Lines Conserving Cultural Heritage and Human Emotions: Archiving the Works of Artist Namboothiri

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Abstract

Artist Namboothiri's work span over a century. He is one of the most productive artists who presented the world using lines. Landscapes, cities, villages, heritage buildings even after many were lost long ago, people, costumes, festivals and rituals, traditional arts, along with characters of classics remain documented in sketches of Namboothiri. There is a possibility that his works also will be lost because in Indian art scenario book and magazine illustrations are not considered with the seriousness of other art works. But any of his illustration from those running to tens of thousands can stand with any important artwork of the world. We are yet to realize their heritage value and importance. Till now there was no attempt to list his work or conserve them from any quarters. From heritage conservation angle and heritage of Indian art his works needs to be preserved. This is an initial study and attempt to evolve a system 'Artist Namboothiri Open Access Digital Archive' to document and preserve his works.

Keywords: Culture, Heritage, Art, Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Costumes, Architecture, Kerala, Varanasi, Women, Society, Emotions, Namboothiri.

"Art is a human activity, consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feeling and also experience them" (Leo Tolstoy, 1897)

Kerala's Art Forms and their Cultural Heritage

Kerala, the southern most state of India has a rich heritage and culture and is a haven of art forms from numerous streams of culture. It is a region with magical beauty, which made people from everywhere call it as 'God's Own Country' from very ancient days. Where we go in the region we will see all around coconut trees, paddy fields, ponds, streams, hills and charming forests. The region is known for its supreme harmony, tranquillity and unity and it stands high when it comes to its cultural traditions, heritage, and rituals.

Artist Namboothiri

An aspect that makes Kerala unique is its art forms. Different communities have contributed diverse art forms to the region which were successfully preserved for

Karuvatta Mana

centuries like; Theyyam, Koodiyattam, Ottam Tullal and Kathakali of which many face threat of extinction since last two three decades. The notable classical art forms of Kerala are Kathakali, Koodiyattam, Theyyam, Tholpavakoothu, Ottamthullal, Mohiniyattam, Krishnanattam, Nangiar Koothu, Panchavadyam etc. Kathakali a classical dance form uses elaborate colourful costumes and is one of the best traditional art forms of Kerala. Mohiniyattam, which requires extensive training, is a type of solo dance, performed by women and is the most beautiful ritual art form. Theyyam is a ritual art of the Malabar region and is usually performed at the village shrines by well-trained dancers along with drummers after a long period of preparatory life every year. In the traditional art form Thullal consists three types -Sarpam Thullal, Kolam Thullal, and Ottan Thullal. Padayani and Chakyar Koothu are classical arts performed by Chakyar community. Koodiyattam is a theatrical art and is recognized by UNESCO as the Masterpiece of Intangible and Oral Heritage of Humanity. It is Sanskrit drama performed in traditional style especially with musical instruments in temples of Kerala. Some ritual arts of the region are Pulikali performed during Onam festival; Onapottan

and Thirayattam are performed in Malabar region. Kalaripayattu is a martial art form that survived for centuries. Chakyar Koothu a classical art performed by Chakyar community in Kerala performs this classical art form and it is one of the oldest art forms of Kerala. The annual festivals like Onam, Thrissur Pooram conducted around Vadakkunathan Temple, Attukal Ponkala where the largest assemblage of women in the world occur in the auspicious day etc also includes performing of various ritualistic arts.

Kerala has also made its mark on painting drawing and carvings. The ancient wall paintings can be seen mainly seen in places of worship such as temples. Kalamezhuthu, is a ritual art in which the pictures of Gods and Goddesses are drawn on the floor using coloured powders, a ritualistic system of painting prevalent in Kerala. The unique features of folk painting techniques can be seen in ritual art forms. Modern painting styles were introduced through the paintings of Raja Ravi Varma known worldwide. There are a number of modern artists including C. Rajarajavarma, Mangalabhai Thampuratti, K Madhava Menon, V S Valiyathan, C V Balan Nair, P J Cherian, K C S Panikker, A. Ramachandran, Akkitham Narayanan and Paris Viswanathan etc.. The excellence of ancient sculptures is clearly seen in wooden sculptures, stone/metal idols, lamps and vessels. Remarkable wooden figures and idols are seen in temples ancient churches also display sculpting skills. Kerala has contributed many skilful artists to the field of modern sculpture like Kanai Kunjuraman. Among all these only a very few like Raja Ravi Varma has attempted line drawings. In quantity and quality as well as in the subjects covered and their importance to heritage and culture the contributions of Artist Namboothiri stands unique.

Heritage of a Century Conserved in Lines

Karuvatta Mana Vasudevan Namboothiri born 13 September 1925 popularly known as Namboothiri or Artist Namboothiri is an artist who is known mainly for his line
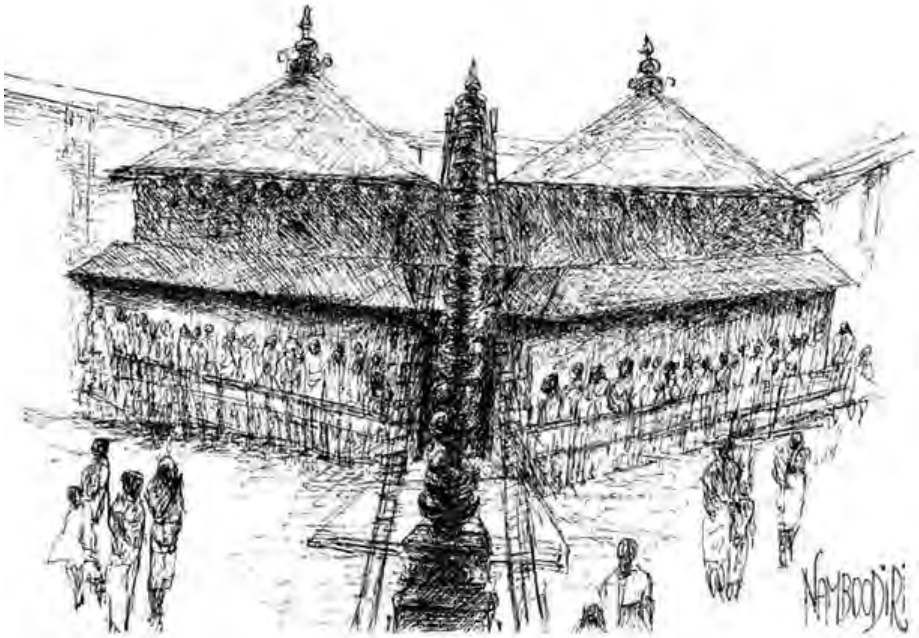
Kollur Mookambika Temple in Karnataka

drawings. He did paintings and sculptures also. Among those who used lines as their medium of expression we will find no other artist in the world who is equal to him in number and magnitude of his contributions. He was the chairman of the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi. He won the most prestigious award for artists from the State Raja Ravi Varma Award. Throughout his life he was engaged with art and art alone, and lived by it. Namboothiri wields the brush, sketch pencil, chisel and the hammer with equal ease.

For millions of readers of Malayalam fiction and our classics and world literature in translation during last two generations, the characters in Classics and modern stories and novels they read are remembered as depicted in the sketches by Artist Namboothiri. There is no writer popular or otherwise in Malayalam from Stalwarts like S K Pottekkadu, MT Vasudevan Nair, Lalithampika Antharganam, Thakazhy Shivasankara Pillai, Kesavadev, Vaikkam Muhammed Basheer, Uroob, Edasseri Govindan Nair, V.K.N and Madampu

Kunjukuttan and others to our young writers; of whom at least one character has not been depicted by Artist Namboothiri. Like this he has also sketched characters of classics of World literature, literature in different Indian languages of India; especially Bengali and Hindi. Illustrations for 'Randamoozham, a novel by MT Vasudevan Nair a different approach to original story of Bhima in Mahabharatha was perhaps his magnum opus. " The name Namboothiri is in itself a signature in the hearts of millions of readers who for generations read the great work of authors in Kerala, great stories and the sketches of Namboothiri went beyond mere accompaniment to make critics opine that the stories were just a caption for Namboothiri sketches, and this made every Malayalee attached to the literature of Kerala consider that Namboothiri is the artist who gave life to characters with his sketches" (Uma Nair, 2016)

Numerous heritage structures of Kerala, the costumes, different cultures, traditional arts, landscapes and everything remains in

An Instant Sketch of Performing Arts of Kerala

sketches of the artist even decades after those invaluable original structures or art forms have become extinct.

Namboothiri's illustrations are very important for the country in regard to heritage conservation for it touches most aspects of art, architecture, religion, culture, costumes, society, history, literature etc especially in regard to local groups which were unique specimens from those areas facing extinction. So the digitization, conservation and accessibility to his work needs priority in projects related to culture.

Uma Nair commented on his drawings stating "Lines dance to the tune of an artist and then it takes the shape of a character the artist wants it to form- this is the magic of artist Namboothiri's sketches' (Uma Nair, 2016). When Uma Nair interviewed; Namboothiri stated that "Line drawings came naturally to me; lines can bring about a three dimensional character to structures on flat surface unlike other drawings. Line drawings have their own rhythm and elegance. They are dynamic; they embody the telling of tales. When I draw lines it has a literary context but also has a historical flavour. I believe that when we draw we must be honest and truthful to the narrative that we are creating. When I created line drawings for characters in stories I was going beyond mere illustration. I was giving life to an expression born out of cultural and human emotions." (Uma Nair, 2016)

This is part of an initial attempt to chalk out a project to digitize and conserve the art of Namboothiri and make it accessible worldwide to art lovers, researcher, and critics. As part of the project importance will be given to creating an awareness among numerous organizations which possess work of Namboothiri on the importance of their heritage stock and the need to conserve them and present them to the world beyond the limits of literature. Along with this support for conservation and preservation will be provided to those who possess them. The project will result in the development of a most reliable and complete virtual museum and archives of the life and work of the great artist. The plan for the initial phase of the project forms the discussions in this paper. It will be modified through discussions with experts from different areas concerned.

Methodology

The study will use different tools identify the status of the concerned collection, and development of the Archive on Artist Namboothiri's life and work. Initially there will be a survey of earlier work, research or development in the specific area. A preliminary survey to identify the sources like organizations, publishers of journals, newspapers, books, personal collections and archives, museums etc where his work is available in Kerala and outside as well as authors personal collections was undertaken. Preliminary survey estimated approximatley one lakh works of Namboothiri to be existing in diffrent collecions in India and abroad.From the works we came upon during preliminary survey, mainly from secondary sources we selected 70 items to prepare the prototype of the archive envisioned. Available data on the samples were collected to evolve the model archive. In continuation there will be informal interviews with the artist to get first hand knowledge on the subject of his art as well how far he has attempted to recreate exactly the subjects he tried to depict or witnessed. In the final stage of preliminary phase

software for archiving heritage stock was also identified and customised for this specific requirement. Aspects to be covered by the archive, which will have to exist as a Knowledge Base on the subject will, discussed and finalized during the system development. The file formats to be used and the standards to be adopted for the digital stock will be finalized. The possibilities for scaling up the software according to changing technology scenario, possibilities for exporting data and digital stock to new packages when it becomes necessary etc will be ensured. As per the above; the prototype archive was developed and will be launched in a local LAN or Internet and tested for a speific period. while so populating teh archial collection will continue.

Objectives of the Project/Study

Objectives and significance of the 'Artist Namboothiri: Open Access Digital Archive' will be the following

- To identify sources where the images produced by Artist Namboothiri are available and list the. Permission will be sought from the concerned authorities or owners of collections and copyright holders for archiving them in an Open Access Digital Archive system under due acknowledgement and statement of status.

- To ensure their conservation and for that to create awareness among it owners about their importance in regard to cultural heritage of the country the benefits of exposing these works to the concerned expert groups and public.

- To set up a digitization unit with minimum possibilities and use it for the major collections to scan the images as per set standards. A mobile system /unit will be used for scanning at small collection.

- To develop a web-based single window online gateway of the entire contributions of Artist Namboothiri in its original quality in an organized way with a customized searchable interface having numerous

Chembai Vaidhyanatha Bhagavathar

advanced search fields for effective retrieval.

- To encourage studies on Artist Namboothiri as well as for organizing discussions, seminars and further research on his work.

Prior Studies

A literature search for earlier research of this specific aspect 'developing a digital archives of a specific artist' yielded only very few papers. Even though many important institutions have developed digital archives paintings separately or included paintings also in their digital archives of art specific searchable specialized archives for artist have not been found anywhere. Even though numerous websites are available for artist like Leonard Davincy, Rembrand, Tagore, Ravi Varma etc they are something like virtual museums and not scientifically organized archives that can serve as a knowledge base on those artists or content in not organized in a search able way. But archives on scientists like Darwin, politicians and philosophers like Gandhi etc, which can serve as knowledge base on concerned persons, or subjects are available. So the present study identified that there was no prior research or development in this specific area in which the paper

M T Vasudevan Nair, Novelist and Film Director who Secured Jnanapeed Award

concentrates. But sufficient literature is available on how paintings can be digitised, as well as the details of collections with paintings as their content like British National Library, Library of Congress etc. Some studies on penumbral are of this paper we identified are discussed below.

Mourkoussis and others in their paper 'AMS-Metadata for Cultural Exhibitions using Virtual Reality' discusses metadata element set for describing cultural heritage objects and their digital representations, which is important for developing virtual exhibitions.(Mourkoussis, 2003). Chanhom and others in their study present architecture for the digital museum and propose data model for distributed digital content; especially of paintings, drawings and other art objects. Data model needs to be developed considering interoperability, standards, museum data models and feedback from experts in live sites. They describe a system that can integrate data from different museums having cultural content. (Chanhom, et al, 2014).

Seguin, Benoit and others in their study "New Techniques for the Digitization of Art Historical Photographic Archives - the Case of the Cini Foundation in Venice: discusses digital archiving of historical photographic collections, which pose special challenges for digitisation most of which are common to digitzation of paintings and drawings (Seguin, et al, 2018). It addresses the difficulties by suggesting new techniques like creation of a custom-built circular, rotating scanner, automatic indexing, and artificial intelligence techniques to be employed for information extraction etc.

Harrison, Dew (2009) in his study 'Digital Archiving as an Art Practice' explores the activity of archiving specific to fine arts and museums studies. He has identified and developed new methods for digitisation of art works, especially paintings and drawings, which can guide museum experts as well as artists.

Gireesh Kumar (2021) in his study on "Designing a Comprehensive Information System for Safeguarding the Cultural Heritage: Need for Adopting Architectural Models and Quality Standards" discusses the need for evaluating the quality and quantity of collected data and metadata once the items are be identified. The author further emphasizes the need for universally accepted and suitable metadata standards for the optimum search, discovery, and better retrieval of items deposited in the information system.

I Di Lenardo and others in their study (2016). "Visual Patterns Discovery in Large Databases of Paintings" identifies the challenges for their digital archiving because of their non-standard format and proposes the methods and techniques developed with his involvement.

Li, Yu-Chang (2015) in his detailed research work titled " Digitization of Museum and Art Gallery: A Framework for Enhancing User Interactivity and Personalization in On-site Environments' done at Grifith University Australia opines that on-site museum experience can be enhanced by

digital archiving. The digital curation in cultural expression can promote the role of museum and also boost the value of cultural heritage more than ever before. His study focuses on the development of digital curation in cultural expression applications, such as museums and art galleries. He has developed a prototype archive, which is interactive. He developed the database using Apache Jena - a free and open source Java framework that maintains different streams of information and uses semantic technology.

About Artist Namboothiri and his painting some studies are available. But our search has not yielded any detailed study or critical work on his life and art. But what is available clearly reveals the importance of his work as well as the role it can play in preserving and showcasing Indian cultural heritage.

One most important source for studies on his work is his autobiography named Rekhakal (Lines) : The autobiography of an Artist (Namboothiri, 2003) . This has also been translated by into English by Krishnankutty under the title 'Sketches: The Memoir of an Artist. The book cannot be classified under memoir or autobiography under the normal definitions of those words for it gives no sufficient details about his family or life. It is in truth it is his views and experiences of the people he met during his life recorded in lines when he met with remembrances in words later. It covers his life from childhood to the age of 75. In these reminiscences he highlights the importance of people he met from ordinary villagers to great academicians and artists, men of achievements in various fields such literature, art, film and music and his relationships with them. They varies from the simple uneducated villager to highly talented and reputed intelligential in society, were 'people who lived in the most principled and disciplined way with humility, grounded and care for people around them' and the lessons he learned from them have helped to evolve his art and life with humanness. These people


Mahakavi Vallathol and Literary Critique Kuttikrishna Marar

surely influenced him and helped him to reform his thoughts and ideas. They were also the real critiques of his work. It also provides a classic assessment of Namboothiri's work by M T Vasudevan Nair the novelist, film director and Jnanapeed Award winner (Vasudevan Nair, 2003).

N. P. Vijayakrishnan the author and art critic has prepared a book Varayum Vaakkum, (Lines and Words) which is another important source containing the artist's reminiscences and some of his drawings. He has also compiled another book 'Namboothiriyude Sthreekal' (The Women of Namboothiri) which contains selected line drawings of women by Namboothiri. It includes two assessments of this specific group of work by the popular actor Mohanlal and also Vijayakrishnan (Vijayakrishnan, 2003) both giving their reminiscences of the artist and detailed comments on works included. Then there is a collection of Namboothiri's drawings on Varanasi he did for Vasudeven Nairs' popular Novel 'Varanasi'' (Namboothiri, 2002).

Then even though few; there are some articles, papers and documentary films on Namboothiri. Few of the Critical studies that authors could trace out are of Uma Nair (2016) 'Living Lines – Kerala's Artist Namboothiri', Sudakaran's (2015) 'Illustrated Epic: Celebrating the Art and Life of Artist Namboothiri' Jacob Thomas's (2018)
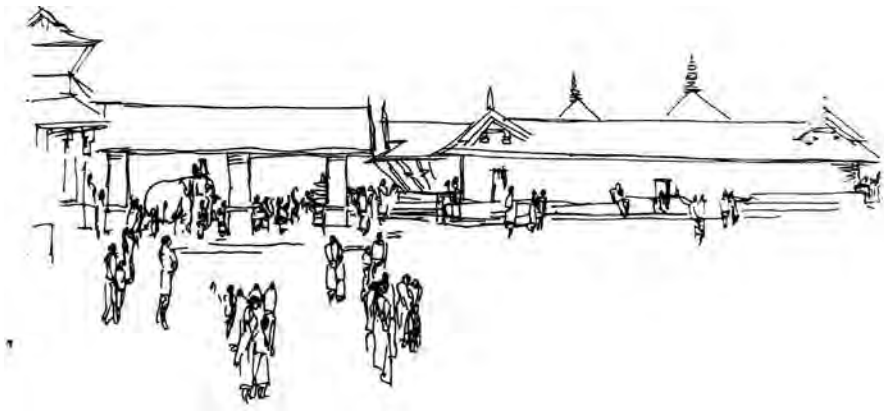
Thrikkavu Temple of Ponnani

Anandhamanu Artist Namboothiri: Akathum Purathum (Namboothiri is Anadha: Inside and Outside) etc. Ask movies produced a film on his life and work named "Namboothiri-Varayude Kulapathy' (Namboothiri - The Prince of Lines). It presents Namboothiri's childhood, Madras days, his life at Cholamandalam and the period of his work at Mathrubhumi Weekly. Manorma Online (2015) has prepared a film "Artist Namboothiri' which is an exclusive interview of 30 minutes on his 90th Birthday which gives stress to his work. In addition to the above there are numerous short films on specific works of the artist as well as his interviews available in the web, which the authors are yet to explore.

Sources and Image Archives

The major sources for identifying and documenting original drawings of Namboothiri's work are found to be available in the archives of Mathrubhumi Weekly (Calicut), Kalakaumudhi Weekly (Trivandrum, Kerala), Katha Magazine (Samakalika Malayalam Varika (Ernakulam, Kerala), Samakaleena Malayalam (Kaloor, Kochin and Bhashaposhni (Kottayam) where huge collections of his published and unpublished works final ones as well as drafts are available. Kerala Sahithya Akademi (Thrissur), Appan Thampuran Smarakam (Thrissur), Sree Chithira Tirunal Grandhasala (Vanchiyur, Trivandrum), Ulloor Smaraka

Granthasala (Jagathi, Trivandrum) and Avittam Tirunal Ganthasala Manacaud, (Trivandrum) have large collections the above-mentioned literary and cultural weeklies and journals. Bound volumes of the above periodicals are available at Kerala University Library and Calicut University Library. There are also a few other libraries in different regions of the State, and private collections where back files of popular periodicals which are invaluable. Film actor Mohan Lal, Literary critique and poet B Krishna Kumar (Atmnaraman) etc have collection of original work as well as old publications with the artists illustrations. The private collections with the libraries may also hold different books and other publications in which Namboothiri's works have been published as well as studies on the artist may also be available.

Childhood

Vasudevan Namboothiri popularly known as Namboothiri or Artist Namboothiri was born as eldest son of Parameshwaran Namboothiri and Sreedevi Antharjanam on 13th September 1925 in a traditional orthodox Namboothiri Brahmin family named Karuvattu Mana of Ponnani, in Malappuram district of North Kerala, India.

His village was a typical Kerala village with hills, rivers, water bodies, old temples, mosques, churches, traditional houses and other buildings surrounded by paddy fields

Ponnani: Namboothiri's Village Town

and coconut farms, and people using costumes colourful and attractive from three or four different streams of culture which were maintained in-tact during his childhood days. Sukapuram temple complex near his house was a traditional structure with mesmerising beauty and numerous ancient sculptures and wall paintings. The boy used to regularly visit the temple and was influenced by the sculptures and other artwork there. Many times he has stated that he had the urge to draw and mould sculptures due to his seeing sculptures and art work in Sukapuram temple. From his childhood he showed an interest to draw and paint. As a child with chalk or charcol he drew all over the walls of Karuvattu Mana where he grew up.

Ponnani his village at childhood days and youth as thriving with literary activity, and it enabled him to be in close proximity with people like Edassery, Uroob, Kadavanad Kuttikrishnan and Akkitham.

Education

After school to pursue higher education in art, with financial assistance from Krishnan Namboothiri of Varikkasseri Mana he went to Madras School of Arts and learned drawing, painting and sculpture under famous artists like Debiprasad Roy Choudhari, S Dhanpal and KCS Panikkar. From there he secured diplomas in fine arts and also applied arts by 1954. After that he stayed at the artist village of K. C. S. Panikar learning and practising. While he was staying at Madras he supported K. C. S. Panikkar to finish a large painting for the Indian Railways, which is considered to be the most prolific, such illustration in the world.

About his evolving as the artist we experienced he stated to famous art critique Uma Nair that his "life that began at the Madras School of Art. My life as an artist was shaped by two people-the first was Abanindranath Tagore's student, DP Roy Chowdhury, who was Madras School of Arts' first Indian Principal in 1929. He introduced training in fine arts. He encouraged studying indigenous arts and I developed an insight into human figures. The second was my teacher KCS Paniker who encouraged us to explore, experiment and showcase our talents. Both of them

Film Directors Aravindhan and C P Padmakumar

encouraged a search for Indian identity."
(Uma Nair, 2016)

Family

Namboothiri is married to Mrinalini. They have two sons, Paramesvaran and Vasudevan. They are presently living at Naduvattam Near Edappal in Malappuram district. Presently he is resting at home writing, and working in a leisurely manner. He has a large collection of his drawings, paintings, sculptures and books and magazines that used his artwork.

Career

After studies; in 1960 he returned to Kerala to work as an artist in Mathrubhumi. He continued at Mathrubhumi up to 1982. In Mathrubhumi he drew pictures to illustrate the works of most of the important writers in Malayalam like M T Vasudevan Nair, Uroob, S K Pottekkatt, Edasseri Govindan Nair, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai, Kesavadev, and V K N. He also prepared illustrations for stories of authors like Rabindranatha Tagore, Satyajit Ray, Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay, Mahasweta Devi and Sarat Chandra

Chattopadhyay, Tharasankar Banerrji, Amritha Preetham, Prem Chandh and others from Bengal, UP, Punjab, Rajasthan and other regions which introduced the people and culture of other regions of India to Malayalees. During this period he published a cartoon series Naniyammayum Lokavum, which became very popular. In 1982 he joined Kala Kaumudhi another popular weekly published by Kerala Kaumudhi Group of Publication. Then he shifted to Samakalika Malayalam a weekly from Indian Express Group of publications. Now he is contributing to the journal Bashaposhini of Malayala Manorama group.

About his illustrations in the above weeklies and magazines for the Stories of Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay, Mahasweta Devi, Rabindranatha Tagore, Satyajit Ray, and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay translated by Leela Savarkar into Malayalam Uma Nair states "Lines dance to the tune of an artist and then it takes the shape of a character the artist wants it to form. This is the magic of artist Namboothiri's sketches" (Uma Nair, 2016)

About his illustrations in Kalakaumudi for Randamoozham of M. T. Vasudevan Nair when the novel was serialized there were innumerable comments. Characters from Mahabharatha with all their features described by the original author of the epic were presented through his lines, and it raised the artist to a level equal to the author in that work.

In the Film World

The great film director G Aravindan who himself was a popular cartoonist who used to do the cartoon strip 'Valiya Lokavum Cheriya Manushyanum' was a follower of Namboothiri's work. When he produced his important movie, Uttarayanam, Namboothiri was requested to join him as the art director of the film, which received numerous awards. He also associated with Arvaindhan's another film, 'Kanchana Sita', the costume of the Gandharvan in P Padmarajan's film 'Njan Gandharvan' was also designed by him.

Sculpture

Beyond paintings and drawing he is an expert in sculpture using earth, rock, wood and metal as medium. After leaving Mathrubhumi for some time he turned to copper relief work and created some notable relief works of which 12 were exhibited in a highly reviewed one man show of the artist.

Copper Relief Works

His series of copper relief works based on events from Mahabharata, titled Lohabharata, and another based on Parayi Petta Panthirukulam are noteworthy items. He has also created a few large sculptures for Cholamandal, which include Modern Family on a Scooter and Maithuna as well as a 500 ft long outdoor drawing featuring incidents from the Indian freedom movement. The Kathakali sculptures he made in fibreglass and the series of metal sculptures depicting the story of Mahabharatha are noted works, which will attract generations of art lovers. He worked with noted film directors serving as art director costume designer etc.

Women

Namboothiri's drawings of women are probably among the most impulsive. His interpretation of women has earned him recognition as an artist of sensuous, lustful perfection of human beauty through simple sketches. The freedom and ease with which he tames lines to present women is striking. All types of women are there in his works; virgins, lovers, old, married, bulky, lean, Hindus, Christians, Muslims, nudes, big breasted, dancing, cooking, happy, sad, and what not. Mohan Lal, who had a collection of hundreds of his works states that we would have surely met them at somewhere sometime at some context of our life. There is no other artist who has presented the beauty of women with so many details in lines. It is yet one sign of the imagination and genius of this great master of lines that the samples we took reveal.

Human Emotions

Throughout the history of art capturing human emotions and expressions has played

A Drawing of Woman

a very important role in art from very ancient times. Only very few have successfully used lines to capture this aspect from life. Namboothiri has successfully attempted this in innumerable contexts of people coming from different cultural and social streams which includes emotions that becomes extinct from human life due what we call progress or modernization. The face of an innocent village girl blushing when she see her lover is an expression that we will never again view or understand in the days to which we are moving fast. They will only remain preserved in literature and art. Namboothiri's artistic magnificence would one day be rated higher than that of any artist in the world who used line as the medium for expression. His insightful glance into human emotions and skill in capturing individual character traits were unique. His power in expressing human emotions - a feature that bestows upon his art a rather mysterious, personal character - is one of the most salient aspects, which we can experience from the samples we selected for this study.

The range of emotions that his drawings capture is probably their most impressive aspect. He has caught people in laughter, bewilderment, joy, love, hostility, pride, guilt, shame, regret, and in introspection each in

Vaikkom Muhammed Basheer

their numerous shades. "The tender moments and chance encounters illustrated are universal…It's almost as if the protagonist in these stories could be the robust heavy bosomed woman or a wiry looking man who is waiting to catch someone's eye on the pathway, and moves like a funny, flustered being around the narrow paths lined with palm trees. Namboothiri is particularly adept at capturing the quirks, awkwardness and unexpected moments of amusement that punctuate big city living, anyone looking for more expressions in his work will find a host of avid conversations happening between the eyes that pin one's gaze. The kurta, the lungi the set mundu the blouse that conceals yet reveals a degree of sensual aura, his idea of the simplicity of drapes is indeed one that belongs to an epicurean who has an acute sense of observation of form and figure. Namboothiri's women are voluptuous and zesty, his men are robust" (Uma Nair, 2016).

His drawings on scenes from classics like Mahabaratha, Ramayana, and myths and legends of the country especially like those recorded by Kottarathil Sankunni are exemplary.

The care for detail, the free handling of lines and the almost buoyant quality of the compositions are other features that set his drawings apart. Indeed, his images have nothing of the structured, rigid feeling of photographs or paintings, but resonate with their same spontaneity.

With Great Men of the Time

Being natives of the same region and associates in literary and artistic fields in different periods of his life he was very close to social reformists like VT Bhatthathiripad, poets like Akkitham, Idasseri, G Sankarakkurup and P Kunjiraman Nair, novelists like VKN, M T Vasudevan Nair, Uroob, and Vaikkam Muhammad Basheer.

M T Vasudevan Nair comments that Namboothiri's media is not colours. In nature lines are not there. Images presented by nature materialize before us from differences in colours, the shades created by light, the differences in distance from the eye. From the nature, which only has colours, the artist brings into form the lines. So lines are creations of the artist only.

Documenting the Cities of Kerala

Namboothiri by himself took of a project to pictorially document the cities of Kerala. The project was named Nagarangal (The Cities). It was started from Cochin and he has covered most of the important cities of Kerala by now. It covered numerous heritage structures like temples, palaces, forts, churches, mosques and public buildings, which were on the verge of destruction or marked for removal in the name of development. It could create a public awareness about the invaluable wealth we are destroying forever and it forced government and owners of the buildings to think again before removing or altering them. At leas a few were saved due to his work.
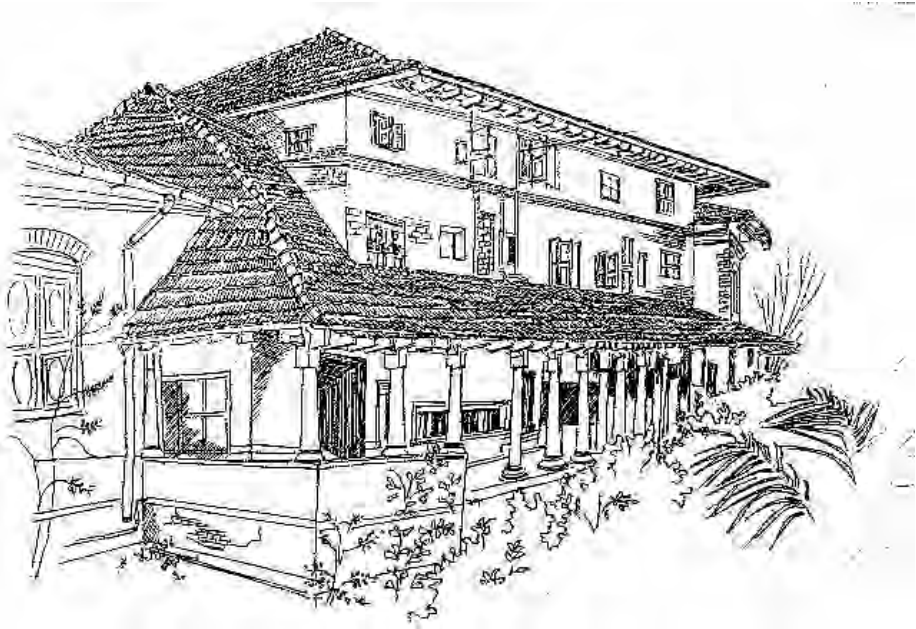
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Awards and Recognition

Conserving his expertise and achievements he was Chairman of Kerala Lalithakala Akademi for more than one term. Government of Kerala honoured him with Raja Ravi Varma Award in 2003. He was the third recipient of the award since it was constituted. He also received the Bala Sahitya Award for the illustration he did for in Kuttikalude Ramayanam (Ramayana for children), which was published by the Kerala State Institute for Children's Literature. For his work in the film Uttharayanam of Aravindhan; Namboothiri got award for the Best Art Director.

Subjects the Artist Dealt

There is no subject that Namboothiri's line drawings that have not covered. It includes records on valuable records of tangible and intangible heritage items many of which we have already lost without a trace. The 70 samples we have taken for study altogether covers almost that much different subjects when seriously analysed which can be classified under eight main subjects; Heritage Buildings (10), Classics, Characters (3), Culture (23), Emotions (9) Nature (3) People (7), Social life (10), Women (5) presented in the chart proided below.

The specific topic or topics each selected sample from the works of Namboothiri used in the archive deal with are identified and alphabetically listed below with strength of the subject representation in total collection indicated against them.

Architecture, Nalukettu: 1, Architecture, 9, Artists: 3, Bathing Ghats: 3, Brahmins: 1, Characters, Classics: 5, Chembai, Village: 1, Chess: 1, Cholamandala: 2, Christians: 1, Copper Relief: 1, Costumes: 5, Cremation: 1, Culture: 1, Day-to-day life: 5, Death 2, Dramatists: 1, Dress: 2, Drum: 1, Dwelling Houses: 5, Elephants: 1, Entertainment: 1, Festivals: 2, Feudalism: 4, Film Directors: 2,
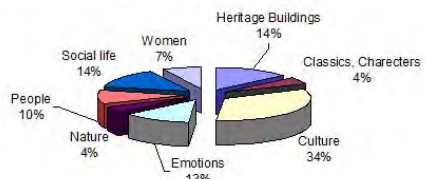
Characters of Mahabharatha Story

Freedom Movement: 1, Gandharvan: 1, Ganga: 4, Germans: 2, Hinduism: 2, Instrumental Music: 3, Kashi: 4, Kathakali: 1, Kollur: 1, Lord Siva: 1, Mahabaratha: 5, Marriage: 1, Mosque: 1, Music: 2, Namboothiries: 3, National Movement: 1, Paddy Storage: 1, Palakkad: 1, People, Emotions: 20, People, Muslims: 3, Performing Arts: 1, Pilgrimage: 1, Places: 2, Ponnani: 2, Priests: 1, Public Office Building: 2, Religion: 8, Rituals: 3, Sculpture: 1, Social life: 12, Soundarya Lahari: 1, Temple Mookambika: 1, Temples: 5, Thrikkavyu Temple: 1, Thrissur Pooram: 3, Vadakkummathan Temple: 1, Varanasi: 5, Village Library: 1, Village Scenes: 18, Village Towns: 1, Women: 10, Workers: 1, Youngsters: 2,

Namboothiri has drawn most of his contemporaries who made commendable contribution to different spheres of activity in Kerala and outside. The selected 70 samples itself covers about 15 persons who have made unique contribution to their field of activity whom the Artist met as part of his work whose influenced him also. The great personalities covered in the samples are Aravindhan (Film Director), Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar (Musician), Kavu Namboothiri (Sculpture), KCS Panikkar (Painter), Kuttikrishna Marar (Literary Critique), M T Vasudevan Nair (Novelist), C P Padmakumar (Film Director), Roy Choudhary (Sculpture), Sankaracharya (Philosopher), Vyloppally Sreedhara Menon (Poet), V T Bhattathiripad (Dramatist), Vaikkam Muhammed Basheer (Novelist), Vallathol Narayana Menon (Poet), M N Vijayan (Writer (Political Philosophy), and Vyloppilly Sreedhara Menon (Poet).

Content Management Software for the Archive

We have searched for and discussed on the package that can be used for Knowledge Management systems specifically those apt for organizing, and presenting media-rich online exhibits like paintings, drawings, sculptures, and performing art forms. When

Home Page of 'Artist Namboothiri: Open Access Digital Archive'

information retrievable capabilities are considered we found that most packages lack the power we find in BasisPlus/TechLib plus, GenISIS ISIS developed by UNESCO or its updated version ABCD. The packages popular now like Omeka, DSpace, Fedora, Greenstone, Eprints etc were also considered. In addition to the above we have surveyed many of the common content management systems presently used which allows publishing and exhibiting cultural heritage stock.

Most large museums and Art collections use software developed in-house or specially made for them and are not available to others. Finally we limited selection to ABCD and OMEKA. ABCD needs customisation for our specific purpose especially on its presentation of exhibits. Omeka even though the possibilities are limited it has a focus on display and uses an unqualified Dublin Core metadata standard very much like in ABCD. So initially we have decided to develop the 'Artist Namboothiri: Open Access Digital Archive' in OMEKA and later export it to ABCD after customising it in future.

Omeka designed especially for archiving art collections and has the capability to host multiple sites, which draw from a common pool of resources. So if an Art Gallery develops an archives of all artists of India through special modules a separate archives

of a specific artist can be organized and presented while the original project, will continue to exist as it is alongside individual projects focusing on artist like Raja Ravi Varma of Namboothiri, category like drawing, painting or sculpture, or region like Kerala, Bengal or Rajasthan or subject like, landscape, nature, or architecture serving specific purposes.

Artist Namboothiri Digital Archive

The package selected for developing the prototype of the 'Artist Namboothiri Open Access Digital Archive is a web-publishing platform named Omeka. It was customised according to the requirement. It can facilitate sharing digital collections. As a flexible content management package it supports adding plugins and themes, which increases its capabilities to exhibit the content. It was created by the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University and was given a technological collaboration grant by the Andrew Mellon Foundation. Since 2016, the non-profit Corporation for Digital Scholarship is engaged in research and development of Omeka project. It has two versions. Omeka Classic and Omeka S. Classic version is a web-publishing platform for sharing digital collections and creating media-rich online exhibits. Omeka S is a next-

Project Managment Details

generation web-publishing platform for institutions interested in connecting digital cultural heritage collections with other resources online. Many sites can be created and managed with a streamlined installation of Omeka S.

Database

Database is developed using an open-source content management software named Omeka, installed using LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, and PHP) architecture. A number of plugins are also used to facilitate the multiple access point for item to the user and also to facilitate the admin to organize the content of the digital collection. Few among them are as follows

Exhibit Builder: Build rich exhibits using Omeka.

LC Suggest: Enable an autosuggest feature for Omeka elements using the Library of Congress Authorities and Vocabularies

Related Content: Suggests Items related to the one currently shown

Simple Pages: Allows administrators to create simple web pages for their public site.

Simple Vocab: A simple way to create controlled vocabularies.

Wikipedia Citations: Formats citations according to Wikipedia guidelines

Workflow in Digital Archive

Once the Omeka installation is completed, we need to set-up the user, appearance, setting, and plugins because it will govern the workflow of the digital archive.

User: This section defines the total number of user and the privilege provided to them to access the digital archive. Users can be created and deleted in this section.

Appearance: It will define how the pages of the digital archive should look. Various themes can be chosen accordingly. Here we can define navigation tabs of the pages of the digital archive. New navigation tabs can also be defined. Size of the upload image, thumbnail size, and how many item should appear in the page is also defined here.

Settings: Security options, Allowed file extensions, elements of search records, elements sets (can be arranged)

Uploading Data

After proper setting of the digital archive, we are ready to upload the data in the archive. On left panel Dashboard, items, collections, item types, tags, exhibits and
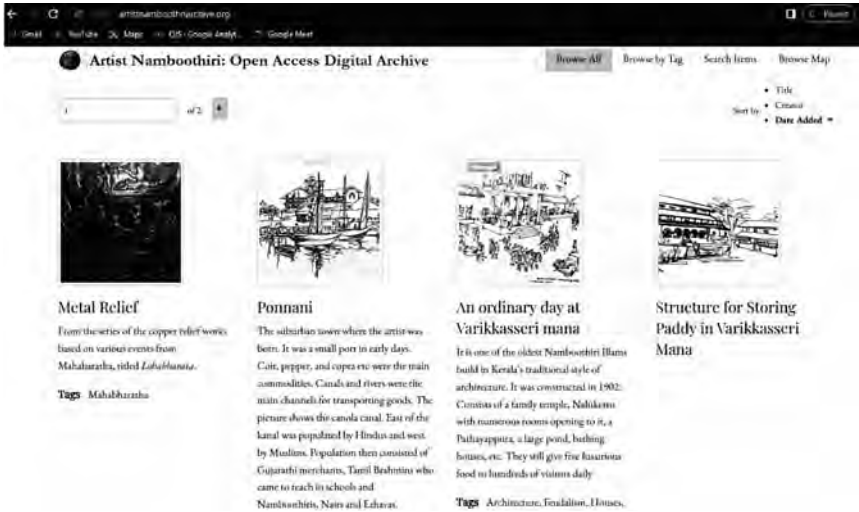
Browsing the Images in 'Namboothiri OA Digital Archive'

other menu links appear depending on the plugins installed on the system.

Dashboard: It provides the glimpse of the archive like number of items, collections, tags, plugins, user, and theme, which is currently implemented.

Items: New items can also be added through dashboard and also through here. It also provides the list of item currently present in the archive and options like details; edit and delete are provided for the items. 'Search items' is provided with number of search options to find desired result.

Uploading Stock

Item can be added here to the archive. All the details defining an item is provided here, such as metadata elements (here Dublin Core), 'item type metadata' (weather it is image, movie, sound, person, etc.), 'files' to upload the file related to the item, tags to provide better search result, and more options can appear depending on the plugins installed.

An item can appear only in a collection but in number of exhibits.

Collections: This menu is used to create the collection in an archive.

Item Type: Predefined Item types are mentioned here. New item type can be defined according to the need of the archive. Here, number of items in a particular item type can be viewed.

Tags: number of tags which are used to define items can be viewed and their count (how many times particular tag is used for different items)

Exhibits: Used to create exhibits depending upon the theme, occasion, particular item types etc.

Lc Suggest: used to create standard subject heading (Library of Congress subject heading) though out the archive.

Information Retrieval Methods

The Artist Namboothiri Digtial Archive will database and collect together digital versions of the paintings, drawings and sculptures of Namboothiri with maximum detailed description possible for speedy retrieval and display of images as and when required. Maximum data on each and every image will be entered into the database so that search and retrieval becomes easy, speedy and specific. For examples: a search with key words 'MT Vasudevan Nair' and 'Randamuzham' will retrieve all images the artist had drawn for the

Metadata Presented by Namboothiri Archive

novel in the weekly in which the novel was serialized or in the novel published in book form. Like that a search for 'MT Vasudevan Nair' and "Panchali" can retrieve all the drawings of Panchali artist had done for the above novel or any other article or story MT had written. If searched by a broad term 'Panchali' any drawing of 'Panchali' the artist had done; published or unpublished for any story, or any book anywhere will be retrieved in seconds.

In basic search, retrieving can be done by keywords, Boolean or exact match in different categories like item, file or collection. In which categories admin want the user to search can be changed in the admin setting.

For the advanced search option (limited to items only), information retrieval can be done via keywords, Dublin core metadata elements, range of IDs of items, collection type, item type, user (like super user, admin, creator etc), tags, public/non-public items, Featured/Non-Featured, created exhibits individually and in any permutation of above fields.

Archive Stock Categories and Standards

Currently, file upload size is limited to only 2Mb. However, it can be increased according to the requirement of Digital Collection. Text, moving images, oral history, sound, still image, websites, events, email, lesson plan, hyperlink, person, interactive resource, dataset, physical object, service, are few item type that are pre-defined. According to the need, new item type and its element can be defined and modified.

Metadata Standards

For this prototype, we are currently using Dublin Core metadata element set, but more advanced VRA Core metadata standard, especially designed for cultural heritage, is also available to use through plugins.

Namboothiri Archive will establish Digital Storage Systems as per internationally accepted standards to ensure conservation of the total collection of works by and on Namboothiri in digital form. All methods using current technology and digital archiving concepts will be used to ensure that the conservation of the archive with total collection Namboothiri's images for posterity will be ensured. It will remain open and accessible worldwide free of cost for Art lovers, researchers, historians, cultural heritage conservation related projects and the public 24 hours 364 days.

Search Settings in Artist Namboothiri Archive

Conclusion

Namboothiri has never put any of his drawings or paintings for sale. But he has gifted his work generously to hundreds of friends and well wishers. But he has undertaken many projects at acost. We while searching for sources of his work met many of his admirerers including noted artists, authors and film actors who preserve about 5 to 100 of his collections carefully. He views art as part of his life and blood. Drawing and Painting makes him joyous and elevates him. He stated "As far as I am concerned, art is nothing but a way to satisfy my creative impulses; because from nothing, I use my brush and colours to create something that has shape, expression and meaning" (Namboothiri, 2015).

When interviewed; Namboothiri said to Uma Nair "Line drawings came naturally to me; lines can bring about a three-dimensional character to structures on flat surface unlike in painting or other arts. Line drawings have their own rhythm and elegance. They are dynamic; they embody the telling of tales. When I draw lines it has a literary context but also has a historical flavor. I believe when we draw we must be honest and truthful to the narrative that we are creating. When I created line drawings for characters in stories I was going beyond mere illustration. I was giving life to an expression born out of cultural and human emotions. His wit and narrative is as sharp as his heart is tender, and his portraits of the people not only intellectually stimulating, but also emotionally and aesthetically rewarding" (Uma Nair, 2016).

Artist and photographer Gireesan Bhattathiripad, an ardent follower of Namboothiri's works has unearthed numerous lesser-known rough sketches from a trunk at artists' home where the works remaining with him have been preserved. They are rough drawings done on A4 size drawing sheets. Considering all the works he came upon he has stated that "Namboothiri has been a singular force in line drawing, inspiring generations of artists" (Anasuya, 2022). Another artist who reviewed his works opines: "Namboothiri's work seem effortless, but they are extremely complex and detailed. In just a couple of lines, he captures the entire range of possibilities of the human figure. A turn of the head, a slight ripple in the muscle, waistlines, the curve of a nostril… the drawings say it all. Though Namboothiri's figures might seem gigantic, they are proportionate. He had his own take on human anatomy," (Kaladharan, 2022)

There are more than one lakh works done by Namboothiri existing in different collections we have identified and mentioned here. Most of them are private collections. For example the famous actor Mohan Lal has purchased about two hundred of his works and are kept in his private museum. As those who hold the collections are capable to preserve them there; there is no need to worry about that for the time being. But identifying what is available where and creating in them awareness about their importance related to culture heritage in different contexts and providing access to their digital versions for researchers, art lovers and those involved in heritage conservation is important. So a knowledge base on Artist Namboothiri is very important not only for art lovers, researchers and conservation professionals but also to present before the world the work of a great master of lines which mainly remain concealed and unexplored in irrelevant stacks. It is the most apt return we can give to this saintly artist who remained immersed since youth using his days and nights to record our culture and civilization; getting erased day after day.

What we have presented is only a draft plan and statement on initial vision of the project conceived by the authors in discussion with a few others and the result of research and development of our attempt to define and configure an Open Access Digital Archive Artist Namboothiri's life and work, which tested successfully. Now we will circulate this proposal again among experts from concerned areas by providing access to the archive and after discussions formal or informal with museum curators, archivists, virtual reality programmers and documentalists we will evolve a technical proposal and system design to proceed further.

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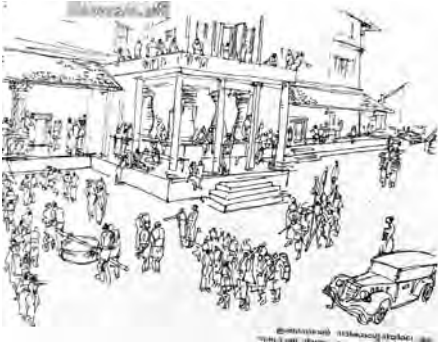
An ordinary day at Varikkasseri Mana

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SAMPLES SELECTED FOR DEVELOPING AND TESTING PROTOTYPE OF 'ARTIST NAMBOOTHIRI OPEN ACCESS DIGITAL ARCHIVE'

Samples from the work of Namboothiri which covers heritage architecture, costumes, ornaments, cultural scenes, festivals, people, etc from different streams of culture, and great artists and men of literature who maintained close relations with the artist during different phases of life blending their works with that of the artist; selected from few collections within the reach of authors for developing the prototype of the archive are listed here. We have tried to include different formats and major subjects from wide area he has covered in his sketches.

Paddy Storage Building in Varikkasseri Mana

Short Forms Used to Indicate Sources/ Collections

APA: Artists, Personal Archives/Collections
APC: Personal Collection of the Artist
ASG: Avittam Tirunal Smaraka Grathasala
ATS: Periodical Collection, of Appan Thampuran Smarakam
BKC: B Krishanakumar's private Collection
BPM: Bhashaposhini Magazine,
CTS: Periodical Collection of Chithria Tirunal Smarka Granthsala
HNK: Hotel Nalini, Kollam.
ISJ: Journal 'Informatics Studies'
KKW: Kalakaumudhi Varika
KME: Katha Magazine
KSA: Periodical Collection, Sahithya Akademi
MLG: Mohnlal's Art Gallery
MMP: Malayala Manorma Publications
MMS: Mathrubhumi Mookambika Special Issue, 1991
MTV: Randamoozham by M T Vasudevan Nair
MTW: Mathrubhumi Weekly
NSC: Namboothiryude Sthreekal. Collection of Drawings,
RAN: Rekakal : Autobiography of Nampoothri
USG: Ulloor Smaraka Granthasala
VTV: Varanasi (MT Vasudevan Nair)

Sample Items Selected for Developing Prototype With Description, Source, Keywords and Collection Indication

1. From the series of the copper relief works based on various events from Mahabaratha, titled Lohabharata. 2011. Source : Hotel Nalini, Kollam : Source: HNK, 2011 : Keywords : Mahabharatha, Copper Relief, Sculpture

2. Ponnani. The suburban town where the artist was born. It was a small port in early days. Coir, pepper, and copra etc were the main commodities. Canals and rivers were the main channels for transporting goods. The picture shows the canola canal. East of the canal was populated by Hindus and west by Muslims. Population then consisted of Gujarathi merchants, Tamil Brahmins who came to teach in schools and Namboothiries, Nairs and Ezhavas. : Source : RAN, 2003) : Keywords : Ponnani, Port, Kerala, Line Drawing

3. An ordinary day at Varikkasseri Mana : it is one of the oldest Namboothiri Illams build in Kerala's traditional style of architecture. It was constructed in 1902. Consists of a family temple, Nalukettu with numerous rooms opening to it, a Patthayappura, a large pond, bathing houses, etc. They still

Chembai Village in Palakkad

give free luxurious food to hundreds of visitors daily. : Source : BPM, 2001 : Keywords : Architecture, Nalukettu, Temple, Houses, Feudalism, Line Drawing

4. Structure for Storing Paddy in Varikkasseri Mana. Source : BPM,2001: Keywords: Architecture, Line Drawing, Agriculture, Paddy Storage

5. Chittalasseri Moothedathu Mana. A very old Mana showcasing traditions amidst wide paddy fields. Promoted various performing arts and provided its facilities for performance. : Source : BPM .2001: Keywords : Architecture, Dwelling Houses, Feudal Lords, Nampoothries

6. Poomulli Mana : has a history of more than 500 years. It was once the important cultural centre of Kerala. It members were famous as practitioners and experts in Ayurveda, Rig-veda, Yoga, Kalari (martial-art). Its buildings and structures are in traditional Kerala style architecture. They were reconstructed under the initiative of the Late Poomully Narayanan Namboothirippad, who was the father of Poomully Aramthampuran. The Poomully manor is a brilliant piece of

architecture. Its authentic design was much appreciated worldwide. The manor was reconstructed by the gifted designer-architect Vellanezhi Namboothiripad, who also reconstructed the Koothambalam at the Thrissur Vadakkunnathan Temple: Source : BPM, 2002 : Keywords : Architecture, Dwelling Houses, Feudal Lords, Nampoothries

7. Krishna Panikkar Memorial Library, which enabled the artist to get acquainted with, great literary men and artists of Kerala of this time : Source : BPM, 2000 : Keywords : Architecture, Public Building, Village, Library

8. Karuvatta Mana situated in Ponnani, Malappuram is artist's birthplace. Amidst the lush greenery of its camps there is a very ancient temple. : Source: BPM, 2001 : Keywords : Architecture, Dwelling Houses, Feudal Lords, Nampoothries

9. Chempai Vaidhynatha Bagavathar and Vaidymadam Namboothiri : A Musician and Physician. : Source : Keywords : Source : APA, 2020. keywords : Music, Medicine, Ayurveda

10. Vadakkumnatha Temple, Thrissur is a very ancient and large temple complex. It is dedicated to Lord Siva. On each of the four sides of its compound wall there is one monumental tower. There is also a large Kuttambalam in the campus. Very ancient mural paintings depicting scenes from Mahabaratha are there in the temple walls. There are numerous sculptures in stone and wood inside the temple. It is now a National Monument. Temple, is the main venue of the famous Thrissur Pooram festival. It is considered to be the first one among the 108 Shiva Temples established by Lord Parasurama : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Architecture, Temple, Lord Siva, Vadakkumnatha Temple, Thrissur, Kerala

11. Thrissur Pooram Festival : It is an annual festival held at Vadakkumnathan temple in Thrissur annually. It is one of the largest and most famous of all festivals in India and consists of performance of dance, music and various ritualistic art forms special to the festival. Even though a Hindu festival, it is attended by different sections of Kerala society. : Source : MTW, 1970 : Keywords : Kerala, Festivals, Temples, Elephants, Hinduism

12. Thrissur Pooram : Elements coming to join the Pooram celebrations : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Festivals, Kerala, Thrissur Pooram

13. Kollur Mookambika Temple in south Karnataka. Dedicated to the Mother Goddess known as Mookambika Devi. Mookambika is the union of Adiparashakthi and Parabramha as the Linga has integrated on its left side "Maha Kali, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswathi" It is situated in the foothills of Kodachadri Mountain and on southern bank of Souparnika River. The main deity of the temple is a swayambhu (self-born) jyotirlinga with a golden line cutting it into half, in which the left half represents Tridevis, and the right half represents Trimurtis. Along with this, a fourhanded panchaloha idol of Goddess Mookambika is also installed. The temple and its rituals are believed to have been finalized by Sankaracharya. : Source : MMS, 1991 : Keywords : Karnataka, Temples, Kollur, Mookambika Temple

14. Cholamandala : is an artists' commune Established at Tamil Nadu. It's artists brought modernism to art in South India. The community has many resident painters and sculptors, who live as a community and pool their skills. The community was founded by K. C. S. Panikkar who was the principal of the Madras School of Arts, Artist

Roy Choudhary and Kavu Namboothiri

Namboothiri who was his student also spent few years with him at this village after completing his studies : Source : MMP, 2003 : Keywords : Artists, Village, Cholamandala, : Source : Keywords :

15. The Artist Namboothiri with KCS Panikkar at Cholamandalam : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Artist Namboothiri, KCS Panikkar

16. Chembai Village in Palakkad, which became famous by the birth of Chembai Vaidhyanatha Bhagavathar. It is a place found to be entirely musically gifted and even laymen enjoy classical Karnatic music performance, just like the experts do. : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Kerala, Palakkad, Chembai, Village, Music

17. Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar popularly known as Chembai who belong to Chembai village in Palakkad. 'Chembai had a vigorous, strong, vibrant, ringing and resonant voice. He would sing in a clear, open-throated style that requires

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high levels of physical and mental endurance to pull off, yet, he did so in a seemingly effortless manner. He had a wonderful sense of accurate time measure. His empathy for his accompanists and disciples was noteworthy and he would go to great lengths to encourage them' He received Padmabhushan Award from Govt of India. : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavatar, Music

18. Famous artist Roy Choudhary and his student artists' friend Kavu Namboothiri during a class at Madras school of Arts : Source : RAN, 2003 : Keywords : Artists, Roy Choudhary, Kavu Namboothiri

19. Vallathol and Marar : Mahakavi Vallathol Narayana Menon was a great Malayalam poet and promoter of Kathakali and other arts; one of the triumvirate of modern Malayalam poetry, along with Kumaran Asan and Ulloor S Parameswara Iyyer.. He was a nationalist poet whose poems influenced the National movement in Kerala. He also wrote against the caste injustices, the tyranny of the British and native feudal lords and other social injustices prevailing at that time. He established the Kerala Kalamandalam which is Presently a University. Kuttykrishna Marar known as Marar was an Indian essayist and literary critic in Malayalam. He popular work is Bharathaparyadanam, a critical study of the Mahabharatha, which is counted by many among the most influential books in Malayalam. He received the Sahitya Akademi Awards both national and State : Source : MMP, 2003 : Keywords: Vallathol Narayana Menon, Kuttikrishna Marar, Poets, Writers.

20. Vaikkam Muhammed Basheer popularly known as Basheer was a Malayalam Novelist. He was a writer, humanist, freedom fighter, novelist and short story writer, noted for his path-breaking, down-to-earth style of writing that made him equally popular among literary critics as well as the common man. His notable works His works have been translated in to different languages of the world. He was honored with Padma Shri by Govt of India. He also received Sahitya Academy Fellowship of Centre and state, Vallathol Award and the Kerala State Film Award for Best Story. : Source : BPM, 1990 : Keywords : Vaikkam Muhammed Basheer, Basheer, Malayalam, Novelists

21. V T Bhattathripad : was a social reformer, dramatist and an activist of Indian National Movement from Kerala. He fought against caste, conservatism and the prevailing social injustices against women. He numerous books which include the drama, Adukkalayail Ninnu Arangathekku and an autobiography, Kanneerum Kinavum . His works influenced social

and political reform movements. Kerala Sahitya Akademi honored him a fellowship : Source : RAN, 2003 : Keywords : V T Bhattathripad, Freedom fighter, National Movement, Dramatist

22. M T Vasudevan Nair popularly called MT, is novelist and critic. He writes screenplays and had directed many films. He is one of the masters of post-Independence Indian literature. His works deal with the basic Kerala family structure and culture and the problems inside traditional families and many of them initiated new trends in Malayalam literary scenario. His important novels on life inside matriarchal family in Kerala are Kaalam, and Randamoozham, a novel based on story of Mahabaratha viewed from the angle of Bhimasena is an entirely different approach to the story than we have ever seen and is widely credited as Naalukettu, Asuravithu, and his masterpiece. A film also has been made from the novel. He got the National Film Award for Best Screenplay more than once and was awarded the highest literary award of India, Jnanpeed, Govt of India honored him also with Padma Bhushan.. He was the editor of Mathrubhumi Illustrated Weekly and was a close associate of the Artist Namboothiri blending lines and words : Source : RAN, 2003 : Keywords: M T Vasudevan Nair, Jnanapeed, Novelist, Film Director

23. G Aravindhan and C P Padmakumar : Aravindan was one of the notable Indian film director, screenwriter, musician, cartoonist, and painter. He was one of the leaders of parallel cinema in India especially Malayalam with unorthodox way of filmmaking; continuously changing his cinematic forms, experimenting new ways in storytelling without regular narrative styles. He was also a very popular

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cartoonist. He made many documentaries, theatre productions, and also directed music for other filmmakers. Received Padmasree from Government of India. C P Padmakumar is also a flag bearer of the parallel stream in Malayalam cinema. He was a man who walked in the league of Malayalam cinema's stalwarts, when the medium was going through a period of transformation in the late seventies. He made his directorial debut with 'Aparna'. His second film, 'Sammohanam', won the 'Best of the Fest' Award at the Edinburgh International Film Festival. He also edited 'Nityatha', a famous magazine of the turbulent seventies. His short films and documentaries include 'The Track', 'Mangroves of Malabar', 'Day of Silence', 'Swathanthryam', 'Neermizhikal', 'Road Safety' and 'Bhakshyasuraksha'. Besides, he also acted in films like 'Padam Onnu : Oru Vilapam', 'Kanchanaseetha' and 'Pakal Nakshathrangal' : Source : MMP, 2003 : Keywords : Aravindhan, Padmakumar, Film Director, Art Director

Near the Busstand in Varanasi

24. M N Vijayan, a Professor of Malayalam was academic loved by thousand s of students and villagers around all places where he lived was a great orator, columnist and Malayalam writer known for his leftist ideals and oratorical skills he acted as the president of the Progressive Association for Art and Letters in Kerala) and served as the editor of Deshabhimani the popular leftist Newspaper. . He published a number of books of which Chithayile Velicham (The Light in the Pyre) received the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Literary Criticism. His collected works recently published runs in thousands of Pages : Source : ATS, 2016 : Keywords : Vijayan M N, Literary Criticisdm, Teacher, Political Thinker

25. Malamkavil Kesava Poduval the popular Mridangist : Source : RAN, 2003 : Keywords: Artists, Mridangam, Instrumental Music

26. A scene from Mahabaratha drawn for M T Vasudevan Nair's novel 'Randamoozham' : Source : MTV, : Keywords : Mahabharatha, Indian Classics, Randamoozham

27. A causal talk by two villages at a public place : Source : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People

28. A scene from daily life of family drawn for a story : Source : KSA, 2018 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People

29. Teaching of Musical instrument Nilavu: Source : APC, 2020 : Keywords :

30. A social context drawn for a story : Source : Keywords :

31. Playing Chathuranga (Chess) which was a popular enjoyment at wealthy houses in those days : Source : APC, 2020 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Entertainment, Chess

32. Another instant from social life - drawn for a story : Source : KSA, 2018 : Keywords: Kerala, Village, Society, People

33. From a simple marriage function in the village : Source : KSA, 2018 : Keywords: Kerala, Village, Society, People, Marriage, Rituals

34. An instant from social life sketched for a story : Source : KSA, 2028, : Keywords: Kerala, Village, Society, People

35. House maids of a feudal house : Source: APC, 2022 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Workers,

36. A Namboothiri Brahmin Women : Source : RAN.2003 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women, Brahmins

37. A Christian women in her traditional dress : Source : RAN.2003 : Keywords: Kerala, Village, Society, People, Christians, Women, Costumes, Dress

38. Women talking - Day to day social life: Source : MMP, 2003 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women, Day-to-day life scenes

39. A moment from a home- illustration for a story : Source : MTW, 1970 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People,

40. A women with her grand child : Source: KSA, 2018 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People,

41. Namboothiri used to draw all types of women old, young, child, Christian, Muslim and Hindu in their traditional costumes, dressed, half dressed, naked, village women and

urbanized women in their different contexts and thousands expressions. A select drawing: Source : MSC, 2012 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women, Costumes, Dress

42. Another drawing of a Women by Namboothiri : Source : KSA, 2018 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women,

43. A selected drawing from the collection of drawings of women published by Namboothiri : Source : MTW, 2012 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women,

44. Visualization of a Sloka from Soundarya Lahari. Artist took five years to paint this took : Source : MLG, 2020: Keywords : Soundarya Lahari, Sankaracharya, Mother Goddess Worship

45. Village Women : Source : NSC, 2012 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Women,

46. Gandharvan. A painting Commissioned by Mohanlal : Source : MLG, 2018 : Keywords : Gandharvan, Mythology, Classics

47. Ganga Gnats between Adi and Varana. Here Ganga flows from south towards north : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords: Ganga, Pilgrimage, Ghats, Religion

48. Doing the last rituals for the self under guidance of the priest : Source : VMT,2002 : Keywords : Ganga, Pilgrimage, Ghats, Religion, Rituals

49. Ganga. Manikarnika Ghat : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords : Ganga, Ghats, Religion, Cremation, Death

50. Sketch from a street of Kashi : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords : Varanasi, Kashi

51. Rituals for Ancestors at Dasswamedh Ghat : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords: Ganga, Pilgrimage, Ghats, Religion, Rituals, Death

Varanasi- Manikarnika Ghat

52. A Sketch from the Kashi Street : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords : Varanasi, Kashi

53. Vibandhaka and Rishyasringa : Source: CTS, 2020 : Keywords : Classics, Mythology, Vyloppilly Sreedhara Menon

54. Near the bus stand in Varanasi : Source: VMT, 2002 : Keywords : Varanasi, Kashi

55. In the streets of Varanasi : Source : VMT, 2002 : Keywords : Varanasi, Kashi

56. A Muslim Priest of Kerala : Source : KSA, 2020 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Muslims, Priests,

57. A Young German Girl : Illustration for Hermann Hesse's Story, 1989 : Source: KME, 1989. : Keywords : People, Women, German

58. German Youngsters in Love. Illustration for Hermann Hesse's Story: Source : KME, 1988 : Keywords: People, Youngsters. German

59. A Kerala Muslim lady in their casual dress : Source : KME, 1987 : Keywords: Kerala, Village, Society, People, Muslims, Women.

60. Mulla Nazurudheen. Mystic. Character like Tenali Raman who becomes subject for many stories : Source :

KME, 1987: Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Muslims, mystiques

61. An instant sketch o a Kathakali scene. One of the numerous casual sketches of Kathakali Teyyam etc : Source : APA, 2020 : Keywords : Kerala, Culture, Performing Arts, Kathakali

62. Namboothiri lighting the lamp at a function : Source : ASG, 2022 : Keywords : Kerala, Culture, Rituals

63. Jama Ath Mosque of Ponnani. I earlier day Mosques were built according to Kerala traditional architectural style. These unique heritage structures related to Islamic culture are becoming extinct in Kerala due to their replacement by Arabic style of architecture in Kerala.: Source : RAN, 2003 : Keywords : Kerala, Village, Society, People, Mosque

64. Muncif Court of Ponnani. A heritage building : Source : RAN,2003 : Keywords : Kerala, Architecture, Suburban Towns, Public Offices

65. Thrikkavu Temple at Ponnani the artist's village. He used to attend the performances of music and dance regularly conducted there : Source : APC, 2020 : Keywords : Kerala, Ponnani, Temple, Hindu, Thrikkavu Temple

66. A Portrait of Artist Namboothiri : Source : APC, 2016 : Keywords : Artist Namboothiri

67. Artist Namboothiri at his Personal Archive : Source : APC, 2016 : Keywords : Artist Namboothiri

68. Namboothiri and his wife : Source : APC, 2016 : Keywords : Artist Namboothiri

69. Scene from the Mahabharatha : Source: APC, 2016 : Keywords : Classics, Mahabaratha, Characters

70. Scene from Maha Bharatha from Periodicals collection of a library : Source : ISJ 2016 : Keywords : Classics, Mahabaratha, Characters

At Dashasamedh Ghat, Varanasi

Acknowledgments