

From

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To

The Program Officer,

ICH section

Sangeet Natak Akademi,

New Delhi-110001

Sub:- 1st Report : Scheme: Safeguarding the ICH and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India-2014-15"Integration of Education and Culture through the medium of "Ottan Thullal"- A diverse cultural tradition".

Respected Sir,

Regarding the letter [28-6 / ICH-Scheme / 24 / 2014-15 / 12738] dated 12th March 2015 & based on the e-mail on last month, here I am resending 1st Report of my project:--"Integration of Education and Culture through the medium of "Ottan Thullal"- A diverse cultural tradition". Enclosing performance photos, Audio- Video recording of a presentation[DVD], Copy of Invitation letters, Copy of Brochures, Copy of the notices & Press Clippings for your great consideration.

Thanking you

Yours Faithfully

Suresh Kaliyath

Killimangalam

06/03/2016

SCHEME FOR “SAFEGUARDING THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND DIVERSE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF INDIA”- 2014-15

PROJECT: “INTEGRATION OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF ‘OTTAN THULLAL’-A DIVERSE CULTURAL TRADITION.

By Mr. Suresh Kaliyath, Kaliyath, Killimangalam PO, Thrissur [District], Kerala-680591

1st Report: { From 15th Jan.2015 to 30th June 2015 }

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROJECT:-

The proposed project “Integration of Education and Culture through the medium of ‘OTTAN THULLAL’-A diverse cultural tradition” aims the need of greater appreciation of the diverse cultural tradition of South India-“Thullal”. This particular art form used to be a vehicle to criticize social evils prevailing the time it’s written and it has enormous possibilities of Variety of Rhythms, Social references, Cultural echoes, Educational aspects, The mode of language used, Complimentary colors, Jestural languages, The four kind of Abhinayas and the way it dealt with contemporary expressions. “Thullal” originated in the Eighteenth Century early as a new form of stage play. The Great Malayalam Satire poet Kunchan Nambiar evolved this art form by combining various elements of existing rituals like “Padayani” and dramatic traditions of “Koodiyattam” and “Koothu”. Music, dance and acting are harmoniously blended in this stage art. Now it has a fading tradition and need utmost care and promotion. The project aims to expand the horizons of “Ottan Thullal” tradition with constant engagement with educational institutions, community gatherings, in connection with cultural festivals, and different cultural centers, thus we can achieve the strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.

Implementation:

From 15th January 2015 to 30th June 2015, I successfully managed to present the rare art form of “Ottan Thullal” at Thirty different venues which include interior villages of Kerala, small town ship area, Schools, Arts Colleges, Cultural centres, festivals, Panchayath areas and packed town areas like Guruvayur in Thrissur, Mathrubhumi-Kozhikode, Mahalingapuram-Nungambakkam in Chennai, Ambalapuzha Kunchan Smarakam-Alleppy , Dakshinachitra-Muthukadu Village-Chennai- Tamil Nadu and the prestigious Kerala Kalamandalam Deemed University, Vallathol Nagar. Approximate One Lakh Eighty Thousand spectators watch, participate, entertain, relax and educate through these presentations. I hope through the next series of Twenty presentations in the coming months, The art form of “Ottan Thullal” get familiar with another One Lakh Twenty Viewers more.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH, DATA CREATION OR DOCUMENTATION OF THE PROJECT:-

*To explore the great facility and familiarity with intricacies of Music and Rhythms:- The lecture-Demonstration series specially focused on the musicality and rare rhythm patterns used in the three forms of Thullal-namely Ottan Thullal, Sheetanakan Thullal and Parayan Thullal.

*Spread the awareness, possibilities of “Education through performing arts of India” concept. This art form is very relevant in contemporary times- In “Thullal”- Kunchan Nambiar excelled in fusing reality with fantasy and made his characters appear totally valid to the scenario of his time:- To make Thullal presentations highly memorable for audiences, we tried to create the awareness about the contemporary values and importance of Thullal tradition in culture and education. It’s culturally specific and aesthetically brilliant in presentations.

*Observation and careful analysis of performance techniques of “Ottan Thullal”.

* Documentation of “Ottan Thullal” performance tradition with live music and costume.

*The poetic diction adopted in Thullal works, its phraseology, Theatrical presentation, the suggestion of Rasas etc.

Findings/ Suggestions/Causes/Threats/ safeguarding measures:-

The proposed project helps the cultural expressions alive and strengthens the actions of preserving, disseminating, and propagating by giving training and awareness. Through this it attains the integration of our Education and Culture.

- 1] Give enormous opportunities to perform “Thullal” so that it will reach a mass number of all section of people .
- 2] Give quality training and best higher education in Traditional art practices.
- 3] Cultural awareness and wide the horizon of “Thullal” tradition.
- 4] Provide best cultural practice and generous financial support.
- 5] Proper documentation and preservation of existing practices.
- 6] Use as a tool to explore the possibility of national integration through arts.
- 7] Transmission of Knowledge from one generation to next with quality training and support.
- 8] Encourage and entertain youngsters with the familiarity of Thullal tradition through their syllabus and multi task educational training.
- 9] Creates collaborative and exchange programs with other traditions and encourage contemporary versions and practices.

The fading tradition of “Ottan Thullal” will reach almost 2 lakhs viewers in a comparatively shorter duration of time. It expands the possibilities to include new areas of creativity and cultural expressions. Detailed interaction with students, teachers and public create the scope of preservation and promotion of our rich cultural heritage. To bring the spirit of togetherness which welcome and blend diverse elements of India’s cultural traditions. It strengthens the classical, Folk and Ritualistic traditional theatre characteristics of “ Ottan Thullal” because this art form is an interesting blend of Koodiyattam, Koothu, Kathakali and Padayani.

THULLAL: AN ART FORM WITH EXCEPTIONAL ARTISTIC QUALITIES & POSSIBILITIES

Thullal originated in the 18th century early as a new form of stage play. Among the performing arts of south India, Thullal has its uniqueness and peculiar characteristics as a traditional theatre art form such as simplicity of presentation, its frank, outspoken wit and humor. It was invented by the most famous satiric Malayalam poet Kunchan Nambiar [1705-1770], hailed from Killikurussi Mangalam in Palakkad District who written and rendered his poetry based on epic themes in this newly formulated visual style. He belonged to the Nambiar community, percussionists by profession, accompanying on the ancient instrument called Mizhavu. Mizhavu is the accompanying instrument for the traditional presentation of Sanskrit drama tradition known as Koodiyattam and Koothu. One of the most popular interesting story related to Thullal history is one day Nambiar fell asleep while playing Mizhavu for a Chakyar Koothu performance at Ambalapuzha Temple, inviting ridicule from the Chakyar. In response, he created this new art form. Thullal is the most popular semi-classical art form of Kerala and the artist who performs Thullal has to gain disciplined training in the art and he or she must be proficient to sing the poem, rhythmic movements on the stage and present the story in an interactive and humorous style. Kunjan Nambiar, for his inspiration, turned to legend and mythology but gave to each story or episode a totally contemporary slant. He took figures from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the Bhaagavatham and other Puranas. It is rendered in Thullal metres like Tharangini, Vakthram, Mallika etc. and sung with different ragas or tunes and exposed them to the modes and mores of the society of his time. Artistic brilliance, poetic genius, observational capacity and scholarship are blended in the creative personality of Nambir. He spent most of his life time at the court of Chempakassery Devanarayanan and Marthanda Varma of Travancore. There he got the opportunity to interact with other poets and scholars and also the forms Padayani, Kathakali and Kalaripayattu.

Thullal is essentially a solo performance. The performer sings the entire passage. It is repeated by a musician to the accompaniment of cymbals, Mridamgam and Edakya. He also translates the meaning of the sung text into action through dance, gestures, and facial expressions. The footwork is extensively patterned to blend with the rhythms and the gestures are simple and communicative. The hand gestures follow the ancient Sanskrit text “Hastalakshana deepika”.

Thullal is a genre of poetry in Malayalam. It based on classic principles of “Natyashastra” but its technique is not rigid at all. The songs are written in simple Malayalam language and provide a direct appeal to our everyday life. This aspect made Thullal very popular and spectacular. Kunchan Nambiar was an extrovert and observed the life around very closely. He was also very critical of the social evils he

saw around him. In Thullal the role of the narrator and actor are perpetually interchanged with tremendous aesthetic effect.

The songs sung in Thullal follow the Thala and Raga along with the use of folk and Carnatic ragas. The Thala patterns like Chembada, Chappu, Marma, Kumbha, Lakshmi, Karika, Dhruva, Chemba[Jamba], Kundanachi and Panchari are seen in Thullal poems. The ragas like Shakhana, Ananda Bhairavi, Sindhu Bhairavi, Neelambari, Mohanam, Yadhukula Kambhoji, Shankarabharanam, Adhana and Dhwijavanthi are also used to compose Thullal Padams.

Thullal is classified in three different categories according to the rhythm and metre of the songs. They are "Ottan Thullal", "Seethankan Thullal" and "Parayan Thullal". The costumes, basic Rhythm structures and dances of Thullal vary from one kind to another. Among the three forms of Thullal, Parayan Thullal is said to be the slowest in tempo. A conical crown is worn by the performer and the hood of a serpent is placed on the top of the crown. The body of the performer is smeared with sandal paste and red cloth covers the legs and a white cloth is tied over it. The performer uses only one ankle-bell, which is a specialty of Parayan Thullal. The popular Parayan Thullal stories are Pulindheemoksham, Dhruvacharitham, Harischandracharitham, Thripuradhahanam and Sabhapravesam.

Seethankan Thullal is another form of Thullal. This is slower in tempo, metre and rhythm in comparison to the Ottan Thullal. The costumes of the dancer include a black cloth that is tied around the head with tender palm leaves decoration. This looks like a crown. Different ornaments made of palm leaves are used too. The waist of the dancer is decked with red and white cloth called "Kacha". Kalyana Saugandhikam, Krishnaleela, Ganapati Prathal, Poundraka Vadham and Sundopa Sundhopakhyanam stories are fallen in to this category..

Ottan Thullal has gained most popularity among the three forms of Thullals. It is the most sophisticated and refined one. This dance form is fastest among the three Thullal dances with a high tempo. In this form, the face of the dancer is painted as the "Pacha" style Kathakali make-up. The popular Ottan Thullal stories are Kiratham, Santhanagopalam, Nalacharitham, Syamanthakam, Rugmini Swayamvaram, Krishnarjuna Vijayam and Ghoshayathra.

The institutions like Kerala Kalamandalam Deemed University for Art & Culture, Vallathol Nagar, Thrissur, Kunchan Nambiar Smaraka Kalapeedam, Killikurussi Mangalam, Lakkidi, Palakkad and Ambalapuzha Kunchan Smarakam, Alapuzha providing proper educational training in Thullal. Kalamandalam offers Graduate, Post-Graduate and Research Programmes in Thullal. A German Artist Mr. Harienu Harshitha[Hary] and a Swedish female theatre performer Ms. Charlott Lihnell[Lotta] are thoroughly studied in this art form and giving performances in their respective languages. The researchers like P.K. Sivasankara Pillai, Dr. V.S. Sharma, Dr. K.N. Ganesh, Prof. Evoor Parameswaran are extensively studied Thullal history and Great Thullal exponents like Shri. Malabar Raman Nair, Payyannur Kannan Nair, Ayamkudi Divakaran Nair, Ayamkudi Thakappan Nair, Evoor Damodaran Nair, Kalamandalam Gopinatha Prabha, Guruvayur Sekharan and Kalamandalam Prabhakaran are contributed much in the 20th century.

This particular art form used to be a vehicle to criticize social evils prevailing the time it's written and it has enormous possibilities of Variety of Rhythms, Social references, Cultural echoes, Educational

aspects, The mode of language used, Complimentary colors, Gestural languages, The four kind of Abhinaya { Angikam, Vachikam, Aaharyam and Swathikam} and the way it dealt with contemporary expressions. Thullal demands musical ability, literary competence and artistic merit. It strengthens the classical, folk and Ritualistic traditional theatre characteristics because this art form is an interesting blend of Koodiyattam, Koothu, Kathakali and Padayani. This approach expands the possibilities of human expression and is an enterprise with no disciplinary boundaries although unique approaches and methods best serve each of the art forms. It shows the way the harmony attained with dramatic power by blending historical events with classical themes and moral purpose with artistic skill. Some of the new features like “Thullal Trayam”- presentation of the combination of three forms of Thullal in one story and “Thullal Padam Concert” are now slowly getting familiarity in the art circle. Today’s need is to expand the horizons of “Thullal” tradition with a close association of modern contemporary theatre techniques and constant engagement with educational institutions and cultural centers. This form can be a torch bearer of our rich cultural and artistic heritage. This approach will lead to achieve the strengthening, protecting, preserving and promoting the rich intangible cultural heritage of India.

DETAILS OF PRESENTATIONS OF “Ottan thullal” at Cultural Centres & Educational Institutions

1. Date: 17/01/2015

Venue: Mathrubhumi Auditorium, Kozhikode, Kerala.

Organiser: Navarasam Charitable Trust, Kozhikode.

Number of People attended:[approximate]: 440

2. Date: 21/01/2015 to 26/01/2015

Venue: Dakshinachitra Heritage Centre, Muthukadu, Chennai

Organiser: “Village Heritage Festival”, Dakshinachitra Heritage Centre, Muthukadu, Chennai

No. of Presentations: 6

Number of people attended:[approximate]: $400 \times 6 = 2400$

3. Date: 27/01/2015

Venue: Mankara Kalikavu Auditorium, Mankara, Palakkad.

Organiser: Cultural Festival, Kalikavu Festival Committee, Mankara, Palakkad, Kerala.

Number of people attended:[approximate]: 500

4. Date: 29/01/2015

Venue: Mariamman Kovil Auditorium, Peringalam, Palakkad,Kerala.

Organiser: Pooram Festival Committee, Peringalam.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 600

5. Date: 31/01/2015

Venue: National Games Stadium,Thiruvananthapuram,Kerala.

Organiser: National Games Organising Committee, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.

Number of people attended : [approximate]: 20,000

6. Date: 03/02/2015

Venue: Kolathur Subramanian Kovil Auditorium, Chelakkara, Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: Pooyyam Festival Committee, Kolathur, Chelakkara.

Number of people attended : [approximate]: 400

7. Date: 03/02/2015

Venue: Chelakode Subramanian Kovil Auditorium, Chelakode, Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: Pooyyam Festival Committee, Chelakode, Chelakkara.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 550

8. Date: 06/02/2015

Venue: Tendenkavil Auditorium, Elanad, Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Festival Committe, Elanad, Chelakkara.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 450

9. Date: 06/02/2015

Venue: Sree Vyasa NSS College, Vyasagiri, Wadakancherry, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: National Seminar by Department of English, Vyasa NSS College, Wadakancherry..

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 300

10. Date: 12/02/2015

Venue: Puthanalkal Temple Auditorium, Palakkad, Kerala.

Organiser: Pooram Festival Committee, Puthanalkal, Cheruplassery, Palakkad, Kerala.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 600

11. Date: 14/02/2015

Venue: Pothiyil Krishna Auditorium, Perumbavur , Eranamkulm, Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Festival Committee, Perumbavoor, Eranamkulam.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 700

12. Date: 15/02/2015

Venue: Pynkulam Ramachakyar Smaraka Kalapeedam, Pynkulam, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: "VAGARTHAM" Festival Committee, Pynkuam, Thrissur.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 800

13. Date: 18/02/2015

Venue: Pynkulam Vazhalikavu Bhagavathi temple open Auditorium, Pynkulam, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Pooram Festival Committee, Vazhalikavu Devaswam, Pynkuam, Thrissur.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 300

14. Date: 20/02/2015

Venue: Kuttimukku Mahadeva Kshetram , Kuttimukku, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: Cultural Festival Committee, Kuttimukku, Thrissur.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 750

15. Date: 21/02/2015

Venue: Uthralikavu Samskarikam open air space, Wadakkanchery, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: "Samskarikam-2015" Festival Committee, Uthralikavu, Thrissur.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 600

16. Date: 27/02/2015

Venue: Varadaraja Perumal Kovil Open air Auditorium, Peringalam, Palakkad,Kerala.

Organiser: Car Festival Committee, Varadaraja Perumal Cultural Organization,Peringalam Village, Alathur, Palakkad.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 550

17. Date: 29/02/2015 &1/3/2015

Venue: Njangattiri Bhagavathy Auditorium, Pattambi, Palakkad,Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Ulsavam Celebration Committee, Njangattiri Devaswam, Pattambi, Palakkad.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 1200

18 . Date: 05/03/2015

Venue: Melpathur Auditorium, Guruvayur, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: Guruvayur Ulsavam -Cultural Festival Committee,Guruvayur Devaswam , Thrissur.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 1750

19. Date: 13/03/2015 to 15/3/2015

Venue: Vylopilly Samskrithi Bhavan, Nalanda, Thiruvananthapuram,Kerala.

Organiser: "Thala Maholsavam" Vylopilly Samskrithi Bhavan Department of Culture, Government of Kerala.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 2250

20. Date: 22/03/2015

Venue: Thatoor Poyil Vishnu Temple Open Air Auditorium, Mavoor, Kozhikode,Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Ulsavam Celebration Committee, Ththoor Poyil Khethram Committee, Malabar Devaswam Board, Kzhikode.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 700

21. Date: 23/3/2015

Venue: Kerala Kalamandalam Koothambalam,Vallathol Nagar, Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: "Sarthakam" Celebration Committee, Kerala Kalamandalam Deemed University for Art & Culture.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 1100

22. Date: 25/03/2015

Venue: Kodamballi Sri Durga Auditorium, Peruvallur, Kozhikode,Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Ulsavam Celebration Committee, Durgapuram-Peruvallur, Kozhikode.

Number of people attended :[approximate]: 500

23. Date: 26/03/2015

Venue: Eliapetta Anthimahakalan Kavu Auditorium, Chelakkara, Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: "Chelakkara Samskarikam" Festival Committee,Chelakkara, Thrissur.

Number of people attended : [approximate]: 300

24. Date: 03/02/2015

Venue: Shri Ammanjerikavu Auditorium, Vengara, Malappuram,Kerala.

Organiser: Thalapoli Festival Committee, Vengara, Malappuram.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 500

25. Date: 01/04/2015

Venue: Vengur bhagavathy Temple Auditorium, Vengur, Angamali, Eranamkulam,Kerala.

Organiser: Annual Festival Committee, Vengur, Angamali.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 700

26. Date: 02/04/2015

Venue: Elayavoor Open Air Auditorium, Kannur,Kerala.

Organiser: Pooram Festival Committee, Elayavoor, Kannur.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 400

27. Date: 03/04/2015

Venue: Kattussery Trikanadevar open Park, Alathur,Palakkad,Kerala.

Organiser: Youth Wing Festival Committee, Kattussery, Alathur, Palakkad.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 600

28. Date: 06/04/2015

Venue: Panangattukara Bhagavathy Auditorium , Thrissur,Kerala.

Organiser: Aarattu Ulsavam Committee, Panangattukara,.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 500

29. Date: 012/04/2015

Venue: Puthur manappully Auditorium, Puthur, Palakkad,Kerala.

Organiser: Vishu Vela Festival Committee, Puthur, Palakkad.

Number of people attended : [approximate]: 600

30. Date: 19/04/2015

Venue: Kerala Sahitya Akademy, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: "Bharatham" cultural Organization, Thrissur.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 300

31. Date: 24/04/2015

Venue: Arafa Teacher Training Institute, Arafa nagar, Attoor, Thrissur, Kerala.

Organiser: "Sam Yak", Arafa Institute of Teacher Education.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 150

32. Date: 03/02/2015

Venue: Mahalingapuram Ayyappa Auditorium, Nungambakkam, Chennai.

Organiser: "Sadh Sangama", Chennai.

Number of people attended: [approximate]: 600

33. Date: 20/6/2015

Venue: GUPS Pynkulam, Pynkulam PO, Thrissur

No. of Students attended: 372

This is to confirm that all the above mentioned "Ottan Thullal" presentation details are true and correct in the best of my knowledge and belief.

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