



The best mulch is organically based and partially decomposed material that conditions the earth as it decays.

## Gardening tips before you go on holiday

Goodlife Reporter

PLANNING on taking a summer break away from home? For many gardeners, a concern when going on holiday is the consequence it will have on their gardens. But even the hardest working gardener needs a holiday – so with a bit of planning, you don't have to come home to a garden in disarray.

Here are some tips from Farmyard Organics:

● **Mulching is a must**  
Mulched plants lose 25% less water than un-mulched plants. Farmyard Organics' large, composted pine bark chip mulch is a good, high quality option for your garden.

Apart from making the beds look neat and attractive, it helps to retain soil moisture and protect the plants from drying out quickly.

It also insulates the soil, keeping it cooler on those hot summer days, as well as inhibiting plant diseases and the growth of weeds.

● **Prune before you dash**  
If you don't want to miss the peak display of flowering in your

garden, you can delay the best show by deadheading all repeat-flowering plants, like roses, before you leave.

This way, on your return from holiday, you will be welcomed by fresh blooms.

Similarly, use a pair of shears to trim out older blooms in the beds. This will allow new buds to develop, ready to open in a few weeks' time.

● **Lawns**

Most standard or family lawns will cope perfectly well if you're going on holiday for up to a fortnight.

Mow and trim just before you leave and be ready to do the same on your return.

We suggest mowing your lawn a bit lower than usual, to ensure it's not too "shaggy" on your return.

● **Find a garden buddy**

Before you jump into the car to set off on your holiday, give your veggies one last good, deep watering.

If at all possible, find someone you trust to tend to your garden while you're away – someone as keen as you are, and whose crops you'll look after in return.

# Mystique and appeal of Indian music

Durban-born Fin Manjoo's independent film *Woodwind* is set to be released next year. A major theme in the movie is the impact of Indian classical music on artists in the West. **Kamcilla Pillay** speaks to Manjoo about the film, his inspirations and his local roots.

THE fiction feature showcases the power of Indian classical music on leading composers worldwide.

The film's lead actor is Argentinian Leandro Taub, who stars as the poet Enrique Lin in Alejandro Jodorowsky's current film *Poesia sin fin* (Endless Poetry, 2016).

Now in the upcoming film, Taub plays the composer Bonifaz who travels to India while being inspired by three women who shape his journey from the holy city of Varanasi to the peaks of the Himalayas.

The impact of Indian classical music on artists in the West is a subject which Manjoo developed, living closely with musicians in Vienna, Austria.

The film is shot by Swiss cinematographer Nicolas Joray (who also shot *The Yellow Star*, *Eye Bye Berlusconi* and *Baltic Storm*), whose three decades of experience was invaluable during the most challenging conditions in India.

Durban-born Manjoo is now based in Cape Town where the film was partly shot.

The international cast and crew, says the filmmaker, were from South Africa, the US, Germany, Austria, Serbia, Switzerland, Argentina and India.

Fin Pictures completed the shooting of the feature film on October 30.

The production has since entered the editing process and is aiming at the most renowned film festivals worldwide for release around September 2017.

**What prompted the making of this movie? What advice do you have for aspiring film makers?**

I've been experimenting with short films for two decades now, some of which has already been documented in local and foreign media. Then I studied film at both university and film school, before having to start in television and other media... it's been a lifelong journey to reach this film *Woodwind*, which is my first major feature movie.

When I was in my 20s the South African film industry was struggling, so I left the country and the biggest obstacle was the financial difficulty getting a film made. Even in the year 2002 one needed a minimum budget of R1.2 million just for the cost of shooting on film. Thanks to the advancement of technology, even with inflation and the total cost of production in all the art departments, we've been able to make an investment for the Arri Alexa where we are using the camera used to shoot a wide range of films from *Birdman* to *Sky Fall* (James Bond).

Ultimately, it's not just the technical side, but most importantly I had to be ready personally and as an artist. I've been to film school where every year you get 100 students all imagining they want to make movies now; even outside of that, most of us love to watch movies and dream of making one. What you find is that they like to recreate their favourite films. However being an artist is about discovering your own, unique expression and it takes years to develop that. When I was in my early 20s I felt as if I was under tremendous pressure to achieve that quickly. To reach the right point, you need to be able to sacrifice everything for many years in the name of your art.

When answering your question about advice, I want to say that I don't believe in answering as if I've achieved something. At 38, I'm still relatively young. Yes, I've had some experiences in life and art that can be shared, and as artists we all should communicate, collaborate and learn from one another openly and selflessly, not in a sense of being superior to one another in any way.



*Woodwind* is an independent film by Fin Manjoo. It was shot in South Africa, the US, Germany, Austria, Serbia, Switzerland, Argentina and India.

Instead of asking me now, one can learn the most watching and reading from the likes of Tarkovsky, Bergman, Kubrick and Bresson. There are so many others that remind us of the true power of cinema, even in places far out like Iran or Japan.

**What was your inspiration for it?**  
My breeding ground was my life in Vienna, Austria – the mecca of music in western civilisation. Though, from there I was moved to learn about the impact of Indian classical music on leading musicians today.

*Woodwind* is not just about art. In a story about relationships, writers can only feel from their own heart, which we can all relate to. In this film, Bonifaz receives a mysterious message whereby an artist abroad could feel what he was doing on the same day, this results in him travelling across the world to meet her. So we wonder, what does this incident mean not just for Bonifaz, but also for our understanding of how people are mysteriously connected? And, from this, what we can learn about our connection to other unexplainable forces out there? In *Woodwind* we use the medium of music to tap into these mystical possibilities.

**What do you hope the audience will take away from it?**

One of the keys of the film is the intrinsic value of art in society. *Woodwind* is about a music composer. In the story we see and hear how art can be used to uplift us, this is the original purpose of these mediums from ancient times. This has always been there like in one of the oldest existing cultures, in the value of Indian classical music. We filmed in India for a month, including Varanasi.

Mark Twain wrote: "Varanasi is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together."

As I've written in *Woodwind*, music composer Bonifaz learns the age-old secrets of the power of sound in tune with the magic of real nature and ancient languages. A mysterious source of knowledge teaches Bonifaz how to heighten our perception of reality through his compositions.

This story is not just about Bonifaz, but about how we can all open our senses to the beauty of the world around us. We are part of it all, this nature and everything is out there to be fitting to us, to heal or aid us in our pursuit of happiness. When we are caught in the pressures of our everyday lives, or lost in our machines we tend to lose sense of the simple beauty. Even in the making of this film, when the sound department isolates the recordings, it is remarkable how we don't notice such



Andrea Christina Furrer and Leandro Taub in *Woodwind*.



Actor Leandro Taub and film-maker Fin Manjoo on the set of *Woodwind*.

extraordinary, beautiful sounds in the music of nature.

My objective in cinema is different to what many are used to in the commercial or entertainment industry. I also love watching films for fun and having a laugh, but that's not the full potential of cinema. As I see it, to put a film out there to the world, the artist has to be totally responsible to his audience. This is why I needed to be ready first, before rushing into creating a proper film. With *Woodwind*, I feel I am, and so I can't wait to share this with you next September.

You can read about the actors and artists in the *Woodwind* team, but let me tell you that one of the real stars of the

film, is India itself. I wanted to capture the India from my heart, after all my grandfather was born near Mumbai, before he sailed to South Africa. So, in many ways Bonifaz's discovery is very much myself, rediscovering my roots.

Having lived in many countries and being away from Durban for nearly two decades, I do miss the Indian communities I grew up in.

● For more information on this unique, independent South African film, visit <https://finmanjoo.com/> Imdb page <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6210064/> Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/woodwind2017>

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