

AMMANNUR CHACHU CHAKYAR SMARAKA GURUKULAM

Organisation

Type of Institution: A registered society under the Travancore Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Registration Act No. 12 of 1955. Reg. No. 11/83

Year of Establishment: 1982

Brief History: The Ammannur family of Chakyars has always been maintaining a training school in their ancestral house at Irinjalakuda. Under the changed social set-up and circumstances the Chakyar families were compelled to give up their hereditary art and seek some other profession for their livelihood. It was a critical time for Kutiyattam. In October 1982 Guru Madhava Chakyar and G. Venu together founded the Gurukulam at the premises of the Ammannur family as a memorial for the great Guru Chachu Chakyar. The institution aimed at giving training in Kutiyattam to the selected candidates strictly in the traditional style. Madhava Chakyar and Parameswara Chakyar are the chief Gurus of this institution. This institution is devoted to the preservation of the famous Ammannur style of Kutiyattam. One creditable achievement of this institution is that it revived and enacted several Kutiyattam plays such as Asokavanikankam (16 days duration), Jatayuvadhankam (5 days duration), Kalyanasaugandhikam (5 days duration), Abhisheka Nataka (2nd and 4th Act) etc., in their full form. The Gurukulam has also

collaborated with the production of Abhijnana Sakuntalam of Mahakavi Kalidasa produced by Natana Kairali – A Research and Performing Centre for Traditional Arts. This institution has also revived the entire repertoire of Nangiarkuthu. Kutiyattam artistes trained at this institution presented performances all over India and abroad several times.

Every year, the Gurukulam organizes a Kutiyattam Festival. The 12-day Festival gives its trainees a valuable opportunity to work with senior artistes and thereby gain better familiarity with the subtleties of performances on the stage. The 'Gurukulam' students also give annual performances in the Kuthampalams (temple theatres) of Irinjalakuda and Thrissur.

All activities of the institution are managed by the Governing Council consisting of seven members. The office bearers are President, Secretary and Treasurer. This is according to the Charitable Societies Registration Act.

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Funding Source

SNA, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India.

Premises and Equipment

The Gurukulam does not have its own working or performing space. Since its inception it is functioning at the space provided by Guru Ammannur Madhava

Chakyar and G. Venu, the founders of this institute. Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar provides two classrooms attached to his residence. G. Venu has built a performing-cum-training space specifically designed for Kutiyattam. In addition to this,

Performance Repertory

Play	Act	Choreography (Attaprakaram)	No. of days
Abhisheka Nataka of Bhasa	Balivadhama	Traditional	5
Abhisheka Nataka of Bhasa	Hanumaddutankam	Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar	1
Abhisheka Nataka of Bhasa	Toranayudham	Traditional	6
Abhisheka Nataka of Bhasa	Samudrataranam	Guru Ammannur	1
Abhisheka Nataka of Bhasa	Mayaseershankam	Kuttan Chakyar	1
Ascharyachudamani of Saktibhadra	Surpanakhankam	Traditional	5
Ascharyachudamani	Jatayuvadhankam	Traditional	6
Ascharyachudamani	Asokavanikankam	Traditional	14
Ascharyachudamani	Anguleeyankam	Traditional	12
Subhadradhananjayam of Kulasekhara	I	Traditional	11
Tapatisamvaranam of Kulasekhara	I	Traditional	8
Kalyanasaugandhikam of Neelakanta	The entire play	Guru Ammannur	1 (4)
Abhijnana Sakuntalam of Kalidasa	The entire play	G. Venu	4
Vikramorvasiyam of Kalidasa	The entire play	G. Venu	4
Srikrishnacharitam (Nangiar Kuthu)	Nirvahana of Subhadradhananjayam	Revised version by Guru Ammannur	12
Saundaryalahari (Nangiar Kuthu)	One sloka	G. Venu	1

Natana Kairali (another parallel institution) provides space for oil-massage, accommodation etc.

Gurukulam has a full set of costumes & ornaments as well as percussion instruments.

Training Faculty

Guru/Teachers:

Guru Ammannur Madhava Chakyar - Kulapathi (Chief Guru)

Guru Ammannur Parameswara Chakyar - Chief Resource Person

G. Venu - Director

Ammannur Parameswara (Kuttan) Chakyar - Acting

Nirmala Paniker - Talam

Kalamandalam Rajeev - Mizhavu

Kalamandalam Hariharan - Mizhavu

Kala. Narayanan Nambiar - Mizhavu

Kalanilayam Unnikrishnan - Edakka

Kalanilayam Haridas - Chutti

Sooraj Nambiar - Acting

Ammannur Rajaneesh Chakyar - Acting

Pothiyil Renjith Chakyar - Acting

Kapila Venu - Acting

Aparna Nangiar - Acting

Saritha T.R. - Acting

Archives

Gurukulam's collecton includes rare

printed books, handwritten compendia and palm leaf collection. The Ammannur Chakyar family owns several palm leaf manuscripts of Attaprakaram (acting manual) and Kramadeepika (production manual). The Gurukulam can use it for reference but does not have the right on it. The institution Natana Kairali published three books in the Kutiyattam series and has also a collection of printed books on Kutiyattam, which can be used for reference by the students.

Other Information

Natana Kairali is another institution working parallel to the Ammannur Chachu Chakyar Smaraka Gurukulam in the premises of the Ammannur family itself. It has undertaken theoretical study and research especially in the manuals of Kramadeepika (production manual) and Attaprakaram (acting manual). As a result of the intensive study and research Natana Kairali has already published two volumes in the Documents of Kutiyattam series.

In addition, Natana Kairali has been also conducting annual workshops on the acting techniques of Kutiyattam for the past 14 years. These workshops are well attended by eminent theatre personalities from different parts of the world.

