

# postnoon

## [A tryst with puppetry](#)

[Kanchan Agarwal](#) | July 7, 2013 | [0 Comments](#)



**Integrating puppetry into academics is one of the main motives behind the foundation of Sphoorthi Theatre for Educational Puppetry, Art & Craft by Padmini Rangarajan.**

If it was not for her son's interference, puppetry would still have remained nothing but a pass time hobby for Padmini Rangarajan. However, this was not so. She fancied teaching his son with the help of puppets and role play and it was him who passed on this information to his teachers and later got Padmini her first performance at her son's school. Since then, she looked at puppet-making and storytelling a more than a passing fancy. She started an institute aptly named Sphoorthi Theatre for Educational Puppetry, Art & Craft. Sphoorthi in Telugu means inspiration.

“Apart from performing puppet shows, we at Sphoorthi provide a fun environment for the kids and help them learn. We also provide training for teachers to help them incorporate puppets into the lives of children. There are various projects adopted by us wherein we travel to rural areas and teach underprivileged children puppetry,” she says.

Main objectives of Sphoorthi are to integrate puppetry into academics mainly for primary, middle school children and also children with special needs and to promote social awareness about various issues through puppet plays and presentations. Puppet show performances by Sphoorthi are mostly on themes such as female infanticide, child marriage, dowry deaths, sexual harassment and so on.

“We are currently working on a show which has e-waste management as its theme. When we conduct workshops for kids, we make the curriculum in such a manner that at the end of the workshop, kids come on stage and put up their performance,” she says.

According to Padmini, puppetry is a culmination of various elements including story-telling, painting, hand-eye coordination and body language.

“It requires a lot of patience and determination to master the skill of puppetry. One might be good at say writing a good story but not very good at presenting it in front of the audience. A course of puppetry helps you be master of all these parts of art. If you are looking at learning how to make puppets to entertain your kids then a one-day workshop will do otherwise mastering this art takes much more time and effort,” she explains.



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