

CREATING AN ONLINE RESOURCE DATASPACE ON FINE EXAMPLES OF DESIGN AND CRAFT IN INDIA

DESIGN RESEARCH SEMINAR

MVDSPL-30

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DECLARATION

I declare that this written submission represents my idea in my own words, and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original source. I also declare that I adhered to all principles academic honesty and integrity and have not falsified, misinterpreted or fabricated any idea/ data/ facts/ sources in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the institute and can also invoke penal action from the sources from which proper permission has not been taken, or improperly cited.

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Roll no :

Date :

APPROVAL SHEET

This Design Research Seminar Report titled Creating an online resource dataspace on fine examples of design & Crafts in India by Nikhil Kunnath is approved in partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master of Design degree in Mobility and Vehicle Design.

Guide :

Date :

Place :

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I sincerely thank my guide Prof. Ravi Pooviah for his guidance & support during the course of this project. I also thank Mr.Baburaj, President, Uravu Trust for his valuable inputs about the community and the material bamboo. I thank Mr.Sujith for sharing his experiences on setting up a firm to follow his passion. It was indeed a motivation.

I thank the artisans Lenin and Mr.Benny for their thoughts about the place and people there in Uravu and about their work.

The Craftsmen Rakeshettan, Baletan, Geetha chechi for guiding me through my stay there. It wouldn't be fair if i don't thank the children of the village; Eby, Amal, Ponni, Minnu, Appus, Shalini, Aarabhi, Lakshmi for their endless energy.

Mohanettan for his wonderful tea.Last but not the least I would like thank my friends and family for their support and views.

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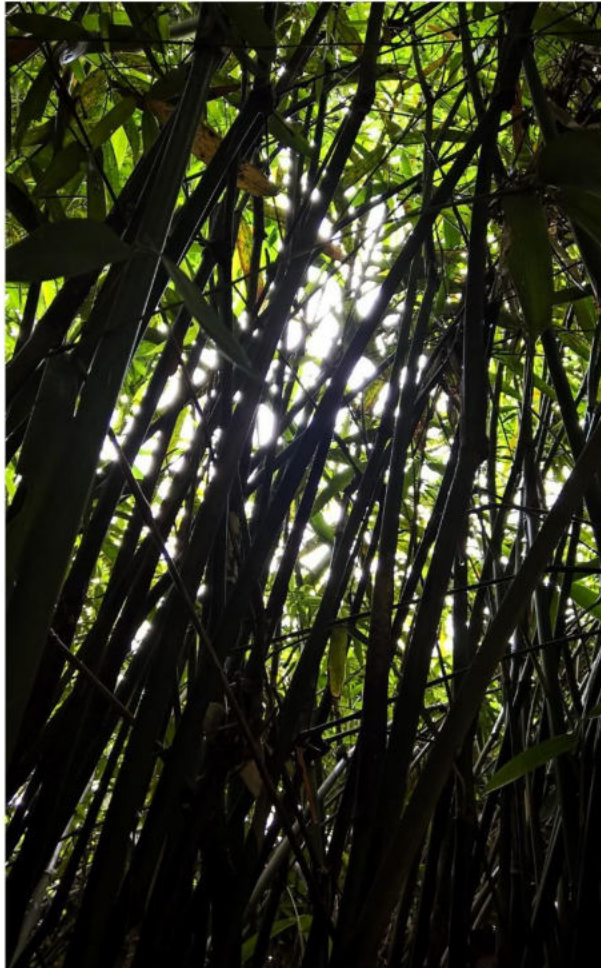
ABSTRACT



Bamboo is a wonder material given to the world by mother nature. It is also known for its capabilities of being the fastest growing biomass. I have been seeing bamboo being used in various art and craft specimens in life till now. Thrikkaipetta is a small village in kalpetta, wayanad where bamboo and bamboo craft is being promoted for a long time through an NGO called Uravu. My curiosity towards the material takes me to this village where i find out more about the wonder material and what people can do with this natural fibre.

Paintings have its roots so deep in our culture. But there aren't much people who paint over bamboo. Here in wayanad, there is a group of artisans who does mural paintings on bamboo and that is their means to livelihood. In this project i meet the artisans behind BHAVM, a unit under Uravu and try to find answers to some questions about their art.

INTRODUCTION



Uravu is a non profit trust formed in 1996 with the sole intention of promoting bamboo and creating an awareness among the people about the material, Uravu began its journey by cultivating bamboo shoots and supplying them to the farmers in the community. Bamboo craft is another domain which they had right from the beginning. Uravu aims to provide employment to the marginalized sectors in of the community through bamboo craft.

Uravu sets up various units under it for for production of various craft products. Some of these units are jute bag unit, basket weaving unit, Mural painting unit, achaar(pickle) unit, stationary products unit etc. Whenever they see an opportunity where they can involve the people of the village to make a product from bamboo which would benefit the community for their livelihood, they organize a small gathering with the community and spread their ideas. If the people are willing to make the products, they form a unit and provide training to a selected number of people for the production of the craft item in batches.

Bhavm is one such unit which dedicates itself to creating marvelous artworks over bamboo and certain other materials like terracotta ,clay, wood and canvas. They create mural painting of idols of indian mythology. The unit was started by two artists, Sujith and Miss Deepa who reside in kalpetta. The paintings they do are inspired from the kerala temple paintings and are mostly depicting idols of hindu mythology.

HISTORY



Mr. Baburaj, President Uravu Trust.

Uravu has a very inspiring story behind its setup. I had a conversation with Mr. Baburaj, the President of Uravu Trust. I call him Babuettan with respect (ettan meaning brother). He speaks about the most bad times thrikkaipetta had faced in the past. Babuettan was born and brought up in thrikkaipetta. He knows his village and its people. In the olden days women were unemployed.

It was customary during those days that the male member is the earning member of the family and the females had to take care of the house and do all the household works. After marriage the women had no other job than to sit in the house. They did not earn for the family. Babuettan along with few other believed that women could do better than that and they could also earn for their livelihood. Hence uravu started with the intention of providing employment to women belonging to the scheduled tribe community in the village.

He also talks about the importance of the material bamboo and refers it to as 'poor man's timber'. The British when they came to India referred bamboo as the concrete of India. He explains that bamboo has been used by our people from a very early period and has become a part of our culture. People had their shelter made from bamboo in his village during his childhood. He also talks about the darker times thrikkaipetta had faced when they had a famine which he never wanted it to happen again. Uravu was hence setup with great intentions and worked towards the betterment of the community.

LOCATION



Vythiri. A view during the journey to kalpetta

Uravu is located in the village named Thrikkaipetta, 10km away from the nearest township named Kalpetta in Wayanad district of Kerala. The only mean through which one can reach wayanad is through the road and also by air if you are rich enough to hire a private helicopter. There are bus services, both private and state transport departments at every 45 minutes interval to Kalpetta from Kozhikode/-Calicut the nearest district to Wayanad. The journey takes 3 hours to the max.

For anyone from outside kerala, the quickest way to reach Uravu is to take a bus from kozhikode to Kalpetta and a second bus from kalpetta to thrikkai-petta. There is also bus services from bangalore towards Wayanad which takes around a night's journey. The journey is very beautiful and scenic once you enter Wayanad.

THE NURSERY



Uravu has a bamboo nursery where people are engaged in growing bamboo shoots. They have an interesting way of getting their resources through the farmers in the community. Uravu takes the responsibility of providing the farmers with bamboo shoots of varied generas(species). They then sell these shoots to the farmers who grow them and when the time comes these bamboos are then sold back to uravu for various products and construction works. It is a well balanced and self sufficient system.

The farmers also face many difficulties in growing bamboo. One of them is the sugar content in bamboo which attracts the wildlife towards it. And Wayanad is wildlife in a way. At night there are chances of wild pigs entering the fields in groups and then damaging the cultivation. The people there try to avoid facing these creatures as they might attack them when they try to stop them doing so.



Bamboo shoots being organized at the nursery by the workers.

BHAVM



THE STORY



Mr. Sujith, Co-Founder Bhavm Mural Arts.

Sujith is an artist born and brought up in wayanad. He got his inspirations to enter the field of art when Mr.Azhikode visited wayanad and had conducted a workshop back in 2004. And he didn't want to restrict himself to mural paintings in a single medium. So with the cooperation of Uravu he began his mural paintings over bamboo. Four years later he was a part in the setup of Bhavm Mural Arts. he continued his work over different mediums like clay, canvas, terracotta, bamboo etc.

Later he held few exhibitions in Bangalore and he grabbed the attention of many. Soon he conducted workshops in both Wayanad and Bangalore. Wayanad being a tourist destination, the mural paintings grab attention in the crowd. The bamboo mural art painting and artifacts are priced from a minimum of Rs 450 to 2000. Sujith starts work each day by nine thirty in the mornings and continues till five in the evening. Sujith had initially procured a loan of one lakh from the Co-operative bank to set up Bhavm Mural Arts. He is assisted by ten people well trained in

the craft. And the Kerala Khadi Grants Commission extends all support to this creative entrepreneur.

THE PROCESS



The raw material is basically acquired from Uravu. The bamboo used to paint over is locally called as aanamula (literally converted - elephant bamboo). They are the gigantus species. The bamboo is cut to required dimensions in the machine room at uravu and then send to Bhavm.



The machine room at uravu where the resources are cut down to various sizes according to the need.



They are then painted white so that the bright colours used does not lose their vibrance. The basic drawing is then made over the white surface with pencils and pens.



The terracotta pots ready to be painted.



They then use acrylic bright colours to paint over the drawing. The colours used are usually very warm. Shades of red, orange and yellow. The colours are painted with normal brushes but the unique thing about the painting is their technique. They do not use strokes. Rather they use dots to imprint the colours. By this technique they are able to achieve very intricate details in the painting.

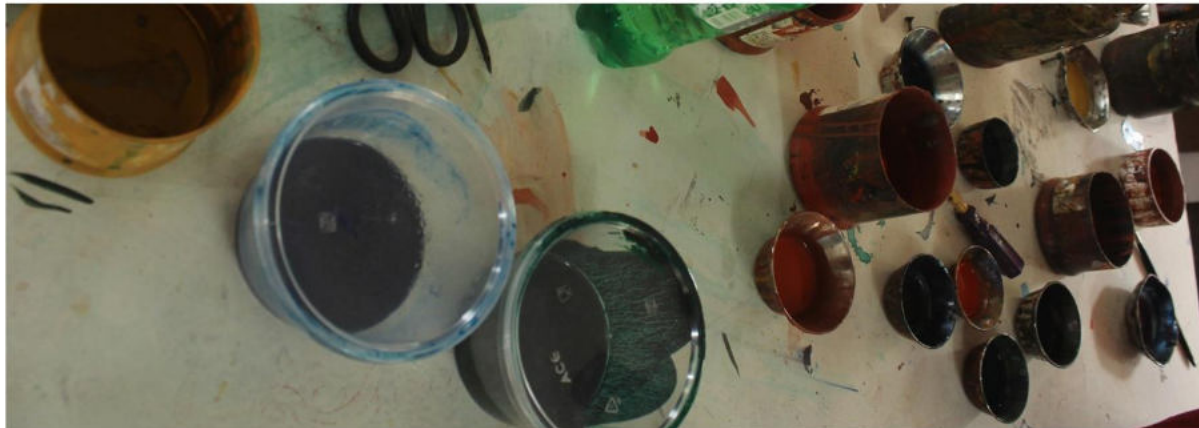


The artisans at bhavm. On a normal working day.



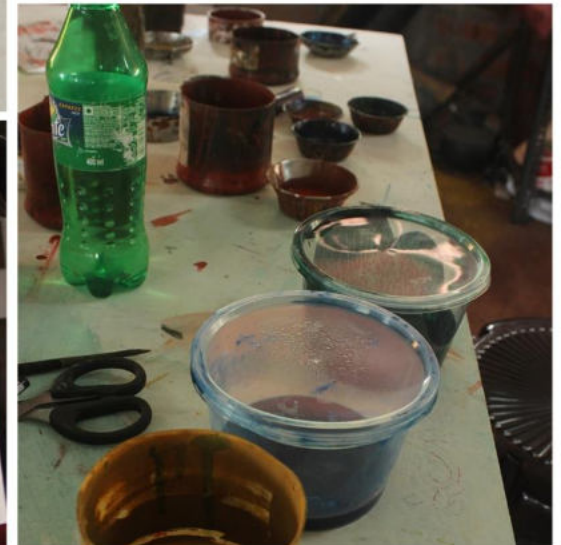
A few glimpses from bhavm.

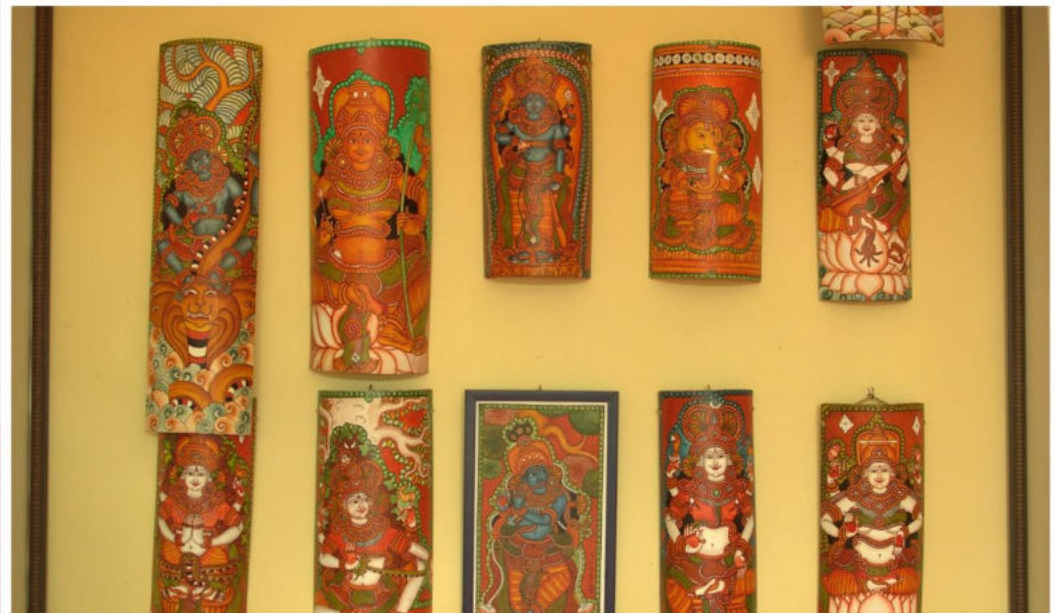
TOOLS USED



They used acrylic colours for the painting. Conventional painting brushes are used for painting. they do not have any specifically designed equipments. Mixing of colours are done in plastic or steel cans.

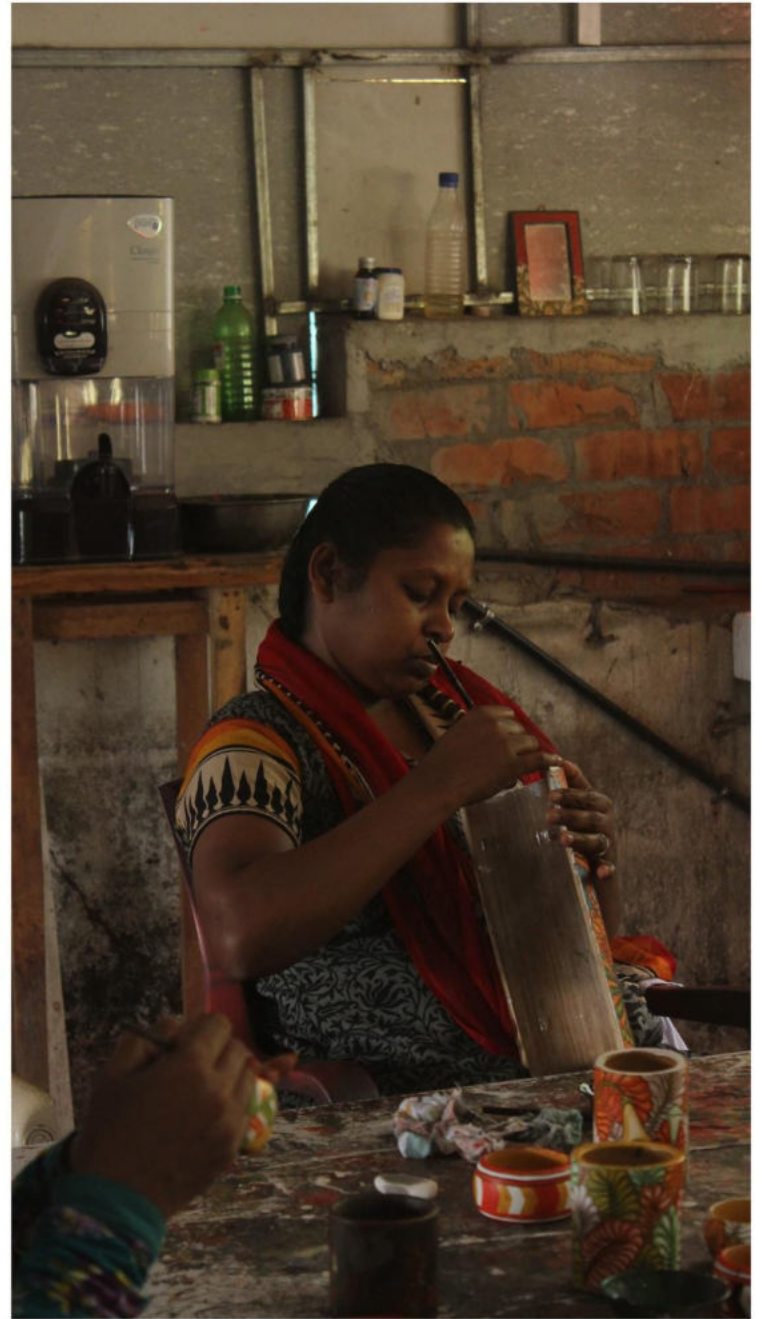
Due to the technique adopted for this art, the time taken for each painting is very high. For instance a 6ft x 4th painting would take them almost 2 months to finish. This art requires them to have a lot of patience and focus henceforth.





observation

The art is highly time consuming and the artisans sit in the same posture for hours. The posture they take while painting is not that comfortable. If they stay in that posture for too long, it may affect their health. The working environments and conditions also needs to be given attention as they aid the production rate and safety of the artisans.



VILLAGE & PEOPLE



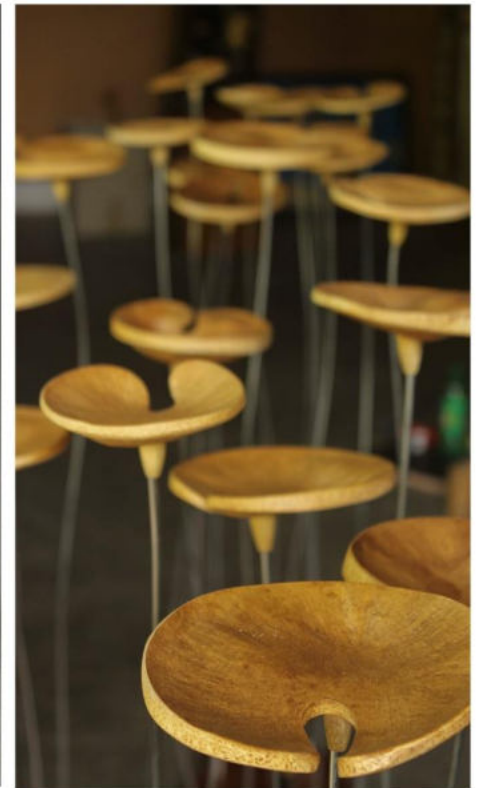
I haven't come across people who are so caring and optimistic about things. The village thrives through tourism and the people of the village are the ones who make that possible. There is an ambience of joy and laughter in the air all the time. Even though i come from a different place, it felt like home. The tourists who come to thrikkaietta can not only see places but get involved in the activities of the village and know the people better. This is a unique approach which the village has taken up to promote tourism and i feel it's incredible.

The children of the village are another crucial aspect. The future of the village lies in their hands and hence they are involved in each and every activity in the village despite of their schooling and education. It's fun to spend time with the children for me because when i'm with them i forget everything else seeing them smile and seeing their innocence. Sometimes the questions they ask are genuine ones which i also wouldn't have imagined.



Amma waits for us to pass through so that she could sell us some murukku and achappams

Other marvels at Uravu.



observation

The village is serene and beautiful. Every breath has energy in them. The change in atmosphere from the crowded roads, the busy running people, the concrete world and then finding new stories and was wonderful and inspiring .



CONCLUSION

It was an important and memorable visit to wayanad. The way of life people followed without much ego and providing a helping hand at any point of time was inspiring and motivates me to have a positive journey ahead in design. The way the artisans were involved in their work was another source of inspiration and a message to how one should know his domain in order have a good design. The stories of the past makes me proud of how we had been using the resources from mother nature in an appropriate manner. The enthusiasm in the children makes me feel secured. The world is going in various directions due to acts of people around the globe. But it is always better to encourage the ones which takes care of mother nature also. Lets go along with her rather than going our own way.

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