

Project 1

INTERNSHIP WITH KERALA JAIVA KARSHAKA SAMITI (KJKS)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of **Master of Design** by

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Industrial Design Centre

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2017

Completion Certificate

Date: Wed, 13 Jul 2016 19:45:40 +0530 [07/13/2016 07:45:40 PM IST]

From: Asok Kumar <asokakumarv@gmail.com>

To: office.idc@iitb.ac.in, Abhijith K R <keyaar@iitb.ac.in>

Subject: Fwd: abhijith@keyaar.in

This is to certify that Abhijith KR of Interaction Design, IDC has completed his internship with Kerala Organic Farmers? Forum (Kerala Jaiva Karshaka Samithi) and our conservation education magazine, One Earth One Life, from 4th June 2016 to 4th July 2016. Please consider this a certificate for the same.

Asoka Kumar v
Editor, One Earth One Life Magazine

on behalf of the Kerala Jaiva Karshaka Samithi
Kizhakke Kara
Trumpakachola Post
Kanjirapuzha
Palakkad ? 678 591

KJKS

An organisation founded in 1991, Kerala Jaiva Karshaka Samithi is a forum of organic farmers in Kerala. This association has units in almost all districts in the state. Each unit conducts monthly meets in the field for organic farmers and shares ideas and suggestions for improving their agricultural activities.

Why I Wanted to Work with KJKS

In addition to farming, planning meet-ups and engaging with governing bodies in activism, KJKS publishes a journal, called Ore Bhoomi Ore Jeevan (translated as One Earth, One Life or OEOL) detailing new practices in organic farming, stories from members, news of the organisation's activities and farm visits across the country serving as inspiration to the community. I had read some issues of the magazine back in 2012 and felt what they were doing was commendable, worth volunteering my time improving their design language and streamlining the typographic delivery of their sections and stories. My then job prevented me from devoting any time to the project. When the chance of an opportunity for working in Kerala arose, I decided to see if they were open to letting me work with them in exchange of learning how such intentional communities work, and meeting interesting people.

Over emails, I proposed a revamp of the KJKS website, building an archive of articles from OEOL and creating a seed database for Kerala, based on insights and information from KJKS members. We agreed to meet during their annual state committee meet.

The State Committee Meeting

The rains had started and I underestimated the traffic in Kothamangalam. I ended up in Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary drenched and late for a simple lunch of porridge and coconut chutney. The landscape was fetching and the rain had toned itself down to a drizzle by the afternoon. I met Mr. Asokakumar V, a teacher and the current editor of OEOL. Over the lunch break, I met a few organisation heads and discussed my intentions and ideas.

The meeting dealt in most parts with organisational structure, politics and served as an event to reflect upon what it means to be an organic farmers' alliance today. The new crop of similar organisations, while ethically not as firmly grounded as KJKS, were media-savvy, had bigger fan-following online and appeared to be the forerunners of a movement KJKS had kickstarted almost fifteen years ago. The office-bearers were worried they were losing relevance and political clout, necessary to effect policy change. Many discussions on the first day were around this identity crisis.

The people attending the two-day meeting were from a variety of backgrounds, with housewives, Kutumbasree workers, full-time farmers and retired government officials sharing space with media people, students and hobby-farmers. My conversations were rich in variety. The 80-plus years old Reiki practitioner who refused to stand in line for food (he chose to receive at in the very end) had tales of his journeys across the country, late into the night, as crickets and leeches slowly crept over our sense of space and time. The early morning coffee and walk inside the forest bathed in the previous day's rain was as refreshing as the day away from computer screens and deadlines to chase.

Areas of Intervention

I found that the institution needed a refresh and streamlining of its online presence, among many other places ripe for design intervention. The visual identity was an honest representation of the organisation in its no-nonsense directness and illustration of a typically Keralite moment in nature. I took the basic drawing and made it into a print-friendly version scalable to a good range of sizes.

The website was developed after discussions with the team of volunteers and officials of KJKS, with a prominent Malayalam version making it accessible to their primary audience. The site is responsive and light, while the archive is built to scale. The accompanying bookstore is similarly designed, short of an online payment system. KJKS prefers to do business the old fashioned (bank-transfer, money order) way.



The redrawn KJKS Logo
(A bird tastes honey from a banana
foret)



Kerala Jaiva Karshaka Samithi

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Updates from our *JaivaKeralam* Blog

State Committee Meet at Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary on 4th and 5th July 2016.

[Visit the Blog](#)

Help Us Grow

[Subscribe to One Earth One Life Magazine](#)

One Earth One Life is a conservation education magazine

[Help Organise the Seed Database](#)

We are inviting organic farmers and well-wishers to help

The KJKS website, reimagined. It now has easy-to access sections and ample hierarchy.



കേരള ജൈവകർഷക സമിതി

ബ്ളോഗ് വിവരശേഖരം സഹകരിക്കുക സമ്പർക്കം

കേരളത്തിലെ ജൈവകർഷകരുടെ കൂട്ടായ്മയായ കേരള ജൈവകർഷക സമിതി 1991-ൽ സ്ഥാപിതമായി. സംസ്ഥാനത്തെ ഒട്ടുമിക്കാലും ജില്ലകളിൽ സാന്നിധ്യമുള്ള സമിതി ഓരോ മാസവും അതാത് ജില്ലകളിലെ ജൈവകർഷകർക്ക് അറിവുകൾ പങ്കുവെക്കാനും കൃഷി മെച്ചപ്പെടുത്തുവാനുള്ള നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ സ്വീകരിക്കാനുമായി ഒത്തുചേരലുകൾ നടത്തുന്നു.

ജൈവകേരളം ബ്ളോഗ് വാർത്തകൾ

State Committee Meet at Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary on 4th and 5th July 2016.

ബ്ളോഗ് സന്ദർശിക്കൂ

സമിതിയുമായി സഹകരിക്കുക

ഒരേ ഭൂമി ഒരേ ജീവൻ മാസികയുടെ വരിക്കാരാകുക

തനതുവിത്തു വിവരശേഖരം

കേരള ജൈവകർഷക സമിതി

ബ്ളോഗ് വിവരശേഖരം സഹകരിക്കുക സമ്പർക്കം

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ജൈവകേരളം ബ്ളോഗ് വാർത്തകൾ

State Committee Meet at Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary on 4th and 5th July 2016.

ബ്ളോഗ് സന്ദർശിക്കൂ

Learning

The state committee meeting was an ideal venue to learn and observe first-hand the inner workings of a community led organisation such as the KJKS. Since they did not consider me an outsider, the discussions were honest and one could see that the group, in spite of being more than ten years old, still suffered from a multitude of visions dragging it in separate directions. As stated in the introduction, with the internship, my intention was to learn how this organisational machine works, while being able to translate their vision for sharing resources into something usable.

Opposite page:

Left: The KJKS website in Malayalam.

To the right is the mobile-friendly version.

Acknowledgements

I thank Mr. Asokakumar V, Editor, KJKS, office bearers and members for their valuable insights into living without poisoning oneself and the environment. I am grateful to previous contributors to OEOL magazine for the invaluable knowledge they have put together. I thank the IDC faculty and staff for their encouragement and course-correction.

Notes on Typography

KJKS website set in Noto Sans malayalam and Merriweather
This report is set in Tiempos Text