

Amrita Kiranam

(a special issue)

a snapshot of happenings at

AMRITA SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, KOCHI

Literary Fest to Commemorate 400th Anniversary of William Shakespeare



***"...Blessed be the man that spares these stones,
And cursed be he that moves my bones"***

So runs Shakespeare's epitaph.

But for the last four hundred years in innumerable theatres and class-rooms over the world, people have been keeping alive the memory of the Bard. 2016 marked the 400th death anniversary of Shakespeare.

To commemorate this occasion year-long festivities have been organized all over the world, which will come to a close on April 23rd, 2017. The Department of English and Languages, ASAS, Kochi, organized a three- day Shakespeare Festival, the first of its kind in Kerala, on April 10th, 11th and 12th under the excellent tutelage of our professor and artist Dr. C.S.Jayaram. Inaugurating the festival in the presence of Brahmachari Anaghamrita, who blessed the occasion, Prof. Murali, Retired Professor, Maharaja's



College, Ernakulum, spoke on the theme of love in Macbeth, offering a fresh reading on one of the most celebrated tragedies of Shakespeare. As part of the festival, an academic Seminar was organized in which Integrated M.A. students and M.Phil. scholars presented research papers, related not only to Shakespeare but to a broad spectrum of contemporary domains of literary and cultural theories. Dr. U. Krishnakumar, Director, presented a thought-provoking interdisciplinary paper on Music as a virtual



person and Cultural Understanding, with special reference to the composition "Tell me Why" by poet and composer, Declan Galbraith. Other staff members who presented papers include Smt. B. Sonia Chellerian, Sri. Vinod Laxman and Sri. M. Ramachandran. A highly educative programme organized as part of the festival was Shakespeare Exhibition which featured models of Shakespearean theatre, a scene from Romeo and Juliet, paintings of birds and flowers in Shakespeare, and models that explained the evolution of language and script from Palaeolithic period

to the present.

A quiz competition based on Shakespeare was conducted. Sri. C. Nandakumar, Asst. Professor in Computer Science was the quiz master and he was assisted by the Librarian Sri. Ratheesh. A soul-stirring musical performance was conducted by the members of AmritaVeechi, the college music band, presenting songs from various plays of Shakespeare.

The highlights of the festival were the theatrical performances of scenes from Shakespeare's plays. They included Macbeth, Julius Caesar (rendered in Malayalam), and a scene from Taming of the Shrew. The stage was set in the form of Elizabethan Arena Theatre, with the audience sitting on the





three sides of the stage. The performances were live, without the aid of dubbing, or front curtain or backdrops. The whole theatre project was designed to initiate the students into all aspects of theatre production, including stage designing, costume designing, art direction, make-up, background score, and direction under the guidance of Dr. C.S. Jayaram. Lot of student volunteers from all batches of English Literature and other departments worked day and night to bring out the production and make the festival a great success. Excellent technical support was rendered by Sri. V.S. Nithin and other ICTS staff. Prizes and certificates were also given to the participants of various events in the festival.



