



# Myths

## IN MINIATURE

YAKSHAGANA PUPPET THEATRE

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)



# YAKSHAGANA

## PUPPET THEATRE

This folk art form was born nearly six centuries back in one of the princely states of a region that later became the state of Kerala. Native to the northern part of Kerala, it features an intermingling of religious elements and reflects the influence of Kannada language too. It is markedly different from other art forms but still bears a faint resemblance to Kathakali in its use of song and costume, and to Theyyam in its choreography and costume. In short, Yakshagana is a harmonious combination of stories, songs, rhythms and mudras or stylized dance gestures.

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)



**P**arthy Subbaya of Kumbala in Kasaragod is considered to be the father of Yakshagana. His Sabhaalakshana is considered to be an authoritative book on this art form.

Yakshagana was born at a time when life was ruled by native beliefs which did not encourage people to don the roles of gods. That, according to popular opinion, was the reason for the choice of puppets to enact stories. Although later on artistes began to present Yakshagana, it was the visual aesthetics of the puppet theatre that transcended boundaries of language and geography and became more popular. Through the centuries, the costumes, make-up and ornaments have changed and new varieties have appeared, but the puppet theatre continues to narrate the Yakshagana stories to generations of spectators.



In its earliest versions, Yakshagana may have presented the stories of Rama and Krishna composed exclusively by Parthy Subbayya. As years and centuries passed, it adopted tales and songs created by hundreds of other writers which survived in their oral or written forms, and continues to do so even now.

The two major musical instruments used in Yakshagana are the chenda [vertical drum] and the maddalam [horizontal drum]. While they are used as accompaniments during the dialogues, the jagatta or chengila [a thick bell metal disc] used in Kathakali and the chakrathala lend rhythm and tone to the songs. In fact, the chakrathala with six bells is what gives vibrancy to the songs.

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)

## Malabar artforms

---

- Yakshagana
- Alami Kali
- Mangalam Kali
- Kalaripayattu
- Kolkali



To experience Malabar,  
Download mobile app  
[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)





# Yakshagana

A popular dance-drama in the northern area of Kasaragod, this famous temple art form is performed in a majority of cultural programmes in the area. Yakshagana is synonymous with massive headgears, elaborate facial make-up and vibrant costumes and ornaments, which are employed in depicting stories from the great Indian epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata.

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)

## Alami Kali

Alami Kali was a popular regional art form in Kasaragod, performed by 'Alamis', who were soldiers of Tipu Sultan's army. Alamikali was celebrated to commemorate the Karbala war, an important event in the history of Islam in the area.





[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)



## Mangalam Kali

Mangalam Kali is an entertaining folk dance that is performed primarily during marriage events. As it was related to Mangalam or auspicious functions, it came to be known as Mangalam Kali.



[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)



# Kalaripayattu

Considered among the oldest and most scientific martial arts in the world, Kalaripayattu was developed in Kerala and is an integral part of the ethos of the State.



## Kolkali

**K**olkali is a folk art performed in Northern Kerala. Usually, there are about 16 performers on stage who move about in a circle, striking small sticks and maintaining their rhythm with a diverse range of steps.

[www.bekaltourism.com](http://www.bekaltourism.com)



*Yakshagana*



*Alami Kali*



*Mangalam Kali*



*Kalaripayattu*



*Kolkali*