



OPEN AIR LIBRARY

by





The Open Air Library by Bookworm, situated in the Art Park, was housed in the Children's Pavilion by Public Art grantee Ruturaj Parikh. The library was centered around curated collections of books for reading and browsing and offered a choice of comfortable seating and an ambience of quiet joy along with curated activities opening out various ways to experience books and stories in the library

PROGRAMMING at the Open Air Library

Programming at the Open Air Library featured 6 stations in addition to the library collection. The activities included engagement with poetry, stories, stitching, movement, process, and visual arts. All the activities were made possible by the sponsored Camlin art material, which reached the following number of children and adults.

Overview:

No. of activity stations: 7

No. of activities featured: 23

Total number of visitors: 1871

No. of schools who visited: 24

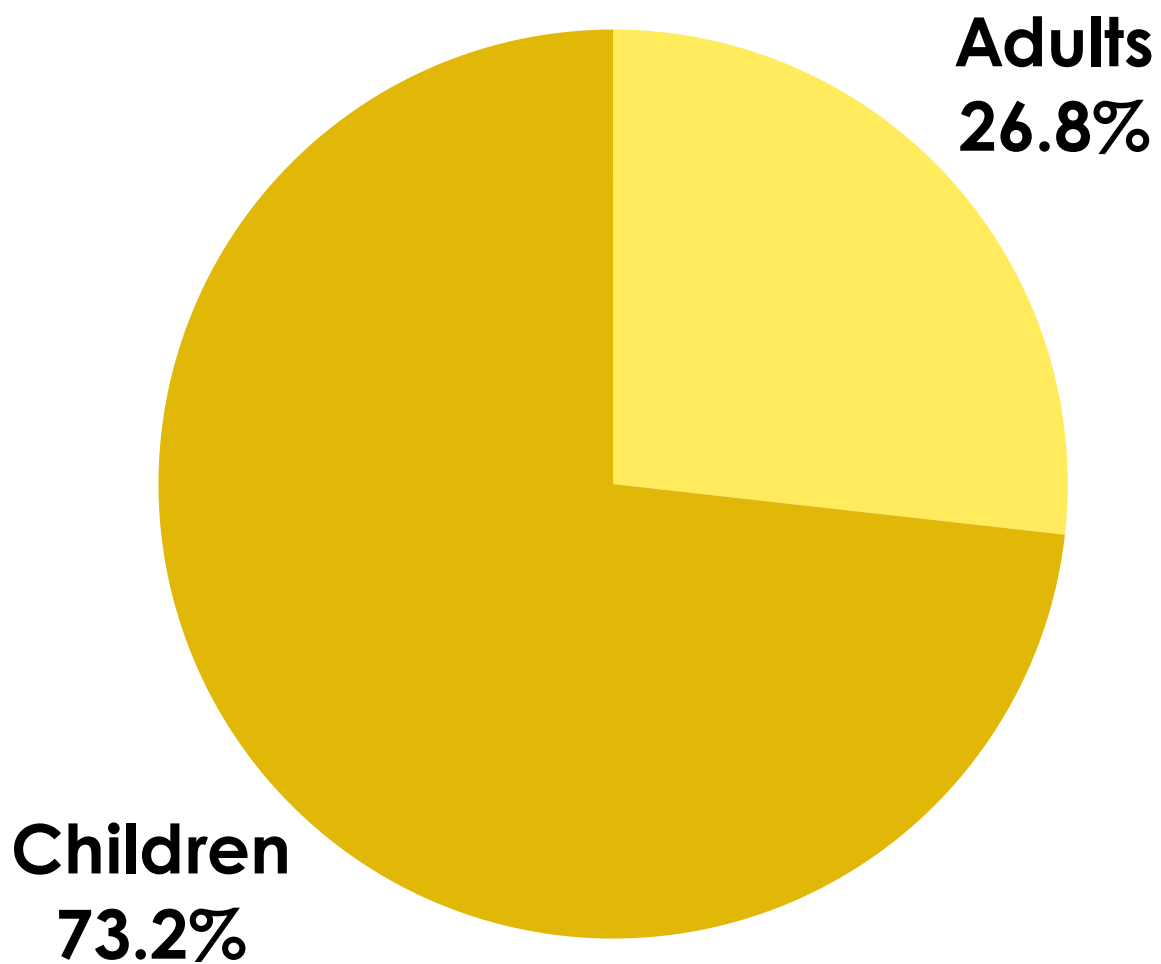
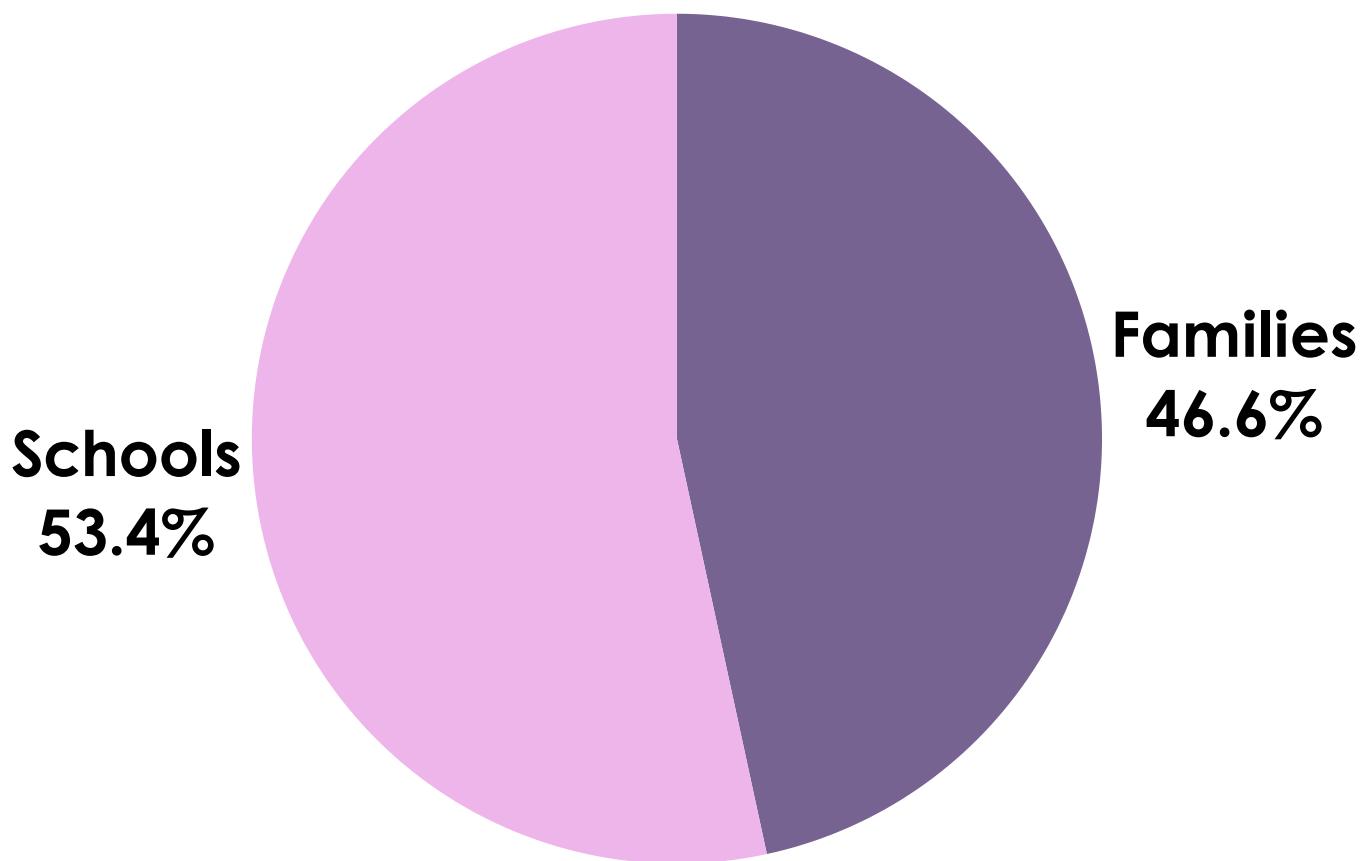
No of children from Bookworm's community libraries who visited: 72

Total number of children who visited: 1370

Total number of adults who visited: 501

Visitors to the Open Air Library

Date	No. of visitors (reach of Camlin material)
15/12/2023	170
16/12/2023	175
17/12/2023	183
18/12/2023	267
19/12/2023	150
20/12/2023	205
21/12/2023	222
22/12/2023	216
23/12/2023	283
Total	1871





Stations at the OPEN AIR LIBRARY



The library

The Open Air Library held a collection of 300 books carefully curated from Bookworm Library's larger collection. The collection at the Open Air Library featured books belonging to various genres such as fiction, non fiction, poetry, and process under the themes of library, ecology, Goa, visual arts, and stitching. A high level of engagement with the books by children as well as adults was observed on all days.



Story

At the heart of our human experience is the space and place for Story and a library is this space. Stories were opened out in the form of activities like activities involved were Story in an Envelope, Ghost story, Sequencing the story scenes, Watching a story and Treasure Hunt. Children were fascinated with Story in an Envelope where they had the choices to make their own story with either phrases or by drawings. Those who could use words chose writing the stories and others chose to draw. The Treasure Hunt was popular as it had many exciting layers to play with. Children played the game and found the books, they sat and read the books and completed the activity. The Story station engaged participants of all age groups.



Poetry

The heart of all literature and expression reposed in this space, imagined as a mix of reading, responding, and making poetry. Various activities, including visual displays of poetry, offered creative opportunities for both children and adults. Listen & Respond, Response to Poetry, Found Poetry, and Make a Diamante Poem were explored in the space to encourage passive activities with active engagement. The poetry station activities garnered deep engagement and valuable feedback. While some parents found the poems challenging, the diversity in poetry books positively impacted engagement. Found poetry received appreciation for its uniqueness, though younger children required assistance. The Diamante poetry experiment was much appreciated.

The literature and poetry space at the festival served as a creative hub for both children and adults, offering diverse and engaging activities. The positive response and deep engagement throughout the festival days were truly heartening.



Process

The Process Station was imagined as a space where 'how to' books were featured along with materials for easy reading and doing. Overall the process station appeared to attract a lot of engagement, and the outcome of making something that one could take back was well received.

The process activities chosen for this station were Doll Making, Origami, Envelop Making and Finger Puppets. Whilst the process station was imagined to function passively and independently, the volunteers' presence added to the engagement that was made possible here. Spatially, the possibility of a larger space, could have increased access to each engagement considerably. Overall, the consistent engagement through all 9 days of the Festival was evident and joyful to observe.



Movement

The design of the available space was utilized to incorporate play, movement, and improvisational activities. The participants for the movement activity primarily comprised of teenagers on the first day and, on the second day, our Mobile Outreach Program (MOP) children. Everyone who participated thoroughly enjoyed the experience, as it required activating every part of the body. Various activities were conducted, ranging from warm-ups like "jump in jump out" to games like "tota pinjra toofan" and more focused activities where participants had to use their bodies to represent parts of the library, including books. Post-session feedback indicated that for some, this was a nice experience of whole-body engagement and enjoyment, while for others, it introduced entirely new movement activities.



Visual Arts

The Visual Arts space to express yourself either freely or using the guided prompts that were available daily. The outcomes of the activities at the Visual Arts station included mono and block prints along with engagement with screen printed books, bookmaking in 3 different formats - zines, accordions, and stitched books, and collaborative drawing which enabled groups (schools or families) to connect and collaborate to create an artwork on a piece of canvas and take it with them. There was great engagement with all the activities over the 9 days of the festival and children's as well as adults' artworks delighted everyone. The activities at the Visual Arts Station were complemented by a mini collection of books related to each activity.



Stitch and Take

The Stitching space at Serendipity was imagined keeping the culture of the state of Goa in mind. Fabric bags and motifs cut from vibrant fabrics were placed at the space along with embroidery threads. Each day we introduced a different motif. The motifs included a cashew, a fish, and a fishing boat. Sample bags were kept on display and visitors could follow the pattern and add elements to their design based on their imagination. Children and adults engaged with the act of stitching with creativity, focus, and joy.

We also had Corner Bookmarks at the Stitching space. Sample pieces of the corner Bookmark were placed for reference and one could choose pre cut felt triangles and sew them together to make a bookmark.

Books related to stitching were placed in the space and there were many who sat and read while their friends / relatives / children stitched their bags and bookmarks.

Challenges

Bookworm was able to collect feedback from our team as well as the visitors to the Open Air Library, a summary of which is as below:

We believe that we would have been able to bring library joy to many more people if the space had been closer to the main path. While we appreciate the security personnel being assigned to the pavilion, we wish that we could have avoided the security failures which led to the loss of our team members' property. Feedback from the visitors to the Library revealed to us that they missed popular activities like painting and clay, which we were unable to include to due to lack of a water facility. Lastly, we wish that the signage which was dedicated to our project had arrived in time and was without grammatical errors.

Acknowledgements

We at Bookworm greatly appreciate the support of the Serendipity Arts Festival in bringing the Open Air Library to life. We are thankful to the SAF team for believing in our vision and providing us with a space, Camlin material, fans and bookshelves at the space as well as the wonderful team of volunteers whose presence and support enhanced the experience of the Library for many. We also greatly appreciate the efforts of your team in reaching out to schools and inviting them to be a part of the experience of the Open Air Library. We thank and appreciate the SAF for hosting 72 children from our Mobile Outreach Program and enabling for them a memorable experience. It was your support that ensured that the project reached almost 2000 people.

Bookworm would like to thank you for another successful collaboration and we look forward to working with you in 2024.

