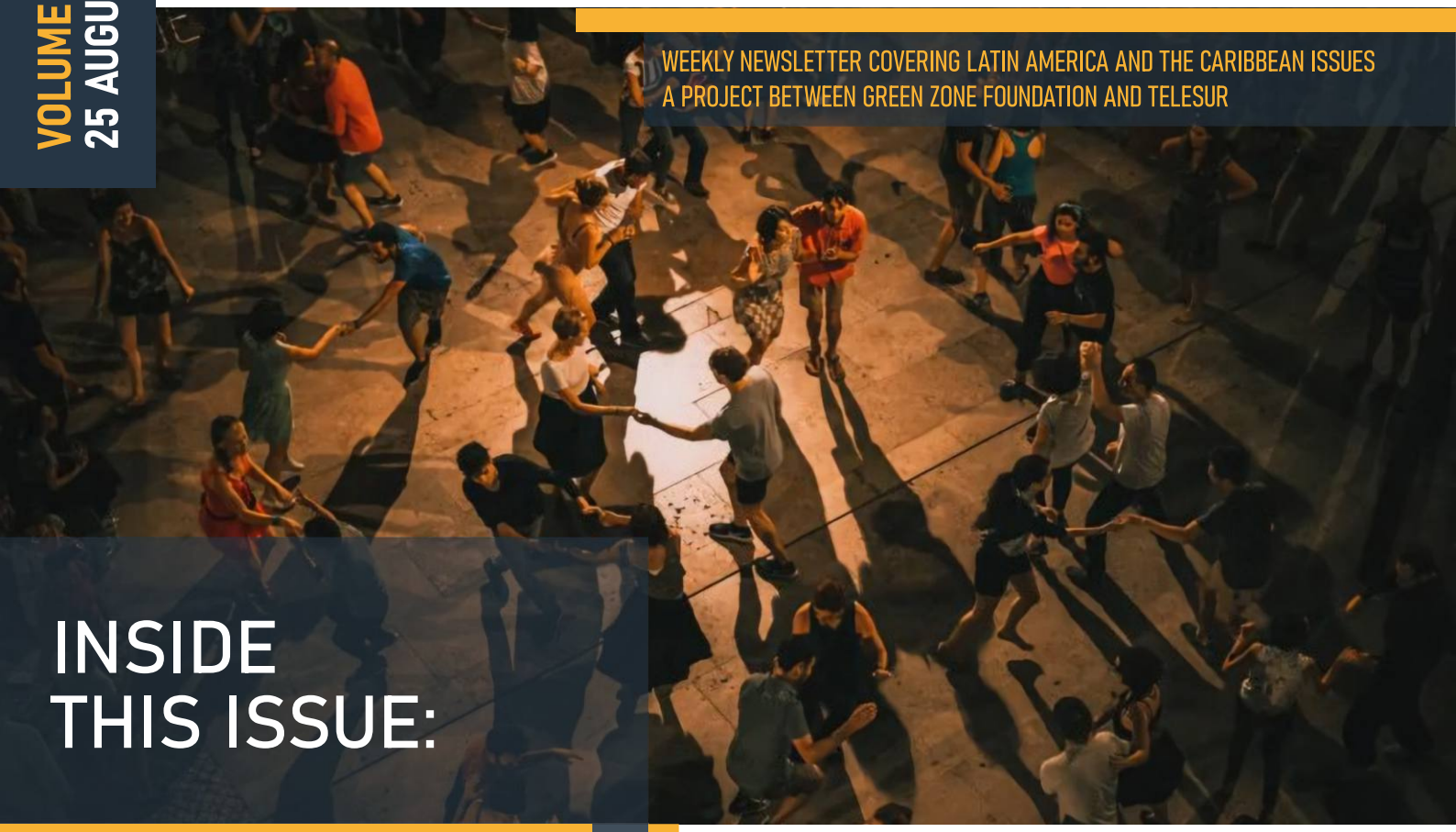
VOLUME 48
25 AUGUST 2025

NEWSLETTER

A VISION OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER COVERING LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISSUES
A PROJECT BETWEEN GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION AND TELESUR



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

BACHATA

From Margins to Global Stage: The Soulful Rhythm of the Dominican Republic



ARGENTINA'S CINEMATIC RENAISSANCE

10 Landmark Films of the 21st Century

In the wake of dictatorship, economic collapse, and social upheaval, Argentina's filmmakers have forged a bold new cinematic identity...



CAPYBARA

South America's Giant Rodent and Urban Survivor

The capybara (Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris), also known as carpincho or chigüiro, is the largest living rodent on Earth...



CARNIVAL OF ORURO

Living Heritage of Dance and Devotion

Blending Indigenous traditions with Catholic devotion, the Carnival of Oruro stands as one of Latin America's most powerful cultural expressions...



AUGUST 22

Folklore as Living Memory in Argentina and Beyond

On August 22, Argentina and the world celebrate Folklore Day, recognizing traditions as living memory and an essential part of collective identity...

www.gz.foundation/language

GZ Language

Green Zone Foundation

omayma@gz.foundation

gzflanguage

GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION

Published by teleSUR 21 August, 2025



ARGENTINA'S CINEMATIC RENAISSANCE

10 LANDMARK FILMS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

In the wake of dictatorship, economic collapse, and social upheaval, Argentina's filmmakers have forged a bold new cinematic identity. This list of 10 Great Argentinian Films of the 21st Century offers a compelling cross-section of this evolution—where memory, genre experimentation, and political critique converge to redefine Latin American storytelling.

Far from mere entertainment, these films interrogate Argentina's past and present with formal innovation and emotional urgency.

From hybrid documentaries to genre-defying epics, they reflect a society grappling with trauma, inequality, and the search for identity.

The Films That Shaped a Generation

Film Title	Director	Year	Key Themes
Nine Queens	Fabián Bielinsky	2000	Economic crisis, deception, capitalism
The Blonds (Los rubios)	Albertina Carri	2003	Memory, disappearance, experimental form
The Magic Gloves	Martín Rejtman	2003	Absurdism, urban alienation
The Headless Woman	Lucrecia Martel	2008	Class, guilt, psychological trauma
The Secret in Their Eyes	Juan José Campanella	2009	Justice, historical memory, romance
Viola	Matías Piñeiro	2012	Gender, Shakespeare, theatricality
Wild Tales (Relatos salvajes)	Damián Szifron	2014	Revenge, social breakdown, dark humor
The Clan	Pablo Trapero	2015	Dictatorship, family crime, impunity
Theatre of War	Lola Arias	2018	Falklands War, shared trauma, testimony
La flor	Mariano Llinás	2018	Metafiction, genre play, epic scale

Editorial Insights

- Memory as Method: Films like The Blonds and Theatre of War use fragmented narratives and real testimonies to confront historical silences.
- Genre as Subversion: La flor and Viola challenge cinematic conventions, blending fiction, documentary, and theatricality.
- Social Commentary: Wild Tales and The Clan expose the cracks in Argentina's institutions, from justice to family structures.

These films have not only reshaped national cinema but also gained international acclaim, with The Secret in Their Eyes winning the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 2010.

Their themes—state violence, inequality, and resilience—echo across borders, offering urgent reflections for global audiences.

Argentina's 21st-century cinema is not just a cultural product—it's a political act, a poetic reckoning, and a mirror held up to society. For editors, curators, and journalists, these films offer fertile ground for comparative analysis, public education, and transnational dialogue.



Published by teleSUR 19 August, 2025

CAPYBARA

SOUTH AMERICA'S GIANT RODENT AND URBAN SURVIVOR

The capybara (Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris), also known as carpincho or chigüiro, is the largest living rodent on Earth. Native to South America, this herbivorous, semi-aquatic mammal thrives in wetlands, savannas, and tropical forests from Panama to northern Argentina. Its unique biology and social behavior have made it a subject of fascination—and increasingly, a symbol of wildlife adaptation in urban landscapes.

Physical Traits and Ecology

- Size: Adults can reach over 1 meter in length and weigh between 50–70 kg.
- Feet: Three toes on the hind feet, four on the front, with partial webbing for swimming.
- Fur: Sparse, coarse, and reddish-brown to gray, offering minimal sun protection—hence their habit of wallowing in mud.
- Diet: Primarily grasses, aquatic plants, fruits, and tree bark. They also gnaw on wood to wear down continuously growing incisors.

Social and Territorial Behavior

- Group Structure: Capybaras live in stable social units led by a dominant male, accompanied by multiple females and offspring. Subordinate males may be tolerated but do not reproduce.
- Territory: Groups occupy areas ranging from 10 to 200 hectares, with designated zones for grazing, resting, and bathing.
- Defense: Intruders are met with aggressive confrontations. Alarm calls resemble barking, and escape is often via water, where they swim with remarkable agility.



Reproductive System

- Breeding Season: Typically in spring, with litters of 3–8 pups.
- Lifespan: 8–10 years in the wild; up to 15 years in captivity.



Urban Adaptation

- Generalist Behavior: Capybaras have adapted to urban environments by modifying their diet and activity patterns. They now inhabit parks, riverbanks, and even under bridges in cities like São Paulo and Campo Grande.
- Human Impact: Urbanization alters their daily rhythms—capybaras become more nocturnal and avoid human-dense areas. Their survival depends on access to water, vegetation, and safe corridors.

Conservation Status

- IUCN Classification: Least Concern.
- Threats: Habitat loss due to urban expansion, hunting for meat and leather, and road accidents.
- Protection: Populations remain stable thanks to their wide distribution and presence in protected areas like the Pantanal. However, localized pressures require ongoing monitoring.

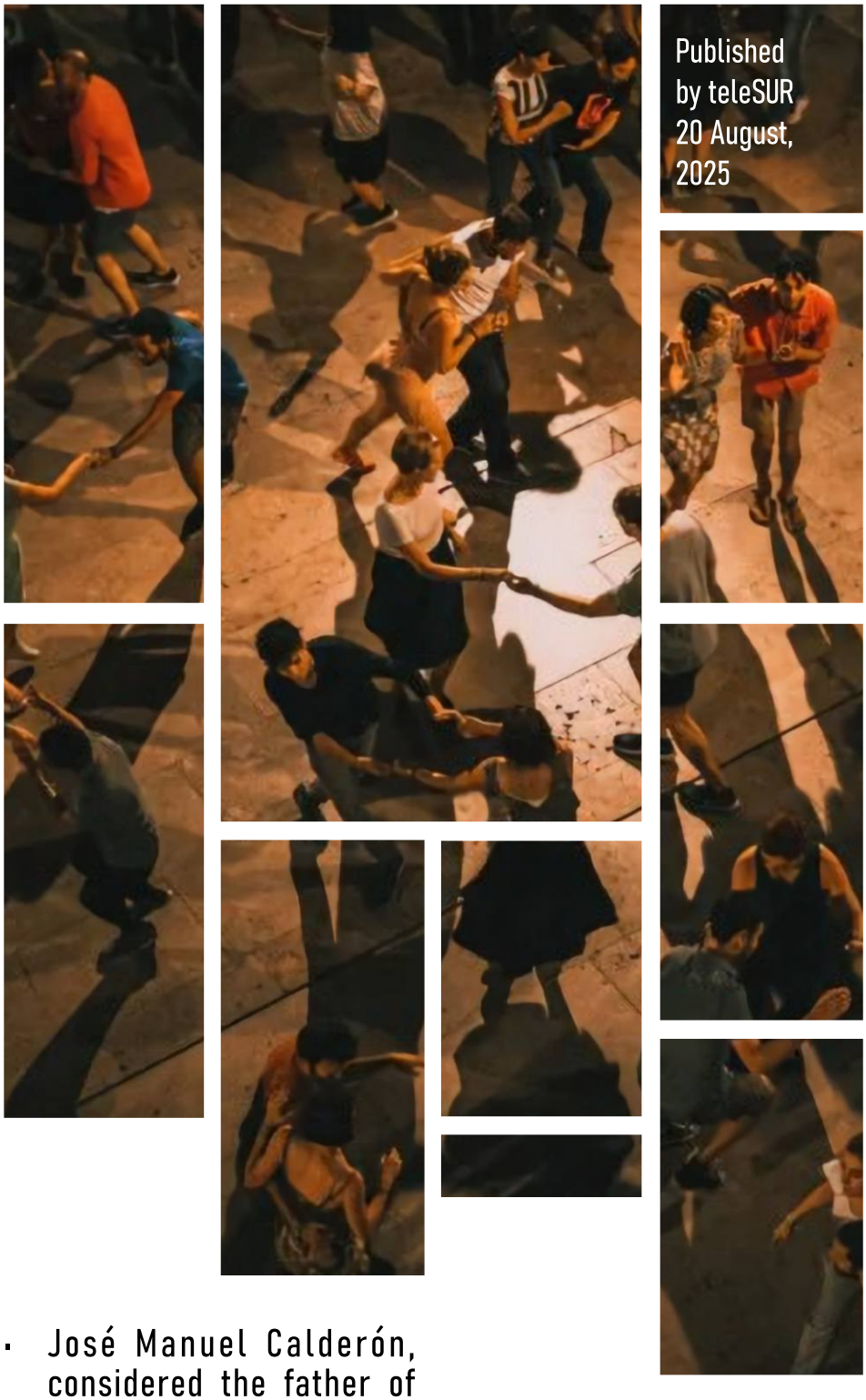
BACHATA

FROM MARGINS TO GLOBAL STAGE — THE SOULFUL RHYTHM OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Bachata is a string- and percussion-based musical genre that originated in the Dominican Republic in the early 20th century. Rooted in Cuban son and African rhythms, it blends elements of bolero with other Latin and Caribbean styles. Its signature instruments include guitars, marimbas, maracas, güira, bongos, and timbales.

Initially dismissed as music of the poor, bachata was stigmatized for its association with rural communities, brothels, and working-class neighborhoods. Under the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo (1930–1961), bachata was actively suppressed in favor of merengue, which was promoted as the national sound. After Trujillo's death, bachata slowly gained visibility and acceptance in public spaces.

By the late 1980s, its musical richness and rhythmic complexity earned it international recognition. Today, bachata is a proud symbol of Dominican identity, beloved both on the island and around the world.



Published by teleSUR 20 August, 2025

- José Manuel Calderón, considered the father of bachata, recorded his first album in 1961. His heartfelt lyrics and distinctive voice earned him the title "King of Bachata," with hits like Luna and Sálvame.
- Rafael Encarnación, another early icon, was celebrated for his vocal talent but tragically died in a car accident in 1964.
- In the 1980s, Luis Segura's Pena por ti opened the international doors for bachata, followed by artists like Raulín Rodríguez, Teodoro Reyes, and Anthony Santos, who elevated the genre with their musical and interpretive excellence.



In the 1990s, Dominican bachateros entered the global music scene. Juan Luis Guerra's Bachata Rosa became a radio sensation, helping cement bachata's place in world music.

Contemporary bachateros experiment with genres like rap, bolero, blues, and reggaetón, creating new bachata fusions. While some have achieved fame and financial success, others remain in obscurity despite their talent.

One such artist is Joan Soriano, known locally as "El Duque." The seventh of fifteen siblings in a farming family, Joan built his first guitar using fishing lines as strings. He formed a band with his brothers called Los Candes, named after their father, Candelario. At thirteen, Joan traveled to Santo Domingo to learn from bachata legends.

Back in his hometown, he continued performing until producers discovered him, helping him record albums and tour nationally and internationally. His story recently gained wider attention thanks to a documentary by Colorado filmmaker Adam Taub, who was captivated by Joan's music and life.



Published by teleSUR 18 August, 2025

CARNIVAL OF ORURO

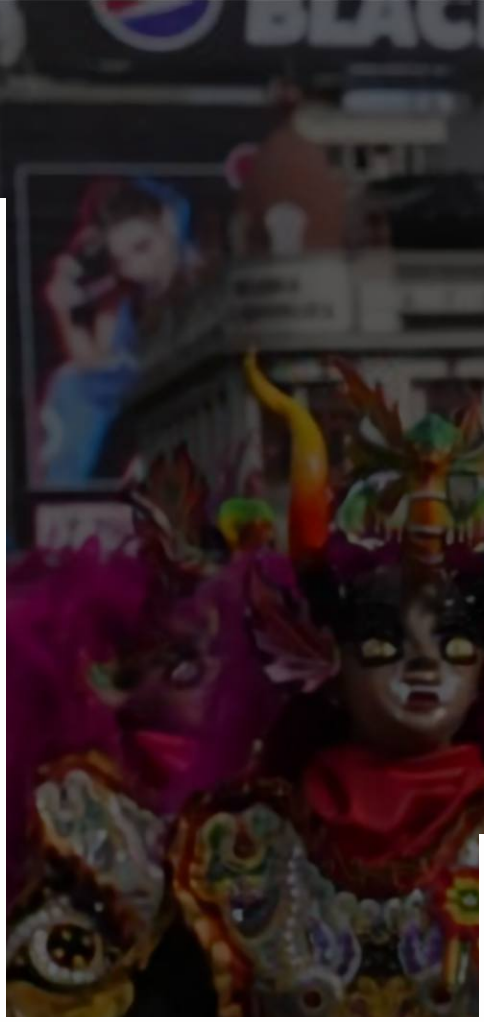
LIVING HERITAGE OF DANCE AND DEVOTION

Blending Indigenous traditions with Catholic devotion, the Carnival of Oruro stands as one of Latin America's most powerful cultural expressions.

Every year in the Bolivian mining city of Oruro, tens of thousands of dancers, musicians, and devotees take to the streets in a ritual that unites ancestral Andean beliefs with Catholic symbols.

Declared by UNESCO a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, the Carnival of Oruro remains a cornerstone of Bolivia's cultural identity.

The festival traces its roots to pre-Hispanic rituals honoring the Pachamama (Mother Earth) and the apus (spirits of the mountains). With the arrival of Spanish colonization, these traditions were reinterpreted through Catholic devotion to the Virgin of Socavón, whose shrine stands at the entrance of an old mine.



At the center of the celebration is the Diablada, or Dance of the Devils, a theatrical performance depicting the struggle between good and evil. Elaborate masks, ornate costumes, and complex choreography merge Andean mythology with Catholic narratives. Other emblematic dances add layers of meaning: the Morenada recalls the history of African slavery; the Tinku reenacts ancestral warrior rituals; and the Caporales, created in the 1970s, transform the figure of the colonial overseer into popular dance.

Over three days, more than 60,000 dancers and 15,000 musicians join a pilgrimage that stretches nearly four kilometers and can last up to 20 hours. Each fraternidad—dance groups that rehearse all year—parades in hand-embroidered costumes and artisan-made masks, many featuring figures such as serpents, toads, and condors, each with symbolic weight in the Andean worldview.

The procession culminates at the Shrine of the Virgin of Socavón, where performers make offerings that combine Catholic prayers with Andean rituals of gratitude. This fusion of the sacred and the celebratory is what makes Oruro's carnival unique in Latin America.

The city's mining history is also inseparable from the festival. Known as Bolivia's "folkloric capital," Oruro has long been shaped by tin and silver extraction. The devotion to the Virgin of Socavón arose as spiritual protection for miners working underground, and that bond continues to anchor the celebration today.

More than a spectacle for outsiders, the Carnival of Oruro is a living tradition sustained by the communities that create and renew it every year. In its music, masks, and faith lies a legacy that not only preserves the past but affirms an enduring identity that projects Bolivia's culture to the world.

Published by teleSUR 22 August, 2025



AUGUST 22



FOLKLORE AS LIVING MEMORY IN ARGENTINA AND BEYOND

On August 22, Argentina and the world celebrate Folklore Day, recognizing traditions as living memory and an essential part of collective identity.

Every year on August 22, Argentina and many other countries mark Folklore Day, a moment to reflect on the cultural traditions that sustain collective identity. The date carries a dual meaning: it is both World Folklore Day —established by UNESCO in 1960— and Argentina's Folklore Day, commemorating the birth of ethnographer Juan Bautista Ambrosetti in 1865.

The word "folklore" and its roots

The term folklore was coined in 1846 by English archaeologist William John Thoms in a London journal. Combining folk (people) and lore (knowledge), it described the shared wisdom passed from generation to generation: stories, songs, dances, crafts, and rituals that communities carry as part of their memory.

In Spanish, the word has taken on different forms. In Argentina and much of Latin America, the spelling folklore (with k) remains common, while the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) favors the adapted form folclore. Both versions coexist today, mirroring regional usage and linguistic tradition.

Folklore Day in Argentina

In Argentina, the celebration is doubly meaningful. It marks the birthday of Juan Bautista Ambrosetti, widely regarded as the father of folklore studies in the country. Born in Gualeguay, Entre Ríos, Ambrosetti pioneered the study of popular traditions and, in 1904, founded the Ethnographic Museum at the University of Buenos Aires.

His work was carried forward by scholars like Augusto Raúl Cortázar, who presided over the First International Folklore Congress in Buenos Aires in 1960. That gathering, with delegates from thirty nations, solidified August 22 as World Folklore Day and reinforced the call to safeguard popular traditions as expressions of shared knowledge and cultural identity.

Argentine folklore lives in the country's daily rhythms. In dance, the zamba, chacarera, and malambo animate festivals and community gatherings. In music, instruments such as the guitar, bombo legüero (drum), and charango sustain melodies passed down across generations.

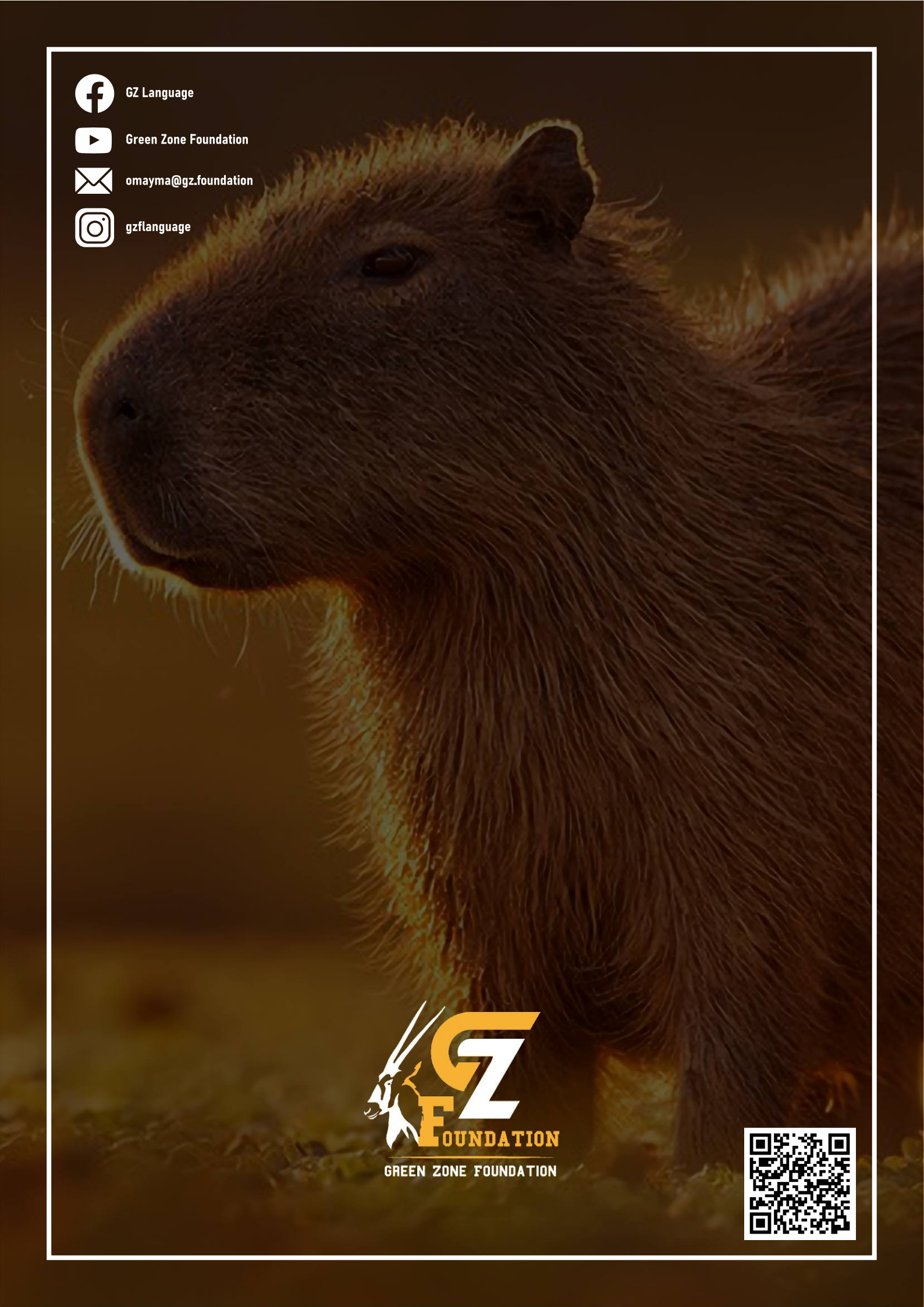
Folklore also thrives in oral tradition and belief. Devotional figures like Gauchito Gil and Difunta Correa form part of a collective imagination that links regions together. Crafts —from woven ponchos to carved mate gourds— preserve ancient techniques while embodying ties to ancestry. Even the asado (barbecue), more than a meal, is a communal ritual woven into Argentina's cultural fabric.

Far from being a static set of customs, folklore adapts and evolves, constantly finding new forms of expression while continuing to serve its primary role: a bridge between generations and a foundation of identity.

A shared memory in the Global South

Across the Global South, where oral transmission and community knowledge have been vital to cultural survival, Folklore Day carries particular resonance. Andean festivals in Bolivia and Peru, Afro-descendant rhythms along the Caribbean coast, or Indigenous ceremonies in Mexico all reflect a common universe where memory is not only preserved but continually renewed.

Argentina's traditions —its dances, myths, and crafts— belong to this wider heritage. Folklore does not live solely in museums or books; it breathes through everyday practices that sustain community life and keep alive the relationship between past and present.


GZ Language
Green Zone Foundation
omayma@gz.foundation
gzflanguage
GZ
FOUNDATION
GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION