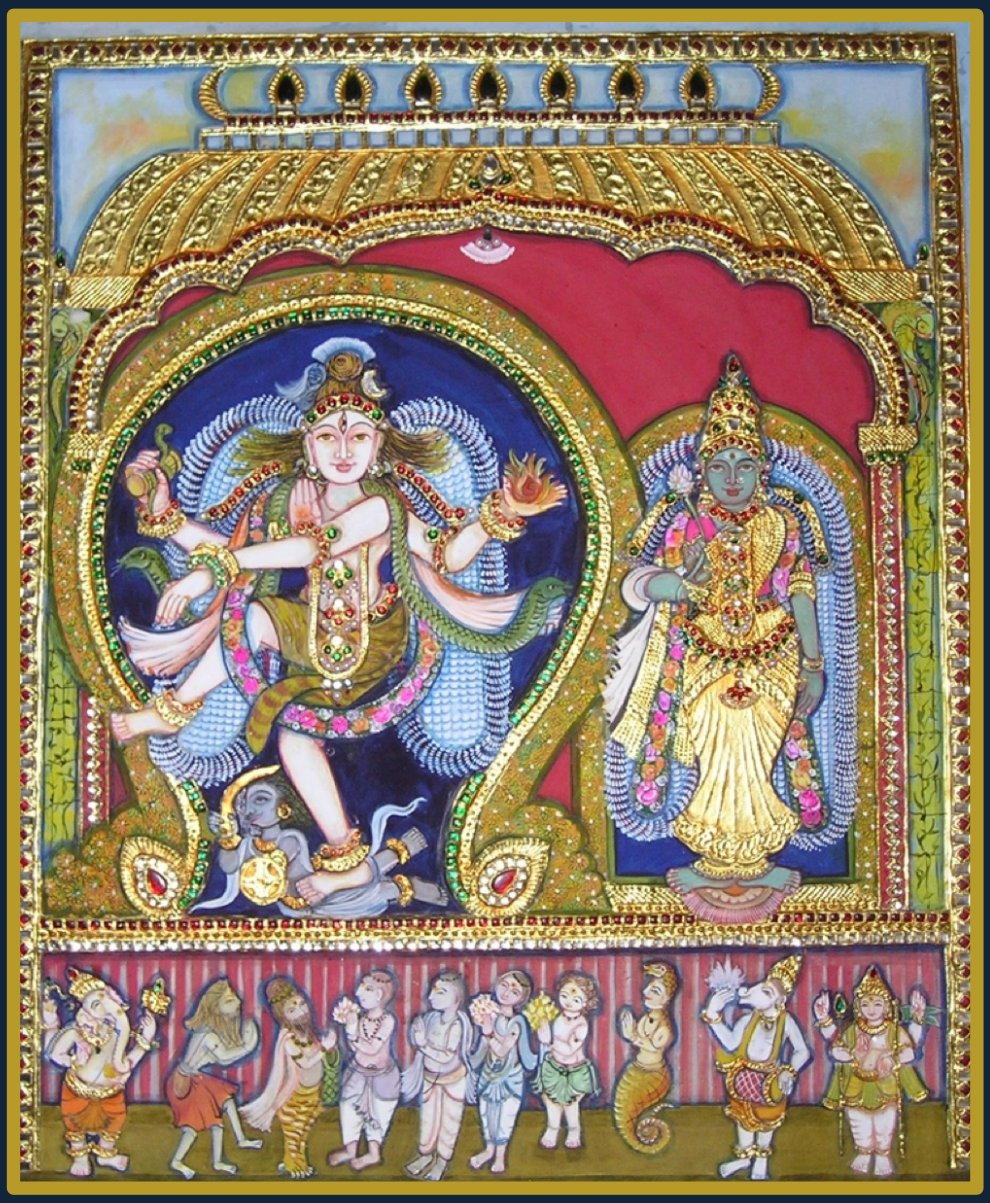
Chitra

PARAMPARYAM



Volume 2

Shadangas (The Canons of Art)



STUDIO

PARAMPARYAM

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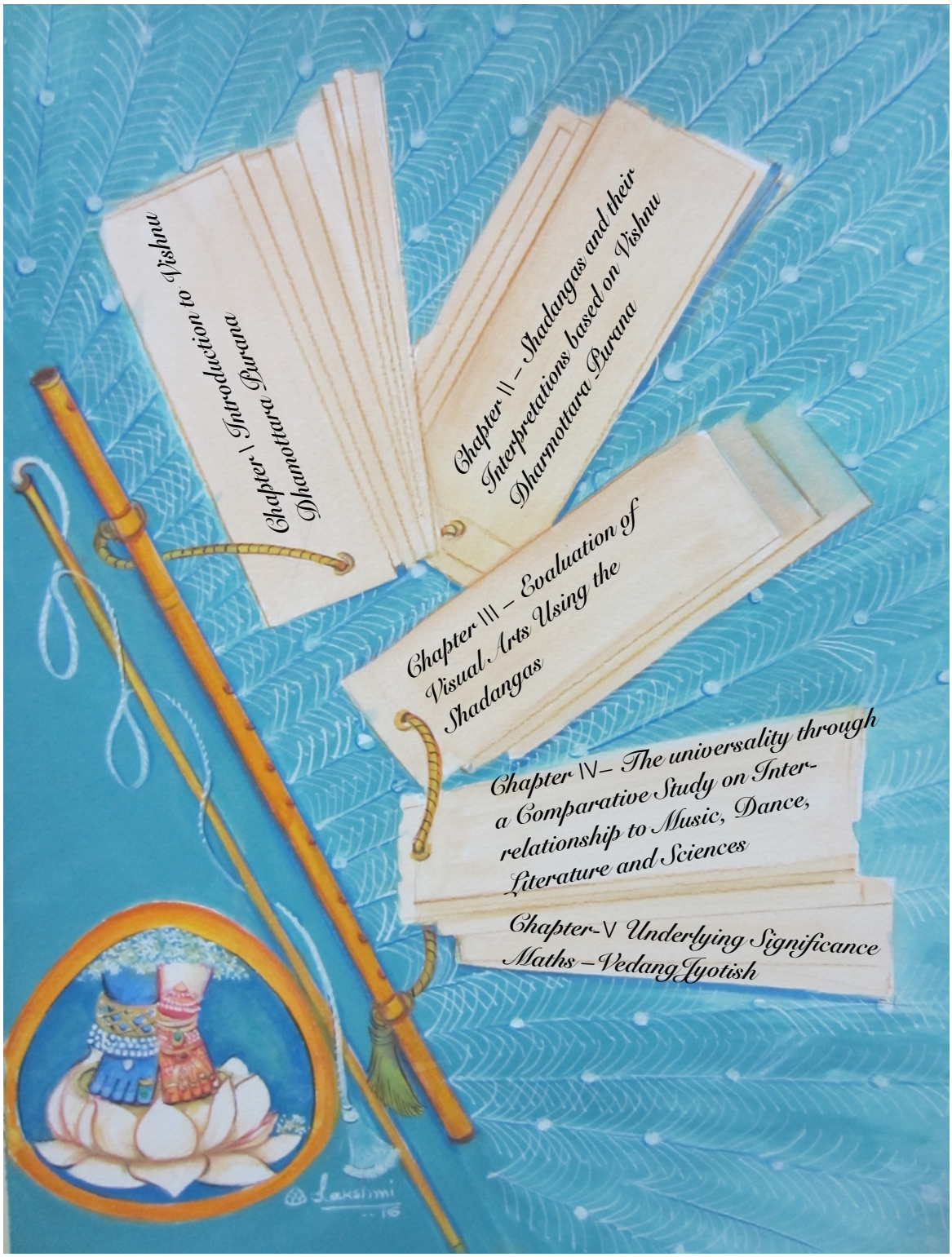
All images and interpretations are the author's own, except those specifically credited otherwise.

Title Page: 'Nataraja' Tanjavur Painting, 15" x18", Devi watching His dance with both Ganesa and Muruga in Chidambaram, with Appar, Sundarar, Thirunavukkarasar, and Thirugnana Sambandar (Tamil saints) paying obeisance with Vyagra Pada, Patanjali and Bhringi Rishi.

He, residing in the Chidambaram Temple, an embodiment of Cosmic Dance, attuned to anatomical connotations, rhythm and philosophical nuances, becomes the ultimate confluence of Shadangas.

List of Chapters are portrayed in manuscript format

to synchronise with their antiquity



Prologue

The cosmos or universe, whatever name we would like to call is wonderfully in synchronisation with time, space, matter and energy and function with precise mathematical accuracy. No wonder it is then derived from Greek *Kosmos* standing for order. This resonates through all sciences, literature and fine arts making the Shadangas or the Canons of Art, universal. The concept even though has been mentioned primarily in the Chitra Sutras of Vishnu Dharmottara, the inter connections are also explained in the same text.



by Author

Shadangas (the Canons of Art) can easily be identified with the *Nagalingam* (Cannon Ball Flower). Six petals could relate to the Shadangas, bee to the resultant beauty and clarity par excellence, when the hood is lifted. Lingering fragrance can be the encompassing universality of the shadangas through art, thought and literature.

Chapter I

Introduction to Vishnu Dharmottara Purana

Puranas (ancient literatures), are sacred texts on Hindu mythology and folklore, eighteen in number, encyclopaedic in nature, covering many areas of study. Compiled by Veda Vyasa, they are considered second only to the Vedas in their antiquity. The *Upapuranas* (Supplements to the *Puranas*), also eighteen in number are supposed to have been compiled by different seers. *Vishnu Dharmottara Purana* is an *Upapurana* to Brihaddharma *Purana*. Passed down for generations by oral tradition to a chosen few, they were compiled in manuscript format mostly during the Gupta period.

The Gupta period from the 3rd to 6th century CE is termed the Golden Age not for their military prowess or the extent of their empire, but for the blossoming of the cultural heritage. During Gupta Renaissance, ascendancy of *Brahmanical* Hinduism precipitated a simultaneous revival of Sanskrit language. All the *Puranas* and *Upapuranas* were compiled in a new form to facilitate easy understanding to common man.

Even though other puranas such as *Lingapurana*, the Vamanapurana, the *Visnupurana*, the Agnipurana, the Brahmapurana and the Brahmavaivartapurana etc. contain the subject matter related to various Art forms, the reference cited here is Vishnu Dharmottara as "the third *Khanda (volume)* contains 118 chapters which are dedicated to various contents such as Sanskrit, Prakrit, Grammar, Lexicology, Metrics, Poetics, Dance, Drama, Music, Painting, Iconography , Architecture etc" (Vishnudharmottara Purana Art and Architecture by Bhagyashree Sarma. Wisdom Library Google) The discussion is more specific with lots of codes and comprises a full account of various branches, methods and principles of Indian Painting through Chitra Sutras in *Adhyayas* (Chapters) 35-43. The systematic discussion of each and every subject makes this work a valuable source of reference for now and forever.

- Adhyaya 35: This chapter showcases the mythic origin of painting and the five types of males together with their differing proportions.

- Adhyaya 36: Chapter 36 discusses about the measurements and proportions of the different parts of the body and the colours and other distinguishing features of the five male types.

- Adhyaya 37: This chapter deals with the measurements of the five types of females, their hair and eye types, and the general characteristics of a Cakravartin, the supreme ruler.

- Adhyaya 38: It gives the details on auspicious marks that divine images, both sculpture and painting, should possess.

- Adhyaya 39: It features the different postures *(sthanas)* of figures.

- Adhyaya 40: This Adhyaya describes how to mix paints, prepare the surface, and apply the paints.

- Adhyaya 41: It defines four types of paintings.

- Adhyaya 42: It prescribes the manner in which a large number of beings–royalty, priests, nature and heavenly sprites, demons, wives, courtesans, attendants of Vaishnava deities, warriors, merchants, and others should be depicted.

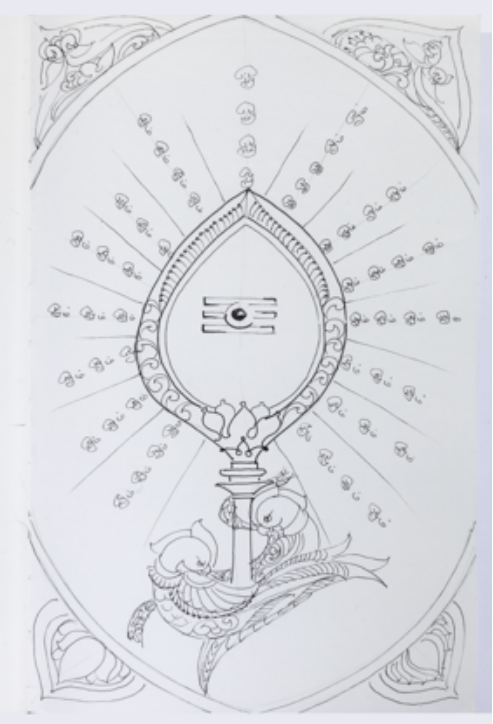
- Adhyaya 43: This chapter depicts the nine Rasas in painting, strengths and defects in painting, as well as sculpture in different materials.

Khanda III (Volume) ends with a note highlighting the inter-dependence and complimentary nature of Visual and Performing Arts

Categories of Paintings in Chitra Sutra

Whilst discussing about the features of paintings in details, Chitra Sutra distinguishes

Chithra as a two dimensional line drawing



Ardha Chithra as Paintings in low relief



Chithra Bhasa resembling sculptures



Chapter II

Shadangas and their Interpretations based on Vishnu Dharmottara Purana

' Rupabhedah Pramanani Bhava- Lavanya- Yojanam
Sadrisyam Varnika – Bhangam iti citram Shadangakam.'
(*Vishnu Dharmottara Purana)*

The manuscript defines the six limbs or *'Shadangas'* of Indian paintings, as *'Rupabheda'* or the various forms; '*Pramanani'* or the proportion in the paintings, 'Bhava' or the infusion of emotions, *'Lavanya Yojanam'* or the infusion of grace, *'Sadrisyam'* or resemblance to reality and *'Varnikabhanga'* or the artistic manner of using the brush and colours in the paintings".
(Ref : Chitra sutra translated in English by Stella Kramrisch -1924)

While *Rupabheda* is the knowledge of appearances, *Pramanani* is the correct perception, measure and structure, *Bhava* stands for emotion, *Sadrisyam* to similitude and *Varnika Bhangam* to the science of colour, *Lavanya Yojanam* stands for the compositional excellence that could be arrived at, when all the other five canons are met with.

Rasa theory lists *Bhava* also with *Lavanya Yojanam* to precipitate visual clarity. To quote "Of the six limbs of *Shadangas, Rupabheda, Pramanani, Sadrisyam* and *Varnika Bhangam* are formal qualities which are enhanced by *Bhava* and *Lavanya Yojanam*, the soul of art" (Ref.from Yasodara in his commentary on Vatsyayana's Kamasutra, Book 1 Chapter 3.]

In a nutshell, in all the different aspects of *Shadangas*, both the intrinsic and sensory perceptions are woven together to create an illuminating tapestry.

Rupabheda Form, The Knowledge of Appearances

Rupa is form created by *rekha* or lines. The hallmark of Indian Art is the force of lines as can still be seen in the Kailasanathar Temple, Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. In one of the miniature shrines called *Devakulikas*, in the Somaskanda Panel, the beautiful red ochre lines can still be perceived. The very first sketching line served also as the finishing line, for the great artists of yester years.

Somaskandar Panel, Kailasanathar Temple. Kanchipuram Tamilnadu.



The lines are the alphabets of fine arts, interlinking, interlocking, intermeshing and disengaging, opening up infinite possibilities through basic geometrical forms to creative fantasies. (Refer Volume 7 on 'Teaching Modules'). The aim of Indian Traditional Art is to reach towards form by diving through the ocean of forms.

Odyssey in explaining the Shadangas naturally begins with the line drawing of Sringeri Sarada. Full picture is shown to understand the travel. The size can easily be perceived.

‘Sringeri Saradambal’ 60” x 90"Thanjavur Painting



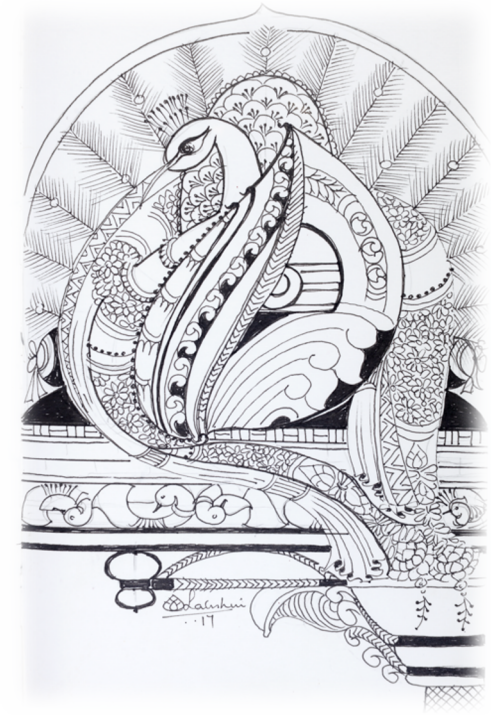




Line Drawing for Composition



Rupa



Alphabets to Visual Arts



Composition-Pen and Ink

Rupa is form which could either be visually perceived and/or aesthetically interpreted.

The cloud formation looking like *Adisesha* – Inspiration'



A portion of 'Traversing Through Eons'

Ras Leela Tempera 5'x3''Inspired'



A part of 'Burgeoning Bliss'

Tempera

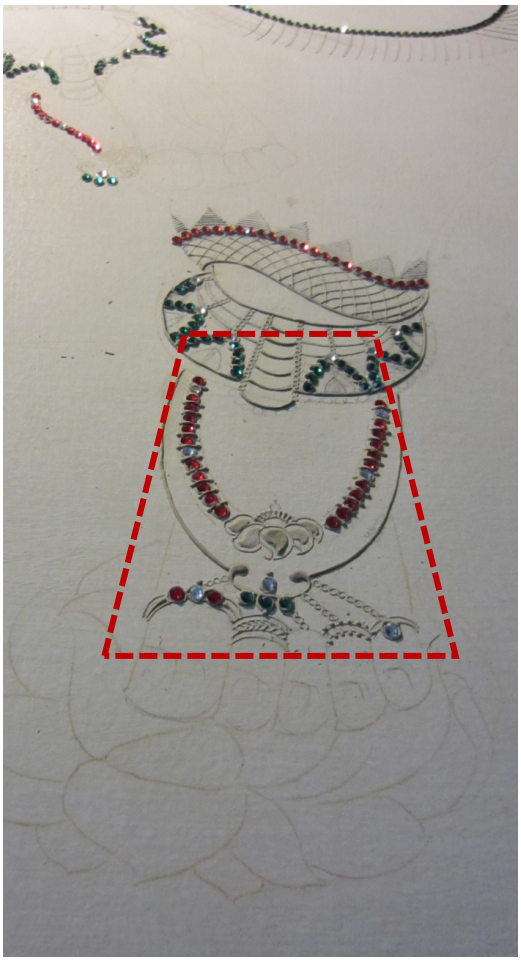
24"x24"

Indra and Brahma as cloud

formation of

Iravatham and *Hamsa 'invented'*







Rupa Bheda is the analysis and synthesis of forms enlightened by the soul or mind.

Sculptors always chisel a second line, the *Jiva Rekha* to infuse life in their works, while in Shadangas, the Pancha Bhutas serve as the life giving forces.

There is *ruci*, (taste) in every form perceivable through the five senses such as lingering taste of food, enthralling beauty of flora and fauna in motion, enticing aroma emanating from the opening of areca-palm flowers, the resonance of gently flowing waters or the gurgling of little ones or the gentle touch of the breeze. It can even be waking up to the enticing taste of pure ghee, frolicking

baby deer in meadows, the waft of blissful fragrance of nagalingam, the music of breeze through the bamboo reeds, the blissful realisation of humility and the list is endless.

This "beam of light" or the lustre of loveliness helps to light up the inner vision. It is the light which sees and shows forms. Light waves from planets and the inner light of our souls reveal form to us, diversely shaped, differently moulded and coloured - "*Jyotih pasyati rupani*" (Refer: Art as Yoga)
The treasure trove of Indian Knowledge Systems has such an in-depth analytical information on practically every field, a source of joy to dive into. In so far as *Rupa* is concerned here is a small peep into Chapter 184 of Mahabharata, *Santiparva*, *Moksha dharma*:

Hrasva - Short or Stunted,
Dirgha - Long or Lean
Sthula - Material, Copulent or Bulky
Caturasra - Square or Angular
Anuvrittyam - Rounded or circular
Sukla - Clean or Pure
Krishna - Black or Sombre
Rakta - Red or Radiant
Pita - Yellow or Pallid
Nilaruna - Purple or Mixed Colours
Kathina - Hard and Severe
Cikkana - Sleek, Glossy and Smooth
Slakshana - Slim, Fine, Delicate and Small
Pischila - Slimy, Gliding or Feathery like a Peacock tail
Mridu - Soft and Tender
Daruna - Rough and Woody, Stony and Terrible

In short, to draw forms, there is “no other way, not even by the way of sight” (Sukracharya). Both living and non-living objects need to be drawn with that sensitivity.

A tender leaf and the one ready to fall may have the same colour, but the texture varies.



Pramanani Proportion Correct Perception, Measure and Structure

The invisible thread, connecting living, non-living, mobile and immobile is like a spider’s web lighting up our intuition to grasp the Pramanani or proportion and its hierarchical interrelationship.

The guidelines from agamic scriptures for *Utthama* (tall), *Madhyama* (medium), and *Adhama* (short) enhance visualisation.

The Silpa sutras compiled for the elucidation of art gives guidelines as to the measurements for human anatomical depictions based on

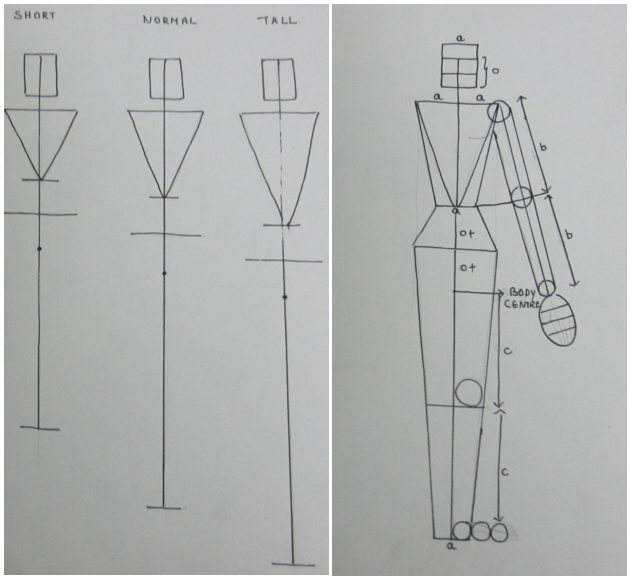
Scale and Proportion,

Form and Character and

Poses and Attitudes and more.

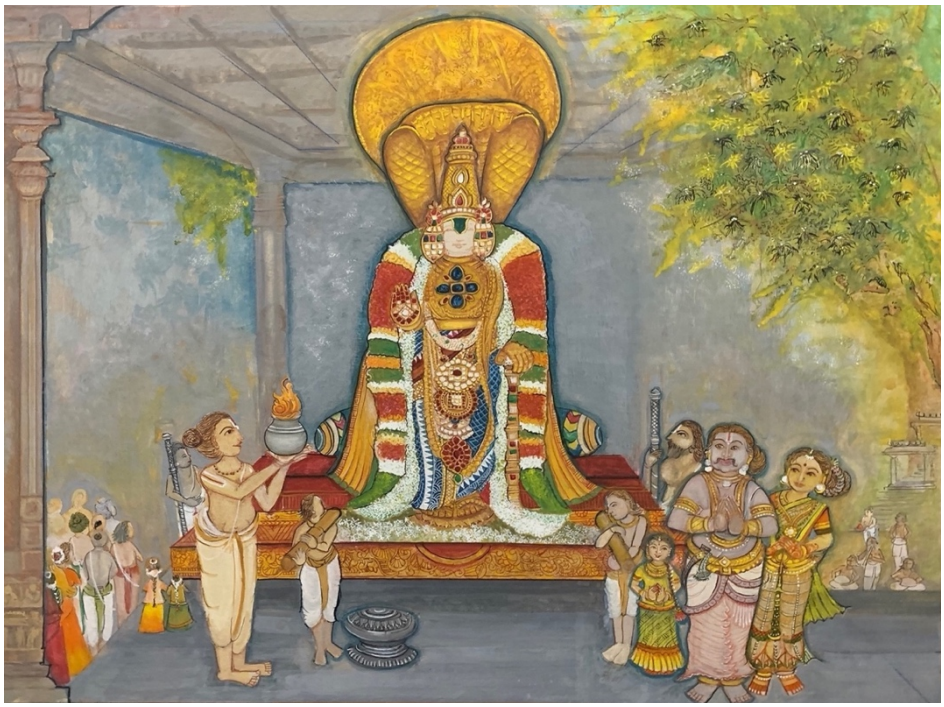
And suggests for Gods that “The artist should always conceive his deity as having youthful figure, occasionally may be as a child but never as old or infirm”





Based on the study of Drawings in the
Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple Museum, Tamil Nadu and
simplified.

'Thiruvandhi Kappu' Tempera 24"x18" (by author) *Namperumal* (Deity) is in *Utthama* Tala*,* King and his retinue – *Madhyama Tala*, People in *Adama Tala* to precipitate focus.



By author



'Transfiguration' Medieval Painting by Duccio di Buoninsegna(1308 – 11), National Gallery, London. Same concept is echoed in this painting emphasising the universality of the Shadangas

'Viswaroopa Darsanam' (Universal Cosmic Form) 24"x18" Thanjavur (by Author)

In portraying *Viswaroopa Darsanam* for example, Vishnu is in *Uttama Tala*, while the other Gods are in *Madhyama Tala* and people in *Adhama Tala*, to effectively bring in the focus.



Ashoka Pillar. as the Great Axis that divided heaven and earth, has to be the central focus with heaven and earth fading out on top, bottom and sides of the canvas to emphasise their vastness,



Thanjavur Paintings of Maratha School has
'Navaneetha Krishna' portrayed
bigger than His Parents.
(Courtesy: Chennai Museum, Chennai, Tamil Nadu)



Pramanani caitanya is a wonderful measuring instrument of mind to guide through proportions and colour symbolism in tune with their emotive content as could be perceived from the following examples.

‘Paradisal Realm of Light’

(Touched by a Ray of Sunlight)

Oil on Canvas -36”x24” Based on nature study and rain forest of

Papua New Guinea (by Author)

Birds are – Victoria Bird of Paradise, Greater Bird of Paradise, Emperor Bird of Paradise and Superb Lyre Bird.

They have all

been portrayed with due consideration to their size and migratory habits.



‘Autumn in Chennai’

Nature Study could be a guide to colour symbolism and proportions

A photograph taken in Theosophical Society, Chennai, by author, stands tall as a beautiful example for focus and proportion,

as none of the shrubs can grow to match the tree –

Adama tala!



Bhava (Emotion) Action of feelings on Forms

The action of bhava is to reveal the mind and the meaning concealed behind the everchanging veil of *Rupa.*

'Ecstasy' Tempera 24"x24" *Ezhil Deviyin Soundarya Darsanam* Series Sloka 41, by author.



Bhairava and *Samaya* dancing in *Thandava* and *Lasya* expressing the *Navarasa*s (Nine Emotions) seem to herald the change of seasons and the cosmic cycle:

'Like a waterfall cascading through the rocky mountain cliffs, in turbulence sometimes,

Hidden behind outcrops playing truant sometimes,

Or cradled by the gentle breeze to soothing calmness sometimes,

Through all *Navarasas*,

Through all Seasons,

Destroying and recreating the whole universe!'

There is no *Bhava* without *Rasa* and no *Rasa* without *Bhava*. It is then no wonder that the nine emotional stages are termed *Navarasas*. "*Rasa* is the seed and fruit of the arts". It represents fluidity and movement. Art could be an end in itself (Sankhya School) or can procure personal pleasure to the receptor (*Vedanta* School). Any artform has to reach out to the receptor, whether he is a connoisseur or not. The creator is considered a seer who can perceive the beauty and harmony of the universe, 'the Ultimate Beauty and pass it on to the receptor' at varying degrees of perception.

Beauty is the truth, that the quintessence of all branches of ancient Indian Fine Arts explained through *Rasas*.

The creator does it in three stages.

- Perception of cosmic beauty through self-forgetful activity, made possible by the use of his *Pratibha* (imagination), when contemplating common experience or observing typical facts;
- Transformation by *Pratibha,* of these observed facts and experiences into a general idea symbolizing the ultimate reality, or the perfection in perceived beauty and
- Conversion of this general symbol as the case maybe into concrete material form. The process of appreciation is reverse.

A beautiful compilation of attributes regarding colour coding and the deities is listed below.

(Vishnu Dharmottara)

Bharata Muni extolls only *8 Rasas as Santha* (Peace, tranquillity) is the inherent quality.	Colour	Deity
Sringara - love	*Shyama* - Green	Vishnu
Hasya - Humour	*Sita* - White	Pramatha
Karuna - Pity	*Kapota* - Dove Coloured	Yama
Raudra - Anger, Fury	*Rakta* - Red	Rudra
Vira - Brave,	*Gaura* – Wheatish Brown	Mahendra
Bhayanka - Fear	*Krishna* - Black	Kala
Bhibatsa - Odious, Disgust	*Nila* - Blue	Mahakala
Adbhuta - wonder	*Pita* - Yellow	Brahma
Santha has been included by Brahma		

Varnika Bhangam Science of Colour

Varnika Bhangam is the knowledge of the real nature and meaning of colours, figure, letterings etc. as well as the proper delineation and description of things seen and felt. It does not merely mean the different mixtures and uses of colours.

Prang Colour Chart

- Primary Colours –

  Red, Yellow and Blue

- Secondary colours –

  Orange, Green and Purple

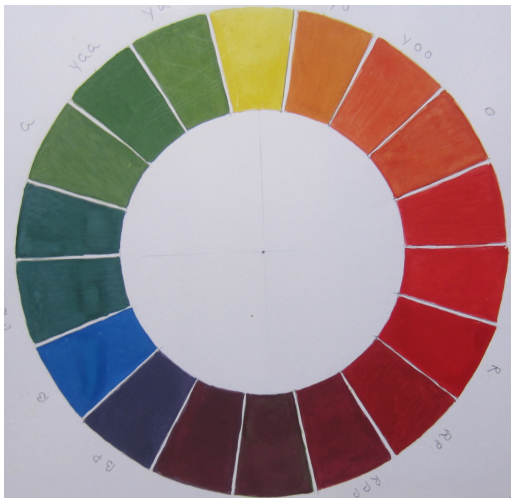
- Complimentary Colours –

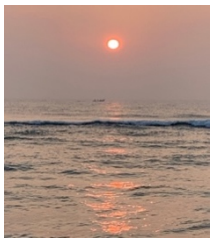
  Red- Green

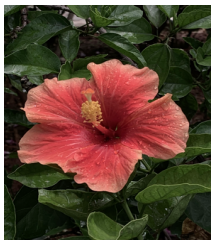
  Yellow – Purple

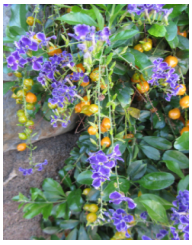
  Blue – Orange

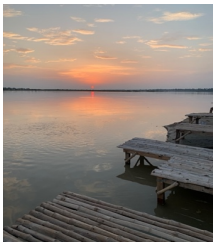
  Old Traditional Saree Colour





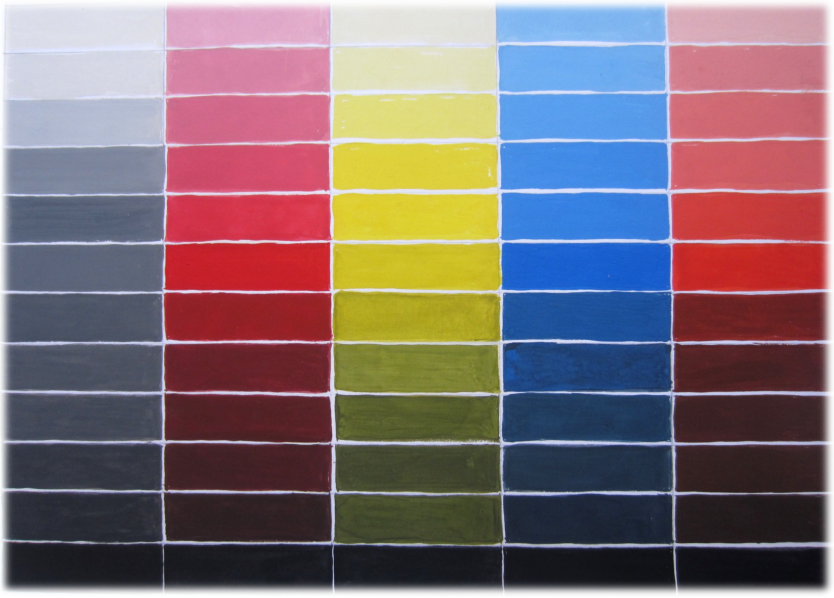






Nature has all the guidelines for colour chart, as in sunrise and sunset with blue and orange, in hibiscus and its leaves red and green and shrubs with purple flowers having chrome yellow fruits (Golden Dew Drop) etc.

Tints are created by adding white and shades by adding black

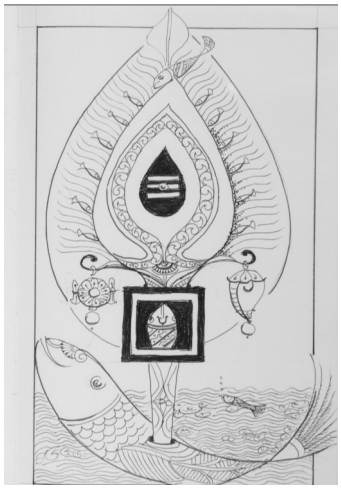


The knowledge of *Rupa, Pramanas* and *Bhavas* can be gained through sight or mind but the knowledge of *Varnika Bhanga* cannot be obtained without practicing with brush and colours.

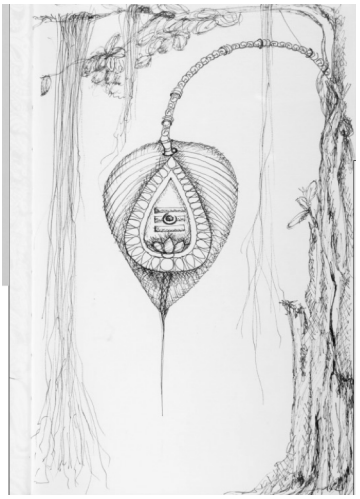
The fingers should dance with the brushes like a ballerina sliding, gliding, sweeping with feathery touches some time forceful at the others, creating kaleidoscopic motions and emotions.

Vartanas-Rendering

Raikikha-Free Delineation



Patra-Cross Hatching



Binduja-Stippling



The *tantras* (mystical instructional text) have ascribed spirit and soul to all lines and figures as well as to each letter of alphabet. For example: letter A - described as possessing the amazing quality of tone and purity of white conch shell, having the radiance of Brahma, the blueness of Vishnu and the terrible and fierce spirit of Rudra or as in Gayatri mantras. The first letter of Gayatri is ascribed to yellow of *champak* flower and fiery nature as is worshipped by fire.

The *Saptaswaras* (Seven Carnatic Musical Notes) and their attributes from Gnanacharyamala (Theosophical Society Library, H780.7Kel GMMr. gu.hi.1)

	sa	ri	ga	ma	pa	da	ni
Devata (Supreme Being)	Priest	Brahma	Saraswathi	Sadasiva	Vishnu	Ganapathy	Surya
Vahana (Vehicle)	Hamsa	Lion	*Berunda*	Deer	*Makara*	Parrot	Crow
Dhwani vachaka Prani (animal sounds)	Peacock	Bull	Goat	*Krouncha*	Kukil	Horse	Elephant
Vanaspathi (Vegetables and Fruits)	Mango	Coconut	Banana	*Jambu*	Pomegranate	Grapes	*Punnai Tree*

The *Natyasastra* of Bharat Muni has given defined guidelines to the mixing of paints, their significance properties and symbolism, the laws governing them and their purposes. Mind sees the true colour of things and it is mind which gives true colour to everything seen and felt. As mentioned earlier in 'Art

as Yoga', the total concentration in yogic meditation opens up visions of images to be illustrated in seven colours of light and seven colours of darkness.

The agrarian scenario of India has precipitated a highly sensitive colour coding and life style to suit the different climatic conditions.

For Example:

- Emerald green of Kerala with white colour in their dhoties and mundus, while their art forms shine in bright colour palette as could be seen in their Kathakali and Murals
- Tamil Nadu imbibed with the fragrance of *Kadambam* (Assorted scented flowers strung together) infused a subtler colour palette
- Karnataka with its hills and dales precipitated an *adibhanga* sensitivity to their art forms.
- Orissa with the stylised icons used stylised pith and silver in their costumes and similar feelings in their fine arts,
- Rajasthan devoid of colour went all out into bold colour rhapsody.

The volume of guidelines available from literatures could fuel the creative energy to fuse all aspects of *Shadangas* –A few examples are given below from Visual poetries of *Sangam* Literature in Tamil, *Soundarya Lahari* by Adi Sankara and *Kumarasambhavam* of Kalidasa in Sanskrit. They are so descriptive that if an artist could do justice even in a small way, it would be laudable.

- In the Tamil Poetry written by *Kabilan* in praise of one of the seven great philanthropist Kings of yesteryears by name 'Pari', it is said that the land was so fertile that the bamboo groves were laden with rice, and the jack fruit on the trees on the banks of the river were so ripe that when the fishes jumped, they burst and honey overflowed!!
- From *Soundarya Lahari* of Adi Sankara, a Sanskrit compilation –Sloka -49 *'Vishala Kalyani* ……

This sloka describes her eyes They are dark in colour and looks like the freshly blossomed Blue-lily *(Varnika Bhanga),* elongated and sharp at the tip *(Rupa)* and (Bhava) are listed in the table below. Different scholars have different interpretations of the same sloka.

Serial No	Name	Eye Vision Based on Discourses of Dr.Sudha Seshayyan on Soundaryalahari at Naradagana Sabha , Chennai by Kalakendra Devotional	Eye Vision Ref-Manblunder https://manblunder.com › articles › Soundarya-lahari
1	*Vishala* 	Wide open eyes loaded with laughter	*Samskoba* (Bliss)
2	*Kalyani* 	*Mandahasam* (Radiant)	*Akarshana* (to bring back the people who tend to drift from the righteous path)
3	*Ayodhya* 	*Mayakkam* (Half-closed Dreamy)	Dravana (Causing fear to the sinners)
4	 *Dhara*	*Karunya* (Compassion)	*Unmadha* (Bliss to the devotees)

5	Mathura 	(Sidelong)	*Vasya (*which elevates one who totally surrenders to ultimate Bliss)
6	*Bhogavathi* 	*Sneha* as you look at Friends (Affection)	Exclusive to Shiva
7	*Avanti* 	*Nidra* (Sleepy)	Tranquilising
8	Vijaya 	*Kadaksham* (grace)	Victorious

Kumara Sambhavam (Birth of *Kumara*), A medley of Mysore,
Thanjavur and water colours Size -22”x18”



When Manmatha and Madhu (Gods of Love and Spring) enter the frozen scenario at *Sthanu* Ashrama (penance grove) befitting the Yogic Meditation of Siva, it bursts forth with colour and cheer. The bees drink honey from the same flower, the deer are playful, the male elephant feeds

water through a lotus stalk to the female elephant and the *ganas* are playing with childlike glee (Shringara), Nandikeswara at the entrance of a creeper house silences the *Ganas*. The whole forest comes to a standstill, “drawn as it were in a portrait, with its trees bereft of waving, the bees becoming silent, the birds without chirping and the animals without any movement” (Kumara Sambhavam by Kalidasa, a Sanskrit composition. Translation in English by Prof Sri. Radhakrishnan, Kamakoti.org).

Later When Siva opens His third eye, Manmatha is turned to ashes – (Anger, fury). Parvathi steps back, her anklets break and *Navaveerarka* (Nine brothers of Lord Muruga) emerge out of the *navaratna* (nine gems) in Her anklets *(Lavanya Yojanam).*

A part of “Celestial Wedding”

Thanjavur Painting 60”x36”



Universality is brought about by mentioning four species of living beings as in Dharma Sastra i.e. Sprouting from the sprouts, Spring forth from warmth as the insects, birds and mammals.

Sadrisyam Similie

Similes are used to explain unknown elements through a comparison with known elements such as almond eyes, lotus feet etc.

According to *Pancadasi* "Mind flowing into the forms of things becomes the thing itself, as melted copper flowing into the mould assumes the shape and form of the engraved stamp."

When form reaches the region of thought, similes are used to make a description more emphatic or vivid. There are four stages in the making of a picture: *Dhanta* (Washing), *Bighattita* (Analysing), *Lanchita* (Drawing) and *Ranjita* (Colouring)

Among many methods employed, the principal ways of using one object as the semblance of other, three stages are used which comes under *Ranjita*:

Stage one - Factual similarity as in portraits, nature etc.

Stage two - Imagery conceptualisation as in visualising a tree as Kalpataru (Wish fulfilling tree), or the Vindhya or Himalayan Mountain peaks as Temple Gopuras etc.

Stage three - Resemblances in mood and expressions. When Devi's eyes are compared to fishes, it is not just for the beauty that they simulate, but for the continuous movement, Her all-seeing vision and the moisture, Her Karuna Rasa and so on.

In the sphere of similes in art, there are two distinct channels, reproductive and suggestive, which are always at cross roads. The rules of beauty and form are of one kind and *Dharmarasa* (devotion) another. For example: The nature of fire and a bouquet of flowers.





In the hands of artist, they can be combined to be made into *phuljuri* (Aarthi adorned with flowers).

Lavanya Yojanam (Compositional Excellence)

Lavanya Yojanam is the compositional excellence reached by conforming to the five *Shadangas* discussed above. Less is more. It stands for purity and restrain with infusion of grace and artistic quality to paintings. *Pramanani* imposes restrictions of measure and proportions on forms. *Lavanya* helps control excessive movements, contortions etc. caused by emotions and feelings, regulating the action of *bhava* for aesthetic purposes.

According to Vaishnava aesthetics, it is the lustre or sheen on pearl or the *vishranthi* after pallavi in Carnatic music.

To summarise,

Quote from Pag-40 South Indian Paintings by Sri. C.SIvaramamurthy Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India 1994

The "paintings of Ajanta provide excellent delineation of the six limbs of painting. Shadangas as they are called in Jayamangala commentary on Vatsyayana's Kamasutra. They are composed of rupabheda, variety of form, pramana, proportion; bhava, depiction of emotion; lavanyayojana, infusion of grace; sadrisyam, likeness; and varnikabhanga; mixing of colours to produce the effect of modelling. The painters have mastered the vast complex of human, animal and plant forms in endless detail. In addition they gave scope to their creative imagination for abundant design.The master at Ajanta has control, not only over individual figures but he also creates groups and he has produced splendid compositions. 'Emotion' is best depicted while narrating the scenes from the legends. The grace in some of the figures illustrates lavanyayojana. Where figures are repeated as in the Vessantara Jataka, the element of likeness is clearly shown and the *sadrisya* is very obvious. The painter's mastery of colour helps us to appreciate his capacity in varnikabhanga."

Glimpses from the *Mahajanaka* Jataka Panel from Ajanta Caves:



1



2



3



4

Rupabheda – Figurative and Architectural

Pramanani – The saint and the worshippers

Bhava – 1, Renunciation, 2, Enticing, 3, Awestruck, 4, Solemn

Sadrisyam - Contrast of the attire - grandeur in 2 and simplicity in 4 befitting the mood of the scene.

Varnika Bhangam – Effective use of the five natural colours

Lavanya Yojanam – Composition



“Ajanta is the sole monumental record of classical Buddhist culture that is preserved in a land that gave birth to this religion, and also influenced the culture of other Asian countries. The thirty odd caves cut into horse shoe shaped scrap of a steep cliff overlooking the Waghora river are the best creations of the time which inspired Buddhist in central Asia, China and south-east Asia.

Ajanta painters were guided by a highly developed sense of blending of colours with a view to produce total impression with three dimensional effects giving true perspective to line and plane. Besides, the technique of giving three dimensional effects to the painting was first introduced in India in the cave p aintings of Ajanta in 3-4 century CE. Figure below shows some of the paintings of Ajanta showing three dimensional effects. This technique was later copied by the other artist in the Asian region. (Ref – Architectural History and Painting Art at Ajantha: Some Salient Features by Manager Singh and Babasaheb Ramrao Arbad)

Three Dimensional Paintings from cave1 and 26. Ajanta



Chapter III

Evaluation of Visual Arts Using the Shadangas

Introduction to Rasa (Aesthetics)

A little note on aesthetics before beginning the discussions on *Lavanya Yojanam* (Compositional excellence) as they complement each other.

Indian Art is closely knitted with religion. The artist does not create but is greatly influenced by the vision that he gets on praying with yogic concentration. Similar sentiments are echoed in the works of Michelangelo for example, when he says that he only releases the soul from the stone.

When the artist is well versed in the *Shadangas*, creativity flows with *Rasa* guiding downstream in meditative, blissful ecstasy to reach *Paramananda* of inner satisfaction, the sea at large. Peace, tranquillity and inner glow ensues. When the observer with *Sahridaya* (one who can relate) can feel the undertones and relate, that is aesthetics revealed and received, a dream come true. Special link has to be invoked and felt both by connoisseur and common man, may be at varying levels. Words may not be needed as eyes could speak volumes. This electric /eclectic connect is aesthetics leading to *Lavanya Yojanam* or the compositional excellence, which is applicable to all art forms.

Sakthi – E (Energy) is constant. It cannot be created anew but only can be converted to other forms like kinetic, potential etc. Sakthi also denotes Goddess, an embodiment / emanation of creation or the energy E. Creative, preservative and destructive energies are mobilised as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva with their Consorts as anodes and cathodes more to make common man understand. Oneness of God is the essence of Vedas. Names did not matter as each scripture pertaining to one form would elevate Her/Him to be the Supreme God/Goddess.

Lavanya Yojanam '*Ezhil Deviyin Soundarya Darsanam*' Thanjavur Technique, 48"x72"

(Composed to elucidate twenty- five slokas from *Soundarya Lahari* by Adi Sankara.

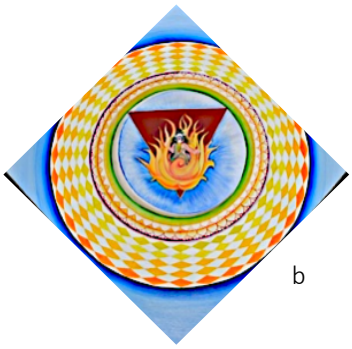
Lahari1,4,7,22,23,27,28,45,46,47,48,51,52,56,57,59,66,68,72,76,78,



As the descriptions of Adi Sankara unfolds a whole plethora of interpretations, some highlights to synchronise with shadangas are used for discussion.



a



b



c



d

a-Colours used in the Painting

b-Sloka -1 Siva-Sakthi *Ikkiam* (Union of Siva and Sakthi)

Square, Circle, Crescent moon and Triangle denote Earth, Ether, Water and Fire respectively to comprehend the impact of Pancha Bhutas in the painting

c-Logo in Hexagon format to denote Wind

d-Use of *Thirumangalyam* (Mangal Sutra) with Meenakshi and Sundareswarar helps in augmenting the prevailing concept of union of Siva and Sakthi in this composition.

எழில் தேவி

அன்பே அழகின் முகிழ்வே
முகிழ்ந்து எழுந்து சிலிர்க்கும் மலரே!
இளந்தளிரே, துளிரின் நுனி பனித்துளியே!
அதில் வானவில்லாய் ஒளிரும் அன்னையே!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

அன்பாம் சுனையே! வற்றாத அருட்கடலே!
பிரவாகமாய்ப் பெருகி வரும் ஒளியே!
காலை, மாலை சந்தி என நீக்கமற
ஒளிரும் சந்திர காந்தக் கல்லே! அன்னையே!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

அபய வரதம் நீக்கி, பாதாதிகேசம் கருணை வெள்ளம்
அருவியாய்ப் பொழிய
மாயை நீக்கும் அன்னையே!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

பஞ்ச பூதங்களின் தலைவியே!
கருவண்டுகளின் கூட்டம் நாணாக,
அழகு மலர்கள் அம்பாக,
இன்சுவைக் கரும்பும் வில்லாக,
காமேச்வரனை மயக்கும் காமாட்சியே!
சிவசக்தி (ஐக்கிய) சொரூபம் விளக்கும்
சௌந்தரவல்லியே!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

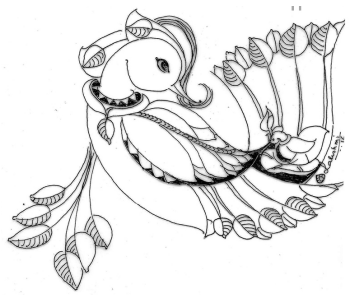
அலைமகள், முத்துக்குடை பிடிக்க,
கலைமகள், காதுக்குண்டலங்கள் தாளமிட,
இரதியும், இந்திராணியும் சாமரம் வீச
தேவ கன்னியர், விளக்கம் காட்ட,
முப்பது முக்கோடி தேவர்களும், பாதம் பணிய
ஒளிக்கடலின் நடுவே, நல்முத்தாய் ஒளிரும் என் அன்னையே!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!
சிட்டுக் குருவி போல் வாயும்,
செம்பவழச் சிற்றடியும், குமிழ்சிரிப்பும்,
குறுநகையும், கொண்டு மயக்கும் அழகனும்,
ஆனைமுகமும், முறம்போல் காதும்,
உலகையே உட்கொண்ட வயிறும் கொண்டு
அன்பின் மறு உறவாய்,
ஞானத்தின் பொருளாய் விளங்கும் கணபதியும் கண்டு,
ஆனந்திக்கும் சிவசக்தியே,
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

வண்டாய் அமர்ந்து
உனது பாதார கமலங்களின் கருணாசாகரத்தில்
விளையாடும், ஆதிசங்கரின் திருப்பாதங்களில் துரசியாகவேனும் விளங்க,
அருள் புரிவாய்அம்மா!
நின் பாதார விந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!
நின் பாத அரவிந்தம் சரணம், சரணம்!

Blessings Tempera 24” x24”
Painting based on Slokas of
Soundarya Lahari



Ezhil Devi



Oh! Epitome of beauty and love
Like the rising radiance of a flower
Like a dewdrop that settles on the tip of a tender leaf
Reflecting the colours of the rainbow
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

Fountain head of love; ocean of mercy
Light that spreads across unending horizons
Like a precious stone that glows alike
In day, night and gloam
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

Eternal giver and destroyer of fear
You are the personification of mercy
That flows like a spring to
Remove the veneer of Maya
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

Leader of the five elements
You draw forth Kama - the god of love
Who uses a row of honey bees
As a string for his bow made of sugarcane
To release arrows of flowers

Oh *Soundaravalli*! Thou art the
Thesis of the merger of the Shiva and Shakti
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

The Goddess of the Seas holds an umbrella of pearls
The Goddess of Knowledge keeps beat
With her ear drops
Rathi and Indrani (the consorts of Kama and Indra) serve you
Heavenly damsels light your path
The countless celestials prostrate before you
You, who are the mother of pearls
Shining amidst the fluorescent seas
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

With a mouth as dainty as the sparrows
And feet as glowing as the coral
And the dimple that forms as you laugh and smile
You are the cynosure of lord Shiva's son
Elephant faced, with ears as wide as winnows
And a belly so large that suggests he has gobbled the universe
Lord Ganesha who is the source of all knowledge and the true picture of love
Is also the apple of your eye, you rejoice in;
Oh, Mother we surrender at your feet!

Adi Sankara who incarnated as a bee
To worship and play at your lotus feet
Which is the reservoir of all mercy
Oh mother! Bless me to find refuge
As a speck of dust on Adi Sankara's feet
So that I may surrender at your feet.

I would like to share the joy in visualising '*Ezhil Deviyin Soundaya Dharsanam'* based on *Soundarya Lahari*, a Sanskrit compilation by *Adi Shankara*, a rare gem, a treasure, where this treasure is, there naturally our hearts will also be, for evaluation through Shadangas. The wonderful feeling in reading can only be experienced. It is almost like when you want to make *Basundhi*, a milk sweet, you keep stirring the boiling milk and collecting the cream and adding saffron, almond, cashew, raisins all sauted in pure ghee. The taste is mouth-watering. Even without adding anything but sugar, stirring more, precipitates *khoa* with the natural aroma of ghee and the taste gets better.

- *Rupabheda*: Placing Devi and Siva inside a triangle formed with the Seat as the base line and the Thiruvasi as the two side lines, the focus is created.
- *Pramanani*: Portraying Siva in equal splendour as Devi, the informal balance has added dimensions to vision.
- *Sadrisyam*: As the whole composition is on Devi and Sakthi, picturisation of other Gods and Goddesses have been more symbolic. The whole picture vibrates with similitudes from head to toe from the Twelve *Adithyas* (Sun) in Her Crown to the Bee (Adi Sankara) at Her Lotus Feet. *Iravatham* (White elephant) represents Indrani (Wife of Indra, King of Heaven) and parrot of Rati (Goddess of Love).
- In the whole composition, lotuses have been painted on the right side and lilies on the left side to denote Sun and Moon as Her Eyes respectively







- *Bhava:* The humour in Siva's eyes, the ease with which He has folded His legs to accommodate Sakthi, Ganga with Her own importance and the all-pervading benevolence of Devi, all speak volumes on *Bhava*.
- *Varnika Bhanga*: To accentuate the body colour of Devi in resplendent glowing orange hue, secondary colours green and purple have been used in Her dress. The background is dark green as they are supposed to be seated in a pavilion supported by Emerald pillars, surrounded by the forest of *kadamba* trees. Dark colour background helps in bringing out the focus.

  Devi is seated on Sadasiva with Vishnu, Brahma, Rudra and Isanana serving as the four legs of the seat. The wonderful use of the five elements, to express the fusion of the combined prowess of the four gods with Sadasiva forming one half, with Shakti, the other half, to attain *Anandha* (Bliss) by Adi Shankara is awesome. The five elements and their *Karaneswarars* have been colour and symbol coded.





Orange – Fire – Rudra - Triangle
Yellow – Earth – Brahma - Square
White – Water – Vishnu – Crescent Moon
Dark - Wind – Isanana - Hexagon
Crystal – Ether - Sadashiva

- *Lavanya Yojanam*

The eye movement starts from the face, goes to Her feet, travels along the folds of the sari to Siva and then the Thiruvasi, Hands and finally back to feet, fitting in with the norms for Traditional Art.
The centre of Devi's face (Nose) is in 1/3 part of the canvas as codified to enhance focus.
The painting is infused with Lavanya Yojanam having met up with the aesthetics.
As a mother, she is never without Her children and hence they have been portrayed as a cameo (water colour on sandalwood) and pasted on the top of the Thiruvasi. Size approx. 1" oval.



‘Hope’ - Tempera Size -24”x18” (by author)



கடல்கோள்

ஆயிரம் ஆண்டுகளில் இருமுறை,

அழித்தும், ஆக்கும் கடல்கோளே!

பொங்கியும், அடங்கியும், ஆர்ப்பரித்தும் இங்குள்ளோர்க்கு அறிவுறுத்தும் ஆழியே!

இயற்கையோடு வாழும் முறைமாட்சி, காட்டத்தேவையோ உன் எழுச்சி?

செயற்கையின் விளைவின் பின்னடவை,

பொருமையுடன் விளக்கும் திறனின்றி

போழிவுடன் புகட்டுகிறாய், நல்பாடம்

அன்பு, அறம் பொருள் விளக்கும்

திருக்குறளின், நல்சாட்சியினையும்,

நற்குணங்களின் சேர்க்கையின், மாட்சியினையும்

அழகிய புத்தரை, அலுங்காமல் அனுப்பி.

நம்பிக்கை என்னும் ஓடத்தில் நல்விளக்கேற்றி,

ஒன்றே குலம் ஒருவனே தேவன்

என அங்கை நெல்லிக்கனிபோல விளக்குகிறாய் பரியவும் வைக்கிறாய்

Tsunami

Twice, in thousand years,
From the depths below, great waves arose,
Each time, they surged and then withdrew,
Destroying, only to be reborn anew.

Your fury and wrath, so immense,
Did you unleash them in despair?
To rouse the hearts of those who dwell,
And remind us all to live with care?

Lacking patience to explain to us,
The cruel effects of what we've wrought,
You chose destruction as the path,
To shock us into learning what we ought.

Empathy, morality, and purpose –
The pillars of the Thirukkural's creed,
Manifested gloriously, with virtues
In the Buddha's serene beauty, freed.

It was a Buddha that you sent us,
Afloat upon a humble raft,
With a lamp to light the darkened path,
Across the stormy seas, steadfast.

Compassion, simplicity, and purity,
In his being, these virtues shone,
Guiding us toward a higher way, A truth, through which we all have grown.

The painting titled '*Hope'* is taken for discussion on *Shadangas* as it depicts that Tsunami is not always destructive. Recorded literary and archaeological evidences show that once in about 500 years, tsunami has struck the Eastern coast of Peninsular India, which has been a busy sea faring country. On the left side of the painting, Lemuria, the highly civilized continent that is supposed to have existed is shown under deluge (around 3000 BCE). The second incidence is narrated to show the repeated attacks on the harbors of the East Coast (2500 BCE).

The third incidence portrays the inundation in areas around Nagapattinam, Tranquebar and Kerala(1200-1300CE).

Emphasis is on the latest Tsunami 26th Dec 2004, on the right side of the painting. With the destruction came 'Hope' in the form of a float with seated Buddha, all the way from Myanmar to the shores of Mahabalipuram (Tamil Nadu)

- Caught the speed but not the destruction.
- Spreading messages of peace and tranquility.
- Lending itself to myriads of expressions.
  - *Rekha* - Line The hallmark of Indian Art-Forceful lines influenced by *Thanka* and Miniature Traditions, flattening out towards the right side enhancing the picturisation.
  - *Rupa* - Form The aureole at the back of Buddha and the lotus seat help defining the form.
  - *Pramanani* - Proportion.The comparative sizes of the monks at the back and the Buddha in
  - front helps keep the focus.
  - *Bhava* - Emotions. The deluge – References for all the boats painted to be under water were taken from the line drawings compiled from literary and sculptural references by Sri. M.Chandramurthy of Tamil Nadu Archeological Department in Poompuhar Museum. (Courtesy M.Chandramurthy)
  - *Sadrisyam* - Similitude By showing the shore temples and the small outcrop of a Durga shrine - explaining that the location is Mahabalipuram.
  - *Varnika Bhanga* - Science of colour- Use of analogous and complimentary colours befitting the solemnity of the occasion
  - *Lavanya Yojanam* – Tsunami in its wake brought about an awesome amount of awareness:

Chapter IV

The Universality through a Comparative Study of Inter-relationship to Literature, Science, Music and Dance,

Literature and Chemistry

		Literature	Chemistry
a	Line	Alphabets	Elements in Chemistry are the smallest unit like Hydrogen - H, and Oxygen – O_2.
b	Forms	Words	Simple compounds (i.e. water H_2O)
c	Shapes	Sentences	Complicated reactions $KMnO_4$ (Potassium Permanganate, purple crystals normally used as disinfectant)
d	Compositions	Essays	Reactions with Catalysts (like Nickel Ni is used to convert palm oil into Margarine) where the catalyst does not lose its identity.

Shadangas and Music

	Shadangas	Music
a	*Rekha* Lines	*Saptaswaras – sa-ri-ga-ma-pa-da-ni-sa sa-ni-da-pa-ma-ga-ri-sa*
b	*Ruphabheda* Form	Chosen group of swaras - Suddha Saveri *Aarohan sa-ri-ma-pa-da-sa. Aavarohan Sa-da-pa-ma-ri-sa*
c	*Pramanan*i (proportion)	*Trikala Talam* *Vilamba* (Slow)

		Madyama (Medium) *Dhuritha* (Fast) *Sthayi* : Mantra – Base, *Madya* – Normal, *Thara* - High pitch
d	*Bhava* (emotion)	*Navarasa* – Like Bhupalam raga is normally sung in the early hours of the morning, especially in Temples to wake up the presiding deity and Neelambari to make Him rest at night.
e	*Sadrisyam* (similie)	Derivative ragas like Janaka (*Melakartha* ragas) and *Janya* Ragas (Derived from *Janaka* Ragas) Harikamboji is 28th *Janaka* Raga and its *Janya* raga is Kamboji
f	*Varnika Bhanga* (colour)	Play with the special combination of *swaras* to highlight the nuances. Niroshta raga is sung without the lips touching: *sa-ri-ga-da-ni-sa. Sa-ni-da-ga-ri- sa*
g	Lavanya Yojanam (Aesthetics)	*Ragam* *Tanam – Anandam is anantham* (creative juxtapositions aplenty) *Pallavi* - Raga *alapanai* with creative ecstasy i.e*. niraval* with Kalpana Swaram

Shadangas and Dance






- *Rupa Bheda* –Line as the basis of Form

  The vertical and horizontal – Vertical as the line of fundamental principle - the dancer and the horizontal as the line of movement on the stage.

  One text speaks of the vertical line being divided into 3 spaces – *tamas, rajas and satva* (Bhava)

- *Pramanani* - Visual proportions that enhance expression

  Proportion can be understood as an individual's own growth and proportionality at a physical level and at the level of maturity (evolution of mind and emotions).

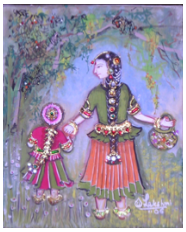
  Appropriate ornamentation enhances (both forms of) proportionality.

  Childhood – foundation and stability – *oddiyanam* (waist belt) and *padakkam* (Pendant) – with a simple braid and *kunjala* (Tassel at the end of the braid)

- Youth - experience and expression – haaram (Long elaborate chain) and *addigai* (Necklace), and nethi-chuti (ornament worn on forehead) and rakkodi (ornament worn on the back of the head well above the braid line) suggesting the direction of the journey upwards of *chakras* (energy points in the body), beginning with tassels finer braid, thicker braid and the *rakkodi.*

- Adult – Full *talai saman (ornaments worn on head)* – and coiffure suggest that *Sahasrara* or the last *ckakra* has been reached.

- *Bhava* Expressions: Even though abhinaya plays a vital role in Bhava, it could be enhanced by the adornments.
- Bottom line is "Less is More"





- *Sadrisyam*

Appropriate motifs vis a vis location, enhance meaning and significance like when Smt. Rukmini Devi placed Nandi on the screen and Nataraja on the stage creating the travel of sadir to Bharatanatyam preserving the sanctity.





- *Varnika Bhangam*

Colour is the reflection of vitality, emotion. For ex. Colour blue for universality, orange to red for Rudra etc

Texts speak of red(s), green and transparency for dance jewellery.

- *Lavanya yojanam*– aesthetics

Bhogadyam – function, meaningfulness

Sukha darshanam – when there is a sense of expansiveness, blossoming

Ramyam – when the blossoming unites the dancer and the perceiver in the space of delight.

Poornam – wholeness. A relationship which connects the individual to the universal.

Aesthetic is an experience through these elements.

Chapter V

Underlying significance of Mathematics

Cosmos is a harmonious and orderly system, governed by natural law functioning with mathematical precision.

The whole world exists with the basic discipline of Shadangas to keep the harmony around. The Canons of art begin with such appropriate codes, that they are like the mitochondria in a genetic loop. To quote from the Book, Vedang Jyotish written in 1000 BCE, just as branches of a peacock and jewel-stone of a snake are placed at the highest place of body (forehead), similarly position of *Ganit* (Maths) is highest in all the branches of Vedas and Shastras. Ganapathi as remover of obstacles is also worshipped first to understand this concept. Nuances of rhythm can be perceived the chiseling of sculptors, the wisps of the brush strokes, the *thalam* (Rhythm) of vocalists, the jingling anklets of the dancers, the beats of the drummers, the rustling of the leaves, the susurration of waves and the fluttering wings of birds all resonate to rhythmic momentum.

"The vastu-purusha-mandala represents the manifest form of the Cosmic Being, upon which the temple is built and in whom the temple rests. The temple is situated in Him, comes from Him, and is a manifestation of Him. The vastu-purusha-mandala is both the body of the Cosmic Being and a bodily device by which those who have the requisite knowledge attain the best results in temple building." (Stella Kramrisch, The Hindu Temple, Vol. I)

A Temple's *Garbagriham* (main sanctum) is equated with human head, *antarala* (vestibule) is equated with human neck, *ardha-mandapam* (half-hall) is compared with human chest, *Maha-mandapam* (main hall) is equated with the stomach, flag-post is viewed along with human male organ, and gopuram or temple gateway tower is viewed along with human feet.

"Everything is governed by one law. A human being is a microcosmos, ie. the laws prevailing in the cosmos also operate in the minutest space of the human being."

“Only if the temple is constructed correctly according to prescribed mathematical system can it be expected to function in harmony with the universe”.
Only if the measurement of the temple is in every way perfect, there will be perfection in the universe as well.” (Reference from researchgate.net authors Srishti Dokras and Uday Vasant Dokras Hindu Temple and the Structure of Human Body (Comparison)

The same connotations can be perceived through many different channels such as:

- The sun light falling on the Linga set deep inside the Garbagriha on Annabishekam day (*Ippasi* -Mid July to middle of August) *pournami* (Full Moon) in Gangai Konda Cholapuram in Tamilnadu,
- The milk poured over the Rahu idol turns blue from the neck downwards until it reaches the feet where it turns white again in Thirunageswaram in Tamilnadu
- In Padmanabhaswami Temple at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, during Equinox, the setting sun passes through each opening in the main Gopuram in succession in an interval of five minutes.
- Phenomenal details about the mathematical guidelines abound in all the Sutras and Sastras

To augment the concept that Art blends with science, a detailed study of the Chidambaram Temple in Tamil Nadu has been included.

Chidambaram temple - Chidambaram celebrated as “clothed in wisdom” or “Atmosphere of wisdom“is an ensemble par-excellence for a beautiful intermixture of art, architecture and philosophy



- The big toe of Sri.Nataraja is supposed to be the center point of magnetic equator as confirmed by *Thirumoolar Thirumandiram* in 10th Century and the Western Scientists in 20th Century. The physicists have even installed a beautiful Nataraja in Cern, Switzerland in acknowledgement.



- Three famous Shiva temples – Kalahasthi, Ekambareswarar and Nataraja - are all aligned in longitude!

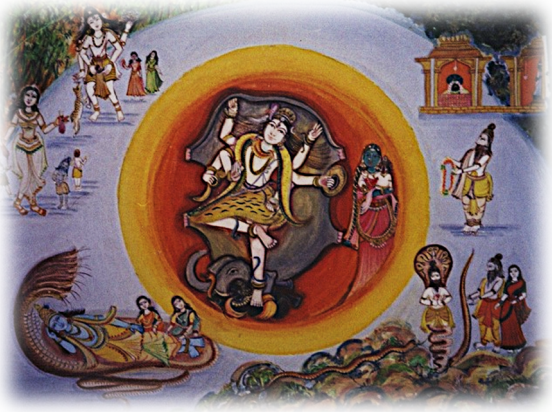
  Anatomical connotations:

- The temple has nine entrances to symbolize the nine *dwaras* (Openings)of the human body.
- Roof is made up of 21,600 gold sheets to signify 21,600 breaths taken in a day.
- The sheets are fixed with 72,000 gold nails confirming to the total number of *Nadis* (nerves) in human body
- The *Ponnambalam* (Golden Hall) is placed slightly to the left, as the heart is positioned on the left side of the chest.
- 28 pillars stand for the *ahamas* and 64 roof beams for 64 arts
- The Cross Beams - The Blood Vessel
- 9 *Kalasas* - 9 Energies
- 6 Pillars at the *Arthamandapa* - 6 Shastras
- 18 pillars - 18 Puranas
- The bells aligned between the pillars - Rhythm
- Chanting of Slokas and Vedas - *Shruthilayam*

All these factors help to assimilate the awe-inspiring revelations on the harmony between mathematical precision and the ecstatic rhythm of the abode and the Cosmic Dance with complimenting religious paintings and sculptures.

This is just a tip of the iceberg. So many marvels to list up!

Pilgrimage Centres of India Series-Chidambaram
24”x18” 4 Paintings in opaque water colour of Miniature technique.



- *Tarukavana Thandavam* “From tradition, it is very clear that the dance of Siva is mainly associated with rishis, like Patanjali *Vyakrapada* and others. After hearing about the war dance of Siva at Tarukavan from

Vishnu, Patanjali set out to witness the same at Chidambaram. After paying obeisance to *Mulanatha* and Uma Parvati, Patanjali and Vyakrapada are waiting for the *Thandava* to begin.



- "The *urdava thandava* silenced Kali, who moved away as Ellai / Thillaikali amman. Every day she is anointed with 15 litres of gingelly oil, wrapped in a bale of new white cloth and kumkum is poured over. When the eyes are opened, she looks awesome and alive glistening with oil. She is the valiant one to subdue the negative qualities such as anger, pride etc. She was pacified with four Vedas by Brahma. She is also the Thillai amman, the benevolent one. The beauty of Hinduism (*sarguna-nirguna* doctrines, or the +ve and –ve energy culminating in Shakti or the *rupa -arupa* concepts) coming to the forte. The Siva *ganas* are the Thillai brahmins serving her.

- Cosmic Dance. According to Ratnakara, Siva's dance encompasses the whole universe, expressing both sringara and raudra aspects and there is nothing beyond him. In the painting, the visualisation is based on C.Sivaramurthy's description, mentioned earlier.



The arrangements of the rows and rows of the bells chiming during aradana, and the rhythmic chanting. all adding ambience to the Akasakshetra, the feeling is of oneness with God.



o Temple Complex. Befitting the cosmic dance concept all the paintings have been executed in a circular format. Liberty (artist's) has been taken to execute the temple complex (though rectangular in shape) also in the same format.

- With Brahma seated with Chandikeswara as *Brahma-Chandi*, all the three Murtis can be seen from one vantage point.

- The only temple where the presiding deity is taken out for processions and the first temple to have a separate Amman shrine.

- Devarams were discovered by Raja Raja Chola and Nambiandarnambi.

- Appar, Sundarar, Tirunavukkarasar and Thirugnanasambandar visited the shrine through four different gopura *vasals (*entrances)

- An inscription states that a manuscript library was situated near the Amman shrine.
- To name a few!
- All these factors have been included in the visualization.



Epilogue

In short, *Shadangas*, are the *sutras* (Formulae) to create, interact with all nuances suggested and to evaluate the final composition of all forms of Fine Arts. When infused with bhava and rasa they can take the creation to a higher realm of perception.

Then:

The dot that dances on the canvas
becomes the wonder that is Art
and
The dot that dances into a rhythmic-crescendo
cadences to be Art Supreme!

