started a relationship with journalist Luis Martins, who was twenty years her junior. She lived with him from the mid 30s to mid 50s, and in this period, her art focused on social themes, and she wrote art and culture columns for the newspaper, *Diario de São Paulo* until 1952.

In 1951, Tarsila participated in the São Paulo Biennial, and in 1964, she was invited to exhibit in the Biennial of Venice.



Osório César



Portrait of Luis Martins



Operários, 1933



Segunda classe, 1933

Personal life

Tarsila was married to her first husband in 1906. He was the father of her only child, Dulce.

It was an arranged marriage and unfortunately Tarsila didn't share any interests with him.

They separated after seven years.

A few years later, she met and fell in love with Oswald de Andrade.

As Tarsila's father was able to annul her first marriage, they were married in 1926. Known as Tarsiwald, the couple represented Brazilian modernism at its best, but separated soon after in 1930, following his affair with a bright young student, Pagu. With her third husband Luis Martins, twenty years her junior, she lived a beautiful and long married life, which ended when she was 70 years old. He eventually left her for Tarsila's niece who was forty years younger than her. Her daughter Dulce died in 1966 from diabetes and her only granddaughter Beatriz, died in the 1940s, aged 15.

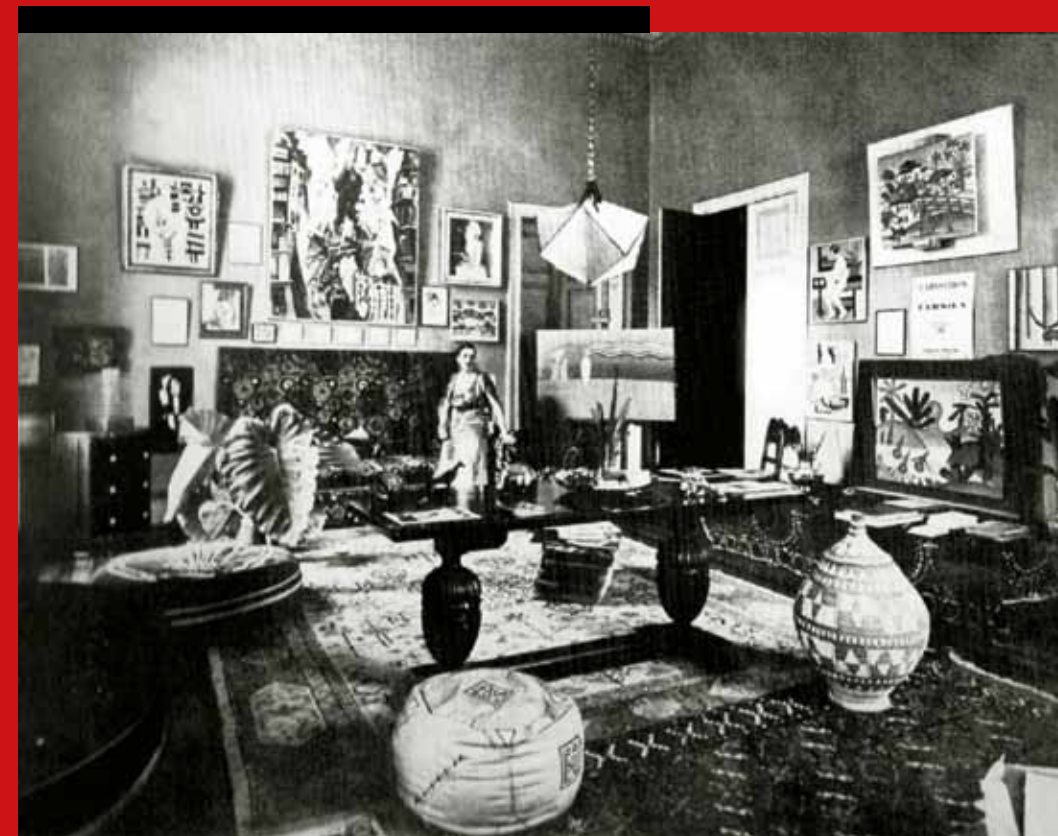
Death and legacy

Tarsila passed away in 1973 at the age of 86 in São Paulo.

Severe back problems had confined her to a wheelchair and she began to sell her paintings, donating part of the money to an organization administered by Chico Xavier, a notorious Brazilian psychic.

She was buried in Consolação Cemetery dressed in white. Tarsila left behind more than 2200 works, more than 230 paintings and drawings, illustrations and prints.

Her work undoubtedly left its mark on Brazilian modernism and contributed greatly towards putting Latin American art on the world's map, alongside the works of other renowned artists like Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera.



Tarsila in her São Paulo living-room

A note from the family

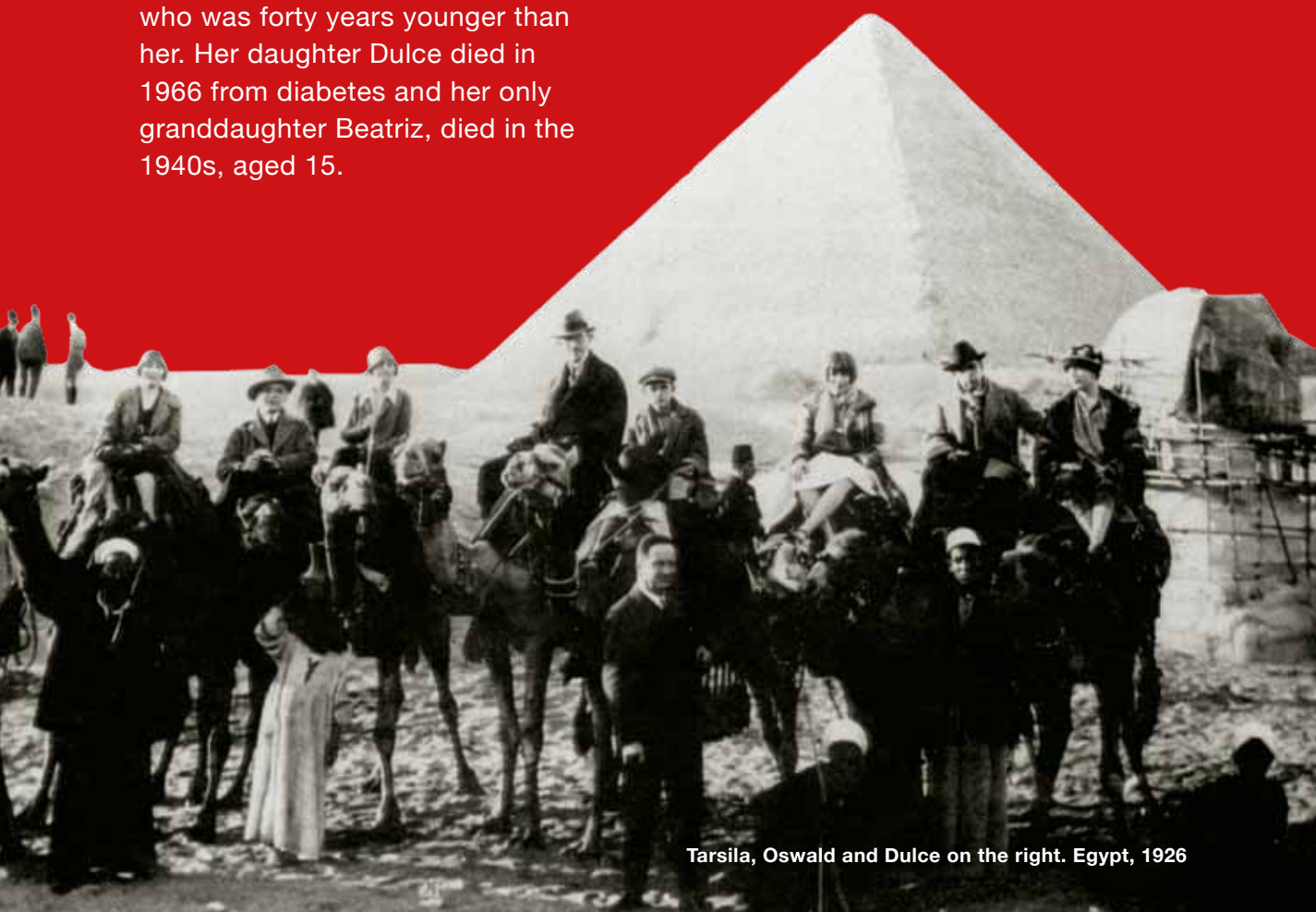
A film about Tarsila do Amaral will be a dream come true for our family.

Tarsila was one of the most talented artists in Brazil. With each passing year, recognition of her importance for Latin American art increases. Her work has been selling internationally at very high prices and this demonstrates a growing interest and appraisal of her work around the world. She always hoped she would become a symbol of Brazilian art and with her paintings she succeeded in capturing and eternalizing the Brazilian soul.

Tarsila led an admirable and interesting life. She was ahead of her times, a feat she managed despite coming from a traditional family rooted in a traditional society in which women were expected to be submissive. She changed the direction of her life by studying art abroad and deciding her own course in her three marriages and other relationships without fear of judgment.

To be able to tell Tarsila's story through film is a precious way for her family to share her intimacy with the public.

Tarsilinha do Amaral
artist's great-niece



Tarsila, Oswald and Dulce on the right. Egypt, 1926



Producer's statement Bedlam Productions

The story of Tarsila do Amaral is a story of a woman at the helm of an artistic movement. Whose creative legacy can still be seen across the world today. Her pursuit of artistic expression comes to define the very heart of a nation and its people.

Rarely in cinema are we afforded female heroines whose lives have influenced, inspired and brought joy to so many people.

It is our absolute intention to create a film that combines the joy of *Amile*, the artistry of *Amadeus* and the wonder of *Cinema Paradiso*.

The appeal of Tarsila is clear: she was a completely unique woman, one who presents the opportunity to create one of the greatest female roles in recent years. Her story unfolds against the backdrop of 1920's Paris, a liberal, artistic and cultural melting pot, and the growing pains of a new Republic, Brazil.

This was an extraordinary time of cultural icons, and revolution. Tarsila travelled throughout Europe, Russia, the Middle East and Brazil, enchanting the ruling classes, cultural elite, the voiceless masses and children of slaves. Allowing us the opportunity to create a truly international production that champions the finest talent and best resources of Europe and Brazil. The wealth of varied roles makes this a very exciting film to cast and our ambition is to bring together a creative team of the highest standard – it's no less than this story deserves.

Just as *The King's Speech* went behind the scenes of history to present an intimate story that appealed across generations all around the world, *Tarsila* will look beyond the headlines of history to tell the moving story of a remarkable woman, her life and her loves. In doing so, we will create a film that will enrapture an audience of all ages, appealing to those older viewers who long for a return to the elegant period dramas, as well as those younger audience members drawn to adventure with a lust for life and romance.

With *Tarsila* we have the opportunity to create a great film that will feel distinctively Brazilian, yet with strong European collaborations. It is a hugely exciting endeavor that will prove how Art can inspire, define and free a Nation from the shadows of Empire.

Simon Egan



Bedlam Productions is a London-based film and television Production Company with over 20 years extensive experience.

The company's first feature film was the BAFTA nominated British thriller EXAM, a success they followed with the multi-Academy and BAFTA Award Winning drama THE KING'S SPEECH. Bedlam's latest feature ZAYTOUN is currently on theatrical release in the United States, having collected the Runner Up Audience Prize at the Toronto Film Festival in 2012.

Bedlam is reuniting with Oscar winning screenwriter David Seidler (*The King's Speech*) for THE LADY WHO WENT TOO FAR – a sweeping epic exploring the extraordinary life of Lady Hester Stanhope, an English socialite and adventurer during the early nineteenth century. Bedlam are also producing HAPPY CAMP – a contemporary noir thriller set on the outskirts of an Indian reservation in Northern California. HAPPY CAMP will be directed by Peter Webber (*'Girl with a Pearl Earring', 'Emperor'*) and is due to go into production in 2014.

The passion for storytelling is also a prominent focus of their television projects. They are currently in post-production on several shows including 'IN SEARCH OF THE HANGING GARDENS', a Channel 4 documentary tracking down the legendary, lost Wonder of the World and Bedlam are also part of the International Production team behind the upcoming documentary drama 'JFK: THE SMOKING GUN'. On the scripted side of television Bedlam are developing a feature length drama, for a US broadcaster, MERCURY 13 – surrounding the female space race during the cold war, they are also working exclusively with The Department of Homeland Security on a 13-part drama series for a US major.





Brazilian Producer's note

Tatu Filmes / Brasil 1500

It is a real privilege, as a producer, to contribute towards the recreation of a moment in Tarsila's life. Her story has never been portrayed in images in a way that does justice to her importance in our cultural heritage. She was an artist who created iconic images that represented Brazilian's imagery in a new and modern

way, often representing the essence of ourselves as Brazilians. Her work, like that of other modernists, was a rupture with old ways of expression, a new way of looking at representations of Brazilian life. Tarsila expressed, with her original and peculiar talent, the image of Brazil through bright colours and determined brush strokes.

We move forward in these early stages of development, with a feeling of enormous responsibility. Our research will have to inspire the screenwriters to penetrate deeply into her life and that of Europe's and Brazil's avant-garde; we will have to convincingly recreate effervescent and creative times and find personal stories that will allow us to portray the monumental transition of Brazilian social and cultural life moving from an agrarian to an urbanized society.

As a student, many years back, I took some stills of a live interview at her house and was struck at the time by the strength of her personality. My happy challenge lies in transforming the memory of this woman's strength into a convincing film that will build bridges between our cultures and capture the world's imagination, while at the same time doing justice to her significance to Brazil's cultural actuality.

The partnership with a company with the depth of experience as Bedlam Productions will be essential in creating the necessary harmony to bridge the gap between our cultures and enable the start of this adventure. Will you join us?

Cláudio Kahns

Born in São Paulo, **Cláudio Kahns** has been connected to Brazilian cinema for more than thirty years. He studied at the School of Sociology and Politics in his hometown and in Paris, at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, Université de Vincennes, and the École des Beaux-Arts in France. Back in Brazil, he studied at the Film Department at the School of Communication and Arts (ECA), part of the University of São Paulo (USP). In those two countries, he organized film screenings and also worked as a journalist for the supplement "Folha Ilustrada" of the daily Folha de S. Paulo. He was the President of the Brazilian Association of Documentarists (ABD). He founded the production company, Tatu Filmes, in 1981 with six other film-makers and took part in the production of numerous short-films, documentaries for foreign broadcasters, corporate films and feature length films, many of them awarded in film festivals. He was Special Advisor for Cinema at the Secretary of Culture for the State of São Paulo. Cláudio has also participated in various juries of festivals and project selections for production. He is currently producing a documentary series for cinema and TV 1937-45 Images of the New State, a co-production with France of the drama Au-dela de la Rivière and actually is preparing other various fiction films for TV and cinema.



Dilma e Obama tiram foto ao lado do Abaporu

O GLOBO



Presidenta Dilma Rousseff e casal Obama posam ao lado do quadro Abaporu, de Tarsila do Amaral, na exposição Mulheres, artistas e brasileiras. Foto: Roberto Stuckert Filho/PR

Presidents Dilma and Obama have their photo taken next to Abaporu in an exhibition in Brasília

Film development crew

Producer: Simon Egan

Brazilian Producer: Cláudio Kahns

Executive Producer: Tarsilinha do Amaral

Executive Producer: Adriana Rouanet

Adviser: Suzana Lobo

Adviser: Patricia Secco

Legal Adviser: Luciana Rangel



Auto-retrato II

bedlam
productions ltd



TATU FILMES

design Victor Nosek



Auto-retrato com lenço vermelho