

# Karan Kapoor's fable-like photos bring alive an India of the past

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Goan dandies from the eighties and priests playing guitars  
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Image: Karan Kapoor/ Tasveer

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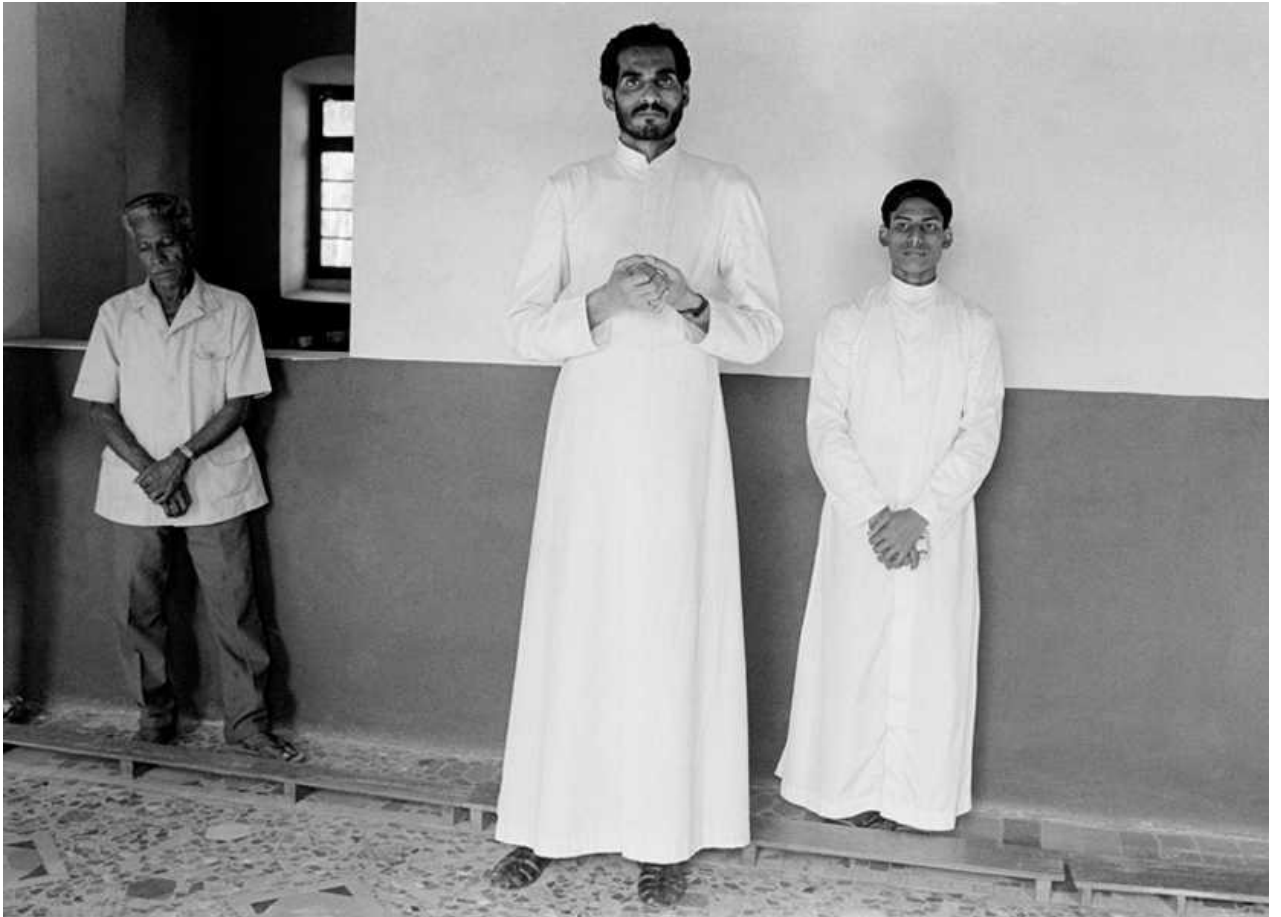


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Image: Tanya Stagnetto  
Karan Kapoor in Rishikesh, May 2016

Even though he made these images more than 25 years ago, some of them have remained vivid memories for Karan Kapoor. The picture of the two Goan boys dressed for fête for instance, is something he couldn't quite get over in all these years. The black and white photograph is stunning in terms of its composition and other-worldly lighting, but beyond formal concerns, there's something to the boys' self-aware expressions and coquetry that lingers.

“Thank god for Facebook,” says Kapoor, over the phone from London. “I’ve been posting images and asking people to help me identify the people and places... with some success.”

Kapoor has been prompted to dig through his archives for a massive touring exhibition that Tasveer will flag off next month. He's been making photographs since he was 15, he shares. After a customary pit-stop as a model and actor as dictated by family tradition, Kapoor (also known as "that Bombay Dyeing guy") started off as a photojournalist before venturing into advertising photography. Now an established commercial photographer with agents across UK and Europe, 54-year-old Kapoor will be showing his personal work for the first time in India. Titled *Time and Tide*, the exhibition by Tasveer will cull works from his Goa series as well as his large body of work on the Anglo Indian community in India.

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Kapoor has fond memories of Easter holidays spent in Goa with his siblings and parents, Jennifer Kendal and Shashi Kapoor, where an average afternoon involved riding pillion with the fishing boys. The intimacy is evident in the photographs. "We had a shack on the beach right through the seventies, and these boys were my friends," says Kapoor, adding, "Goa was really a village back then. Everybody got along." He remembers casual visits to Mario Miranda's home and a society lady called Donna Rossa with a one-legged cook, whose culinary experiments were legendary. "Goa had that incredible duality in terms of the laid-back beach life but also high culture and music. Every child could play an instrument in those old Goan homes," he says.

Driven by his Anglo-Indian girlfriend, Kapoor also photographed the dwindling numbers of Anglo Indians in the late eighties—these images were first shown as part of a group exhibition titled *An Economy of Signs* at The Photographer's Gallery in London in 1990. His wrinkled subjects are the last remnants of the British Raj: people who remembered annual events such as the Marilyn Monroe look-alike contest.

The silver gelatin prints of the Tasveer show only add to the patina of time. Also forthcoming, is a book with texts by Kapoor's aunt Felicity Kendal (on the Anglo Indian series) and William Dalrymple (on the Goan series).



*'Time and Tide' will be on exhibit at Tarq in Mumbai from September 22 to October 16, and will tour to Tasveer's other spaces through the year. [Tasveerarts.com](http://Tasveerarts.com)*