



WOMEN IN FISHERIES

Through the Eyes of Artists



Bay of Bengal Programme
Inter-Governmental Organisation

Amazny

Arnawaz Vasudev Charities



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WOMEN IN FISHERIES

Through the Eyes of Artists

Organised by



BOBP

Bay of Bengal Programme
Inter-Governmental Organisation

Amartya

Arnawaz Vasudev Charities



Dr. S Jayaraj

Co-ordinator - Waves of Art Programme



WAVES of Art

Series 1

Women in Fisheries - Through the Eyes of Artists
The sketchings included in this edition are those drawn during a special event arranged by BOBP and Chola Art Village, Injambakkam, Chennai on 31 July 2022.

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Design
BOBP Design Factory
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August 2022

Message

The contribution by women to fisheries economies globally continues to be overlooked, in part, because “fishing” is often narrowly defined as catching fish at sea, from a vessel, using specialized gears. Fishing is not only catching fish but an entire process of preparing for the voyage, hunting, sorting, processing, and selling. Especially, in the small-scale and artisanal fisheries sector, which remains a family-oriented activity, the role of fisherwomen is ever-important. Here the women not only manage the production process but also actively participate in beach-based and near-shore fishing.

Fisheries research, management, and policy have traditionally focused on direct, formal, and paid fishing activities – that are often dominated by men, ignoring those that are indirect, informal, and/or unpaid – where women are concentrated. The tyranny of the money is one factor for this negligence as women often carry out their fisheries-related activities as a part of their daily chores.

Global studies show that women annually bring in 2.9 million metric tons of fish, worth close to \$5.6 billion. Fifty percent of those employed in the seafood sector are women while women constitute ninety percent of those who work in the seafood processing sector.

In this International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAF), I am happy to note that BOBP-IGO retains its commitment to the cause of women in fisheries. Miles to walk till that goal is reached but what matters more is taking the first step! Because without women there may be no seafood on our plates!

I wish the initiative of BOBP and Arnawaz Vasudev Charities, Cholamandal Artists Village success.



Dr. J.K. Jena
DDG (Fy.), ICAR
New Delhi





Message

There are countless ways to explain the ocean. It's calming, lovely, and humbling. There's something so therapeutic and magical about the ocean, whether swimming or diving in it, sailing on it, or resting on the beach next to it. Simply being near the coast invokes a wide range of feelings. We know very little about our world's seas, yet we feel inexplicably tied to them by nature. Water is always in my colours. The sea is never far away. It remains the guiding thread of my inspiration.

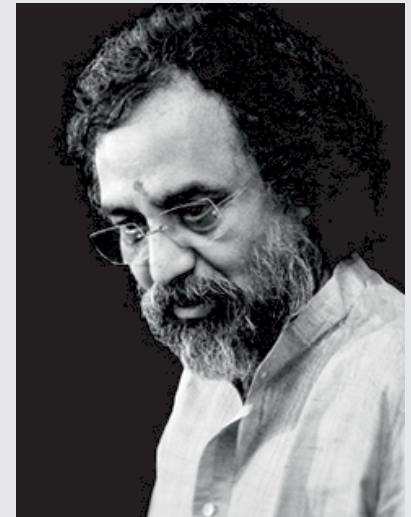
The ocean is everything I want to be - beautiful, mysterious, wild and free. The sound and smell of the sea cleanses my soul. I can't help envisioning myself staring out at the ocean and smelling the sea salt while my hair blows back and forth in the sea breeze.

And when the sea is there, fishers cannot be far behind. I am aware that fishing is a very risky profession and that both men and women who work in fishing contribute to the food supply.

Whenever I'm free, I use to visit the Sketching Club run by Vasudev at Cholamandal Artists village. I know my visit gives inspiration to these young artists, sketching on Sunday under the Banyan tree. It gives immense pleasure to interact and share my views with them.

I am happy to note that BOBP has joined hands with Arnawaz Vasudev Charities, who have a legacy in popularizing art among the community, in bringing out this unique periodical – Waves of Art Series. The artworks published in this compilation are excellent and diverse. They present a kaleidoscopic view of the life of the fisherwomen.

I wish success to this initiative and congratulate all the artists who participated in this edition. My special wishes are reserved to my friend, S Jayaraj, for spearheading this initiative from BOBP.



'Padma Shri' **Dr. Thota Tharrani**
Artist-Painter and Designer
Chennai



Message

It is said that marine fisheries is a marginal activity. A large part of the activity is completed at sea beyond the eyes of society. There is also the human face of the fisheries that we often forget or never come to know! Their hope and worries, struggles and celebrations, impediments and achievements remain unknown to us. What we usually come to know are the troubles in fisheries such as declining fish stocks, and the wide-scale destruction they face during natural calamities.

However, fisheries problems are not isolated. Whether it is income or employment, education or health, without addressing these societal issues, it is not possible to address the sustainability concerns in the fisheries.

The BOBP-IGO, ever since its inception, has been working on the issues concerning the small-scale fisheries sector. The **Waves of Art** Series is yet another step towards connecting fisheries with the larger society using art as a medium. In this endeavour, the BOBP-IGO is collaborating with Arnawaz Vasudev Charities at Chola Mandal Artists Village.

Art connects people across strata and can spur debates and discussions. "Women in Fisheries- Through the eyes of the Artists"- first in the series, has brought together a diverse set of people: professional artists, designers, enthusiasts, and students. In spite of the significant role of women in fisheries, they remain unrepresented and even invisible, in the gamut of policy and decision making. Therefore, it was by conscious choice to have the first issue to shed the light on their lives.

We hope in the coming issues, there will be more diverse participants to present the issues of fishers, in their creative outlook, for the rest in the society to appreciate.



Dr. P. Krishnan

Director, BOBP-IGO
Chennai



Meryl J Williams,

*Ph.D., FTSE,
Honorary Life Member, Asian Fisheries Society,
Founding Chair,
Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section,
Asian fisheries Society*

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BAY OF BENGAL FISHERIES ARE PRICELESS

How do we value women's contributions to the fishing workforce as fishers and fish farmers, homemakers, fish sellers, fish processors, and revenue producers?

Some of women's contributions are priceless, yet they are accepted by families and society as free goods of little tangible value. The contributions include unpaid fishing and fish farming work that is considered merely a daily extension of women's domestic duties, and also the daily homemaking, bringing up the children, caring for the elderly, doing community work, and restoring the environment. All these are vital for the reproduction of society, community and the environment.

Other contributions women make are low paying and uncounted in official statistics. These include small scale fishing on foot or in boats with simple equipment, or diving, such as for seaweeds, informal processing and trading, and replanting mangroves for small stipends.

The more visible contributions of women are in seafood processing and trading, although women working behind processing factory walls are invisible to the public gaze. Around the Bay of Bengal, women's activity in processing and marketing varies considerably, from dominating in some markets such as those supplied by small scale fishing, to have no role in urban markets in



some countries. As the scale of fishing operations grows and fish is sold into more distant markets, such as for export, women's financial power tends to diminish and even vanish. Technological transitions such as trawling, and aquaculture can have a particularly negative impact on women's access to lucrative work.

Overall, women make immense unpaid, underpaid and paid contributions to the fishing workforce in the Bay of Bengal, yet so much they contribute is invisible. Indeed, the word "*invisible*" is very common when talking about the role of women in fisheries. This word is often linked directly to why women lack a voice when fisheries decisions are made. Invisible people in a fisheries value chain and in a community are not invited to the table to voice their needs, or object to changes that will affect them and their households. In desperation, they may take to the streets or block the ports in protest if their conditions deteriorate too far, but this usually requires collective action that is more difficult for women than men due to social strictures on their movement.



Why does this relate to the creative work of the Sketchers and the Bay of Bengal Programme?

The Sketchers offer a wonderful opportunity to make women and their priceless contributions visible and give their work a public voice. I am delighted that *Women in Fisheries* has been chosen as the first topic for the Sketchers and I eagerly await the results of this social art project.



Shailesh BO

Pen and ink drawing, watercolours, pastels- you name it, Shailesh is a master of the medium. As a mentor in the sketching club, he patiently guides every participant who seeks help. And manages to finish a couple of works even while he is interrupted a dozen times.





Sheelaa

Sheelaa manages to imbue life in the drawing with deft strokes and minimal touches of colour with pen and ink and pastels.



S Jayaraj

When it comes to charcoal sketches, Jayaraj is a master. The shading, composing, and choice of frames come naturally to him. His quick, expert pen sketches are as good as photographs in capturing the life around him. His is truly visual documentation that is a treat for the eyes.

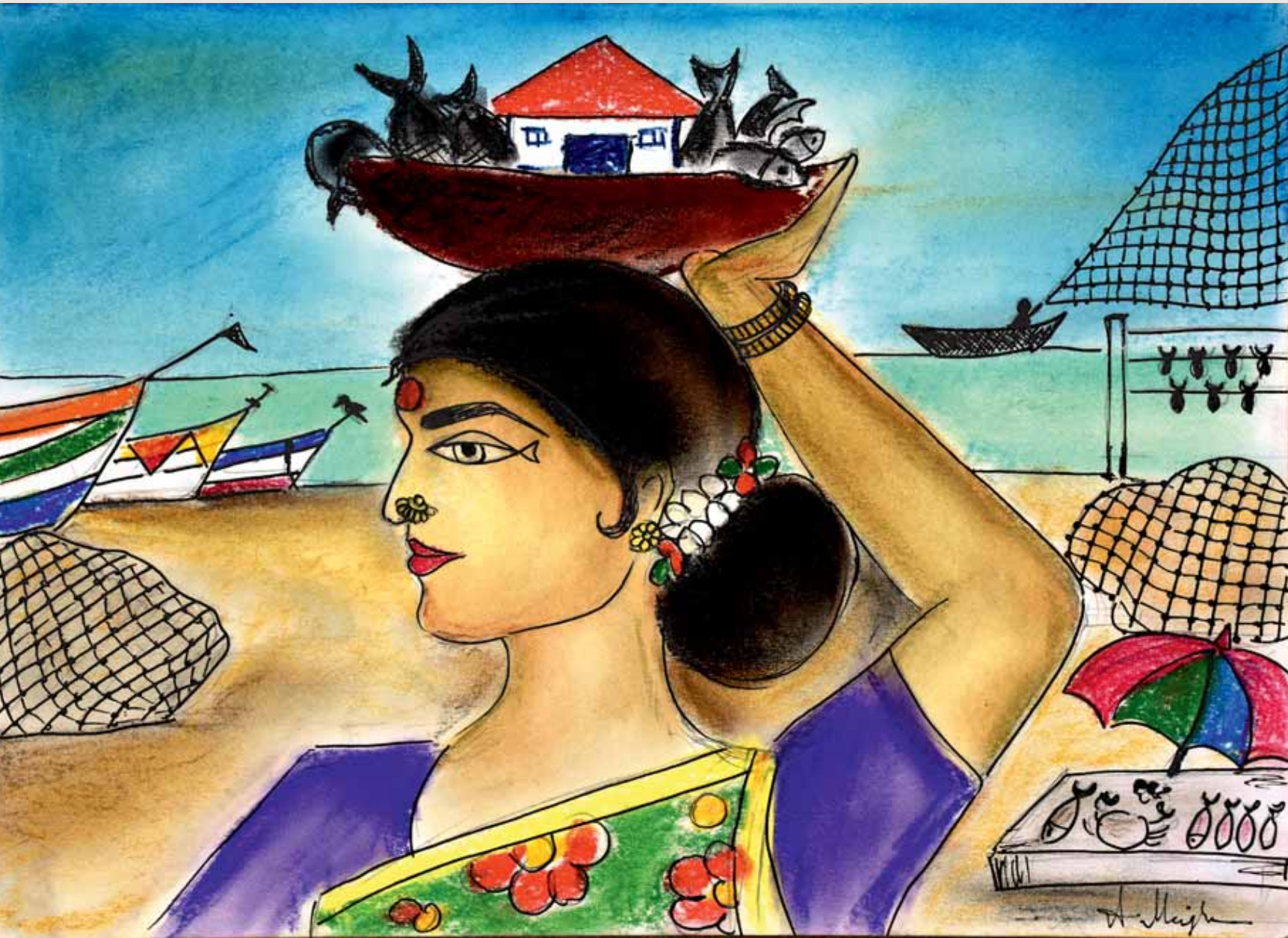


S Jayaraj



Manjula Anand

Manjula is versatile artist who is comfortable across mediums has chosen ink drawing for her quick sketch on-site, and has attempted conceptual art in her painting. She has brought home an excellent point: The woman truly shoulders the home and the business. While the men do the fishing, everything else is managed by the woman.



Manjula Anand



Mala Chinnappa

Mala has an easy breezy style- her strength is colour and composition. Here the fisherwoman is caught mid-stride using pen drawing and pastels. The blues in the background complement the reds to create a colourful scene.





Latha Gopal

Latha's women are always serene, almost saintly. It is the women in fisheries who run the home and hearth smoothly through the good and rough times. So they are portrayed as embodiments of love and compassion using pastels.

Latha Gopal





Govindarajan (a) Ghovi

Pencil sketches or pen drawings, Ghovi is expert at capturing the mood and expressions.



Ghovi

Govindarajan (a) Ghovi



Govindarajan (a) Ghovi





Shreyas Anand



Shreyas Anand

Young Shreyas has a bold style, both in drawing and in colouring. He has portrayed the woman fish-seller, with the boat and the hot sun creating the right scenario using pen and pastels.



Vidyut Zachariah Thomas

Vidyut is a master blaster when it comes to drawing. His strong outlines and stark colouring adds drama to the scene with crayons. The perspective, scale, proportions and composition make this a striking image.



Vidyut Zachariah Thomas



L S Vishnu

Vishnu often creates interesting narratives. Here, the bustling life in the fishing village is captured in this charming sketch with crayons. Be it the shining sun or the smile on the face of the woman, there is so much positivity in the scene.



Anbu Maran

Anbu enlivens his watercolours with little details like the print of the sari and the dark eyes on each of the fish in the pile, drying on the beach. Not to miss the crow in flight attempting a snatch!



Haritha

The fish-seller in her classic squatting pose is striking. She makes bold use of watercolours; the cheeky crow is a lovely touch.

31/7/22



Mokshita

A mature rendition from a young aspirant. The light and shade and the drawing show good control over the pencil medium. The eyes of the fisher woman, the drape of the saree and the beach in the background are all delicately rendered, giving the whole composition a serene quality.



Rugmini

Rugmini's charcoal sketches show good control in line and composition. With strong lines, she manages to create interesting scenes and tell her story.



Jude Jayaraj

Jude does an impressionistic take on coastal life with oil pastels. With daubs of colour, he has brought out the easy companionship of the fisherwomen at work. The bright blue and yellow add so much life to the scene.



Amit Jayakar

Amit's digital rendition of a hardworking fisher woman. The muted tones of grey and ochres gives a sombre mood while the blue adds a touch of relief.



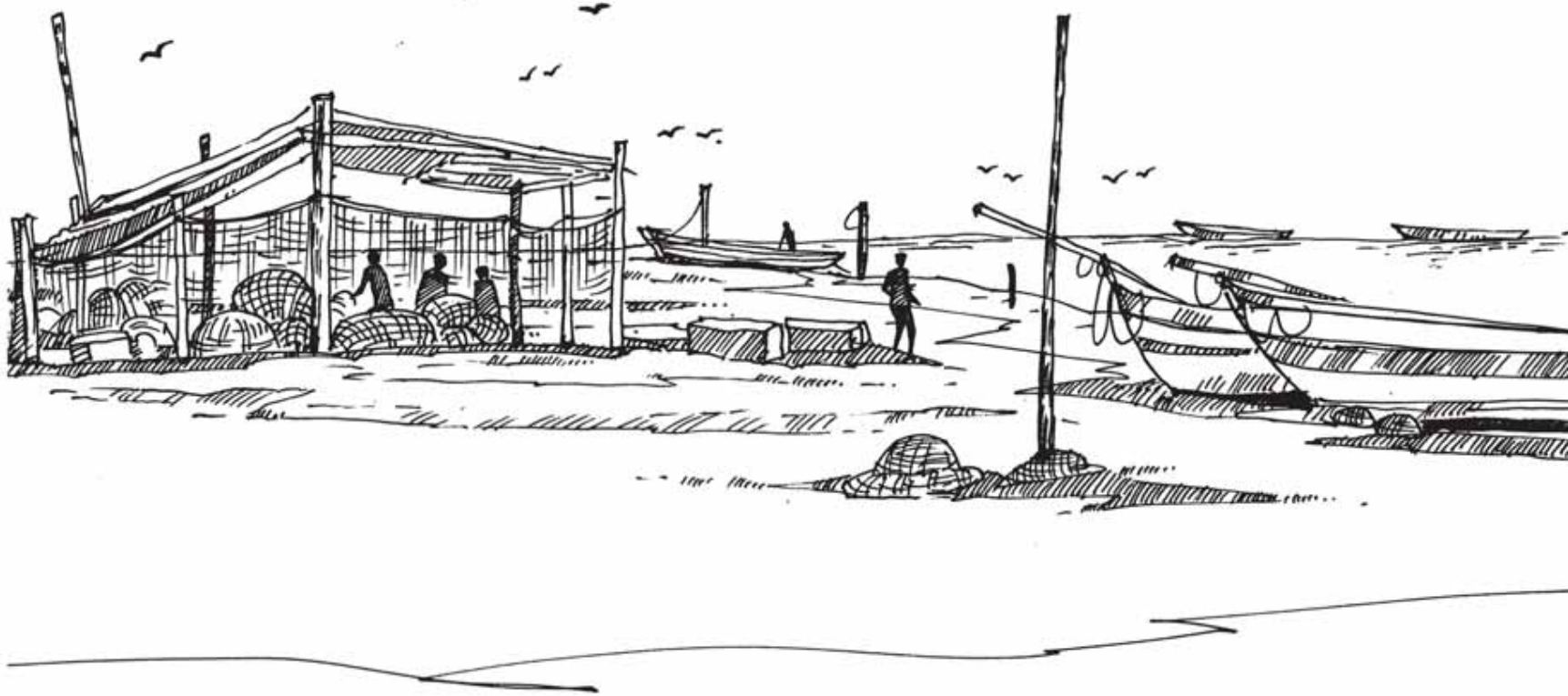
G L Narayanan

Bold and dynamic portrayal of the fisher women, Narayanan's penchant for graphic style is evident here with pen and ink. One can feel the sharp sun simply from the strong contrasts in his light and shade.



R Dhiyaneshwaran

Dhiyaneshwaran is skilled at both landscapes and portraits. While his pen and inks show his mastery in technique and framing, he is equally strong in painting, with his colourful composition in acrylic.



R Dhiyaneshwaran



R Dhiyaneshwaran



Shailesh BO

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Having finished his bachelor's degree in Fine Arts in 1993, Shailesh decided to work as a freelance artist with a studio in Cholamandal Artists' Village, Chennai. He has worked in all mediums of visual art - Painting, Sculpture, Installation and Video art. Shailesh's fascination with Yoga postures is evident in his paintings and sculptures. He is a Trustee of Arnawas Vasudev Charities and has had several groups and solo shows in India and abroad.



Sheelaa

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Sheelaa had her first solo show in 2007 and was introduced to Cholamandal Artists village through her artist friends in 2008. Her involvement with the Sunday Sketching Club and her career as an artist has grown stronger over the years. In 2011, she completed her BFA from Mysore University. Over the years, she has participated in more than 15 group shows in many galleries in Chennai and Bangalore.



S Jayaraj

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S Jayaraj lives in Chennai and works as a Publication Officer at BOBP-IGO. An artist, graphic designer, photographer and short filmmaker, S Jayaraj has over the past 35 years demonstrated his talent and versatility nationally and internationally. His theme-based painting series has covered the following topics: Faces of rural folk; Water; Cycle Rickshaw; Folk Dance; LGBTQ community; Patterns of Indian rural and urban life. He has been associated with the sketching group since 2008.



Manjula Anand

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She is a Senior Talent Manager working with Infosys for the past 21 years. While an Engineer by profession, she happens to be an artist by passion and is self-taught. She had the opportunity to work with senior Illustrators of Hallmark Cards in the US and lives in close proximity with great artists in the Cholamandal artists village. She has long association with the Sunday sketching club in Cholamandal artists village.





Mala Chinnappa

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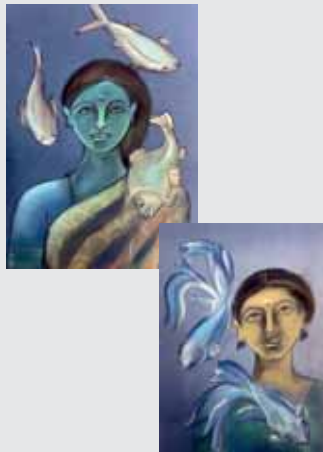
Mala Chinnappa is an advertising designer by profession and art educator by passion. With a background in Fine Arts and Visual Communication, art and design are the driving forces in her life. She has been a part of the Sunday sketching club since 2008. As a special educator, Mala is faculty at 'A Brush With Art', a visual art program for the neuro-diverse. She is also a Trustee of Arnawas Vasudev Charities.



Latha Gopal

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Latha lives and works at Cholamandal Artists' Village. Her journey is to attain the search within herself; the search that goes beyond cultural, racial and gender barriers. People and their relationships are a source of her inspiration. She feels colours act on our minds and influence our feelings. She has depicted in her work the moods and emotions of the women at various stages in her life.



Govindarajan (a) Ghovi

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Self-taught Illustrator, Painter, Cartoonist and Story Board creator for over 37 years, he specializes in rapid-realistic-sketches. Worked with well renowned print media and magazines such as India Today, Indian Express, Tughlaq, Ramakrishna Vijayam, etc., He has been mentored by the stalwart - Maruti. He is experienced in art, acting, dubbing, direction, translation, working with various companies and different channels such as Discovery, National Geography etc.





Shreyas Anand

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Shreyas Anand is a student of Class V. He is an aspiring cricketer and drummer. He has keen interest in arts and being a Cholamandal resident is helping him get the best exposure possible to arts.



Vidyut Zachariah Thomas

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Vidyut Zachariah Thomas is 9 years old. His love for art started as early as a two-year-old. He also has a keen interest in sports cars, and most of his sketches are inspired by them. The weekly visits to the Sketching Club has helped him greatly, interacting with other artists and getting their advice on improving his colourful vibrant drawings. Their constant encouragement and support keep him enthused and motivated.



L S Vishnu

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L S Vishnu is seven years old and loves to paint and has a deep connection with nature. He builds nests and homes for birds and insects. He has a lily pond with fishes and loves taking care of them. At this young age, he is such an environmentally conscious person. He painted the national flag using a banana leaf.

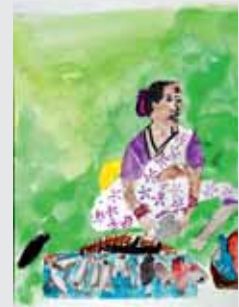


Anbu Maran

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Anbu Maran is an 8-year-old student attending class III. Having a deep love for cartoons, he grew interested in art. He named his red goldfish as "Matisse" inspired by Matisse's paintings. His favourite film is "The Song of Sparrows".





Haritha

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Haritha is a student of class V. She loves to play classical guitar and watch animated movies. She and her brother Anbu share their home in Chennai with indoor and succulent plants. She enjoys organizing her bookshelves by colour.



Mokshita

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Mokshita OS is a student of Class 12 at Besant Arundale Senior Secondary School, Kalakshetra Foundation. She is the daughter of artist Shailesh BO and has grown up among artists and their paintings and sculptures in Cholamandal. She was inspired by this artistic environment, which led her to start sketching. She has been a participant of the Sunday Sketching Club ever since. Her favourite subject is Nature Study.



Rugmini

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Rugmini is a multi-faceted, multi-talented artist who is passionate about sketching, drawing and painting. She works as a freelance 2D animator, graphic designer and storyboard sketching artist. Rugmini is comfortable working with all mediums and has been exhibiting paintings at various art galleries including the gallery at Cholamandal Artists' Village in 2018. She has been a member of the Sunday Sketching Club for over six months.



Jude Jayaraj

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Jude Jayaraj is a student of Class XII, St. Michaels School, Adyar. He has keen interest in Art and Photography. In particular, he is an avid admirer of abstract art due to the style's freedom in colours and compositions. He is especially fond of clicking monochrome photographs of old architecture. His favourite mediums are oil pastels and watercolour.





Amit Jayakar

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Amit grew up in Chennai and works in design, but has been sketching and painting since he was young as a hobby. He recently finished his degree in VisCom. He spends most of his time in 3D design and likes to make futuristic sci-fi type works. He enjoys world-building through art.



G L Narayanan

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Self-taught illustrator, painter, G L Narayanan is a great lover of arts. He has illustrated for stories/comics for newsletters and magazines. Narayanan joined the sketching cub at Cholamandal Artists Village in 2016. His interest lies in portraits and landscapes but he also dwells on social issues/themes to create awareness. He plans to exhibit his works in the near future.



R Dhiyaneshwaran

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Chennai-based painter, illustrator, artist and teacher, Dhiyaneshwaran acquired Masters in painting in 2013 from Govt College of Fine Arts, Chennai. His works are mainly landscapes and figuratives. He does storyboards, illustrations, visualising for books, movies and ad films. Hailing from the small agricultural town Mannargudi, the surrounding paddy fields and lush sceneries greatly impacted his art; his landscapes are memory fragments of sights and emotions recollected from his travels.









Dr. S G Vasudev

Arnawaz

Arnawaz Vasudev Charities

Arnawaz Vasudev Charities, a private trust, was set up by S.G. Vasudev following the untimely death of his artist wife Arnawaz in 1988. The principal objectives of the Trust are to promote art education and art activities, and to provide financial assistance to deserving young artists and art students.

The founding trustees are: Shanta Guhan, Girish Karnad and S.G. Vasudev.

The present trustees are B.O. Shailesh, Bharani V Setlur, Mala Chinnappa, R.M.Palaniappan and S.G.Vasudev (Managing Trustee).

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The Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), set up in 2003, evolved from the erstwhile Bay of Bengal Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) founded in 1979. The current members of the Organisation are Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

The BOBP-IGO is a Regional Fisheries Advisory Body (RFAB), which serves as the think tank for the countries on transboundary and contemporary regional issues concerning fisheries management, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, pollution management, livelihood and occupational safety. The IGO assists its member-countries in achieving UN Decadal Targets for fisheries management, ecosystem conservation and sustainable development in the region through research-based policy advocacy, need-based capacity development and extensive community engagement programs.

BOBP-IGO is a member of the Regional Fisheries Body Secretariats' Network (RSN), coordinated by the FAO.

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