

A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

"Absolutely spectacular. Wish we had more such places in India. Clean, beautifully displayed, nicely explained. So much nostalgia seeing a part of our history. Hats off to the team. Keep up the good work." - **Ashwaty Menon.**

"Thank you for keeping the history of South India alive through these displays. I remember visiting as a kid in school & happy to bring my children back for the same experience!!" - **Saarthi Iyer**

These comments from our visitors remind me of the reason behind our efforts to display and showcase the priceless and rich architecture, artisans, folk performances, music and crafts of South India and also serves to inspire us all even more.

It has been 29 years since this remarkable living museum opened its gates to visitors and it has been a tremendous journey. From a very humble beginning of a very few visitors in the initial years, today the museum welcomes numerous visitors from all over India and around the world.

We have always been a community-driven endeavour and it is through listening to and participating in the community that we found our greatest successes and impacts and strive to grow even further.

It has been a very eventful 2025 and the new year which marks the beginning of our 30th year promises many exciting programmes and exhibitions.

Sharath Nambiar
01.01.2026

COVER PAGE ART

This acrylic painting by M. Suriyamoorthy, a well-known artist of the Madras Art Movement, depicts the universal theme of 'Mother and Child', a favourite subject of the artist, evident from his many works centred on motherhood. The artwork is characterised by Suriyamoorthy's signature use of vibrant, free-flowing, and energetic lines that create an ornamental patterning of space. His compositions typically feature human figures, especially women, and often focus on domesticity and women-centric subjects.

AWARD FOR BEST INNOVATIVE MUSEUM IN TN

DakshinaChitra was awarded the Best Innovative Museum in Tamil Nadu by India Tourism and Tamil Nadu Travel Expo in Madurai on September 28, 2025.

CALL FOR DONATIONS

Our cultural programmes are possible through your support. Donations and CSR funds can be made to the Madras Craft Foundation via NEFT. For bank details and more information, contact Ms. Lalitha Krishnan at 9677190587 or lalithakrishnan.mcf.dak@gmail.com.

OUR GRATITUDE TO...

Our special thanks to Mobis India Foundation, Muthoot Finance, Ford Motor Company, Cholamandalam Investment & Finance Co.Ltd., India Motor Parts Accessories Ltd. (IMPAL), Kotak Mahindra Bank and Chemfab Alkalies Limited for their CSR support and TTDC for their support to our programmes every year. Our sincere thanks to Sujaya Menon, Jayashree Kumar, Kausalya Santhanam, So.So.Me. Sundaram, Ashok Chatterjee and Yusuf Madhiya for their donations to our museum and library collections.



DakshinaChitra is a plastic-free zone.

DakshinaChitra
Muttukadu, East Coast Road,
Chengalpet district,
Tamil Nadu - 603 112
Tel: 2747 2603
www.dakshinachitra.net

For further information, contact
Tara Rachel Thomas at +91-9952894859

DakshinaChitra is open daily
from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Closed on Tuesdays.
Weekends : 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

DakshinaChitra is the project of
Madras Craft Foundation.

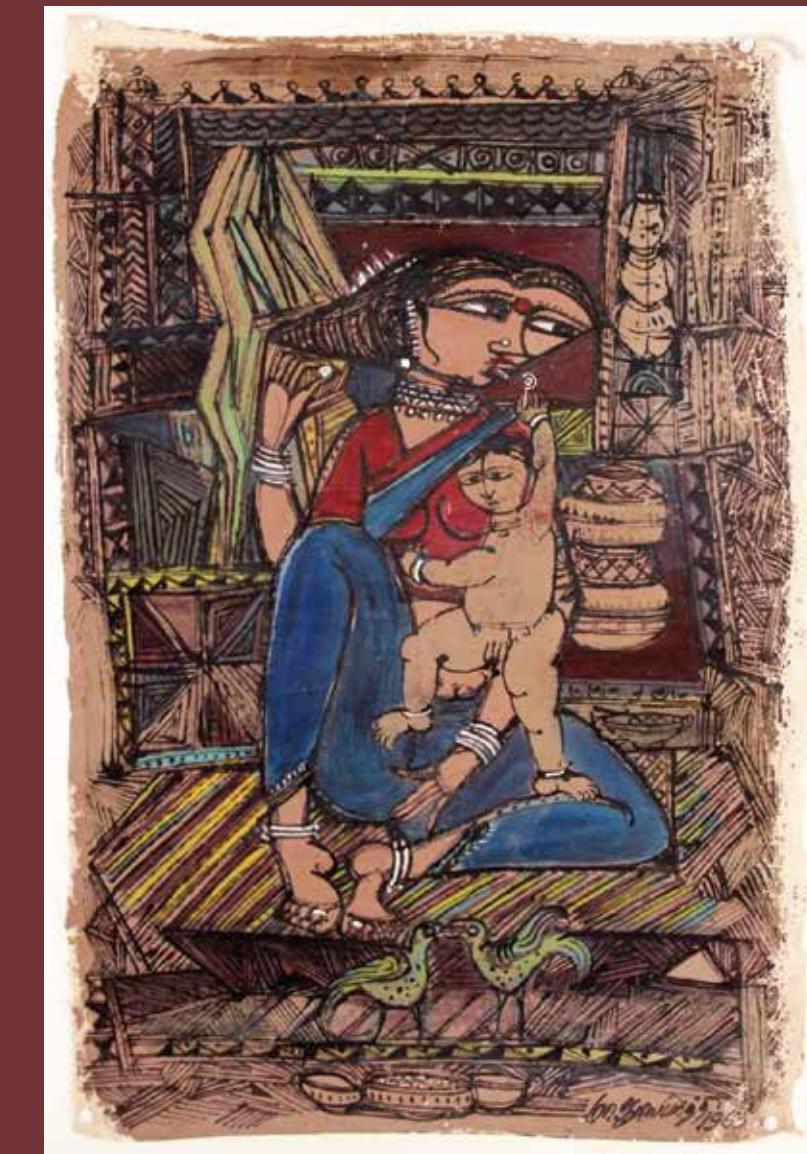
Design and Content :
The Phoenix Company

**ON WEEKENDS
WE ARE OPEN
TILL 7 PM**

Madras Craft Foundation
If undelivered, please return to
Madras Craft Foundation
G3 Madhuram Flats
6 Urur Olcott Road
Besant Nagar
Chennai - 600 090
Tel: 2491 8943 / 2446 2435
Email: dak.comm2@gmail.com



29 years and counting...



NEWS & EVENTS - JANUARY TO MARCH, 2026

Workshops for Adults

Date	Workshop	Age group	Fee
Jan. 24 & 25	Introduction to Tamil Nadu folk dances - Silambattam & Thappattam	15 years & above	Rs. 2000/-
Feb. 15	Making palm leaf decorations - Hanging Thoranams	15 years & above	Rs. 1500/-
Mar. 21 & 22	Leather Puppet making : Celebration of Ugadi	15 years & above	Rs. 3000/-



JAN. 19 - MAR. 19 : CHILDREN'S MELA

This is a two-month-long annual event for school students that encourages them to learn and appreciate our rich cultural history through art, theatre, storytelling, folk dances, puppet shows, bullock cart rides and demonstrations of art and crafts. For further details, please contact Lakshmi at +91- 9841777779.

Art Beat

The schedule for our upcoming exhibitions is given below. Any further updates, announcements and changes with respect to the schedule will be posted on our website & social media handles.

VARIJA GALLERY



**JAN. 9 - FEB. 15 & MAR. 9 - 30 :
From the DakshinaChitra Collection**

This forthcoming exhibition, curated by Shruti Parthasarathy, draws on the extensive collection of the DakshinaChitra museum to examine its legacy and role in nurturing artistic development in South India.

FEB. 21 - MAR. 5 : INTERLACE II - EXHIBITION BY KOREAN ARTISTS

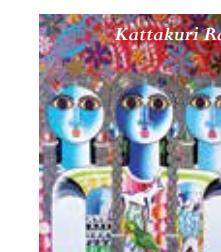


The Paris-based Korean artists' collective, **Sonamou**, will be showcasing the work of six artists from the collective at DakshinaChitra. A longing for India and its profound meaning culminated in this art exhibition titled, '**Interlace II**'. The exhibition aims to create a space for artistic dialogue and cultural exchange. The artists describe the exhibition as a space 'where we delve into ourselves to weave a unique dialogue between two cultures, two worlds, and two journeys.' Works of artists Lee Hyung Joung, Moon Min Soon, Eun Young Leepark, Park Soo Hwan, Hong Il-hwa and Kim Myoung Namis will be on display. Mark your calendars and come witness how art becomes a crucible for cultural collaboration.

KADAMBARI GALLERY

**JAN. 3 - 14 :
Echoes of Culture**

An exhibition of paintings on the inner and outer beauty of a woman by artist Kattakuri Ravi



KADAMBARI GALLERY

JAN. 30 - FEB. 9 : 'ART FUSION' EXHIBITION - GROUP SHOW

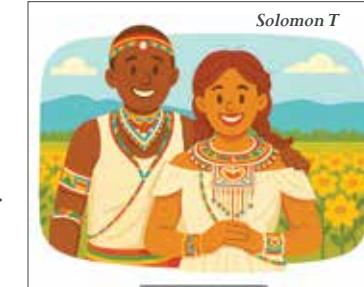
Art Fusion is a group exhibition with a combination of different art forms, styles and cultures that come together to create a new and unique piece of art. This show brings together diverse artistic styles, merging traditional techniques with contemporary expression. It stands as a tribute to artists who push boundaries and redefine the limitless possibilities of unified artistic expression. The works of artists C.Mounissamy, R. Radjoucannane, S.Krishnaraj, K.Silambarasan, K. Anbuveeran and S.Veerasami will be on display.



FEB. 14 - 25 :

Wonderful Weddings around the World

An exhibition by SolomonT that explores global marriage rituals through a style inspired by illustrations from children's books. It highlights visually striking practices, symbolic traditions and socially meaningful moments



WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN

Any further updates and announcements regarding the schedule will be posted on our website and social media handles. For registration and queries, contact Lakshmi at +91- 9841777779. Timings: 10: 30a.m. to 12: 30p.m.

Date	Workshop	Resource Person	Fee
Jan. 10	Traditional games with storytelling	In-house	Rs. 1000/-
Mar. 7	Storytelling with dance movements	In-house	Rs. 1000/-
Mar. 21	Introduction to shadow puppetry	In-house	Rs. 1000/-

YOU CAN ALSO FIND US ON

Instagram

@dakshinachitra_heritagemuseum

Facebook

DakshinaChitra Chennai
Muttukadu

Tripadvisor



GREETINGS FROM DAKSHINACHITRA

This new year, put on your explorer's cap and dive deep into the world of culture, art and heritage at DakshinaChitra. The year begins with our signature Margazhi Village Festival that will feature folk dance performances from the southern states. The sixth edition of LangFest is back this quarter with an interesting line-up of speakers and events. A group art exhibition by Paris-based Korean artists' collective, Sonamou, will be taking place at the Varija Gallery. Friends of DakshinaChitra is organising a unique fundraiser in collaboration with Idlers' Farm. Read on to know more...

Kindly note that fresh updates, announcements and changes to the current schedule of events will be posted on our website and social media handles.

DEC. 31 - JAN. 4 : ANDHRA PRADESH VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Discover the fierce beauty of **Veeranatyam** (Dance of the brave), a dynamic folk art form from Andhra Pradesh rooted in warrior traditions and ancestral worship. Originally performed by the Veeramushti community, this ritual dance honours village protectors and heroic spirits. The dancers smear sacred ash (*vibhuti*) and carry camphor fire on a platter during the performance which also features vigorous movements and symbolic weapons. The rhythmic footwork matches the beats of percussion instruments. Veeranatyam celebrates themes of courage, sacrifice and collective identity; preserving stories from the past. Experience this vibrant tradition that reflects Andhra Pradesh's spirit of valour and devotion.



JAN. 7 - 11 : KARNATAKA VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Kamsale is a captivating folk art form that blends devotion, music and movement. Traditionally performed by the devotees of Lord Male Mahadeshwara, Kamsale features a pair of cymbal-like instruments - also called Kamsale - played in perfect coordination with energetic dance steps. The instrument is moved around the body of the dancer in different patterns and the choreography exhibits synchronicity in movement, religious zeal and martial dexterity. Celebrate the distinct cultural identity of Karnataka through these enthralling performances!



FEB. 28 & MAR. 1 : LANGFEST

LangFest returns in 2026 with its sixth edition, themed '**Histories in the Plural**'. Inspired by James Baldwin's reflection that history shapes our identities and aspirations, this edition explores the diverse ways stories are told, remembered and reinterpreted. Over two days, DakshinaChitra Heritage Museum will host historians, writers, filmmakers, musicians and cultural practitioners in conversations, lectures, performances and film dialogues. Featured speakers include award-winning historian **Anirudh Kanisetti** and writer and activist **Urvashi Butalia**. There will also be a musical conversation between musicians **Sangeetha Sivakumar** and **T.M. Krishna**. Join us for a vibrant celebration of memory, storytelling and the many histories that shape our world.

DEC. 15 - JAN. 17 : GARDEN SHOW & STREET FOOD FESTIVAL

DakshinaChitra's Garden Show will have a wonderful display of ornamental and herbal plants from private gardens, collectors and nurseries. There will also be stalls selling and displaying plants, cut flowers, bonsais, garden equipment and props. Expert chefs from southern states will prepare and serve authentic street food at live counters, offering a wonderful culinary experience. Kindly contact Suseela Vergis: +91-9677029265, Amrutha: +91-9884104195, Sara: +91-9840853653 and Sharath Nambiar at +91 9841425149 for more details and stall registration.

LOOKING BACK : DAKSHINACHITRA AT MAW 2025

DakshinaChitra marked a significant milestone by participating in the Madras Art Weekend, held in December last year at the Taj Coromandel. The artworks were thoughtfully curated from the museum's modern and contemporary collection, highlighting South Indian artistic traditions and the rich evolution of art in the region. As the only non-commercial space at MAW, DakshinaChitra's presence received an overwhelmingly positive response. Paintings of P. Perumal and Veerasanthanam drew significant attention. Works by Aparajithan, Nupur Chatterjee and Mookiah also emerged as visitor favourites. Visitors expressed interest in the museum's collaborative initiatives. Many purchased titles from the museum's publication series, initiating engagement with DakshinaChitra's mission.

JAN. 15 - 17 : PONGAL CELEBRATIONS



Join us as we celebrate the three-day harvest festival of Tamil Nadu through traditional rituals and customs. From preparing varieties of Pongal in pots to staging vibrant folk dance performances, DakshinaChitra is all set to give you an authentic experience. There will be traditional music, pot breaking, craft activities and bullock-cart rides, giving visitors an opportunity to delve into Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage. Let's rejoice together in this season of gratitude and abundance.

JAN. 21 - 25 : TELANGANA VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Gussadi is a striking tribal dance tradition of the Raj Gond community from Telangana. Typically performed during the Diwali season, Gussadi features dancers adorned with elaborate feathered headgear, body paint and handcrafted ornaments. Their energetic movements, accompanied by powerful drum rhythms, narrate stories of ancestral spirits, hunting traditions and community pride. Rich in symbolism and visual splendour, this art form is integral to the cultural legacy of the Gond community. Mark your calendars and come witness these engaging performances.

JAN. 28 - FEB. 1 : TAMIL NADU VILLAGE FESTIVAL



The festival will showcase performances of **Devarattam**, a folk dance of Tamil Nadu performed by the Kambalar and other communities to celebrate valour and victory. Believed to have evolved from the ancient 'Dance of the Gods', Devarattam features vigorous footwork, expressive hand gestures with handkerchiefs and rhythmic patterns accompanied by melam and percussion instruments. Dancers move in seamless formations, combining fast and slow movements. Traditionally performed at special occasions, Devarattam embodies cultural pride and community spirit. Don't miss these exhilarating performances!

FRIENDS OF DAKSHINACHITRA (FOD) EVENTS

JAN. 31 : THE HERITAGE PLATE : POP-UP LUNCH

Join **DakshinaChitra** and **Idlers' Farm** for 'The Heritage Plate', an exclusive farm-to-table fundraiser at DakshinaChitra. The 9-course organic lunch is brought to you by Idlers' Farm, a local farm focused on fresh, organic and hyperlocal produce. It is a great way to support sustainable farming and enjoy a culinary journey for a cause. All funds raised will be used towards DakshinaChitra's community programmes that are open to all. Seats are priced at Rs.3000 per meal. We look forward to seeing you. The lunch is 11a.m. onwards. To buy tickets, please call Lalitha at 9677190587.

FEB. 14 : ISHQ MASTANA : SONGS OF LOVE AND LONGING

Celebrate the season of love with 'Ishq Mastana' - a special concert by **Bindhumalini** and **Vedanth Bharadwaj**. Their performance promises an evocative journey through the love-soaked verses of Bhakti and Sufi traditions, celebrating devotion as a unifying human experience. Through heartfelt songs drawn from mystic poets such as Mirabai, Kabir, Surdas, Bulleh Shah and Amir Khusro, Bindhu and Vedanth explore love in its many forms—longing, separation, surrender, ecstasy and divine union. Love has always transcended barriers, and this concert invites listeners to reconnect with the deep compassion, harmony and inner stillness at the heart of Bhakti and Sufi philosophy.

Join us this February for this memorable sundowner concert followed by refreshments. Come with friends, family, a special someone or alone – and embrace the chance to celebrate love and create new connections. To buy tickets, please call Lalitha at 9677190587. For updates, visit our Instagram handle : @dakshinachitra.heritagemuseum.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEER-INTERNS

Join DakshinaChitra as a volunteer-intern and be a part of the local creative community, learn about its history, develop communication and leadership skills and participate in our in-house community engagement initiatives. You will receive a Certificate of Participation and a Letter of Recommendation. For further details, contact the MCF office at 044-24462435 or Mangai Kamal at mangai.kamal.dkimm@gmail.com.

MAR. 18 - 22 : UGADI CELEBRATIONS



Celebrate Ugadi — the New Year festival of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana — with the vibrant energy of **Dollu Kunitha**. This drum dance, typically performed by men of the Kuruba community of Karnataka, is characterised by its powerful beats on large drums (dolle) carried by performers. The performance depicts mythological stories and involves complex movements including acrobatics that require immense physical strength and finesse. The colourful costumes, spirited tempos and strong group synergy make Dollu Kunitha an exhilarating musical and visual experience that showcases Karnataka's living traditions.

OBJECT OF THE MONTH : THUDI

Thudi (see right) is a traditional hourglass-shaped drum used by tribes such as Paniyan, Mavilan, Adiyan and Pulaya. In tribal societies, music plays a significant role in religious rituals and acts as a means of connecting with supernatural beings. The Thudi is, therefore, used to create a positive atmosphere and rhythm for this communication, alongside songs and dance forms like Vattakkali and Kambalanatty.

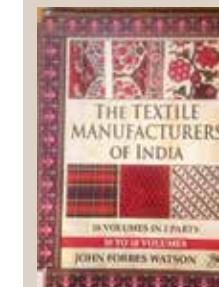


It is a percussion musical instrument featuring two membranes on either side. The body of the drum is typically crafted from jackfruit wood, while the membranes are made from animal hide. These skins are stretched over metal rings that are secured on both sides. They are attached with leather laces that are threaded through holes in the rings. In terms of size, the Thudi stands between the Uduku and Idakka instruments.

The instrument is played by hanging it from the artist's shoulder and is struck with two sticks. The tension of the skin can be adjusted using the lacing. Although not classified as a 'Kshetradvaya' (percussion instrument used in temples), it is used as an accompaniment for 'Aandi nritham', a ritualistic dance performed in Devi temples.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

The DakshinaChitra Library has a rich collection of books on various subjects including art, craft, textiles, anthropology, theatre, architecture, history and more. We invite you to come view and refer from this repository of books during your visit. We will also be highlighting a book recommendation to keep you clued in on the 'Must-read' titles in our collection.



The Textile Manufacturers of India was authored by John Forbes Watson in 1866. Watson was a Scottish doctor, who also served as Reporter on the Products of India at the Indian Museum in London. In this role, he was responsible for identifying and cataloguing Indian products for the Secretary of State for India, thereby enabling British manufacturers to gain direct access to Indian textile samples and reproduce these styles for their own markets.

The monumental work is divided into two parts, comprising a total of 18 volumes—nine in each part. What makes it truly remarkable is that many of these volumes were originally accompanied by actual fabric samples, making them a rare and indispensable reference for scholars and enthusiasts alike. Altogether, the collection contains nearly 700 fabric samples drawn from different regions of India. Each entry is carefully documented, with details about where the textile was produced, how it was worn or used, the fabric type, and even the size of the sample.

This work is not only a study of textiles but also an invaluable ethnographical archive, preserving knowledge of fabrics and practices, many of which are no longer in existence today. It captures a unique fusion of descriptive text with authentic textile artefacts, bridging the gap between scholarship and material culture. Original copies of 'The Textile Manufacturers of India' can be found in major institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and other archives. At DakshinaChitra, we hold a replica of this extraordinary publication, allowing visitors to appreciate the richness of India's textile heritage and the global story it continues to tell.