

How to meet rock stars and pageant beauties

By Eleftherios P. Diamandis

In 1996, I was on a lecture tour to five major cities in India. I gave one lecture in Bombay (now known as Mumbai). While there, I was staying at the famous Taj Mahal Hotel. Returning from a dinner to the hotel one of these nights, my traveling companions and I noticed that there were hundreds of people waiting outside. Curious, we asked the staff why all these people were waiting. We were told that the next evening, the MTV Music Awards were to take place with participation of rock stars from all over the world, most of them staying at Taj Mahal.

Being a music lover and celebrity seeker, I decided to sit in the lobby of the hotel just in case any rocker showed up. It didn't take much time



to hear the roar of the crowd that signaled the entry of a rock star. It was Robert Plant, the lead singer of the legendary rock group Led Zeppelin. He was accompanied by his girlfriend and a couple of others. I asked Robert if he would pose for a picture with me, and he graciously agreed.

I was very excited and asked one of the staff who else was staying in the hotel. She mentioned Bryan Adams, the Canadian rock star. I decided to use an alternative way to reach Bryan Adams. I wrote a letter to him, mentioning how much I liked his music and that I was a fellow Canadian keen to meet him and asking him to autograph two of his CDs, which I happened to have with me at that time. (That was before the iPod was invented.) I put the letter and the CDs in a big envelope, and I requested that a staff member deliver the package to his room. The next day, to my astonishment, I found a voice message from Bryan Adams on my hotel phone noting that he was sorry to have missed me (we had been out for dinner) and that he had signed the two CDs and left them with the concierge.

Around the same time, the Miss World Competition was taking place in Bangalore. During our stay in Mumbai, there was a party in a nearby hotel honoring the winner, Irene Skliva from Greece. Coinciden-



tally, we had dinner at that hotel on that evening. I took my chances and asked the guards of that private party to let me in, showing my business card and claiming that I was a professor of the winner at the University of Athens. To my surprise, the guards believed me and allowed me enter the party, where I had a chance to shake the hand of my compatriot and Miss World 1996.

My India trip was very rewarding for the science and my exposure to the culture of India. But the most exciting moments were in Mumbai, where I met three international personalities under unexpected circumstances.



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