

Department of Art History
School of Youth Empowerment
Madurai Kamaraj University

1. The Department of Art History was organized One Week National Terracotta Art Workshop from **4th March to 10th March** of 2015 in Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.



- Students modeling the clay into creative images



- Students from various Schools visited the Terracotta Art Exhibition



- The students Terracotta art works beautifying the Parks

2. The Department of Art History was organized Monthly Lecture Series for six Months in the theme of **Art in Madurai** from October 2015 to March of 2016 in Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.



Renowned Art Historian Dr. Venketraman felicitated the Function



3. The Department of Art History was organized five days National Scrap Art Workshop from **27th March to 31st March, 2017** in Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.



Scrap Work and the Art works made out of Waste

Moulders of a Green Message

Instead of sending junk to the landfill, a Tamil Nadu professor and his team transform it into creative art installations on their university campus

By JAYANTH SOMASUNDARAM

As you enter the campus of Madurai Kamaraj University in Tamil Nadu, it feels like being on the sets of some sci-fi action movie, with metal characters staring at you from along the streets. From the ferocious bull to the 20th century robot, everything has been created by K A Babu—assistant professor and head of the department of art history—and his team using scrap metal and other junk items collected from the campus. “What we have done here is often called as ‘Junk art’ in the art world. But our aim is to leave a strong message for the onlookers,” says Babu.

The 39-year-old PhD believes these installations reiterate the concepts—reduce, re-use and recycle. As soon as Babu finds some scrap material, his imagination is fuelled with a list of possibilities of what it can be transformed into. “When placed strategically,

the scrap items take form of art with a value and purpose,” says Babu, whose team has made five installations, including a set of musicians, a robot, a bull and a bull tamer for the university, spread in an area of 750 acres, this year. The university was even awarded second place in the Swachhata ranking in 2017.

“Creating art pieces with a message has always been my focus; in fact, in my first solo art show in 2002, I used over 50,000 footprints to create an installation to remind people about the carbon imprint we are leaving on the planet,” he says.

In 2014, when he joined the university, he created terracotta installations under the theme ‘Madurai Mun’ (soil of Madurai). Babu says, “Madurai is symbolic to Jallikattu—traditional bull-chasing sport—so we began with an installation of a bull this year. The five-foot wide and four-foot tall animal was made using over 1,000 pieces of

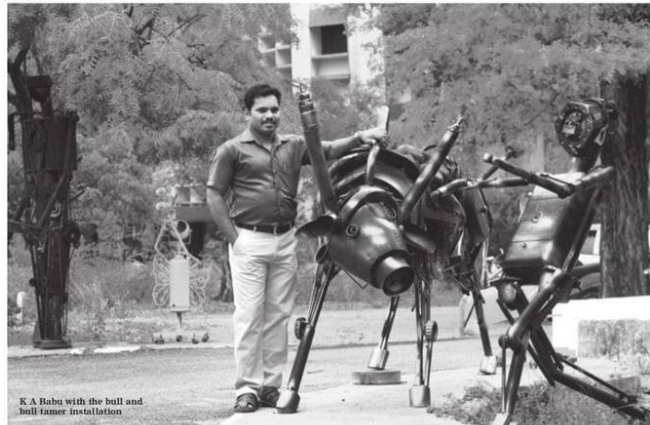
scrap metal in three days, and it weighs 500 kg.”

Babu recollects that everything around the farm was used to educate and entertain. “I think this self-sufficiency was instilled in me because of my rural upbringing.” The professor has been working mostly on upcycled art and strives to spread a message.

“Though I’ve worked on different mediums, as I began to teach, I realised that some students could not afford art supplies. To encourage them, we worked on upcycled art projects.”

Car parts are very useful for these installations, he says. “We even try to fit in waste cutlery items in each art work. The design strategy involves usage of heavy scrap pieces for the foundation and as the height increases, light weight pieces are added as they can be moulded easily,” says Babu, who believes an art should make people think, reflect and change their life towards a positive one.

K K SUNDAR

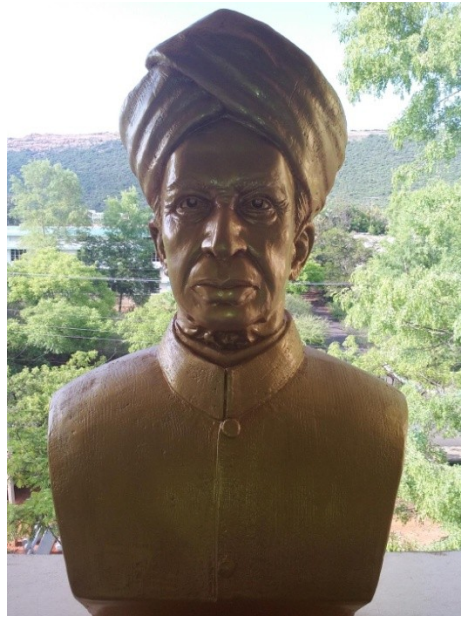


K A Babu with the bull and bull tamer installation



4. Department of Art History has organized a One Week National Portrait Sculptures Workshop from 07/02/2018 to 13/02/2018 in Madurai Kamaraj University. Bust size National leaders, Scientists, and Philosophers portraits were made in that Workshop.





5. Department of Art History organized YOUTH AWAKENING DAY CELEBRATION on 15th of October 2018, birthday of Dr. Abdul Kalam, Madurai Kamaraj University





6. The Department of Art History was organized a one day National Seminar in the theme of SPLEDOURS IN THE HISTORICAL ART MONUMENTS OF MADURAI REGION collaborated with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Indian Ministry of Culture on 26th September 2019 in Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai.



7. Department of Art History organized YOUTH AWAKENING DAY CELEBRATION on 15th of October 2019, birthday of Dr. Abdul Kalam, and exhibited Students Art works in Madurai Kamaraj University

