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ವಿಶೇಷ ಅನುದಾನ ಒದಗಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

# THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

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*Founder Presidents*

***Shri B.P. Wadia & Smt. Sophia Wadia***

A voluntary non-political organisation registered under the Societies Act,  
with the objectives of promoting human brotherhood and culture.

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**'Kalidasa Kriti Parichaya' -- weekly series –**  
**April 2 to May 14, 2026**  
*By Ranjani Govind*

Celebrated classical Sanskrit poet and dramatist Mahakavi Kalidasa has offered an enormous content of his poetic genius replete with imagery to have immersive scholars of all times stamp him the 'Kavi Kulaguru' and later be recognized as an unparalleled genius in world poetry. Kalidasa, India's immortal literary figure, the bard, lyricist and wordsmith is traditionally credited with seven canonical works: three plays (nAtakas), two epic poems (mahAkavyas), and two shorter lyrical poems (khandakAvyas). His works, say scholars, showcase the zenith of Sanskrit literature, portraying fluent grammatical precision and elegant diction.

'Kalidasa Kriti Parichaya' was a peep into familiarizing his works for seven weeks. Curated by the Indian Institute of World Culture (IIWC) - the thought-provoking weekly series (April 2 to May 14, 2026) opened the windows of understanding to Kalidasa's masterpieces in Sanskrit for literary enthusiasts.

Scholars of Sanskrit and Kannada, and professors were invited to help audiences understand the central core or the driving literary force embedded in these Sanskrit works, to have them elucidated and interpreted. The entire exercise was to "have a whiff of the masterpieces" even if the attempt was indeed "the tip of the iceberg" for understanding the genius, said IIWC committee members while introducing the scholars prior to the discourses. The seven-part series is available on video too to make it an archival visual record.

**His masterpieces**

Kalidasa's masterpieces include the celebrated play Abhijn Anasakuntalam (the Recognition of Shakuntala - love story of King Dushyanta and Shakuntala who are separated by a harsh curse, but through tests of memory and a lost signet ring, they are eventually reunited, with the son growing up to be Bharata) This has been translated into numerous languages worldwide.

His two major epic poems include Raghuvamsa (narrates the illustrious genealogy and legends of the Solar dynasty) and KumArasambhava (An epic focusing on the courtship of Lord Shiva and Parvati, and the subsequent birth of their son, KumAra or Kartikeya).

His lyrical gems include Meghaduta (the Cloud Messenger - a poignant poem where a banished Yaksha or demi-god persuades a passing cloud to deliver a message of longing to his wife in the Himalayas) and Ritusamhara (Ode to nature - his earliest work with 144 stanzas of a metrical masterpiece detailing the six seasons).

Other acclaimed plays include MALavikAgnimitra (revolving around the romance of King Agnimitra of the Shunga dynasty and Malavika, a beautiful exiled dancer, and a princess incognito, serving as a handmaid in his queen's palace) and Vikramorvasiyam (Urvashi won by valour - where King Puruvaras and the celestial nymph Urvashi fall in love but have to overcome heavenly curses and magical trials to remain together).

### **Scholars who brought Kalidasa's works alive**

The IIBC's exploratory exercise, brought out by the seven scholars who dealt with seven works of the master-poet, wasn't a trace of just the bare storyline, but conveyed the intrinsic core and aim of Kalidasa's sophisticated thought-play and lyrical screenplay; a vivid and evocative train of thought that the poet employed not with design and purpose to prove poetry or the craft of playwright, but to have people comprehend his expressive-exactitude that had a natural flow, fundamental to his imaginative prowess.

One more aspect of this 'Kalidasa-intro-series' was the pertinent inclusion of a short-overview/ or a broadband recap of Kalidasa at the end of every lecture by musician and scholar Dr. TS Sathyavathi, (also the President of IIBC Committee) whose familiarity with Kalidasa's works proved a value-addition to the endeavour by IIBC, with "encore" from the audiences in each session enriching the experience.

In one of them Sathyavathi said "Scholars have ascribed seven works to the authorship of Kalidasa. Instead of groaning about the non-availability of his other works or his life details, we better be gratified with seven of his works available, that are in themselves fathomless insights and even a drop is yet to be savoured from them. Instead of dwelling into what we do not have, let us take steps to understand every scholarly perspective of the poet's mastermind, as each time, we get a newer dimension of understanding Kalidasa's expressive outpourings. And under the circumstances, reflecting on Kalidasa's thoughts serve to be more essential than trying to know more about him.

Now into the IIBC series

1 - RutasamhAra (Khandakavya - lyric poem - April 2 - by scholar Dr. Shrirama Bhatta)

Flagging off with the first in the series, 'RutasamhAra,' Kannada and Sanskrit scholar Dr. Shrirama Bhatta said Kalidasa's expertise here employs a unique treatment of nature and the six seasons - Greeshma; Varsha; Sharath, Shishira, Hemantha and Vasantha. "You can explore Kalidasa's lyrical prowess when he begins with describing the outer world of Greeshma with the fierce scorching earth driving rivers and animals into frantic searches for water - even as the inner world has women kindling passion in their lovers to have relief during moonlit nights. And in Varsha dark thundering clouds prompt peacocks to dance causing rivers to swell while the torrential transformation triggers intense longing in women to embrace a romantic thrill guided by flashes of lightning."

Summing up the discourse in her expert comments Sathyavathi said, "RutasamhAra brings out a macrocosm-to-microcosm journey that seamlessly weaves the external rhythms of each of the Indian seasonal cycles in nature with the internal landscape of human passion."

2 - MAlavikagnimitram -Six act play - April 10 - By Vidwan Srihari P. Kurudi

Sanskrit scholar Srihari P. Kurudi's discourse on 'MAlavikagnimitram' - said to be one of Kalidasa's earliest works - holds both historical and literary value offering political and thematic exploration of love and courtly life. "It's a light tale with a strong creative pen," commented Kurudi adding that unlike Kalidasa's other works, it sustains a playful and comical mood throughout. "It concerns the machinations of King Agnimitra to win Malavika, a princess incognito in the services of the chief queen. And what makes this play so different is the way Kalidasa incorporates a beautiful dance performance by the nAyika which is reviewed with technical expertise by Pundita Kowshiki - a scene serving as the primary device in bringing the hero and the heroine face to face for the first time," he said.

In her post-talk, Sathyavathi with her robust demonstrations talked of how Kalidasa employs dance not only as an art form, but as a key driver of the plot and character development. "His use of angikAbhinaya (expressive bodily gestures) enhances the storytelling through detailed physical expressions, making dance both a symbolic and functional tool

in advancing the story. Another aspect is the poet's oeuvre that magnificently incorporates music, melody and rhythm. And in this work he brilliantly weaves music and dance making it an integral part of theatrical storytelling," she said.

3 - Vikramorvasiya - Six act play - April 16 - By Vidwan Ananthashayana Shirahatti

'Vikramorvasiya' by Sanskrit scholar Ananthashayana Shirahatti had him elaborate on the play exploring themes of desire, duty and transcendence. "It draws from Vedic lore and showcases the mastery in poetic expression and emotional nuance, starting with the very title, 'Vikramorvasiyam' believed to be a deliberate multi-layered pun woven by the poet - the story of Pururavas' valour (Vikrama) and Urvashi," he said.

The fulcrum is the Act 4, said Shirahatti, when the celestial nymph Urvashi is magically transformed into a creeping vine due to a curse. King Purūravas wanders the forest, driven to the brink of insanity by her separation. The King's conversations with the trees, rivers, and peacocks are not just ravings, they are profound metaphors for the deep inter-connectivity of nature and human emotion," he added.

In her summing up Sathyavathi said, "It's a story that transcends the mortal realm, and blends celestial fantasy with earthly responsibility, utilizing brilliant Dhvani (suggestion) and Alankara (poetic imagery) to navigate the depths of human desire and divine harmony."

4 - Meghaduta - Khandakavya - Lyric poem - April 23 - By Vidwan TN Prabhakar

Sanskrit scholar, TN Prabhakar's discourse on 'Meghaduta' had him explaining on how the poet associates everything seen in the cloud's path with the divine or sublime. Prabhakar said, the power of personification comes about in this Sandesha Kavyam where Kalidasa brilliantly seizes an inanimate object - a cloud made up of mere smoke, water, wind and lightning - and elevates it to a sentient, congenial being for bridging the physical divide, as the exiled Yaksha approaches the cloud to be his messenger to convey his romantic longing. "Literary scholars widely regard this narrative of the poet's romanticized topographical details to be a perfect balance of classical poetic elements with figures of speech (alankara); words that convey emotion beyond the explicit text (dhwani); and gathers an emotional balance through-out (rasa-siddhanta)," he said.

The abundant musical spirit in Sathyavathi had her observe 'Meghadutam's masterful use of the slow moving metre 'mandaakraantaa' with the poet's verbal rhythmic syllables portraying the graceful meandering of the monsoon cloud flowing in tranquil continuous stream, in keeping with the dominant emotion of the poem viraha - love in separation.

5 - Raghuvamsha - Mahakavya - 19-cantos - April 30 - Prof. Ramakrishna Pejathaya

Scholar, Prof. Ramakrishna Pejathaya who handled 'Raghuvamsha' said this brilliant work is multi-faceted establishing an ideal for leadership through the kings of the Raghu lineage, and chronicles the legendary Solar Dynasty (Suryavamsha). This Kalidasa's work -- perfect diction, flawless metaphors and deep philosophical reflections on duty, love and human relations -- opens with one of the most famous invocations in world literature, saluting the divine couple Shiva and Parvati as 'parents of the Universe' innately united like 'word and sense - Vaak and Artha' said Prof. Pejathaya.

"The poet's mastery of similes (Upama) - inseparable to Sanskrit literary traditions - has been summarized by the phrase 'Upama Kalidasasya' as the poet merges the emotional turmoil of his characters with the grandeur of nature," explained Sathyavathi. "In the famous episode of King Aja's mourning (Ajavilaapa) the poet records a profound discourse on death that greatly impacts human life," she said.

6- KumAra Sambhava - Epic poem - Mahakavya - 17 cantos - May 8 - By Vidushi Dr. TS Sathyavathi

Musician and scholar Sathyavathi's handling of 'KumAra Sambhava' was a masterly exposition of the poet's sublime-blending of divine mythology, rich poetic imagery and deep philosophy. In the celebrated mangala-shloka with a personified description of the Himalayas as a divine entity, standing as the measuring rod of the earth, the poet brings in the dual aspects of static and movable personalities of the snow-mountain in an extraordinary manner, she elaborated.

Talking of the poet's unparalleled use of upama (similes) and his meticulous metrical control, Sathyavathi brought out Kalidasa's musicality and metre with his phonetic use of nuances in judiciously employing appropriate rhythmic patterns as best suited to the occasion.

7 -AbhijnAna ShAkuntalam - 7-act play in 17 cantos - May 14 - By Vidwan V Krishnaraja Kuthpadi

The harmony of Kalidasa's sensory descriptions, thematic depth and structural perfection in this classic 'AbhijnAna ShAkuntalam' was described by Sanskrit scholar Krishnaraja Kuthpadi. Elaborating on this Kuthpadi said, "The creative genius of Kalidasa has brought in several changes in the story of Shakuntala and Dushyanta as found in the Mahabharata, the significant of them being the curse of Durvasa separating the innocent couple. The serene surrounding of the ashrama both in the first and the final acts of the play depicts the fruition of the initial attraction into a sublime bonding of the souls through the vicissitudes of providence. This 'Abhijnana Shakuntalam' has a spiritual journey that moves from earthly youthful romance (Gandharva marriage) in the forest, followed by a painful separation, to an elevated spiritual reunion in the celestial realm of Sage Maricha."

Added Sathyavathi, "While his sensory imagery is replete with his descriptions of the hermitage - where wild blooms outgrow garden flowers and the deer are nurtured like a family, all breathing a vibrant ecosystem - the poet's description of Shakuntala leaving her hermitage to join Dushyanta is richly emotive describing the creepers appearing to drop dry leaves like tears; while the deer cease their grazing! Kalidasa's genius lies in Dhvani (suggestion)," she said, "which is subtle and implicit rather than being explicit."

The sum up

To summarize the prodigious pen of Kalidasa, Sathyavathi said, "What we discern from his works is that, for him, no place was just a mass of land, no river just a flow of water, no city just a crowd of people, and no Indian value just a widespread thought. His perspective was an ageless out-pour relevant to all generations of literary lovers."

In the concluding remarks she stated that IIRC will be looking for occasions to showcase works of other poets and litterateurs to open the forum as always to have 'Indian scholars and their works' explained for the benefit of those who seek to expand the horizons of knowledge.

## **Exhibition of Sir David Low's Cartoons**

By Prithvi Prabhu

The Indian Institute of World Culture (IIWC) in collaboration with The Indian Institute of Cartoonists hosted a captivating exhibition dedicated to the legendary political satirist & cartoonist, Sir David Low at The Art Gallery at IIWC, Basavanagudi. The exhibition was on display from the 9th to 16th of May, 2026, the collection on display featured a stellar array of editorial masterpieces originally published during the high-stakes eras of the late 1930s and 1940s. The exhibition offered visitors an intimate look into the complex geopolitical chess game of the Second World War, showing how Low's scathing wit and uncompromising visual commentary captured the anxieties of a world on the brink of collapse.

Among the standout pieces in the exhibition was the famous political commentary titled "What! No Umbrella Yet?" originally published on September 29, 1939. The cartoon serves as a brilliant critique of the fragile and deeply cynical geopolitical alliances of the era. It depicts a perplexed figure looking up at a sky dark with impending conflict while holding documents explicitly labeled "Munich Terms" and "Nazi-Soviet Peace". The context is deeply rooted in the immediate aftermath of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the ultimate failure of Western appeasement policies. Low masterfully invokes the "umbrella", which is a direct satirical reference to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's iconic accessory and his failed policy of appeasing Adolf Hitler, to mock the naive belief that paper treaties could shield the world from totalitarian aggression.

Another striking example that drew significant attention was "Musical Chairs in the Balkans". This piece vividly illustrates the precarious vulnerability of smaller nations during the global power struggle. Low represents regional territories, such as Hungary, Greece, and Yugoslavia (Jugo-Slavia), as small children caught in a tense, chaotic game of musical chairs orchestrated by dictatorial powers. The cartoon perfectly captures the anxiety of late 1939, when small, neutral European states found themselves completely at the mercy of Axis expansionism and shifting Soviet spheres of influence, waiting anxiously to see where the heavy boot of aggression would land next.

Adding further depth to the showcase were pieces like "Anybody Home?", published on May 27, 1940. This cartoon depicts Sir Stafford Cripps, representing the "New British Trading Co," knocking on the door

of a massive, imposing USSR fronting the Black Sea. It brilliantly captures Britain's urgent diplomatic pivot to establish a trade relationship and open a line of communication with Joseph Stalin as the Nazi blitzkrieg rapidly advanced across Western Europe. Additionally, the exhibition featured "Howdy, Tokio! Going Far?" from October 16, 1940, which addresses wartime dynamics in Asia. The cartoon portrays Britain and the USA observing a Japanese figure walking down a "Closed Burma Rd" carrying "Ambitions," highlighting the intense friction surrounding the closure of the strategic supply route to China under Japanese pressure.

Furthermore, the exhibition spotlighted Low's deep fascination with Mahatma Gandhi, showcasing his iconic caricature style, often featuring Gandhi's sparse attire and his trademark goat, alongside serious historical commentaries like "A Shroud for Liberty" (August 11, 1942), which captured the intense political gridlock of the Quit India Movement. Decades after they were first drafted, these masterful cartoons still resonate with profound clarity at the gallery, providing readers and art enthusiasts alike with a potent reminder of the enduring power of political satire as an instrument of global truth.

The exhibition successfully underscored David Low's unparalleled ability to distill dense, multi-layered international crises into single, instantly understandable images. Decades after they were first drafted, these cartoons still resonate with profound clarity at the art gallery. For the journal's readers and art enthusiasts alike, the showcase was not merely a nostalgic trip through archival art, but a potent reminder of the enduring power of political satire as an instrument of global truth.

### **Maya Jala : Exhibition of Cartoons by Maya Kamath**

By Prithvi Prabhu

The Indian Institute of World Culture (IIWC) in collaboration with The Indian Institute of Cartoonists hosted a captivating exhibition titled, "Maya Jaal" dedicated to the late trailblazer Maya Kamath, at The Art Gallery at IIWC, Basavanagudi. The exhibition was a vibrant celebration of wit, social commentary, and artistic brilliance. The exhibition was on display from the 26th of May to the 3rd of June, 2026. The event serves as a poignant reminder of the power of visual illustration in capturing national history and human struggles through an intimate, everyday lens.

In an arena heavily dominated by men, Maya Kamath was a magnificent

rarity, a front-ranking political cartoonist who used sharp satire to dissect society's deepest contradictions. The cartoons on display highlight her extraordinary gift for highlighting macro-political absurdities through the microcosm of ordinary Indian life. One of the most powerful examples featured in the gallery addresses systemic gender inequality and cultural hypocrisy. It depicts a man pointing proudly toward a framed portrait of a multi-armed deity, stating, "See?... We worship women as goddesses in our country!" while simultaneously dragging his real-life wife across the floor by her hair. Kamath masterfully exposes the jarring, painful disconnect between romanticized religious rhetoric and the brutal reality of domestic violence.

Another standout cartoon targets the misplaced priorities of elite-driven social progressivism. Set against a backdrop of impoverished rural huts, a well-dressed representative at a "Conference on Women" asks a group of struggling village mothers carrying heavy loads and crying children: "Now tell us frankly, which is your most crying need of the moment... a comprehensive status report, or a demographic socio-cultural handbook?". The biting irony cuts directly to the core of bureaucratic disconnect, showing how policy researchers offer academic papers to citizens who lack basic survival necessities. Expanding on her brilliant critique of gender dynamics, another cartoon on display hilariously subverts political discourse by shifting it to domestic labor. It depicts a woman leader standing up in a formal assembly of stone-faced male politicians, boldly declaring, "Sir... I'd like to propose 33% reservation for men in household chores...". By adopting the heavy language of legislative quotas for daily house cleaning, Kamath brilliantly satirizes how male policymakers love debating women's empowerment in public but strictly avoid equal partnership at home.

Kamath's remarkable ability to expose institutional and systemic contradictions shines brightly in several other notable panels on display. In one profoundly chilling frame, she confronts deep-seated social evils surrounding the girl child; the cartoon features three grim, cloaked, witch-like figures labeled 'Infanticide', 'Dowry', and 'Sati' peering into cribs under a banner that ironically reads, "Welcome to the world, baby girl!". Shifting her focus from societal tradition to the highest legal institution of the country, another panel delivers a biting commentary on systemic gender discrimination within the judiciary. It depicts a stern judge holding a tilted scale under the caption, "All men are equal! (Who said anything about women?)" ,where a small, submissive man

completely outweighs an visibly distressed woman. Furthermore, Kamath highlights the relentless, unacknowledged exhaustion of domestic life on 'Women's Day'. The illustration shows a husband snoring loudly on a sofa next to a newspaper headline celebrating the event, while his wife stands overwhelmed in a chaotic kitchen, juggling a crying toddler, a cooking stove, a begging dog, and an endless stack of unwashed dishes. Together, these pieces demonstrate how comfortably her pen could pivot from dark, institutional critique to the poignant realities of the domestic sphere.

The exhibition also features her celebrated ability to contrast commercial, media-driven spectacles with grassroots struggles. In a highly striking panel, Kamath illustrates three figures standing side-by-side: a glamorous 'Miss Universe', a crowned 'Miss World', and an exhausted, rural Indian mother carrying a water pot on her head and a baby on her back, labeled 'Miss Bharat'. This piece remains a timeless critique of globalization, showing how the international media obsessed over India's beauty queens while completely ignoring the grueling daily survival of millions of women in the rural heartland.

Beyond these deep thematic dives, the gallery features a wealth of other cartoons targeting political and civic decay. One panel tackles political opportunism by showing a bride labeled 'Mamata' walking away from her wedding stage with a 'Congress' groom, telling the camera, "I've changed my mind. I'm going back to my former husband," mocking volatile political alliances. Another frame highlights systemic corruption, where a lonely figure outside the 'Congress H.Q.' laments, "The party's been cleansed of all corruption, sir. Only me and the gardener are left.". From infrastructure failures where a scientist looking at an INSAT rocket launch laments that his home telephone line is dead, to the commercialization of education where a medical college seat is auctioned away to the highest bidder, no sphere escaped her gaze. This collective archive stands as an enduring testament to Maya Kamath's legacy as a bright, fearless gem in the history of Indian journalism.

Article by Aniruddh

## **World Culture Reading Circle**

### **By Aniruddh**

The World Culture Reading Circle met three times in May, exploring themes that began with familiar moments in the calendar but opened into larger questions of movement, memory, family, power, work, duty, and freedom.

Our first session, held on the first Sunday - 3rd May, was inspired by the season of summer vacations and the long romance of railway journeys. The group examined three extracts that approached railroads not merely as means of travel, but as symbols of modernity and historical transformation.

We began with an extract from Jules Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*, in which Phileas Fogg and his companions travel by the Pacific Railroad across the United States. The group observed how the extract presents the railroad as a spectacular achievement of speed and engineering, while also highlighting the nineteenth-century imagination of progress, where adventure, technology, empire, and frontier violence are all carried together by the same train.

The second extract was from Pankaj Mishra's "The Train to Lhasa," from *A Great Clamour*. Here, the railway was seen as no longer just a romantic machine of travel, but a deeply political instrument. Mishra's account of the train from Beijing to Lhasa was discussed both for the astonishing technical achievement of the world's highest railroad and for the troubling questions it raises around modernization, cultural erasure, and state power. The discussion turned to how infrastructure can be presented as development while also becoming a means of control.

The final extract was from Ken Liu's "A Brief History of the Trans-Pacific Tunnel," from *The Paper Menagerie*. In Liu's alternate history, a vast tunnel connecting Asia and America becomes a monument to human ambition, but also to enormous human suffering. The group discussed how speculative fiction can uncover the invisible labour buried beneath grand narratives of progress.

Our second session in May was held on 17 May and was inspired by the Mother's Day celebrations of the previous week. The group turned to literary representations of mothers as seen by their daughters. We

examined how motherhood can appear as instruction, pressure, ambition, memory, storytelling, and inheritance.

We began with Jamaica Kincaid's "Girl." We observed how the prose poem, which appears at first to be a list of commands, gradually becomes a dense portrait of how a girl is trained to become a woman within a particular culture. The group discussed how the mother's voice carries both care and control, tenderness and the projection of her own anxieties.

Moving on to Amy Tan's "Rules of the Game," the group explored the relationship between a Chinese-American daughter and her mother in San Francisco's Chinatown. The mother teaches her daughter the "art of invisible strength," a lesson that becomes central to the girl's rise as a chess prodigy. We noted that the text also brought up the tension between maternal pride and a child's desire for independence.

The final extract was from Natalia Ginzburg's *Family Lexicon*, where the mother is remembered through phrases, stories, songs, jokes, and repeated family expressions. In this text, motherhood was less about instruction or conflict and more about the preservation of memory.

The third session scheduled for 31 May, commemorated the month through the idea of labour and emancipation. Three extracts brought home the idea of the office and its place in the popular imagination.

An extract from Belgian writer Amélie Nothomb's award-winning *Fear and Trembling* made a year in a Japanese office in the 1990s sound like a Kafkaesque fever dream. Through its sharp, comic cruelty, the group explored the modern workplace as a space of hierarchy, humiliation, and, of course, absurdity.

An extract from Herman Melville's iconic "Bartleby, the Scrivener" — literature's most famous case of existential angst in the office — led the group to examine tedium, resistance, and the strange power of passive refusal. Bartleby's repeated phrase, "I would prefer not to," opened up a discussion on work, alienation, and how rebellion can sometimes begin with a person simply refusing to obey.

We also explored the end of working life and the question of meaning after a lifetime of labour through an extract from Mario Benedetti's *La Tregua*. The text gave a more tender and reflective note to the discussion, showing retirement not merely as rest, but as a confrontation with time, loneliness, habit, and the need to rediscover life beyond routine.

Together, the three May sessions moved from tracks across continents to voices across generations, and finally to offices and the routines of working life. Across these very different texts, the group explored how literature helps us understand the journeys that shape us: the visible journeys made by trains, the invisible journeys carried through family, and the daily journeys through labour, duty, resistance, and the search for freedom.

## **THE ART OF POTTERY**

1st June 1953

Shri G. Venkatachalam, Art Director of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, presided at this lecture by Mr. Walter A. Weldon, an expert in the ceramic arts lent to India under the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme, whom the Chairman introduced as one with 40 years' experience in the industry as well as a collector of Chinese porcelains. Shri Venkatachalam described pottery as the oldest art and, in its widest sense, the key to human civilization and culture. Pottery included earthenware, stoneware, glass and porcelain, the last being its most finished form. The art had developed chiefly in China; though India had had it from the earliest times, it had not all the lovely forms that were found in China. Akbar and Aurangzeb had had colonies of Chinese potters outside their capitals. Earlier, however, the lovely turquoise blue had been, it was said, an Indian import into China.

Mr. Weldon said that Baltimore had developed as a pottery centre from its building of fast clipper ships for trade with China, whence marvellous pieces of pottery were brought, becoming a craze in the United States. Though China's ceramic production, which had reached the peak of production technique in the T'ang Dynasty, was still a major industry, it had declined since the coming of the Chinese Republic.

From China the art had spread to Europe early in the 18th century, Germany taking the lead, but the manufacture of pottery had spread over the Continent and to the U.S.A.

India was abundantly supplied with clay and felspar, which in equal proportions were used for porcelain manufacture, and Mr. Weldon said also that the Calcutta Institute had reached a very high standard of efficiency, developing techniques in porcelain manufacture in advance of the West.

The Chairman in his closing remarks spoke of the early close connection between India and China, not only through philosophy and religion but

also through artisans. Side by side with the movement of Buddhism to China had gone the movement of the arts and crafts.

### **MODERN BENGALI POETRY**

6th June 1953

Shri Buddhadeva Bose, Editor of Kavita and a well-known poet and critic in Bengali, speaking under the chairmanship of Rajasevapasakta Shri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, read on this occasion a paper on the subject which he had contributed to Thought for March 16th, 1951, explaining that he was not a public speaker. Also, at the request of the audience he read several Bengali poems in the original, translating part of one into English.

During the question time, in answer to a question as to whether Bengali literature imitated Western writing, Shri Bose said that this tendency had been outgrown during the time of Tagore, who had served as a connecting link between

East and West. The charge of imitation was brought against other Indian literatures also, but it was somewhat unfair. Imitation was not bad if, in consciously imitating, one recreated. All work, if it was to be real, had to be born in one's own mind. The Western influence, however, was upon India and had its good as well as its bad aspects.

The Chairman said that to keep alive we had to imitate and exchange with one another. He objected to the fact that there was so little knowledge, even among writers, of writings outside their own language areas. People considered themselves citizens of a region rather than of India as a whole.

The Chairman paid a tribute to the Institute's cultural effort and to the value of lectures on the different literatures of India, as a corrective to the tendency to cultural insularity.

### **SANT KABIR**

11th June 1953

Shri Dilip R. Kothare, a Bombay solicitor, lectured under the chairmanship of Shri Gulabdas Broker, a well-known Gujarati writer, on the mediæval saint, poet and philosopher, Kabir. His actual dates of birth and death, Shri Kothare brought out, were not known, nor was his parentage. Certainly he had been brought up by a Muslim family in Banaras, who were weavers and taught him their skill, but his familiarity with Hindu ways and beliefs as well as with the Sufi teachings made both

communities claim him. Some thought that he had been influenced by Ramananda, a follower of the doctrines that had been taught by the South Indian teacher Ramanuja; and he was believed by some to have influenced Nanak, the teacher of the Sikhs. Some of Kabir's poems appear in the Sikhs' Adhigrantha, but most of them are preserved in the Bijaka, a collection of some 1,400 hymns supposed to have been recorded by one of Kabir's disciples, Kabir himself having been unlettered.

There could be no doubt, Shri Kothare said, that Kabir had had a genuine mystic realization of unity with the Supreme.

He had no use for rites and ceremonies and as a philosopher he attempted the reconciliation of Hinduism and Islam, twitting the followers of both with the illogicality of their rites and assumed separateness from one another. The milk from the black cow and the yellow cow could be blended and no one could tell the difference. So it was with their faiths.

Shri Kothare read a number of Kabir's poems in Hindi, then rendering them into English, and by request, read two of Rabindranath Tagore's translations into English of 100 poems by Kabir. He had made these translations from a Bengali version and the authenticity of some of the poems, the speaker said, was considered doubtful.

The Chairman said that it was not general to find creative artists who were noble and good, but this was not true of the Indian saint-poets, of whom Kabir was one. Controversy over whether he was a Hindu or a Muslim was fruitless, as he had followed neither faith exclusively. He had been first and foremost an Indian, and had been able in his time to soften the asperities of mutual contact between the followers of the two faiths. He hoped that some of the audience would turn to a study of Kabir.

## **CULTURE THROUGH THE LIBRARY**

23rd June 1953

Speaking under the chairmanship of Shri K. Guru Dutt, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, President of the All-India Library Association, defined culture for the purposes of his address as indicative of a way of life. The culture of a people might be defensive, offensive or peaceful. Fear characterized the first type, fear and desire for things and power characterized the second. Our present tensions were the result of this double motivation. It was necessary for people to be themselves and recognize their unity with all others.

The word "through" implied three things, demonstration, dissemination and development. Thus a library might be either a place where a collection of books was kept, and this custodial aspect had sometimes been to the fore; or an institution taking care of books and producing any book on demand, or an institution which disseminated culture, at least within its four walls; today it had even to function beyond them sometimes, as in the national propaganda libraries in other countries.

To the speaker's mind a library was "a trinity of books, readers and staff." A proper staff for making contacts with readers was very necessary; there should be no barriers between them and the readers whom they were there to serve.

The library properly staffed led to the peaceful way of life, bringing readers into contact with the minds of peace-loving, cultured people. A few people could help themselves, but the majority did not know how to do so. A librarian need not know all the books, but had to know his way about and direct the reader to where the information desired could be found. There were no omniscient librarians, but there was a technique for efficient service.

Shri Guru Dutt closed the meeting with a few words of appreciation, speaking of the width and depth of Dr. Ranganathan's treatment of his subject, but wished there had been time to develop more ideas about it.



## THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

No. 6, Sri B.P. Wadia Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru - 560 004. © : 26678581

### CULTURAL PROGRAMMES JUNE - 2026

#### PROGRAMMES WILL BE HELD IN WADIA HALL

##### June 3rd Wednesday 6:00 PM :

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗಮಕ ಕಲಾ ಪರಿಷತ್ತು (ರಿ) ಮತ್ತು ಇಂಡಿಯನ್ ಇನ್ಸ್ಟಿಟ್ಯೂಟ್ ಆಫ್ ವರ್ಲ್ಡ್ ಕಲ್ಚರ್  
ಡಿ|| ಟಿ. ಎಸ್. ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರ ಅವರ ಸಂಸ್ಕರಣಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ  
ಕಾವ್ಯಭಾಗ : ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ. ಎಲ್. ನಾಗರಾಜ ವಿರಚಿತ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಶ್ರೀಮದ್  
ಭುವನೇಶ್ವರೀ ಕಥಾಮಂಜರೀ  
“ಮದನಹನನ ಪ್ರಸಂಗ”  
ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನ : ಚಿ. ಅನೀಶ್ ನಾಗೇಶ್  
ವಾಚನ : ಕು. ಸುಮೇಧಾ ಸೋಮಯಾಜಿ

#### OTHER PROGRAMMES : JUNE - 2026

June 5th Friday 6:00 PM : “Dheemahi” - Drama Program

June 6th Saturday 6:00 PM : Prasthuthi Trust Presents Karaoke Music Program

June 7th Sunday 10:00 AM : “Vedanta Shravana” Aham Brahmaasmi foundation

June 7th Sunday 6:00 PM : Sri M A Narasimhachar Music Foundation  
Carnatic Vocal Concert Vidushi Paavani Bharadwaj

June 10th Wednesday 6:00 PM : Music Program In Collaboration with IIWC

June 12th Friday 10:00 AM : “Samaskaara Bharathi”  
Art Gallery Inauguration

June 12th Friday 6:00 PM : “Sahitya Sahavasa” Cultural Program by Azim Premji University

June 13th Saturday 6:00 PM : Karaoke Music Program

June 18th Thursday 6:00 PM : Team Antaranga - Drama Program

June 21st Sunday 10:00 AM : Aavahanam School of Bharatanatyam  
Bharatanatyam Dance Recital

June 21st Sunday 6:00 PM : Music Program by Vikram Dixit

June 27th Saturday 10:00 AM : Music Program

June 28th Sunday 6:00 PM : Karaoke Music Program

June 30th Tuesday 6:00 PM : Book Release Program

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**ART GALLERY SHOWS – JUNE – 2026**

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**June 04th Thursday - June 09th Tuesday :**

Group Show @ IIBC Art Gallery

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**June 12th Friday - June 17th Wednesday :** Samskaara Bharathi

Art Gallery Show @ IIBC Art Gallery

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**June 12th Friday - June 19th Friday :** Azim Premji – Photo Exhibition on  
1st Floor

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**June 19th Friday - June 28th Sunday :** Group Show @ IIBC Art Gallery

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**ALL ARE WELCOME**

The other Programmes are by external individuals or organizations and are only hosted on the premises of the IIBC. IIBC does not necessarily endorse the views/opinions of the sponsors or the proceedings of the programmes and IIBC does not take any responsibility for these programmes. **WH: (Wadia Hall)**

***Our Recent Publications Transactions List  
available in the Library / Office***

**SPECIAL CLASSES**

- ART CLASSES : Directed by Sri T.K.N. Prasad, Dr. Ramaa, Ambuja Rao and Prithvi Prabhu Meets every Tuesday and Thursday between 4.30 pm to 5.45 pm
- ART CLASSES (SENIOR BATCH) : Directed by Sri Sanjay Chapolkar meets every Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 10:30 am to 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm

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## ACTIVITIES

- Library has a collection of about 80,000 volumes on culture, history, literature, philosophy etc.
  - Reading Room receives about 200 magazines and periodicals from all over the world.
  - Children's Library has about 20,000 books in a separate building and caters to the needs of students and youth.
  - Behanan's Library has a special collection of important works and reference books.
  - Publication consist of a monthly bulletin, transactions, books and reprints. Sale as well as exchange arrangements are welcome. Programmes are held each month consisting of literary, visual and performing arts. About 15 to 20 activities are planned every month.
  - Bequests, donations and endowments enjoy 80G Concession. Inquiries invited.
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### OFFICE WORKING HOURS

WORKING DAYS	:	Tuesday to Sunday (Monday Holiday)
OFFICE TIME	:	10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.
Library	:	9:30 a.m - 7:00 p.m.

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