National Institute of Advanced Studies
Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bengaluru 560 012

Cordially invites you to a PUBLIC LECTURE

on

THE NIAS LOGO AND THE SULVA-SUTRA

The Programme

- An introductory word by Dr. V. Siddhartha, Adjunct Faculty, NIAS
- The NIAS Logo and the Sulva-Sutra by Prof. Roddam Narasimha, Emeritus Professor and Former Director, NIAS
- Creating the NIAS Logo by Shri. Balan Nambiar, Practising Artist

Chairperson: Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Director, NIAS

on Friday, October 11, 2019 at 4:30 PM
Venue: J.R.D. Tata Auditorium, NIAS

The NIAS Logo, as Prof. Narasimha notes*, “… can be traced back to a remarkable Sanskrit work called the Sulva-sutra (The Manual of the Cord) which, while being concerned chiefly with vedic ritual, displays a deep knowledge of geometry from pre-Euclidean times. The NIAS logo displays the arrangement of bricks in the first layer of an altar called syena-cita, in the shape of an eagle or falcon (= syena), with 200 bricks of five different shapes. Vedic fire-altars were of two kinds, the perpetual ones (nitya) and the optional ones (kamya). The syena-cita is an optional fire, meant for those who desire heaven, and is constructed in the likeness of the falcon. Although the Sutra appears to be a manual of applied geometry it is remarkable that, apart from the formidable geometrical problems solved there, many general geometrical propositions are in fact stated and frequently used. The syena-cita was therefore a creation for the spirit inspired by Vedic philosophy, and founded on great mathematics and engineering - an apt symbol for all the things that NIAS stands for”.

About the Speakers:

Dr. V. Siddhartha is an Adjunct Faculty with the International Strategic and Security Studies Programme of NIAS since 2013. He worries about the lack of a sense of institutional history of our scientific agencies, and our Think Tanks, particularly amongst young scholars.

Prof. Roddam Narasimha was the Director of NIAS from 1997 to 2004. He has had an abiding interest in Indian science, philosophy and history. He started a Lecture series on the History of Ideas at NIAS, several of them were published in Dialogues Across Disciplines 2012, Other publications include Encyclopaedia of Classical Indian Sciences2007, Nature and Culture 2011 and Verses for the Brave 2005 (Selections from the Yoga-Vaasishtha with English translations, NIAS). Prof. Narasimha received the Padma Vibhushan in 2013. He has been elected to the Royal Society, London, and the US National Academies of Science and Engineering.

Shri. Balan Nambiar is one of India's leading contemporary artists and a research scholar on ritual art forms of the west coast of South India. He is based in Bangalore and has been an Associate of NIAS for more than two decades. His sculptures are in mild steel, concrete, stone and stainless steel. Monumental sculptures are his hallmark. His enamel paintings are done with jewellery enamel colours, silver and gold on copper base. He has received several awards both for creative works and academic research.

For further information, please contact Ms. Hamsa Kalyani hamsa.kalyani@nias.res.in