

THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2026

Friends of Thudippu - Edition 05



Took part **2**
Run by **Aparna NS**

Where **aikyam space, Fort Kochi**

Yes!!!!!! Kerala is rich and diverse in every aspect, and art is no exception. There are many art forms and communities that have been practising and preserving these for generations, without expecting anything in return. These art forms are a reflection of the history, culture, and people of the land.

So, the question for us was: how can we bring art forms like these into the mainstream? How can we create an experience where people can come together with their friends, engage with these art forms, and help them reach a wider audience and continue to thrive?

That is how the idea of Friends of Thudippu (FOT) came to life.

Since then, we have successfully hosted four editions at Thudippu Studio, Vennala. As we began planning the next edition, we wanted to explore something different.

"What if we take Friends of Thudippu (FOT) closer to a place that is deeply connected to Kerala's cultural and historical landscape Fort Kochi and Mattancherry?"

And the whole team went: YES! We started with a basic Google search and shortlisted a few spaces to understand what might work. But Google wasn't our only source of information. We also reached out to friends and people around Kochi, and they suggested a few spaces and possibilities that we hadn't come across ourselves.

One of the spaces we came across was Artiko Tales, Mattancherry. It took us a while to finally explore the space because they had shifted to this new location only about a month earlier.

On the day we went to visit, we reached a little early. Instead of going straight to the space, we walked through Jew Town. It was a beautiful, peaceful evening. The yellow lights were already on, the streets were quieter, and the character of that historic place felt completely different at that time of the day.

We decided to stop for a tea.

And somehow, that chai time became an important part of the process. Sitting there and talking, we started thinking about what it would actually mean to bring the next Friends of Thudippu edition into this neighbourhood. It wasn't just about finding a venue anymore. The place itself started becoming part of the idea.

When we finally reached Artiko Tales, the first sight was incredible. An artist was sitting and painting in a room filled with artworks, paintings and small sculptures. Some were finished, while others were still in the beautiful process of becoming.

She got up, smiled at us and said,

"Hi, I'm Sudharshana."

She was the founder of Artiko Tales.

We started talking about the space and our idea for Friends of Thudippu. And then she told us that she already knew about Thudippu.

That small connection felt unexpectedly meaningful.

At that point, the space felt less like something we had simply found and more like something that had somehow come back to us at the right time. We were happy, excited, and, honestly, a little emotional about it. We decided to go ahead with Artiko Tales. and yes The right space isn't just one that can hold the audience, it's one that can hold the experience.

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