



KCHR WEBINAR

THE KING'S CRAFTSMEN

History of the Ivory Carvers of Thiruvananthapuram

PROFESSOR SHARAT SUNDER R.

Department of Architecture
College of Engineering Trivandrum (CET)

MONDAY | 11 JULY 2022 | 3.00 PM (IST)



WEBINAR
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ABSTRACT

The talk will be based on the speaker's own book '*The King's Craftsmen-History of the Ivory Carvers of Thiruvananthapuram*' which explores, for the first time, the saga of the craftsmen community of Thiruvananthapuram. Once celebrated for their skill in producing magnificent handicrafts in ivory, the ivory craft guilds of Thiruvananthapuram thrived through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries under royal patronage and remained active until the late 1980s when the Indian government banned the sale of ivory and ivory carvings. As the work explored an area hitherto neglected, that too about a marginalised community, the author's main challenge was locating sources illustrating the craftsmen's life. The talk will also throw light on the meticulous documentation of oral history involved in the making of the book.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Professor Sharat Sunder R. is a conservation architect and history enthusiast currently working at the Department of Architecture, College of Engineering Trivandrum. As the author of *The King's Craftsmen - History of the Ivory Carvers of Thiruvananthapuram* (2016), a book which documents the history of the extinct craft of ivory carving in Kerala, he is also involved in research on the vernacular and traditional architectural history of Kerala. Professor Sharat Sunder was also a regular columnist with 'The Hindu'. His writings focusing on the history, art, architectural and cultural heritage of Travancore can be found in the blog '*Tales from Travancore*'. Currently he is working on a book which documents the life and times of the artists involved with the Travancore royal atelier. In his role as a conservation architect, Professor Sharat Sunder conducts curated heritage walks in the historic fort area of Thiruvananthapuram and during 2017-19 he was a member of the Conservation Committee for Sree Padmanabha Swamy temple constituted by the Hon. Supreme Court of India.

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