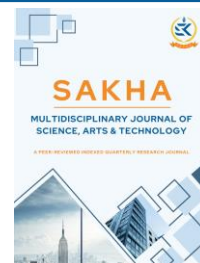




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### Visual Communication in South India Animated Sculpture

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#### Abstract

*This project explores the concept of “animated sculpture” as a dynamic form of visual communication rooted in the artistic traditions of South India. Temple sculptures, ritual objects, festival icons, and performative installations in this region have long embodied movement, narrative, and symbolic expression, transcending their apparent material stillness. By examining how sculptural forms convey motion, emotion, and story, this research positions South Indian animated sculpture as an early and sophisticated medium of visual storytelling comparable to contemporary animation and multimedia art. The study combines art historical analysis, field documentation, and practice-based experimentation. It investigates sculptural panels, stone reliefs from key cultural sites, focusing on gesture, posture, rhythm, and sequential narration embedded within static forms. These elements are interpreted as visual devices that guide viewers’*

*Perception of time, action, and transformation. The project further extends this understanding into contemporary visual communication by developing experimental animated interpretations inspired by traditional sculptural. Through this dialogue between heritage and digital practice, the research highlights how indigenous knowledge systems inform modern design, animation, and visual media. It demonstrates that South Indian sculptural traditions are not only devotional or decorative but also communicative systems that encode movement, performance, and collective memory. By reconstruction these forms within present-day visual culture, the project contributes to the preservation, reinterpretation, and pedagogical use of traditional art. Ultimately, it proposes “animated sculpture”*

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*as a bridge between past and future visual languages, reaffirming the relevance of South Indian artistic heritage in contemporary creative discourse.*

**Keywords:** *Traditional Animated Sculpture, South Indian Temples, The Origin of Animated Sculpture, around the World, The Convey of Drawing, Evidence of Sculpture.*

## Introduction

Animated sculpture in South India refers to the remarkable artistic tradition where sculptors created stone and metal figures that appear to be alive and in motion. These sculptures, found mainly in the temples of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, show dynamic poses, expressive faces, and flowing forms that capture moments of dance, music, animals war, mythology, and daily life. South Indian artists mastered the ability to give movement to still materials.

### Advanced Techniques:

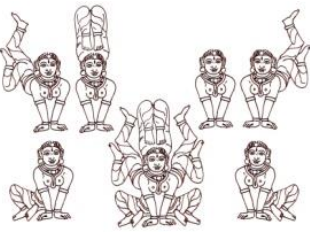
Using advanced techniques, detailed craftsmanship, and deep cultural symbolism, they transformed stone and metal into vibrant, life-like forms. These sculptures not only decorate temple walls but also serve as visual storytelling, reflecting the region's history, religion, classical dance traditions, and artistic excellence. In this project, we explore the origins, styles, techniques, and cultural significance of animated sculpture in South India, understanding how ancient artists created works that continue to inspire admiration even today. Through movement or animation, functioning as powerful tools of visual communication.

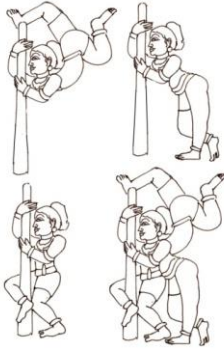


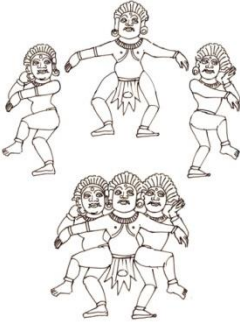
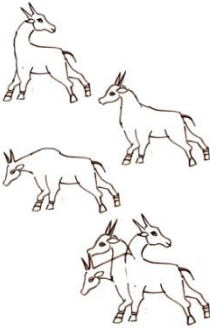
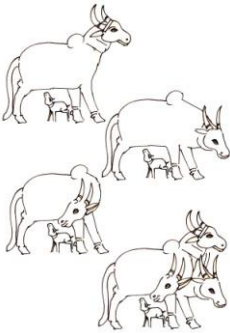
Over 35,000 years ago, we were painting animals on cave walls, sometimes drawing four pairs of legs to show motion. In 1600 BC the Egyptian Pharaoh Rameses II built a temple to the goddess Isis which had 110 columns. Ingeniously, each column had a painted figure of the goddess in progressively changed position. To horsemen or charioteers riding past – Isis

appeared to move. The Ancient Greeks Sometimes decorated pots with figures in successive stages of action. Spinning the pot would create a sense of motion

### Evidence of Sculpture:

| No. | Sculpture Image's                                                                                                                                                      | Line Drawing's                                                                     | Statement's                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1,  |                                                                                       |   | <p><b>Place:</b> Thirukameswar Temple, Puducherry</p> <p><b>Title:</b> The Woman Sitting six Different types of Position</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The woman sitting six different types of position one head and six moving bodies aesthetics of woman sculpture and beautiful ornaments 12<sup>th</sup> Century - King Rajendra Chola I</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2,  |   |  | <p><b>Place:</b> Thirukameswar Temple, Puducherry</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Monkey and human body composition sculpture</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The composition of sculpture two monkey position and two human body intermixing the position of sculpture the beauty of human hand &amp; legs will composing on the monkey body and very rare animated movement sculpture</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Malarkambam</p> <p><b>Medium::</b> Relief Sculpture Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Four different types yoga Malarkambam sculpture one head the action</p> |

|    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     | <p>of animation movement sculpture siting position the human body turn right and life type, the beauty of sculpture <b>12<sup>th</sup> Century</b> - <i>King Rajendra Chola I</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3, |    |    | <p><b>Place:</b> Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple, Ariyalur, TN<br/> <b>Title:</b> Malarkambam – Man<br/> <b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone<br/> <b>Description:</b> The Mallkhamb position three steps on the sculpture and visually motion steps animating creating style frames the human leg -actions very beautiful standing one third top legs <b>11<sup>th</sup> Century</b> - <i>King Rajendra Chola I</i></p> |
| 4, |  |  | <p><b>Place:</b> Bhu Varaha Swamy Temple, Srimushnam, TN<br/> <b>Title:</b> The Woman sitting six different types of position<br/> <b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone<br/> <b>Description:</b> A sculpture of a woman sitting on the position with one head and six moving bodies – aesthetics of women sculpture and beautiful ornaments and running design <b>10<sup>th</sup> Century</b> - <i>King Cholas</i></p> |

|    |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5, |    |    | <p><b>Place:</b> Thirukazhukundram Temple, Chennai</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Veeran</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The Sculpture three head composing human body sculpture the dance pose leg passion was the human leg right and left leg dancing composition sculpture</p> <p><b>8<sup>th</sup> Century - King Shiva Nayaner, Sundarar</b></p>                                                                                 |
| 6, |    |    | <p><b>Place:</b> Kanchipuram Ekamba Nathar Temple, TN</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Dear Animals</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Black Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The standing position on the dear animal sculpture will composed three head and step by step motion animated processing on the movie a action sculpture three different types dear animal heads, one animal body</p> <p><b>16<sup>th</sup> Century - King Pallava, Chola, Vijayanagara</b></p> |
| 7, |  |  | <p><b>Place:</b> Veerabhadra Temple in Lepakshi, Andhra</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Cow Sculpture - 01</p> <p><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The animated sculpture cow – one body, three different heads animation movement sculpture step by step motion picture, animated processing movie, the action sculpture three forms head on the right side, movement composition sculpture Andhra Pradesh –</p>                               |

|           |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           |                                                                                   |                                                                                   | <b>16<sup>th</sup> Century - King Achyuta Deva Raya Nayaka</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>8,</b> |  |  | <b>Place:</b> Kailasanathar Temple, Kanchipuram, TN<br><b>Title:</b> Malarkambam<br><b>Medium:</b> Relief Sculpture Stone<br><b>Description:</b> Four different types yoga Malarkambam sculpture one head four action of animation movement sculpture sitting position the human body turn right ad lift type the beauty of sculpture<br><b>7<sup>th</sup> Century - King Palavas</b> |

### Relevance to Visual Communication:

Animation is the art of creating the illusion of movement by displaying a series of images or frames in rapid sequence. Each image differs slightly from the one before it, and when played quickly, they appear to move smoothly. From traditional hand drawn cartoons to modern 3D computer-generated films, animation has become one of the most powerful and creative forms of visual storytelling. Today, animation is used in many fields' films, television shows, advertisements, education, video games, architecture, scientific visualization, and even mobile apps. The development of animation has evolved from simple flipbooks and stop-motion techniques to advanced digital software and motion-capture technology. This evolution has allowed artists and animators to bring imaginary characters, fantastical worlds, and complex stories to life in ways that seem real and emotionally engaging. This project explores the history, types, techniques, and importance of animation, highlighting how it has transformed from a basic visual trick into a global industry and a vital part of modern entertainment and communication.

### Conclusions:

This section presents a conclusion of selected sculptures and artists across action sculpture, animated sculpture, highlighting their techniques, visual communication methods, and narrative impact.

- 19th Century, Introduce around the world History of Animation
- 7th Century, Animation Sculpture - Kailasanathar Temple, Kanchipuram, Title: The Mallakhamb, King Palavas
- 7th Century to 19th Century (1200 – Years differentiation)
- The Development of Animations Software 19th Century to 21st Century
- Upcoming the AI tool programming function the animation



Thirukameswar Temple, Puducherry, 12th Century - King Rajendra Chola

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