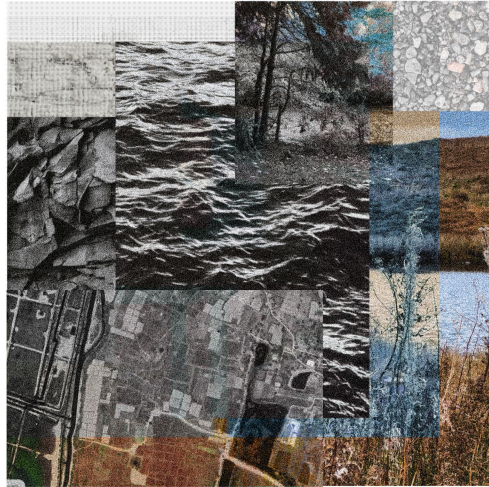


time stands still



This portfolio is an invitation to slow down and reconnect, to step gently and rediscover what it means to belong. Each space here is crafted with the quiet wisdom of soil, water, and forest, inspired by Tamil philosophy. It is a journey that invites you to walk barefoot upon the soil, to dip a hand into water that mirrors the sky, to pause under the canopy of trees that hold stories older than memory. These places are shaped not only by design but by the land itself—spaces that breathe, reflect, and remember.

what

"அன்பால் புவி தாங்கும்."

"The earth is held by love." Bharathi Dasan

Time Stands Still is an immersive journey into the heart of nature—a project that reimagines our connection with the earth by drawing on timeless principles from Tamil culture. It's a space crafted to honor the elements of soil, forest, and water, each embodying memory, belonging, and renewal. Here, nature is not simply observed; it is experienced and felt.

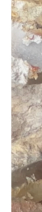
Through thoughtful design and an embrace of ecological balance, Time Stands Still invites visitors to pause, to breathe, and to become part of the landscape. This project isn't just about creating a sanctuary—it's about creating a living connection between people and place, an enduring reminder that we are deeply rooted in the cycles of the natural world.

Time Stands Still is where tradition meets timelessness, a place where every step, every breath, and every quiet moment is woven into the fabric of the land.

Land, a finite treasure, reveals its deepest meaning in spaces that honor its essence. Sanctuary is not merely a place to build; it is a place to belong—a canvas for humankind’s mindful partnership with the earth. For those who seek more than just shelter, it represents an ancient connection to the elements, a harmony woven through soil, water, and air.

As Ayn Rand succinctly captures: “From the simplest necessity to the highest religious abstraction, from the wheel to the skyscraper, **everything we are and everything we have** comes from a single attribute of man—the function of his reasoning mind.” time stands still seeks to harness this pinnacle of human capability, crafting a timeless symphony of coexistence between man, community, and nature.

Here, this reasoning finds expression in restraint and reverence. Manam becomes a testament to coexistence, where human craft and natural beauty converge in a dance of subtlety and respect. It is not merely a statement of architecture but a call to dwell lightly on the earth, to leave a legacy of harmony, and to forge a future rooted in respect for the landscapes that shape us.



| GEOLOGICAL |

cyclone
drought

| METEOROLOGICAL |

floods
heatwaves

| CLIMATE CHANGE |

sea level rise
loss in aquifer recharge zone
climate central

| HUMAN INDUCED |

urban sprawl
water scarcity
depleted ground water
rainfall surface run off
loss of bio diversity
socio-economic
land use encroachment

| ENVIRONMENTAL |

coastal erosion
sea water intrusion
altered weather patterns

"மண் இருக்கிறது; அதனால் உயிர் இருக்கிறது."

"The land exists; therefore, life exists." Kannadasan

Elegance

Family

Chennai

Curious

Self

Contemporary

This project is not merely a series of spaces; it is a continuum, a return to harmony where nature leads, and we follow. Sanctuary is an immersion—a pathway through soil, water, and forest where the earth itself becomes a guide. Here, each step grounds us, each breath connects us. The soil is sacred, holding the weight of generations, and the water mirrors both the sky above and the stillness within. In Sanctuary, nature reveals itself, not as something distant, but as an extension of our own lives—a place to touch, to listen, and to remember our role within the earth's embrace.

In the quiet spaces **where earth and self meet**, we find a sanctuary—an invitation to listen, to remember, and to belong.

Culture

Manam, by contrast, invites an inward journey. At its center lies a stillness, a quiet reflection of what we bring to the space. The journey here is from imbalance to clarity, an unfolding that mirrors the self-discovery that only silence can offer. The reflective waters of Manam ask for reverence, not observation; they invite us to look within, to pause, and to acknowledge the purity that lies in simply being. Together, Sanctuary and Manam are not places to visit; they are spaces to dwell, to experience, and to become part of a landscape that remembers, nurtures, and endures.


Roots

smells like 

looks like 

tastes like 

sounds like 

feels like 

holds 



Time Stands Still finds its home in Thiruvидanthalai, a coastal village near Kovalam Beach, Chennai. This place, rich with Tamil heritage, offers more than a physical space; it holds memories of a culture deeply connected to the land. With two quiet lakes, West Lake and East Lake, lying dormant, and soil that absorbs and releases water like breath, the land is resilient yet fragile, shaped by cycles of monsoon rains and summer droughts. Here, where the soil and water tell stories of endurance, the project seeks to revive this connection. In transforming these forgotten spaces, Time Stands Still aims to bring life back to the lakes and create spaces that honor the land, inviting people to **pause, remember, and reconnect.**



At the threshold of the site stands an ancient tree, its branches draped with plastic bags, each carrying the remnants of a cow's placenta. For the people living here, this act is one of reverence, an offering that transcends the material—a gesture deeply rooted in their beliefs. They believe that by suspending these placentas in this manner, they invite **health and fortune** upon themselves, a custom woven into the fabric of their daily lives.

Much like the rituals that infuse Tamil culture with meaning, this tradition is a quiet acknowledgment of the unseen forces that connect life and land. The tree becomes more than just a part of the landscape; it is a participant in this shared existence, a symbol of the community's relationship with the earth. The placentas, remnants of birth and vitality, are placed high, blending with the branches, a silent wish carried by nature itself. Here, health and fortune are not sought in isolation but nurtured through connection, an ancient dance between people, animals, and the land they inhabit.

In the tradition of Aasai—the Tamil yearning for harmony with nature—this ritual speaks to a forgotten wisdom, one that sees health not merely as a state of the body but as a reflection of one's relationship with the earth. It reminds us that fortune is not in possession but in balance, in the quiet gestures that bind people to place, grounding them in a cycle as old as time itself



மரத்தின் ஒவ்வொரு கிளையும் வாழ்வின் நெசவாகிப் பொருந்தும் பசுவின் அருள் - நலமும் வளமும் தொடரும் வழிபாடு
Each branch of the tree becomes a woven thread of life, carrying the cow's blessing - a ritual that brings health and abundance.



In the Tamil land, community is woven from threads of connection, resilience, and quiet dignity. Each face, each stance in this gathering speaks of shared histories, of stories passed down through evenings spent under the stars and early mornings beside temple tanks. This is a culture where **belonging is not spoken** but felt—a silent understanding that runs deep, binding each person to one another and to the land itself.

Here, tradition breathes. It's in the gentle sway of sarees, the sturdy postures of men who have tilled the soil, and the steady gaze of those who know the rhythm of the earth. Tamil people are bound by more than language or place; they are held together by **acasai**, a longing for harmony, and **karpu**, an inherent purity that values respect for all life.

To be Tamil is to carry these values, often without words. In every shared look, there is a reminder of who they are—a **people rooted in place**, connected to each other, and committed to honoring a way of life that feels as timeless as the land they walk on.



Each morning, the ritual of kolam graces the thresholds of Tamil homes, a quiet offering of rice flour to the earth and to life itself. These intricate patterns, drawn by hand, carry an *intention of care*, inviting blessings upon the household and nourishing the smallest creatures of the earth.

As insects come to feed on the rice flour, the kolam becomes an act of giving back, a gesture that acknowledges our role within nature's cycle. It is more than decoration; it is a moment of pause, a connection to the living earth. Through this simple act, Tamil women shape beauty from dust, weaving a bond between earth and spirit, and reminding all who pass that the ground beneath our feet is alive and sacred.



The simple act of offering—flowers and a coconut—carries with it a world of meaning. In Tamil life, these offerings are not merely ritual; they are expressions of gratitude, symbols of life’s wholeness and beauty. The coconut, with its rough shell and nourishing core, represents completeness, a gift from the earth that sustains us. The flowers, vibrant and fragrant, are reminders of life’s fleeting beauty, an homage to nature’s grace.

These offerings are not simply ritual objects; they are gestures of gratitude, given back to nature as a reminder of our dependence on her gifts. In each petal, in each husk, lies a quiet acknowledgment that all we have comes from the earth. Through these offerings, Tamil people celebrate a bond that is as ancient as it is sacred—a bond of **giving, receiving, and belonging**.



To bow before the soil is to acknowledge its quiet power and boundless generosity. In Tamil culture, the soil is revered as a source of life, memory, and renewal—a silent witness to generations past and a foundation for those yet to come. Through offerings and gentle prayers, this act of worship honors the soil's role in nurturing and sustaining all that grows.

With each prayer, there is gratitude for the soil's patience, for its ability to **give without asking** in return. This ritual is not just tradition; it is a promise, a reminder of our responsibility to tread with care, to honor the ground that holds our stories and nourishes our futures.



In Tamil tradition, offering blessings to the earth is a ritual rooted in reverence, a way to honor the soil as a living **source of life and memory**. With hands extended, each participant presents offerings of flowers, turmeric, rice, and milk—symbols of abundance, purity, and connection. This act is a shared moment of devotion, linking generations in a promise to respect and nurture the land.

Here, the earth is both witness and participant, receiving these gestures with silent grace. Through this collective act, Tamil people reaffirm their deep bond with the soil, acknowledging its enduring generosity and embracing their role as caretakers of its future.



In Tamil tradition, the stone is not just an object but a vessel of presence, a silent witness to the eternal dance of creation and dissolution. Adorned with fresh flowers, coconuts, and offerings, it becomes a living symbol of reverence—a bridge between the sacred and the earthly. Each ritual offering, each garland, is a gesture of harmony, a recognition of the interconnectedness of all life. Here, the stone is a reminder that the divine exists not in distant heavens but in the soil beneath our feet, in the flowers that bloom, and in the hands that prepare offerings with devotion. This act of adornment becomes a reminder that the earth itself is sacred, deserving of our respect, care, and humility.



For Karpu, the essence of purity is captured in the silent act of offering, as water cradles delicate flowers. In Tamil culture, water is a mirror for the soul, a quiet reminder of life's clarity and the beauty of surrender. **To hold water is to hold stillness; to release it, a humble gesture of respect.** Here, purity is not simply a state but a journey—a continuous flow that cleanses both body and spirit, bringing one closer to the rhythm of the earth. Through Karpu, we are reminded to honor life's simplest elements—water, flowers, and intention. It is a call to reconnect with the purity of our origins, to bow to the river, the lake, the rain, acknowledging each drop as a keeper of balance, a giver of life. In this, there is a profound simplicity: as we seek purity outside, we find it within, reflected in the gentle waves of water that echo our own quiet depths.



In Tamil culture, trees stand as silent witnesses to the continuity of life, revered not only for their shade and beauty but for the spirit they embody. Each tree—whether peepal, neem, or banyan—holds a unique place within the Tamil heart, symbolizing the interconnectedness of life, spirit, and earth. Tying a turmeric-thread around their trunks is more than a ritual; it is an invocation, a way of binding oneself to the rhythms of nature, seeking blessings that go beyond words.

For generations, Tamil people have approached these **trees as living deities**, recognizing them as embodiments of protection, longevity, and purity. The neem, associated with the goddess Mariamman, is revered for its healing properties, while the banyan, with roots that seem to reach eternity, symbolizes resilience and endurance. Circumambulating a sacred tree, often barefoot, is a gesture of reverence, a walk that echoes the cyclical nature of life itself, each step a reminder of our humble place within the vastness of the natural world.

In their silent stature, these trees offer more than shade; they offer a quiet space for reflection, an embrace that holds the essence of Tamil identity—*karpu* (purity), *aasai* (longing), and *poruttam* (harmony). Through prayers and offerings of flowers, water, and rice, there is an exchange, a recognition that these trees are more than part of the landscape—they are kin, guardians, and symbols of life's unbroken cycle. In Tamil land, to honor the sacred tree is to honor the unseen forces that hold the world in balance, a tender reminder that our lives are intricately woven with the ancient roots that anchor the earth.