

Course Name: Creating products with the art of Tholu Bommalata craft of Andhra Pradesh

Artisan Name: Sinde Sriramulu & Sinde Bhagyamma

Campus: Bengaluru



शिल्प संगम



About Craft

Tholu Bommalata is a vibrant Indian shadow puppetry art/craft form from Nimmalakuntha, Andhra Pradesh, known for its large, intricately crafted leather puppets that perform mythological and folk tales behind a backlit screen. The puppets are made from translucent animal hides, like goat or deer, and are painted with bright colors, allowing for colorful shadow displays when illuminated. Performances combine narration, music from traditional instruments, and dance to bring stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata to life, though the tradition has faced decline and efforts are being made to revive it.

This art form has hence been used by artisans to create a variety of products that celebrate the ability to backlight these surfaces and making paintings glow - mainly lampshades of various forms and sizes, screens, jewellery and wall hanging, to diversify the craft into products that can be used in urban lifestyle, and artisans like Sriramulu in the village of Nimmalakuntha have been pioneers in this effort.

About Artisan

Sinde Sriramulu (37) belongs to a traditional family of making and performing with leather puppetry craft who have been practicing the craft for many generations. He himself has over 18 years of experience of practicing this traditional craft since his childhood and is one of the best artisans of the Nimmalakuntha craft cluster having the repertoire of drawing a large variety of themes. He has worked with many designers exploring a range of content keeping the traditional style and character of the craft intact. He also conducts craft training workshops across the country for a large variety of people - school students, housewives, design studios and organizations - both government and NGOs like Chitra Kala Parishad, Bangalore and Crafts Council of Telengana and Andhra Pradesh.

Sriramulu will be accompanied by his wife, Sinde Bhagyamma (31) who also has been practicing this craft for over a decade.

Expected Outcomes-

Interesting range of products incorporating the leather painting craft, which celebrates its unique characteristics. Possibility of creating leather products involving other materials like bamboo.

Course Objectives

- Through hands-on engagement, the students will learn the nuanced technique of creating leather puppetry art with the essence of the style and iconography that defines this art form.
- Through reflective dialogues and conversations, participants will explore the multifaceted nature of craft—its rituals, cultural significance, and contemporary relevance.
- Through a process of co-creation with the master artisans and fellow students, they will be able to create paintings and incorporate them in different sorts of household objects like table and floor lamps, screens, jewellery, mobiles, wall hanging, etc that celebrates the unique characteristics of the paintings.
- The students can explore outcomes that celebrate diversity in thought and contemporary themes in a traditional setting
- Exploring the possibility of intercraft collaborations with other crafts in the campus to create large product/s. Possibility of creating leather products involving other materials like bamboo.

Course Methodology

- Demonstration by Master Craftsperson
- Learning the basics of the craft,
- explorations of traditional forms
- Developing contemporary themes for contemporary narratives and new possibilities
- Making prototypes
- Finishing and displaying new outcomes to encourage conversations around them

Number of Participants - 12 to 18