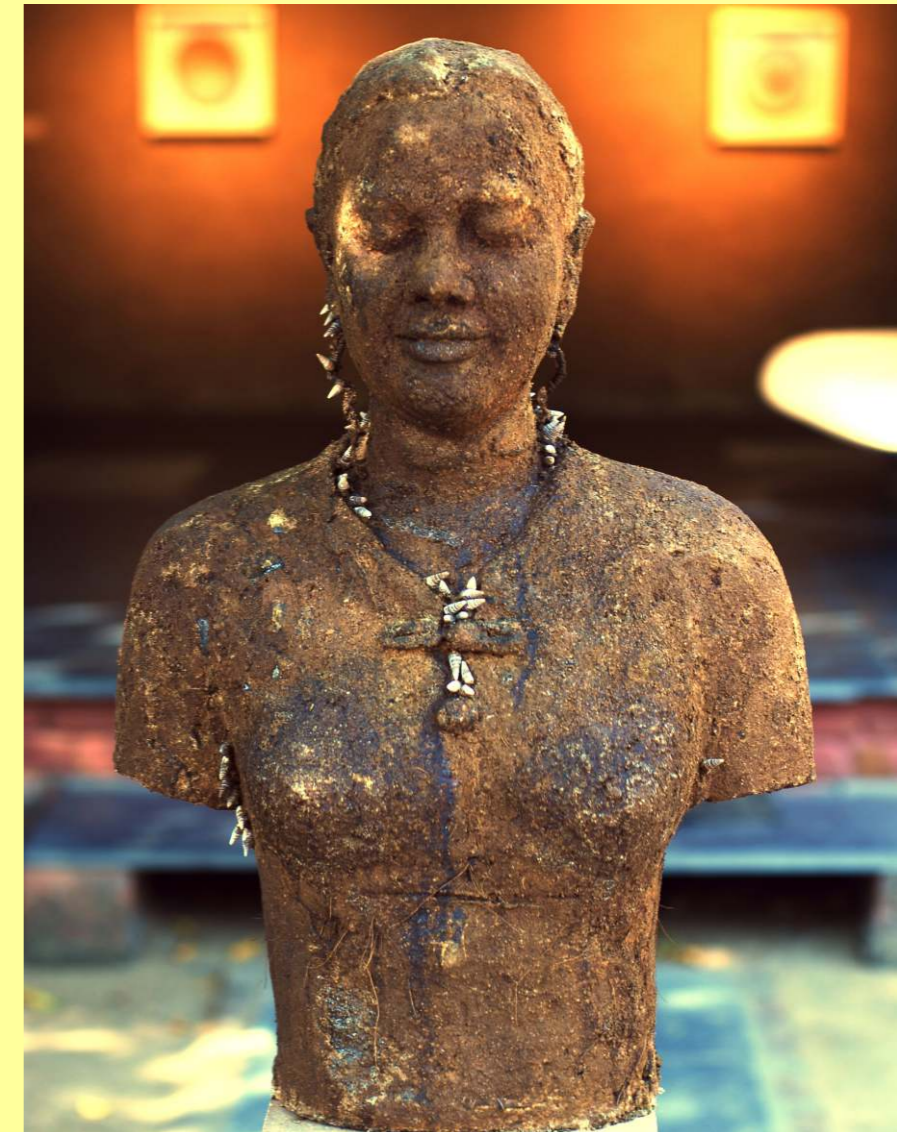




Sanskarika

Newsletter of the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo July 2014



Cultural Calendar

July 2014

Bharatha Natyam Recital

11

Friday 6.00 pm

by

Abirami Patkunam

Venue: ICC Auditorium

15

Tuesday 6.30 pm

Documentary

Yoga: Aligning to the Source

Directed by Raja Choudhury

(With English subtitles. Duration: 26 mts)

Venue: ICC Auditorium

21

Monday 6.00 pm

Bharatha Natyam Recital

by

Natyamayuri Archana Narayanamurthy (India)

Venue: ICC Auditorium

30

Wednesday 6.00 pm

Hindustani Vocal Music Recital

by

Palinda Udawela Arachchi

Venue: ICC Auditorium



Weaving sari is another form of craft of the state. The state is famous for the gorgeous Kanchipuram sarees. The pallu has a different kind of wrap and is often woven separately and attached to the body. Tamil Nadu's basket and fiber products are aesthetically appealing and very much



in vogue all over the country and abroad. Palm trees along with bamboo shoots, cane, grass and reeds form a major ingredient of Tamil Nadu's wood works and relate basket products.

performers are dressed up as Lord Subrahmanya traveling on a Peacock. The dress is decorated with glorious peacock feathers. With a shimmering head-dress, which includes a peacock beak, the dress is complete. A widely popular folk dance form Theru Koothu is commonly occurs during the village festivities and become the centre of all fun, frolic and attention of the folk people. In Theru Koothu make-up and costumes are considered to be of prime importance.

Literature

The Sangam literature from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD is considered a landmark in the literary and cultural history of Tamils. The greatest literary work of the Sangam age is Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural, composed with 1330 couplets dealing with morality in public and private life. Even after the Sangam age, Tamil writers continued to produce excellent literary works under the patronage of royal dynasties. Silapathikaram (200 - 300AD) by Ilango Adigal and Manimekalai (200 - 300AD) by Sathanar are such great Tamil epics. Over the ages the south produced great poets like Kamban who composed the Tamil version of the Ramayana.

Crafts

Tamil Nadu boasts of a distinctive brilliance in its stone carvings during the commencement days of ancient Indian history. Among the relics of Tamil Nadu's stone carvings that have been excavated from archeological sites, the granite figurines and statuettes deserve special mention. Contemporary granite carving is confined mainly around Mamallapuram and Chingleput, with the leading sculptors hailing from the local Vishwakarma or Kammaalar communities.



The cover shows the life size mixed media work (Hydrated lime, kaddukai (myrobalam), sand, jaggery, copper and seashell) titled "I seem to be alone, but I am not" by **Benitha Perciyal**. Tamil Nadu born Benitha Perciyal obtained her graduation and postgraduation in Painting and Printmaking from Government College of Arts & Crafts, Chennai. She participated in many exhibitions in India and abroad. She lives and works in Chennai.



Cultural Tapestry

Tamil Nadu

The early history of Tamil Nadu, between the periods of 1st - 9th century AD, had been dominated by the Chera, Chola, Pallava and Pandya rulers. It is also considered the golden period of Tamil literature famously known as 'the Sangam Age', which lasted till the end of 3rd century AD. The early Cholas between 1st and 4th centuries ruled Tamil Nadu. At the peak of their glory, the Chola kings expanded their influence as far as Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the south and hundreds of kilometers across the northern region. During the latter half of 4th century, the Pallavas came into prominence and dominated the south for another 400 years. They ruled a large portion of Tamil Nadu with Kanchipuram as their base.

The Cholas again rose as a notable power in 9th century under Rajaraja Chola and his son Rajendra Chola. The Chola Empire extended to the central Indian states like Orissa and parts of West Bengal. Rajendra Chola went beyond, occupying the islands of Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Java, Sumatra, Malaya and the islands of Pegu. The Chola power declined in the last quarter of the thirteenth century and the Pandyas reemerged as a mighty power, in the early 14th century. But the emergence of them was short lived as Alauddin Khilji subdued them in the very beginning.

Tamil Nadu was also a witness to the struggle between the colonial powers in which the British came out victorious. The British fought with various European powers, driving the Dutch away and reducing the French dominions in India to Pondicherry. The British also fought four wars with Hyder Ali and later his son Tippu Sultan, which led to their eventual domination of India's south. The British consolidated south India into the Madras Presidency.

After independence in 1947, the newly constituted Madras State, comprised of present day Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Northern Kerala, and the southwest coast of Karnataka. The state was later divided on linguistic lines. In 1968 the state of Madras was renamed Tamil Nadu.

Architecture and Sculpture

Pallava Temples of Tamil Nadu are remarkable for their architecture. The



temples in Kanchi and the rock-cut temples known as the seven pagodas in Mamallapuram are built in Pallava style. The fine sculptures on rock walls, the wonderful monolithic temples and many rock-cut caves stand in testimony to the superb Pallava arts.

The Cholas who succeeded the Pallavas were mighty builders as well. The best example of their style is the Brihadeswara temple built at Tanjavur by Rajaraja Chola. Chola art is characterized by a massive grandeur. The Cholas also contributed significantly to the arts of bronzes. The Chola bronzes speak volumes about the artistry and skill of the carvers with which they were made. Nataraja, the dancing Shiva at Chidambaram is a classic



example of Chola craftsmanship. The Pandyas of Madurai also contributed their share to the temple heritage. The temples of Madurai are befitting examples of Pandya style of temple architecture. Thirumalai (in Thiruvanamalai District of Tamil Nadu, India) is an ancient Jain heritage site that has cave temples, cave paintings, sculptures and ancient Tamil inscriptions all related to Jainism. Jain monks had inhabited the caves thousands of years ago.

Art

Some of the most beautiful ancient Indian cave paintings are located in Sittanavasal



Cave. In Arivar-Koil, a rock-cut Jain temple that was made circa 7th - 9th c. AD was covered with beautiful paintings - now they have been preserved only on the ceiling. Chola frescoes were discovered within the circumambulatory corridor of Tanjavur's Brihadeswara temple. There is a wealth of Vijayanagara paintings all over

South India and some of the best examples are to be seen in Ranganathaswamy temple of Srirangam and on the walls of the Varadaraja temple at Kanchipuram.

The Tanjore paintings are a hallmark of Tamil Nadu's rich cultural legacy. Painted in vibrant shades embellished in colorful semi-precious stones, pearls, glass pieces and gold, they form some of the world's masterpieces done on surfaces of wood, mica or ivory.

In the Indian modern art scene Tamil Nadu played an important role and the artists like K. G. Ramanujam is worth to mention. The Cholamandal Artists' Village became a major centre for art with many



artists live and work there.

Music

Tamil Nadu, particularly Chennai is considered as the Mecca of Carnatic Music and might have originated as a result of Bakti Movement. One of its greatest composers was Thyagaraja. Besides him, Muthuswami Dikshithar and Shyama Shastri are the other two composers who constitute the three pillars of Carnatic music. All the three belonged to Tamil Nadu and they enriched Carnatic music with compositions in their individual styles and



it is their compositions that yet constitute the core of the concert repertoire. Spiritualism has been the key content of Carnatic music. The beautiful interweaving of the devotional element and aesthetics has made it ethereal and eternal.

Tamil folk music is remarkable for the tala intricacies. Very ancient classical ragas or melodies like Manji, Sama, Navaroz, Kalyani, Karaharapriya, Thodi, and Nadanamakria are used in the folk-songs. Villu Pattu is one of the quaint type of simple and catchy folk music, which still stands as a symbol of a cultural wealth of the Tamils, is popularly known as Villu Pattu in Tamil, literally translated as 'bow-song'. Kappal Pattu, another of the folk music is sung by travelers in chorus to overcome the fear of tides and to prevent the monotony of travel on lakes and rivers. Another kind of music is produced from a conch to which a silver pipe is attached. It is called Sankhu Pattu. The end of the pipe serves as the mouth-piece. The pipe does not contain any air-holes. The sound so produced resembles the combined sound of a clarinet and mukaveena (mouth organ).

Dances

Bharatha Natyam is one of the oldest classical dance forms of India that



originated in Tamil Nadu. The salient features of Bharata Natyam are that the dancer moves and creates a series of geometrical patterns. It is a blend of Nirtta (the rhythmic movement of the body without any expression of emotion), Nirtya (the combination of rhythm with expression through eyes, hands and facial movements) and Natya (the dramatic element). Bharatanatyam is performed with Abhinaya (expression), rasa (emotion) and mudras (hand formations). All Dances are structured around 'nava rasas' (the common emotions of happiness, anger, disgust, fear, sorrow, courage, compassion, wonder and serenity). The dance is accompanied by Carnatic music.

Tamil Nadu has a variety of folk dances such as Karagam Dance, performed by a performer balancing a decorated pot on his head, Kavadi Attam done by the devotees of Lord Murugan, the son of Lord Shiva. The dancers twist and spin in a row, Poikkal Kuthirai Attam, in which the performer dresses and pretends as if he is riding a horse and dance to the rhythmic music. Another of the folk dances of Tamil Nadu is Mayil Attam. The

