

Document Citation

Title	Nelson Pereira dos Santos, the father & conscience of Brazil's cinema novo
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Film Society of Lincoln Center</i>
Date	1995
Type	program
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	Santos, Nélson Pereira dos (1928), Sao Paolo, Brazil
Film Subjects	Rio Zona Norte (Rio, Northern Zone), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1957 Jubiabá, Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1986 Na estrada da vida (On the road of life), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1980 A terceira margem do rio (The third bank of the river), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1994 Memórias do cárcere (Memories of prison), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1984 O amuleto de Ogum (The amulet of Ogum), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1975 Como era gostoso o meu francês (How tasty was my little Frenchman), Santos, Nélson Pereira dos, 1971

Rio 40 graus (Rio, 40 degrees), Santos, Néilson Pereira dos, 1955

Vidas sêcas (Barren lives), Santos, Néilson Pereira dos, 1963

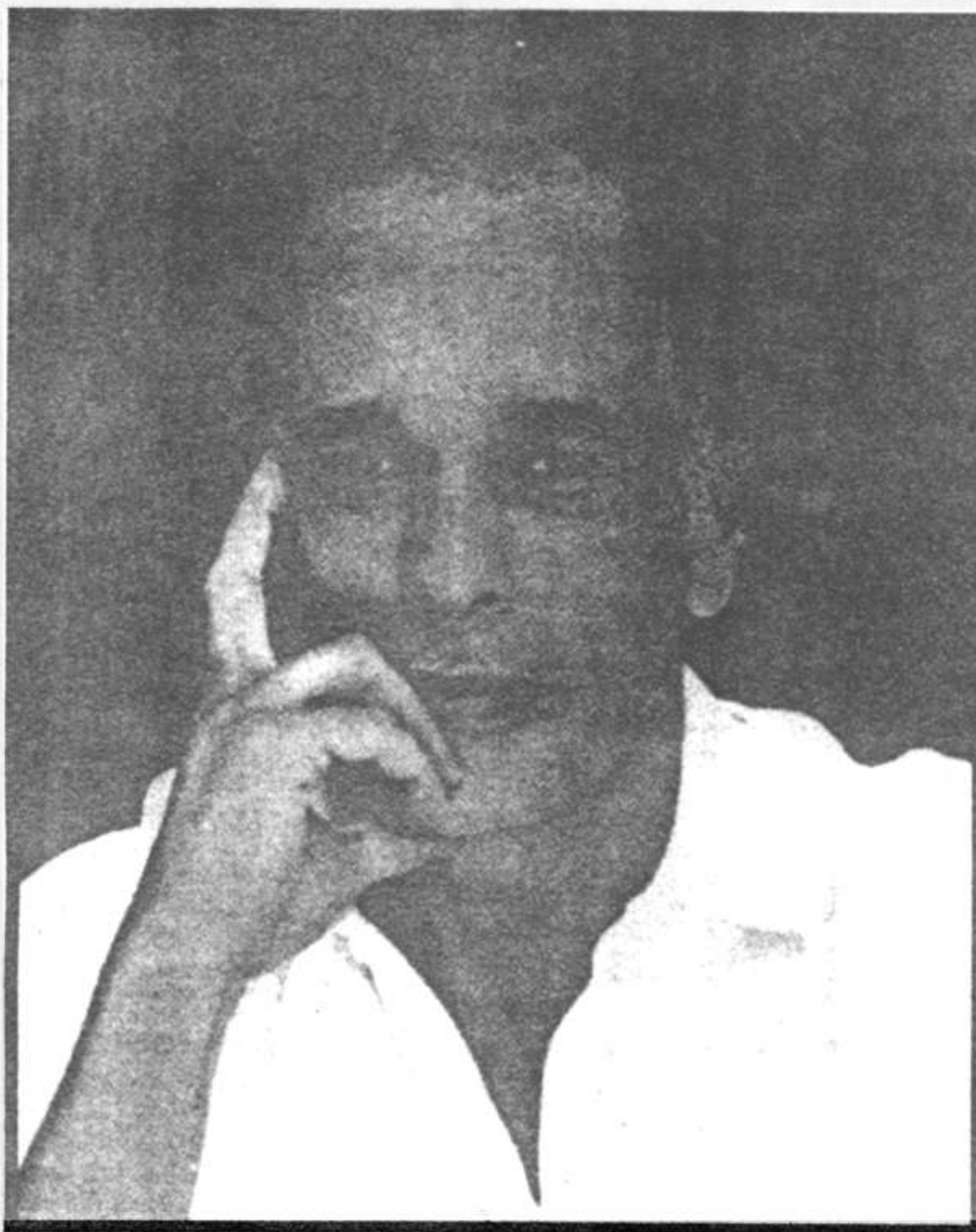
Tenda dos milagres (Tent of miracles), Santos, Néilson Pereira dos, 1977

Nelson Pereira dos Santos

The Father & Conscience of Brazil's Cinema Novo

Harvard Film Archive in conjunction with a simultaneous cinema retrospective at the Film Society of Lincoln Center pays tribute to the aesthetic innovation and social commitment of Nelson Pereira dos Santos. From 1954 to today, his films constitute the single most important and coherent body of work in the history of Brazilian and, arguably, Latin American cinema. Dos Santos' oeuvre screens like a capsule summary of the major film movements in Brazil during the last forty years — movements more often than not, he helped to create. His films try to show the "true reality" of Brazil from the time of his first unprecedented feature *RIO, 100 DEGREES* (1954), about five black slum children, to his latest, *THE THIRD BANK OF THE RIVER* (1994), receiving its United States premiere in this series on February 10 and 12.

Discount Series Pass: \$15 for 4 shows



In the 1960s he was called the father and conscience of *Cinema Novo*, the new wave of filmmaking which fashioned a national look and identity unmistakably Brazilian. This "aesthetic of hunger" begun with *RIO, 100 DEGREES* continued to inform his work, culminating with *BARREN LIVES* presented to international acclaim at Cannes in 1963. In ensuing years through subsequent political upheavals, dos Santos explored the power and the potential of Brazilian popular culture adapting films from the works of Brazil's greatest writers, Jorge Amado, Machado de Assis, Graciliano Ramos, João Guimarães Rosa and Nelson Rodrigues. These films offered a conduit for the passionately authentic dreams, voices and rhythms of the Brazilian people.

Dos Santos will make a rare personal appearance at HFA on Saturday, February 4 at 8:00pm with *TENT OF MIRACLES* (1977) and Sunday, February 5 at 8:00pm with *THE AMULET OF OGUM* (1975).

February 3 — 16 • Curated by Wendy Keys & Fabiano Canosa

Co-Sponsors: David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University, The Film Society of Lincoln Center, and Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the invaluable support of Celso Amorim, Minister of Foreign Affairs



Fri 2/10 7:00pm
Tues 2/14 9:30pm
RIO, 100 DEGREES

Rio, 40 Graus • Brazil 1954 (100 mins)

Dos Santos follows five young peanut vendors as they spread out from their slum homes on one hot summer Sunday to different points of Rio de Janeiro to make a living. Each location — Copabana, Sugarloaf, Vorcovado, Quinta da Boa Vista, and Maracana — inspires a different story. Creating a rich tapestry of Brazilian society from its lowest to its highest reaches, this landmark Brazilian film pulses with the down-and-dirty rhythms of Brazilian life and music.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Jece Valadão, Glaucete Rocha, Roberto Batalin (Portuguese with English subtitles, bw, 35mm)

Sat 2/11 9:30pm
Wed 2/15 9:30pm
RIO, NORTHERN ZONE

Rio, Zona Norte • Brazil 1957 (90 mins)

Grande Otelo, a black actor best known for his roles in *chanchada* musicals, plays a working-class composer of sambas trying, against all odds, to make it in the music business. His story is told through a series of dramatic flashbacks as the composer lies injured after falling from a train. **RIO, ZONA NORTE** is a powerful criticism of the exploitative aspects of Brazil's popular culture as represented by the *chanchada* genre of light musical comedy which idealizes Brazilian society.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Grande Otelo, Malu, Jece Valadão (Portuguese with English subtitles, bw, 35mm)



Sat 2/11 7:00pm
Thur 2/16 8:00pm
BARREN LIVES

Vidas Secas • Brazil 1963 (135 mins)

Set in the early 1940s, this Brazilian **GRAPES OF WRATH** follows an inarticulate family's tragic journey from the drought-stricken empty plains of the northeast into the urban south. Laced with Italian neo-realism, it presents none of the self-awareness with which Steinbeck and Ford gifted their characters, but exposes them as driven animals in the harsh, blinding light of the uncompromising photography of Carlos Barreto.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Atila Iório, Maria Ribeiro, Orlando Macedo (Portuguese with English subtitles, bw, 35mm)



Sat 2/4 6:00pm
Tue 2/7 9:30pm
HOW TASTY WAS MY LITTLE FRENCHMAN

Como Era Gostoso O Meu Francês • Brazil 1972 (84 mins)

The operative metaphor in **HOW TASTY** is cannibalism, the assimilation of the Enemy or Other into one's own body or culture. Opening the film with a radio-broadcast style announcement of the "latest news from the Terra Firma," dos Santos creates the sense of a Movietone News documentary or an anthropological investigation as he recounts the adventures and fate of a Frenchman set down among the Tupinamba Indians in 16th century Brazil.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Ana Maria Magalhães, Arduíno Closaut, Eduardo Imbassahy Filho (Tupi Dialect with English subtitles, color, 35mm)

Sun 2/5 8:00pm
Dos Santos in person
Special Event Admission
\$6.00 all seats

THE AMULET OF OGUM

O Amuleto de Ogum • Brazil 1975 (112 mins)

A blind singer is jumped in an alley by three thugs who force him to sing a popular ballad, which is in fact the movie we watch. This fascinating cinematic fiction takes its narrative form and rhythm from song, magic and *umbanda*, an Afro-Brazilian religion practiced in Rio's slums, and the mythic tale of death and resurrection expresses the endlessly renewable life and spirit of the people of Brazil.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Jofre Soares, Anecy Rocha, Nev Sant' Anna, Maria Ribeiro (Portuguese with English subtitles, color, 35mm)



Sat 2/4 8:00pm
Dos Santos in person
Special Event Admission
\$6.00 all seats

Wed 2/8 9:45pm
(regular admission)
TENT OF MIRACLES

Tenda dos Milagres • 1977 (148 mins)

A sex-filled version of Jorge Amado's novel about Pedro Archanjo, an obscure Brazilian mulatto who, while working as a janitor, educates himself to become a radical anthropologist committed to the theory that cross-breeding among the races could only do good for humanity. The film teems with inventiveness, playfully prodding Brazilian racism, the formulas of contemporary filmmaking and the ways in which ordinary people act as if they live in movies.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Hugo Carliana, Sônia Dias, Anecy Rocha (Portuguese with English subtitles, color, 35 mm)



Fri 2/3 6:00pm
Sun 2/5 3:00pm
ON THE ROAD OF LIFE

Estrada da Vida • Brazil 1981 (103 mins)

Two poor painters and would-be singers migrate to San Paulo with a dream to become rich and famous by singing to the people. They form a duo called *Millonario* and *Jose Rico* — the most popular singing team in Brazilian country music — but success eludes them. In despair, Jose implores the Holly Virgin for assistance, placing their album on an altar. A radio *dee-jay* discovers it there, plays it on his show, and a meteoric career is launched.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Romeo J. Mattos, José A. Santos, Nádia Lippi (Portuguese with English subtitles, color, 35mm)



Thur 2/9 7:00pm
MEMORIES OF PRISON

Memórias do Cárcere • Brazil 1984 (174 mins)

Dos Santos has said, "The prison in my film is a metaphor of Brazilian society." He dramatizes how the novelist, Graciliano Ramos, incarcerated as a political subversive in 1935, used his experience in the penal colony with a wide spectrum of his countrymen to come to understand "the people" less theoretically and more visceral. He shows how his wife, starting out as a neurotically jealous type with little initiative, is radicalized into a strong resourceful fighter in the struggle for political freedom.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Carlos Verez, Glória Pires, Jofre Soares (Portuguese with English subtitles, bw, 35mm)

Sun 2/12 9:00pm
Mon 2/13 9:30pm
JUBIABA

Brazil 1987 (100 mins)

A gripping tale unfolds of a mutually obsessive relationship between a poor black man who falls in love with a wealthy blonde in a society supposedly without prejudice. In the course of this richly atmospheric drama, the star-crossed lovers endure many terrible transformations, all under the mysterious gaze of Jubiaba, local sage, but are never able to consummate their passionate affair. The film takes place in Bahia, center of the African influence in contemporary Brazil.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With Grand Otelo, Antônio José Santana, Luís Santos de Santana (Portuguese with English subtitles, color, 35mm)



Fri 2/10 9:00pm
Sun 2/12 7:00pm
United States Premiere

THE THIRD BANK OF THE RIVER

A Terceiro Margem do Rio • Brazil 1994 (98 mins)

Adapted from five short stories by João Guimarães Rosa, dos Santos's latest film exists only in the fabulist's imagination, on the river's third bank. It is a mysterious story which begins with a man bidding his wife and children farewell and then rowing out into the river to disappear forever. A gangster's lust for the wife of the man's son sends their family into hiding in the slums of Brasília, where magical powers prevail and, after many fantastic narrative turns, the son returns at journey's end to his source — the river.

DIRECTED BY NELSON PEREIRA DOS SANTOS • With (Portuguese with English subtitles, color, 35mm)