

Heritage Centre, IIT Madras presents

Volume 2 - Issue 7

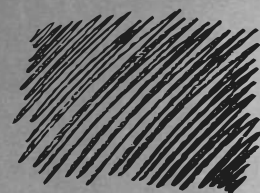


Heritage Centre
IIT Madras



Nov
2024

Glass Panels

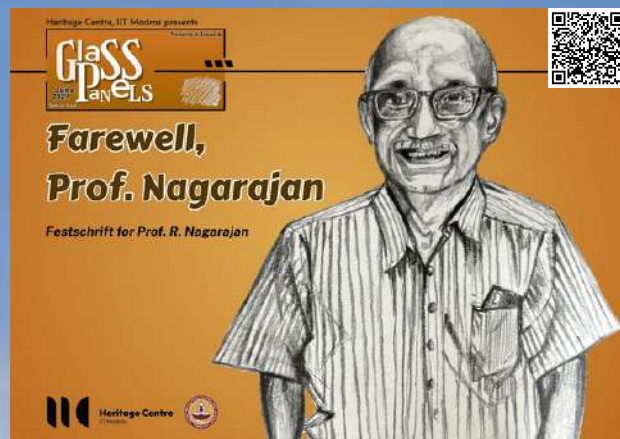
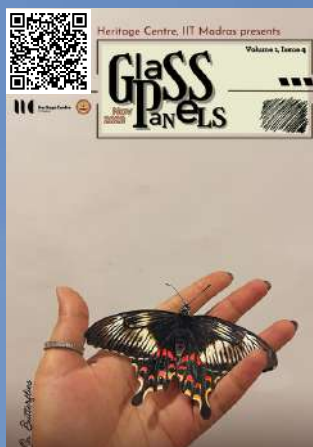
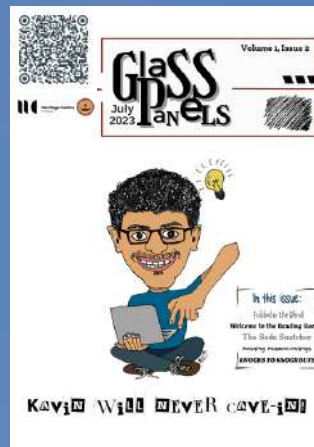


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- AMUSING MUSEUM MUSINGS

THE ANGRY WINDS

Check out the previous issues of *Glass Panels* by visiting the Heritage Centre Library or by scanning the QR codes to access the PDFs!



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FOLDER
DIRECTLY!

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Ms. Lagan Jain
Mr. Surjit Randhava
Mr. Norman R. Jaffray
Mr. Aryan J. M.
Mr. B. S. Ganesh

The Heritage Centre was formally inaugurated by Dr. Arcot Ramachandran, former Director of IIT Madras, on 3 March 2006. It is a repository of material of heritage value and historical significance to IIT Madras. "Heritage Centre - Reimagined" was inaugurated on 18 December 2022 by Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Honourable Finance Minister of India.

Located centrally on campus, the Heritage Centre has an exhibition space that enjoys an abundance of natural light. The Centre also has a small theatre and a particularly pleasant reading area that offers incomparable views of the green campus.

Our readers write...

Thanks for *Glass Panels*, the issue of September 2024, especially for the very interesting article of Prof. S. Ramani's article about his part-time services to the Indian Air Force, while he served the Department of Humanity as its faculty.

He did his Ph.D. under Prof. Srinivasan of our Department of Mathematics at IIT Madras. In those days Humanity Department was just above our Mathematics Department (HSB, building). Very nice friendly person, I used to feel very happy whenever I used to meet him.

With regards,

Surendranath Majhi

(Department of Mathematics, senior faculty member)

Pictures are beautiful and nostalgic. The articles seem to be very good.

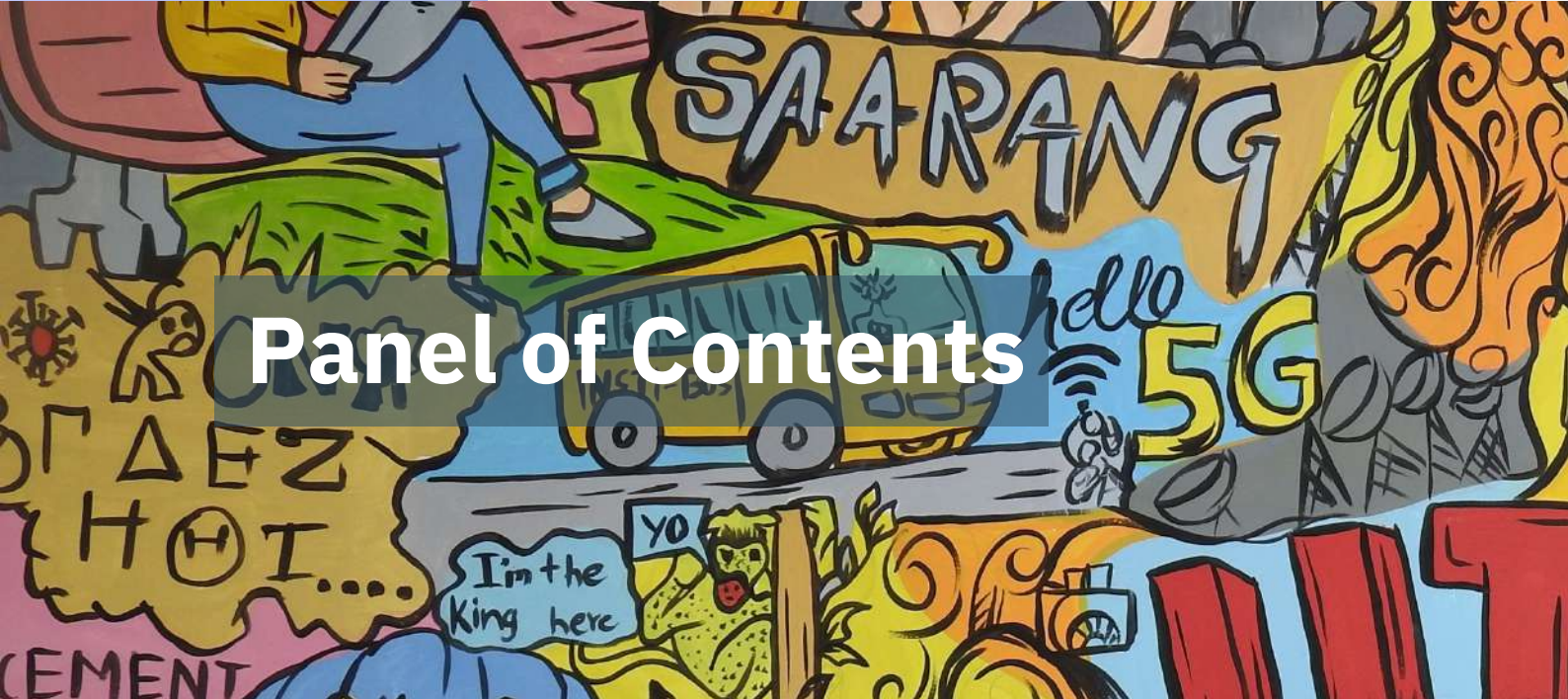
Quality of e-magazine and hard copy is superb.

Thanks for publishing my article on CAAM. This museum building is more than hundred years old. ASI specifies all 100 year old buildings under ASI as Heritage Building and these buildings are preserved .

Thanks & regards,

H. K. Panigrahi

(1970 batch alumnus)



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Ministers, entrepreneurs, authors, Nobel laureates...the Centre is never short of stories of dignitaries gracing it. The past, present and future of the Institute are documented and kept on display here, making it a significant part of any visitor's itinerary. Here is a glimpse of some of the recent distinguished visitors.

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YOU

Cannot miss
these mugs!
Available at the
Heritage Centre!!

Letter from the **EDITOR**



Docent training has taken our weekends but given us a new skill to flaunt! Lagan's article describes her journey to becoming a docent. She had to sacrifice her weekends, but was it worth it? Read her article to find out! Mymoon writes about a flock of crows at IIT Madras. We learn about the reasons behind them circling and gathering in large groups.

H. K. Panigrahi steals the cover story yet again with an interesting story about the 1966 cyclone that hit Madras. Well, our city is no stranger to cyclones and floods, but this story will take you way back in time and give you an idea of how IIT Madras weathered the storm and moved on!

My article, based on a talk by Femke Bijlsma, is a reflection of the work we do here at the Heritage Centre. Picking up on the idea of making visitors curious and eager to learn about the facts displayed at a museum, I have drawn comparisons between her talk and the techniques we use to generate curiosity in our visitors.

Jabaraj and Diya have captured images of a special visitor to the Heritage Centre. Flip through to find out who this visitor is! The Heritage Square is back with a bunch of fun content. A poem, a few pieces from old *Campastimes* issues, and a surprise contest with guaranteed cash prizes!

This issue is loaded with things to keep you entertained and informed! Drop by at the Heritage Centre sometime!

-Bhuvanesh Santharam



Send us your
feedback!



Sir Charles Chaplin at his usual hangout near the Krishna Chivukula Block

The Angry Winds

A chilling account of the 1966 cyclone that hit IIT Madras



Hiranya Kumar Panigrahi
B. Tech in Metallurgy, 1970
IIT Madras

November is a pleasant month at IIT Madras. Students are busy with academic activities, sports, and games. The deer on the IIT Madras campus also enjoy the comfortable temperatures and often wander from their usual habitats in the woods to areas near the hostels. The season brings plenty of greenery and flowers.

However, the 1960s were different. There were no trees in the hostel area between Taramani Guest House and Ganga Hostel. The hostels and roads were still under construction, and the area had been cleared of trees for the building work. The deer population was smaller, and very few ventured into the hostel area.

In 1966, the third year of the five-year B.Tech. course for the 1964 batch involved periodical tests to assess academic performance. These tests were held at regular intervals, and the marks obtained were included in the overall marks for the year. We took these tests seriously and studied regularly for them.

In early November 1966, we had a periodical test and classes at the Humanities and Science Block (HSB) and the Metallurgy Department in the morning. Other students from different batches were also attending classes or tests in the HSB. Most of us were focused on the tests and didn't pay much attention to the weather, which was cloudy with light, intermittent rain. Some of us brought umbrellas, while others didn't. I didn't have one, but the rain was usually light and didn't last long.

View from Ganga Hostel, 1960s



Normally, there was a lot of deer activity near the hostels in the mornings. However, that day, there were no deer in sight. After the tests and classes, we returned to the hostels for lunch. As we left HSB, we were hit by a storm. The wind had picked up, and the light rain turned into a torrential downpour, driven by strong winds. Those with umbrellas struggled to shield themselves from the rain, while the trees along the road from HSB to Taramani House offered some protection from the wind. Walking with open umbrellas was difficult in the wind and rain.

Beyond Taramani Hostel, the trees stopped, and the road was barren. The hostels were on one side of the road, with no buildings on the other. Ganga Hostel, located at the end of the road, stood alone on the opposite side. Once we reached this stretch, we faced the full force of the winds. The pelting rain was painful, and umbrellas were useless. The stronger umbrellas didn't flip inside out but were hard to hold, while the weaker ones overturned immediately, offering no protection.

Students in the hostels closer to Taramani House had a hard time making their way back. The wind, coming from the sea, was blocked by the hostels, reducing its speed for those closer to Taramani House. By the time I reached Godavari Hostel, the wind had intensified. I was walking alone after this point, as others had gone to their respective hostels. Walking through the wind and rain felt like pushing against a crowd. Despite my strength, it took most of my effort to keep moving. By the time I reached Ganga Hostel, the wind was incredibly strong. The winds from the sea had no buildings or trees to slow them down. I kept pushing against the wind until I finally reached the hostel.

About fifty feet from the entrance of Ganga Hostel, I saw something strange. Some students were crawling on their hands and knees, trying to move forward against the ferocious winds. The storm had forced them to the ground. I barely managed to stay on my feet and reached the hostel.

My room was in the rear wing on the first floor, near the sea. Ganga Hostel was the last hostel on the campus, and there were no tall buildings between it and the sea. Once inside, I changed into dry clothes and breathed a sigh of relief, thinking the worst was over. But there was no luck. The power was out, and it was pitch dark in the middle of the day. The clouds had completely blocked the sun. There was a deafening noise coming from the common washroom. I went to investigate.

"ABOUT FIFTY FEET FROM THE ENTRANCE OF GANGA HOSTEL, I SAW SOMETHING STRANGE. SOME STUDENTS WERE CRAWLING ON THEIR HANDS AND KNEES, TRYING TO MOVE FORWARD AGAINST THE FEROCIOUS WINDS."



Visitors to Marina Beach enjoy the waves and sea breeze near the half-submerged Stematis. Image source: The Hindu / Mr. H. K. Panigrahi

The washrooms in Ganga Hostel, like those in most other hostels, had several bathrooms, toilets, urinals, and washbasins. They were equipped with exhaust fans with metallic blades. Surprisingly, the fans were spinning at a high speed despite the power outage. It soon became clear that the winds from the sea were blowing through the exhaust fans, causing them to rotate at incredible speeds and creating a loud noise, similar to that of a siren. Ganga Hostel had six bathrooms on the seaside, each with several exhaust fans. The combined noise from all the fans sounded like dozens of sirens blaring at once. The angry winds had found a voice, and they screamed for three days. The fans kept spinning and howling for the entire duration of the storm.

For the next few days, we had to eat bread and butter or rice and dal, as vegetables were unavailable. Classes and periodical tests were suspended.

This was the cyclone of 1966. A cyclonic storm, originally expected to cross the coast near Nagapattinam, changed course and hit the shores of Madras on the evening of November 3, 1966. Winds blowing at 100 km/h caused widespread damage. The storm's fury was felt across IIT Madras, and the campus suffered significant damage. Villages around the campus, like Taramani and Velachery, were also affected. Students returning to their hostels during the storm had their own stories to tell. Some helped weaker students make their way through the cyclone, while others cheered them on. For a couple of days, there was no power, and the water supply was disrupted. We had to make do with stored water and rainwater collected from the rooftops. The damage along the coastline was even worse.

When normalcy returned and we ventured into the city, we saw clear signs of the storm's impact. Madras had experienced several cyclones in the past, but the destruction caused by the 1966 cyclone was massive. It caused severe damage to at least six ships in the Madras harbor. One ship, the Panamanian cargo ship *Progress*, split into two after hitting a rock, killing about 26 crew members. Another ship, *Stematis*, a Liberian-flagged cargo ship, ran aground on Marina Beach on 3 November 1966, and was partially submerged. The wreck remained on the beach until the 1990s. The sight of the half-submerged *Stematis* became a well-known landmark in the city, attracting many visitors. There was even talk of turning it into a floating restaurant, but the idea was abandoned for safety reasons.

For over 24 years, the remains of *Stematis* stood as a grim reminder of nature's power. Over time, people became accustomed to its presence, but the memory of the wreck remained. Today, there are no signs of the ship left on Marina Beach, but the memories of the angry winds and the storm still linger. The winds may be calm now, but they could wake up at any time.

December, 1966]

The Moving Finger Writes . . .

The Agony and the Ecstasy

One should normally expect that with the present three periodical-a-week system we I. I. Tians should be immune to what is generally termed as examination-phobia. But in spite of the gruelling exercise that we have to undergo here, with the approaching terminal examinations there was a visible tensioning of the atmosphere in all the hostels. Though few ever spoke of it, everyone was aware of the looming danger ahead. Just as all good things must end, so also, all bad things must start. The preparation leave came and finished off just when we were beginning to feel that they were too long and that the sooner we finish off with the exams the better. The examinations began with all their force and fury, and the monotonous rite of walking every afternoon to the exam hall was broken only by the lashing winds and the cyclonic weather. But even nature in the midst of her tempest managed to show a soft corner for us. After a dinner by candle light, the clouds parted and the stars winked merrily from way above and lady moon peeped out ever so shyly. With no examinations the following day this seemed to be an ideal sort of break from the daily drudgery of examinations. Finally, just as quietly and naturally as they had crept on us the examinations finished off and four days of luxurious and well earned holidays followed.

Coverage about the cyclone from the Campastimes issue dated December 1966. ▲▼

Probably for the first time in the history of our Institute, the terminal examinations were postponed due to a gale. The gale which threw the whole Institute out of gear for almost two days was a disappointment to many whose Diwali holidays were spoilt due to the postponement of the examinations.

In spite of the impending examinations forty IITians set out to do relief work in Velacheri. Attracted by the enthusiasm of Kabilan and Veer the volunteers set out to distribute food packets to the poor villagers who were rendered homeless. The spontaneous help caused one surprised villager to remark that it was all for the coming elections.

Swarms of Crows at Twilight



Mymoon Moghul
Former IIT Madras Campus Resident, Alumna of Kendriya Vidyalaya IIT Chennai



A couple of days back at about 5.15 p.m. I witnessed a huge gathering of crows on the roof (tank) top of the neighbours' house from my terrace. There were about 10-15 of them gathered silently in a sort of conference. Intermittently a few would fly off cawing loudly while some others joined the group. As I turned towards the IITM compound I was stunned to see more than a hundred crows circling in the sky and many more gathered on the rooftop and treetops close to the hockey grounds. The sight was mysterious and fascinating. The phenomenon lasted till darkness fell.

One reason crows flock together is effective foraging. While in groups, crows cover more ground, which helps them find food easily. Gathering in groups also offers them security from predators, particularly at night.

In an article, Jane Hunter writes:

"In addition to these practical reasons, crows gather for social learning and information exchange. For instance, when one

crow finds a good food source—such as a tasty meal at a local KFC dumpster—others in the group often follow, ensuring that valuable resources are shared. These gatherings also provide opportunities for crows to meet potential mates beyond their immediate family groups, expanding their social circles and increasing their chances of finding a suitable partner." (<https://www.junehunter.com>)

Communal roosting helps crows strengthen bonds within the group. Known for their intelligence and ability to adapt quickly, their problem-solving capability increases when they roam around collectively.

Editor's Note: What other animals or birds have you observed on the IITM campus? Let us know via email! (ic35226@iitmad.ac.in)

SCAN THESE QR CODES TO FIND MORE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY MYMOON!



Giving Up My Weekends: Was It Worth It?

My Honest Take on IIT Madras's Docent Training Program



Lagan Jain
Dietitian, Entrepreneur

Hands down, no cap – giving up my weekends for IIT Madras's Docent Training program sounded like a wild idea. I mean, who willingly sacrifices their precious weekends? But something about the opportunity to learn something new and different resonated. Maybe it was the idea of exploring uncharted territories or the thrill of challenging myself. Whatever the reason, I took the plunge.

I couldn't help but wonder what I was getting myself into. Would I regret giving up my weekends? The answer, I'd soon discover, was far more complex than a simple yes or no.

Join me as I share my honest take on my experience as a non-IITian at IIT Madras.

As I stepped into the IIT Madras campus I was always mesmerized by the beauty of this campus the air felt like a warm hug on cold winter days, and the students here are quite welcoming from exchanging smiles to getting a free auto ride till the metro station from a cute guy. I made the most of it. My time at IIT Madras was full of surprises. From getting lost on the campus to finding my way to the Heritage Centre. I recall hours of waiting for the institute bus which almost felt like an eternity but I was never alone. In the charming company of IITM's campus residents, the spotted deer always stole my heart. Every moment spent on the campus felt like a treat.

The training program was very informative, engaging, and thought-provoking. I learned not only about IIT Madras's rich



Taking a tour!

history but also about Chennai's fascinating past. What struck me was that, despite it being the first time they conducted this program, everything was meticulously planned and executed. The organizers' attention to detail was impressive, and the entire schedule ran seamlessly.

The professors who conducted the classes were highly professional and made each session engaging and interactive. Their passion for sharing knowledge was evident. The classes were well-structured, and the discussions were very informative.

I also enjoyed connecting with my fellow participants, who came from diverse backgrounds. We shared our experiences, asked questions, and learned from each other.

The Heritage Centre is a testament to IIT Madras's commitment to preserving its legacy. I felt a deep sense of connection to the place and its people. It's now my favorite place on campus.

As I reflect on my journey with IIT Madras's Docent Training program, I am filled with a sense of gratitude. Was it worth giving up my weekends? Absolutely! It was a spontaneous decision that turned out to be an invaluable investment. Giving up my weekends was a small price to pay for the wealth of knowledge and experiences I gained. And now I'm officially a campus expert – just don't ask me where the cafeteria is!



Receiving my certificate!

Curating Curiosity at the Heritage Centre

Reflections on Femke Bijlsma's talk



*Bhuvanesh Santharam
Senior Content Writer
Heritage Centre*

Some of us had the opportunity to visit Femke Bijlsma's talk at architect Benny Kuriakose's office on 22 October 2024. Femke is an architect, storyteller, curator, and museum designer from the Netherlands. The talk was enriching and (naturally) visually appealing. Femke shared her experiences working in places worldwide including Asia, North America, and Europe. Key takeaways from her talk included inculcating a sense of curiosity in exhibitions and preserving the human element in the museum experience.

Femke discussed the importance of maintaining a strong network and building relationships, especially with individuals in government, since some of her projects involved collaborative efforts with governmental bodies. She emphasized that not everyone would support the ideas being discussed, but the backing of even one person within the framework could make a significant difference.

Emphasizing the interactive element in museum exhibits, Femke highlighted the need to create room for suspense in an exhibition. Think about it. Would you like it if a museum experience were reduced to an insipid display of text, text, and more text? Probably not! As curators, our role would be to indulge in storytelling using the facts at hand. Femke pointed out that one must try to touch the hearts of the visitors and make them feel curious to "learn" more about the exhibition. She drew a comparison between the Montessori education system and a museum, pointing out that "a child only learns what it is ready to learn." It is similar to a museum, isn't it? One cannot force a visitor to look at a particular exhibit or artifact if they are not interested in it.



An invite to the talk



Pictures from Femke's talk

The next question is: how do you spark curiosity in people? Femke explained that there are thousands of ways to do this. One example is the use of a peephole exhibit—an idea that draws people in even if they are told it's a "boring" exhibit. This is one way to build curiosity. Once people are intrigued by an exhibit or artifact, they naturally become more interested in learning about it.

Of course, being an educational institution, IIT Madras's history is loaded with facts. One of the ways we, at the Heritage Centre generate curiosity is by partially revealing the story behind artifacts. One such example I can think of is the Time Capsule. While taking visitors around the Centre for a guided tour, we often ask them to guess what it could be. No, I am not going to explain what it is in this article. Come down and see it for yourself! Another example is the 30 species of butterflies placed in an acrylic box. Are they real? Are they painted? Again, come and figure it out yourself.

Recently, I had the chance to co-curate with Mamata Dash, a thematic exhibition about Fashion at IIT Madras over the decades. The exhibition, titled 'Snippets of IIT Madras Style', contains photographs showing various personalities from the 1950s up to the 2020s clothed in their unique sense of style and fashion. I ensured that the visitors did not leave the central globe (location of this exhibition) without scratching their heads (or chins) a little. The captions I've placed alongside the photographs sometimes invite visitors to find a person from one image in a different photograph within the same exhibition. Not exactly an easy task given the number of pictures in the exhibition!

The bottom line of Femke's talk was to ensure that curating an exhibition involves a human element, something that resonates with peoples' hearts on a deeper level. During the alumni meet in 2023, we collected admission photographs of visiting alumni with the help of the Archive of IIT Madras. These images were displayed on an interactive screen in a prominent location at the Heritage Centre. When the spouses of alumni visited while their husbands were away at another event, we asked them to identify their significant others. Laughter ensued when some were unable to identify the right person. They posed for pictures next to their husbands' admission photographs. Ms. Usha Nagarajan from the National Centre for Combustion Research and Development (NCCRD) gave us the idea for this fun activity.

When the alumni themselves visited, the images rekindled their teenage selves. They poked fun at one another, commenting on how much hair such and such person had lost compared to their admission photograph and how handsome they were compared to the present. Everyone had a great time.

Sometimes, visitors to the Heritage Centre, troubled or stressed about something in their lives, pour their hearts out to us. One time, a student who had misplaced the key to his room walked into the Heritage Centre, approached our Senior Project Officer, Ms. Mamata Dash, and burst into tears. He had an important online meeting to attend and needed to enter his room to participate in it. Ms. Mamata had to console him and guide him to the Administration Building to find the right person who could address his issue.

At times, we are forced to take on the role of listeners rather than docents. This brings to mind a quote by Rachel Naomi Remen:

THINK ABOUT IT. WOULD YOU LIKE IT IF A MUSEUM EXPERIENCE WERE REDUCED TO AN INSIPID DISPLAY OF TEXT, TEXT, AND MORE TEXT? PROBABLY NOT!



A photograph from the exhibition Snippets of IIT Madras Style

"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention.... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words."

The Heritage Centre is all about connections. Connecting the past to the present and also the future. We connect stories and people and curate them into a big, beautiful story for our visitors. By the end of Femke's talk, I realised that we had been unconsciously doing some of the things that she mentioned while preparing exhibitions or while taking visitors around the Centre. I daresay, we as museum-folk have a much greater responsibility than just putting up exhibitions!



December 2022 - Spouses of the 1981 batch trying to identify their husbands through their admission photographs on the interactive screen at the Heritage Centre





This Shikra was captured on camera by Jabaraj J. and Diya Mariam Satheesh on 25 September 2024. The bird was perched on a tree outside the Heritage Centre.

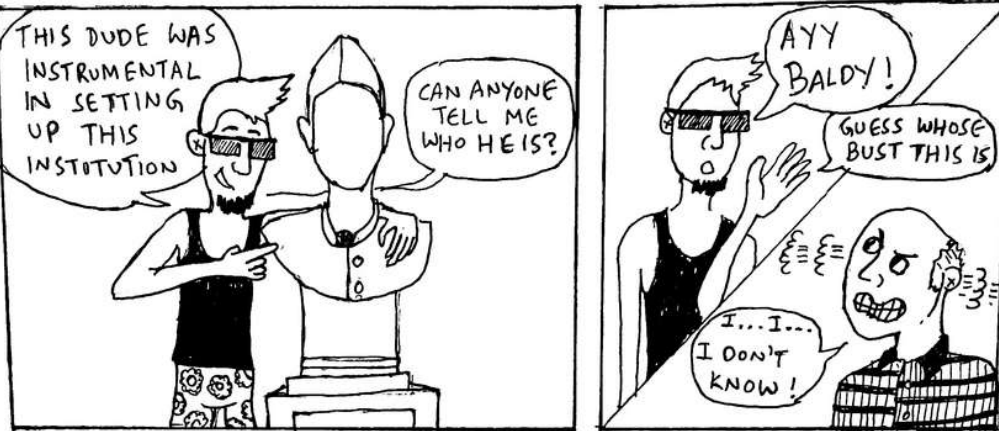


How Not to Guide a Tour

Highly informal outfit, informal language and use of abbreviations is a strict no-no!



Touching the artifact, pointing with index finger is a sin!

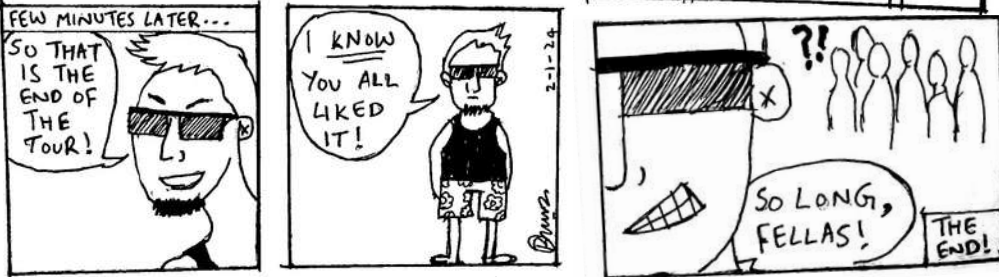


Making fun of the visitors and calling them names is not allowed!

Ridiculing visitors is a crime!



A good docent never blocks the artifact.



Never leave your visitors stranded after a tour. A docent is responsible for answering any questions or doubts a visitor may have.

A good docent must never be obnoxious and snobby!

The Heritage Square

Blackbuck

In IITM

A blackbuck stands, with words to say.

"Do you owe me an apology, friend?

For the lives you've taken, for the harm you send."

Once I roamed free, in fields so wide,
But now I see sorrow where I used to hide.
Your footsteps echo, a reminder of pain,
In the silence of nature, our losses remain.

I sang my secrets, but they fell like leaves,
In a world where compassion often deceives.
So hear my plea, as I stand here alone,
Let's heal the earth, and make it our home.

-Lagan Jain



CONTEST ALERT!

(continued on page 14)

Students!

Gather your wits

To send IIT Madras into laughing fits!

We have one fun task for you,

So sharpen your pencils

Decorate your pages with the finest frills!

And the catch?

An attractive load of cash!

But bare in mind

You must not be unkind

For offensive humour will not be aligned,

With what we have in mind!

So keep it healthy and let's have fun,

Make some quips and let us snigger at the
satire we have spun!



FROM THE ARCHIVES...

(Campastimes November 1970)

OAT Reconstruction Plan

(In the year 2525)

Submitted by Kokonut Kottai of the Civil Engineering Department, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras. Dr K Kottai was awarded his Ph D in Home Science from Stella Maris College in 2222, and in 2223 he joined the teaching staff of the IIT, Madras, in his present capacity as a Dissociate Professor.

Dr Kottai is a member of the Institution of Coconut Engineers, Association of Coconuts, and of the Hooch-drinkers party. He is the author of two valuable treatises—'Complicated Coconut Leaf Structural Analysis' and 'More and More Complicated Coconut Leaf Structural Analysis'. He has published a series of monographs on topics in Coconut Technology such as 'Kokonut water, good for your daughter', etc.

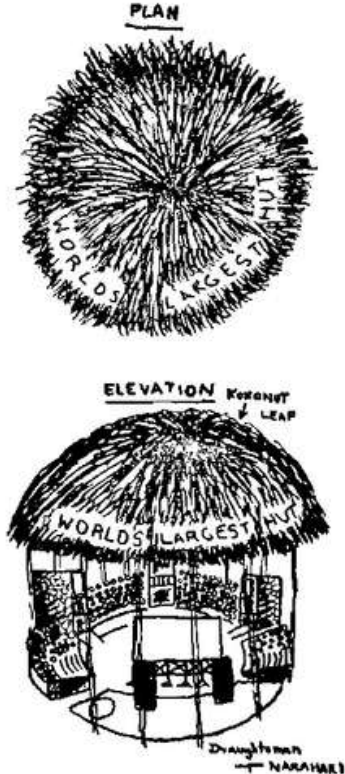
And here Dr Kokonut Kottai gives you four concrete reasons to prove to you that his plan is based on a strong foundation.

1 You will not contract sniffles, whooping cough, double pneumonia, or frostbite after Saturday night movie. Statistically it has been proved that the overall probability of rain at 8.15 p.m. on a Saturday is one.

2 Construction of an additional Hut during the Convocation will not be necessary.

3 IIT, Madras, will have the World's Largest Hut. It will become an important tourist center. With the amount of foreign exchange we will be earning, the Ministry of Tourism will recommend to Mrs Gandhi that all the money required by the Registrar be sanctioned immediately.

4 The full blooded IIT audience will enjoy the thrill of seeing Velachery movies every Saturday.



(Campastimes 15 November 1962)

CAMPASTIMES

NEWS AND VIEWS

SURJIT RANDHAVA

Rain, rain, and yet more rain. The last month has all records. The whole campus was absolutely flooded; the fun starting when a water-soil mixture of deceptive consistency began trapping a lot of unwary engineers, cars, and cows. Miss Gaudin was a victim of a Teacher's Trap just outside the well-known Science and Humanities Block. Now has it that she had the misfortune of stepping into a three foot water-filled ditch. Where, may I ask, were all the Sir Walter Raleighs?

Diwali was rather subdued this year; primarily because our contestants would not allow us to have a roaring time with so many of our countrymen giving up their lives trying to restrain the yellow borders. All the same, the Hostels were flooded at night. Some crackers were exploded, mostly on top of people living on the ground floors, and in the rooms of others. I may add that Kaushik can also give you a lecture upon fire-cracker safety.

Behgal, undaunted as usual, came up with the idea of launching fire balloons. Hopping on to his bike, off he went to Saidapet and came back with tissue paper, glue, and bamboo. Sad to say, in spite of the help given this young Mongolian by a variety of technicians, he only succeeded in setting his balloons on fire.

Hectic preparations are going on around the Institute in expectancy of the West German President's visit in the beginning of December. The open-air theatres will be ready sometime this month. This should also help the Film Club who are once again out on the street searching for a suitable location to screen their films. The trouble with having a monthly magazine is the time lag that occurs between the time when news becomes hot and the day when we go to press. After the last issue went to the printers, the Film Club did manage to finally show 'Infascetti', although I had reported to the contrary in my column.

The Institute has a definite potential for rowing. Some of our boys are members of the Madras Boat Club. Basu John won the maiden regatta event in the last Boat Club Regatta. Kapur is rowing in Senior Fours, and there is a chance that he might represent the Club at the All-India Regatta. We are all just waiting for the time when we have our own facilities for rowing. They are there in the master plan alright.

The two main roads in the Campus have been named 'Delhi Avenue' and 'Bonn Avenue'. Incidentally, a person well-versed in German geography told me that in Bonn the roads are not big enough to be called avenues. Instead, they have the handle 'Strasse' and 'Gasse' attached to them. In plain English these mean 'street' and 'lane'. It is also rumoured that the bypassed road past the Electrical Block is likely to be named after Maxwell, in which case, if we carry on like that, the strip adjoining the Heat Engines Lab will become 'James Watt Avenue'—and so on.

A staff member who knows all the secrets of Electricity, confided in me and told me a rather interesting tale about the unconnected exhaust-fan in one of the Civil Engg. Building bathrooms. I will not divulge the story as it might only shatter the morale of the Electricity Board.

Talking about bathrooms, have you noticed the gradient of the floor in most of the ones attached to the Hostel? An elementary course in Hydraulics (without even having to undergo the rigours of Mr. Chandrasekhar-swamy's Fluid Dynamics) makes it 'water' clear that liquids flow down a slope. Why is it then, that even without any clogging the pipes (sewage effect) the water always manages to stay ankle-deep in the wrong places?

I could carry on in this vein, but the Editor wants the manuscript in about ten minutes. So, now, they always manage to push me around.

Idea of the Month: If the Chinese don't make a rapid recovery of their assets, how about an I.T. Peking, complete with periodicals and all the rest of it?

That Falling Feeling

All bodies have magnetic force;
That goes for you and me, of course,
And though your mass has little weight,
Towards you, my dear, I gravitate.
My rate of falling, or resistance,
Depends entirely on your distance.
Were I to venture half way nearer,
Attraction makes you four times dearer
Because it gains in force for me
Inversely to square, you see.
And now that I've explained the rule
Of Newton's that we learned in school,
Permit me by that splendid law,
Still closer to your side to draw,
Ah, yes! I feel it growing stronger.
I can't resist the pull much longer;
Nearer and nearer, inch by inch,
I'm tugged by the compulsive winch.
You, too! We touch, we merge—we're
kissing!

Dear Me, what weightless folks are
missing!

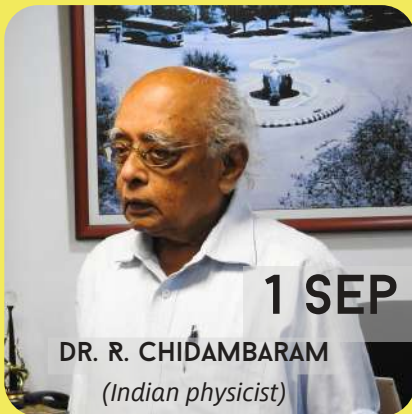
NORMAN R. JAFFRAY

Visitors to the Centre



Left Hook Lokesh
Featured Reporter

It is always a pleasure and honour to host important personalities at the Heritage Centre. Ministers, entrepreneurs, authors, Nobel laureates...the Centre is never short of stories of dignitaries gracing it. The past, present and future of the Institute are documented and kept on display here, making it a significant part of any visitor's itinerary. Here is a glimpse of some of the recent distinguished visitors.



1 SEP

DR. R. CHIDAMBARAM
(Indian physicist)

"It is always a pleasure to come back to IITM and to listen to the latest S&T developments here."



2 SEP

SUNIL K. BARNWAL (IAS)
(Additional Secretary, Ministry of Education, New Delhi)

"An excellent effort to preserve its history by IIT Madras. Quite impressive collections depicting richness of campus & its history."



5 SEP

PT. RAKESH CHAURASIA
(Double Grammy Award winning flautist)

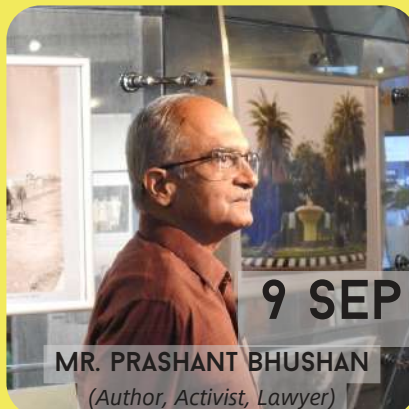
"Amazing experience being in IITM. Love to visit again and again. All the best."



9 SEP

PROF. CATHERINE O'LEARY
(University of St. Andrews)

"Beautiful campus and impressive research and wonderful friendly atmosphere. Looking forward to working with you"



9 SEP

MR. PRASHANT BHUSHAN
(Author, Activist, Lawyer)

"Wonderful to be back at the campus where I studied for 6 months in 1973. Also enjoyed seeing the Heritage Centre to see the enormous strides made by IITM in the last 50 yrs."



20 SEP

MR VIMAL K TIWARI
(Director, Military Engineer Services, Government of India)

"It was great experience to be at the Heritage Centre and learn about the genesis, development and excellence of great institution IIT Madras. Very thoughtfully and professionally developed and managed. Best wishes."



22 OCT

DR. SUBRA SURESH

(Member, Global Advisory Council, Jio Institute)



22 OCT

MR. KRIS GOPALAKRISHNAN

(Co-founder, Infosys)



28 OCT

MR. B. NAGARAJA RAO

(First Assistant Registrar of IIT Madras)

"It is really wonderful to return to IITM. I have so many fond memories of my time here. Thank you for a great tour of the Heritage Centre."

"Very much pleased to see IITM after a long time. Developed very well. Happy to see."

THE CLASSIFIED DIVERTISEMENTS CONTEST

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

Classified Divertisements? Yes, folks. You read that right.

It's like this. Once upon a time, there was a magazine called *Campastimes*. It carried news items of interest to the IITM community, and it had a light touch. "News with a heavy dose of muse", to use the words of Vikram Rao, of the second batch of students. To browse through the Heritage Centre's collection of *Campastimes*, visit the HC or use this link:

<https://heritage.iitm.ac.in/publications/issues?category=Campastimes>

Campastimes had a column that went under the name "Classified Divertisements". This is what one of the inventors of this column, to wit Vikram Rao, said about this column: "[Divertisements] was a compound noun intended to combine Advertisement with Diversions. These were contrived advertisements, often directed at members of our community. Tongues planted firmly in collective cheeks; nobody took offense."



If you would like to see some samples of Divertisements quickly, this is the QR for you:

Sample of Classified Divertisement

DEADLINE - 27 February 2025

Hurry! (Well, you actually have a month. So there's no need to hurry. But force of habit, you know.)



SEND YOUR ENTRIES HERE!

With that background having been provided, let us cut to the chase.

The Classified Divertisements Contest is an opportunity to unleash your imagination, to let loose your sense of humour. Above all, it is a chance to win prizes.

This is what you need to do to win a prize or two in this competition. Write one or more classified divertisements in the true spirit of *Campastimes* and submit them to the Heritage Centre. There are up to 10 prizes of Rs.500 each waiting to be won.

Reminder: The divertisement needs to be IITM-centric. Exams, Saarang, friends, hostels, food in the mess are all fair game.

Reminder 2: There must be humour. And nobody should take offense. And all that sort of thing.

Number of entries allowed per person: No limit.

Finally: The judge's decision is final. All the best!



News BITES

V.9.

Latest news from the Heritage Centre

November 2024

THE HERITAGE CENTRE DOCENTS!

Report by Bhuvanesh S.
Photographs by Jabaraj J.



Ms. Lagan Jain, Ms. Ashita Yedida, Ms. Anika Chinnu, Mr. Kavin Chakaravarthy, Mr. G. Veeramani and Dr. Gowri Shanker R.

The Heritage Centre organised a docent training program in October and November. Ms. Jyoti Ramesh, founder of Crossfluence Consulting and a professional museum docent, conducted the training over four weeks. The immersive program saw eleven docents graduate from the first batch, mostly IIT Madras staff and students. One graduate, a dietitian from Anna Nagar, came to know about the program through social media.

The training program ran from 19 October to 10 November 2024. It included introductory sessions, talks, assignments, and interactive workshops, followed by a final evaluation. Some of the lessons included the do's and don'ts of guiding, body language, and handling difficult visitors.

The docents were asked to present their tours of the Heritage Centre to the rest of the attendees in their unique way. After a rigorous few weeks, the docents received certificates of completion from Prof. P. Sriram (Faculty-in-



Introduction to the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras by Ms. Mamata Dash



Ms. Jyoti Ramesh explaining a point to the budding docents



Dr. Gowri Shanker receives his certificate from Prof. P. Sriram (Faculty-in-Charge of Heritage Centre) as Ms. Jyoti Ramesh looks on

Charge of Heritage Centre). The docents are now fully equipped to conduct guided tours of the Heritage Centre to visitors from all walks of life.

HERITAGE TALKS AT THE HERITAGE CENTRE



Dr. Sethuraman Suresh (Consultant Archaeologist of the Archaeological Survey of India) presented a talk at the Heritage Centre on 27 September 2024. The title of the talk was 'The Present Shapes the Past: Technology in Archaeology'.

The unique presentation brought to light the increasing application of modern science and cutting-edge technology in archaeological operations and research, with case studies from the USA, India, and Cambodia.



Dr. S. R. Ganesh (Director of Research, Kalinga Foundation, Agumbe, Karnataka) presented a talk at the Heritage Centre on 11 October 2024 titled 'Common Reptiles and Amphibians of Chennai - An Overview'. In his talk, Dr. Ganesh talked about some of the snakes, lizards, frogs, and toads found in Chennai. His presentation aimed to raise awareness about the common and widely found herpetofauna in India, highlighting their key features along with accompanying photographs.

FIRST ASSISTANT REGISTRAR OF IIT MADRAS DROPS BY AT HC!



↑ Mr. B. Nagaraja Rao with his wife at the Heritage Centre. Their family members can be seen behind them.

← Mr. B. Nagaraja Rao signs the visitors book as his wife looks on.

Mr. B. Nagaraja Rao, the first Assistant Registrar of the Institute visited the Heritage Centre with his family on 28 October 2024. His wife first recognised her husband in a group photograph which was on display. Mr. Rao engaged in a brief conversation with the Heritage Centre staff.



↑ Mr. B. Nagaraja Rao in a photograph from 1959.



Scan this QR code to see the video from Mr. Rao's visit on the Heritage Centre Instagram page.



Helpers Quarters by B. S. Ganesh

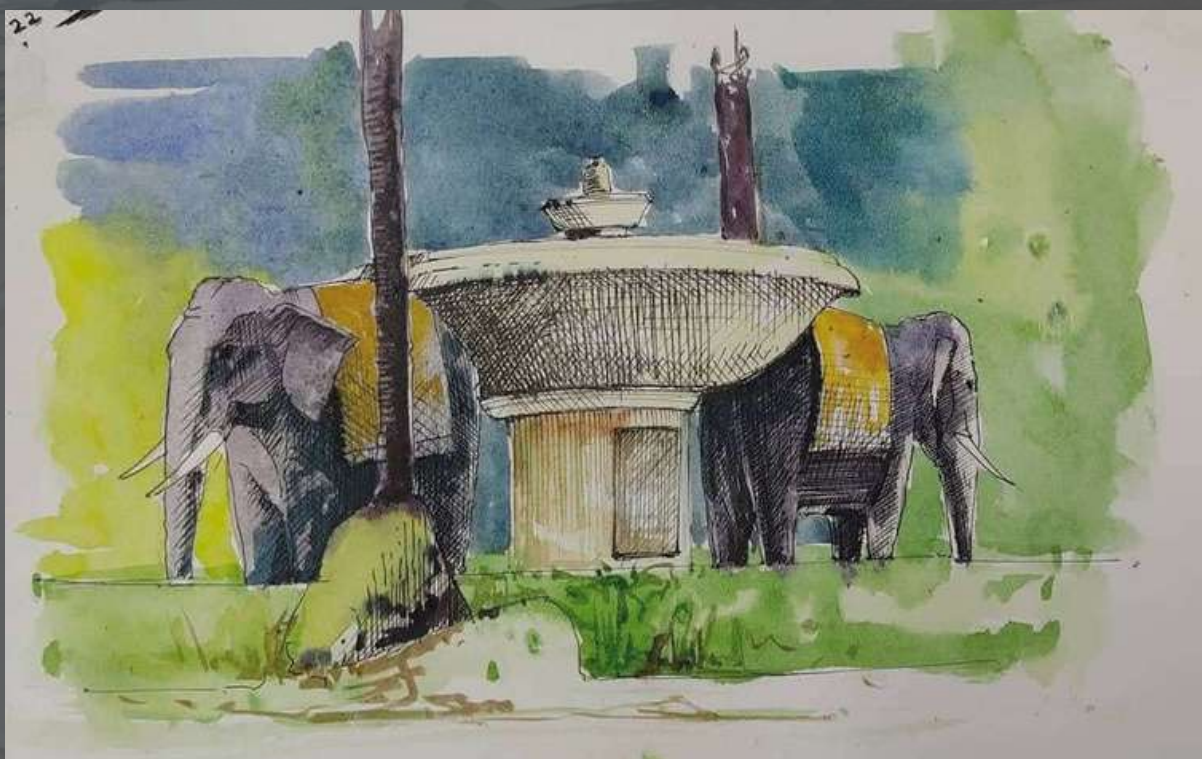
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An art exhibition will be held at the Heritage Centre of IIT Madras in the month of March.

Campus artwork made by B. S. Ganesh and Aryan J. M. (both IIT Madras residents) will be exhibited at the Central Globe of the Heritage Centre.

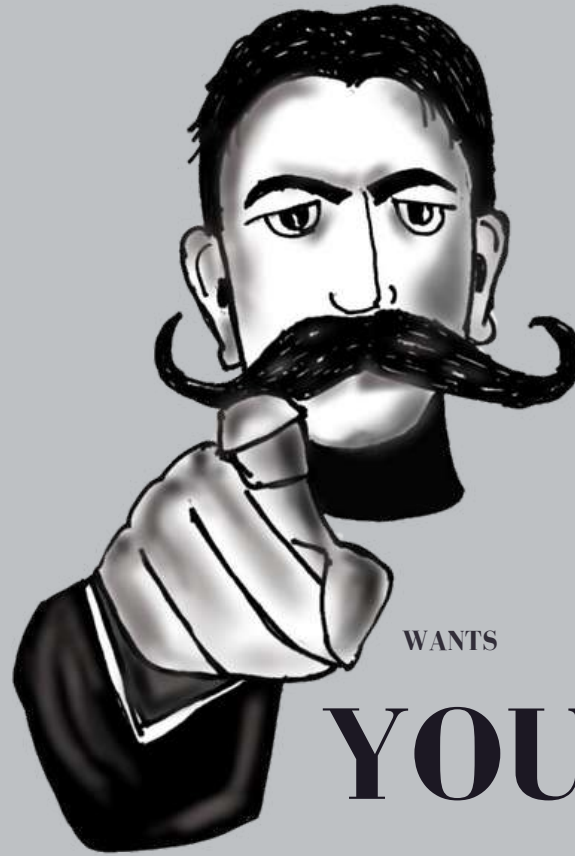
You cannot miss this vibrant exhibition!

Campasart



Gajendra Circle by Aryan J. M.

HERITAGE CENTRE



WANTS

YOU

Send in your articles, art, poems and more to get featured
in the next issue of *Glass Panels*!

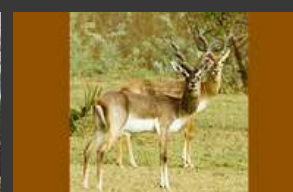
NEW MERCH! MERCH! MERCH!



A Forest in the City T-Shirts
Available in red, yellow, orange, dark blue
and white colours.



IIT Madras - themed postcards



Only at the Heritage Centre!

“Man is a history-making creature, who can
neither repeat his past, nor leave it behind.”

— W.H. Auden



Jyoti, the docent trainer in a dazzling saree! The Heritage Centre is grateful to Jyoti for conducting the first docent training program ever at IIT Madras.

To know more about the work we do,
SCAN THE QR CODES:



Follow us on
Instagram at
@heritage_iitm



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Schedule visits by writing to the
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Heritage Centre
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