

Chennai Storytelling Festival 2025

(The 13th annual edition of the Festival)

Festival homepage: <https://storytellinginstitute.org/CSF2025.html>

CSF 2025 events may relate to one or both of these two themes: Storytelling and

1) "Growing, Maturing, and Transforming",

and

2) "Environment" – Considering ways the place one is in may affect one's thoughts and mood.

A) "Landscapes" – for examples:

i) Tamil culture identifies five landscapes, each of which corresponds to a stage in a married couple's relationship. Including: "Seashore" (relating to the couple's separation, because one partner might be away on a sea journey), and "Mountain Forests" (relating to the couple's joyful reunion).

ii) In Indian culture in general, "Forests" are often thought of as places for meditation.

B) Being –

i) in a City, in a Town, in the Countryside, at Sea, on an Island, away from the Earth, in a Dream, etc.

ii) Indoors or Outdoors.

iii) Offline or Online.

Weekend #1: Fri 31 Jan, Sat 1 Feb, Sun 2 Feb.

Weekend #2: Thurs 6, Fri 7, Sat 8, Sun 9 Feb.

Weekend #3: Thurs 13, Fri 14, Sat 15, Sun 16 Feb.

Weekend #4: Thurs 20, Fri 21, Sat 22, Sun 23 Feb.

Yellow = Storytelling for adults.

Green = Storytelling by/with/for children.

India Timings –

Weekend #1

Friday 31 Jan –

4:30pm-5:00pm, **Opening Session.**

5:00pm-6:30pm, Sheetal Rayathatha (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Stories that Heal and Inspire: Empowering Parents and Teachers to Assist the Development of Young Minds](#)".

6:30pm-8:30pm, **Storytelling for adults (1 of 12).**

6:30pm, [Neeta Joshi](#) (Gurgaon).

6:50pm, [MaryAnn Paterniti](#) (Vermont).

7:10pm, [Divya Anand](#) (Chennai).

7:30pm, [June Brown](#) (Toronto).

7:50pm, [Sudha Umashanker](#) (Chennai).

8:30pm-10:00pm, Karin Wedra (Germany), **Workshop:** "[Biographical Storytelling](#)".

Saturday 1 Feb –

10:30am-Noon, Vijaylakshmi Nagaraj (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Chorus of Colours: Storytelling with Hand Puppets](#)".

2:00pm-4:00pm, **Storytelling for adults (2 of 12).**

2:00pm, [Anagha Prasad](#) (Bangalore).

2:20pm, [Kousalya Pari](#) (Chennai).

2:40pm, [Nageswara Rao](#) (Hyderabad).

3:00pm, [Stefania Ganzini](#) (Italy).

3:20pm, [Manjiri Gogate](#) (Mumbai).

4:00pm-5:30pm, Marijana Mrvos (Croatia) and Elizabeta Alkovic (Croatia),

Talk and Tales: "[Croatian Author Ivana Bric Mazuranic's Stories, Including Ways She Wove Slavic Mythology into Her Stories](#)".

5:30pm-7:00pm, **Storytelling for/by/with/children** (Session 1 of 2), [Kalyan Babu](#) (Chennai).

7:00pm-8:30pm, Laura Simms (New York), **Workshop:** "[The Holy Grail of Braiding Stories](#)" (Part 1 of 2).

8:30pm-10:00pm, Aparna Athreya (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Understanding Mountains through Stories](#)".

- Sunday 2 Feb –
- 10:30am-12:30pm, **Storytelling for adults** (3 of 12).
 10:30am, [Ed Lewis](#) (California).
 10:50am, [Sudhir Pathak](#) (New Delhi).
 11:10am, [Renu Narayan](#) (Chennai).
 11:30am, [Vijaylakshmi Nagaraj](#) (Bangalore).
 11:50am, [Bhargavi Kumaran](#) (Bangalore).
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- 3:00pm-4:30pm, Srividya Veeraraghavan (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Story-Concept Creation for Teachers](#)".
 4:30pm-5:30pm, **Storytelling by [Katha Krafters](#)** – Anagha Prasad (Bangalore), Geetha Subramanian (Coimbatore), Meera Venkatesan (Bangalore), and Parvathy Eswaran (Bangalore).
 5:30pm-7:00pm, Vidya Porselvi (Chennai), **Talk and Tales:** "[Eco-Feminist Approaches to Folktales](#)".
 7:00pm-8:30pm, **Healing Story Circle** led by [Circle of Love](#) – Geetanjali Shetty Kaul (Mumbai), Poonam Joshy (Bangalore), Ramya Iyer (Bangalore), and Sowmya Srinivasan (Coimbatore).

Weekend #2

- Thursday 6 Feb –
- 5:00pm-6:30pm, Neena Girish (Thiruvananthapuram), **Workshop:** "[Storytelling Pedagogy: Ways to Train Mentors to Teach Concepts of Subjects](#)".
 6:30pm-8:00pm, Sharada Sampathkumar (Pune), **Workshop:** "[Match Your Nature with Nature](#)".

- Friday 7 Feb –
- 5:00pm-6:30pm, Ambika Arunachalam (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Exploring Logical Reasoning and Emotional Intelligence through Storytelling](#)".
 6:30pm-8:30pm, **Storytelling for adults** (4 of 12).
 6:30pm, [Shraddha Nigavekar](#) (Bangalore).
 6:50pm, [Gerald Fierst](#) (New Jersey).
 7:10pm, [Maria LoBiondo](#) (New Jersey).
 7:30pm, [Elisa Pearmain](#) (Massachusetts).
 7:50pm, [Heather Forest](#) (New York).
 8:30pm-10:00pm, Jamie Brunson (Pennsylvania), **Workshop:** "[Storytelling In Action](#)".

- Saturday 8 Feb –
- 10:30am-Noon, Ramya Srinidhi (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Artful Narratives: Enhancing Expression with Indian Picture Storytelling and Kamishibai](#)".
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- 2:00pm-4:00pm, **Storytelling for adults** (5 of 12).
 2:00pm, [Shilpa Mehta](#) (Jaipur).
 2:20pm, [Vineetha C. B.](#) (Chennai).
 2:40pm, [Meenakshi Devarai](#) (Chennai).
 3:00pm, [Ramya Srinidhi](#) (Bangalore).
 3:20pm, [Juliana Marin Fryling](#) (New Delhi).
 4:00pm-5:30pm, Sudha Umashanker, **Workshop:** "[Helping People to Create Stories Relating to the Environment](#)".
 5:30pm-7:00pm, "**Storytelling for/by/with/children**" (Session 2 of 2), [Kalyan Babu](#) (Chennai).
 7:00pm-8:30pm, Laura Simms (New York), **Workshop:** "[The Holy Grail of Braiding Stories](#)" (Part 2 of 2).
 8:30pm-10:00pm, Les Schaffer (Virginia), **Workshop** on "[The Lizard in the Fire: Utilizing African and Indian Dilemma Tales](#)".

- Sunday 9 Feb –
- 9:00am-10:30am, Marleny (Colorado), **Workshop:** "[Captivate Your Audience: Storytelling from Myths to Modernity](#)".
 10:30am-12:30pm, **Storytelling for adults** (6 of 12).
 10:30am, [Regina Ress](#) (New Mexico).
 10:50am, [Shalini Bajaj](#) (Mumbai).
 11:10am, [Meenu Sivaramakrishnan](#) (Bangalore).
 11:30am, [Nilquen Yalay](#) (New Zealand).
 11:50am, [Seema Karanth](#) (Bangalore).
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- 2:30pm-4:00pm, Banumathi H. (Coimbatore), **Workshop:** "[Recall, Reflect, Resonate: Enhancing Storytelling with Pre- and Post-Storytelling Activities](#)".
 4:00pm-5:30pm, Samatha Sharma (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Creating and Telling Healing Stories](#)".
 5:30pm-7:00pm, Nyanna Tobin (Massachusetts), **Workshop:** "[Flip-Flop Stories: Recrafting a Negative Experience into a Healing Story](#)".

Sunday 9 Feb – 7:00pm-8:30pm, David Heathfield (UK), **Workshop:** "[Tell a Child in Gaza's Tale: Sharing our Humanity](#)".
8:30pm-10:00pm, Maria LoBiondo (New Jersey), **Workshop:** "[Storytelling and the Labyrinth Archetype](#)".

Weekend #3

Thursday 13 Feb – 5:00pm-6:30pm, Smita Rajan (Mumbai), **Workshop:** "[Storytelling Through Movement](#)".
6:30pm-8:00pm, Ambujavalli N. (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Story Alchemy: Tweaking Tales to Fit Any Context](#)".
8:00pm-9:30pm, Nicholas Pawlowski (Minnesota), **Workshop:** "[Telling Stories to Children, and Leading Children in Story-related Activities](#)".

Friday 14 Feb – 5:00pm-6:30pm, Eric Miller (Chennai), **Workshop:** (For info, please click [here](#).)
6:30pm-8:30pm, **Storytelling for adults (7 of 12).**
6:30pm, [Ellen Tannenbaum](#) (New York).
6:50pm, [Dewthy Chandran](#) (Kochi).
7:10pm, [Ambujavalli N.](#) (Chennai).
7:30pm, [Jaishree Sethi](#) (New Delhi).
7:50pm, [Vicky Ness](#) (California).
8:30pm-10:00pm, Jennifer Ramsay (Spain), **Workshop:** "[Working Creatively with *The Dream Makers*, a Scottish Tale](#)".

Saturday 15 Feb – 10:30am-Noon, Sheeja Nair (Chennai), **Workshop** "[Using Roleplay and Other Methods to Explore the Story, Dreams and Aspirations: Maya's Inspiring Journey](#)".
2:00pm-4:00pm, **Storytelling for adults (8 of 12).**
2:00pm, [Indira Ananthakrishnan](#) (Chennai).
2:20pm, [Sharada Sampathkumar](#) (Bangalore).
2:40pm, [Lipika Mohanty](#) (Bhubaneshwar).
3:00pm, [Veena Seethepalli](#) (Hyderabad).
3:20pm, [Sheetal Rayathatha](#) (Chennai).
4:00pm-5:30pm, Renu Narayan (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Healing Sound Therapy](#)".
5:30pm-7:00pm, **Storytelling for/by/with/children**, [Sridevi Srinivasan](#) (Chennai).
7:00pm-8:30pm, Sarah Howell (Italy), **Workshop:** "[The Oracy Bridge: From Reluctant Speaker to Confident Storyteller](#)".
8:30pm-10:30pm, Magdalene Jeyarathnam (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Psychodrama and Dreams](#)".

Sunday 16 Feb – 9:00am-10:30am, Regina Ress (New Mexico), **Workshop:** "[Fashioning Fiction from Fact: Re-imagining Our Personal Stories](#)".
10:30am-Noon, **Storytelling for adults (9 of 12).**
10:30am, [Salome D.](#) (Mumbai).
10:50am, [Lavanya Prasad](#) (Bangalore).
11:10am, [Nidhi Bagaria](#) (Mumbai).
11:30am, [Priyanka Sagar Maheshwari](#) (Noida).
Noon-1pm, Jasmina Žiljak (Croatia), **Talk and Tales:** "[Storytelling and Teaching-and-Learning with Young Children](#)".
2:30pm-4:00pm, Lavanya Prasad (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Kolam - A Journey Within](#)".
4:00pm-5:30pm, Meera Venkatesan (Bangalore), and Meenu Sivaramakrishnan (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Integrated Learning: Putting Together the Learning Puzzle through Stories](#)".
5:30pm-7:00pm, Lalitha Thilak (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[The 4 C's of Life: Choice, Chance, Change, and Creativity – Knowing Life Through Stories](#)".
7:00pm-8:30pm, Bruce Kirchoff (North Carolina), **Workshop:** "[Group Improvisational-Storytelling](#)".
8:30pm-10:00pm, Despina Ariou (Greece), **Workshop:** "[Celebrating Strong Women from the Past to the Present: Medea and Us](#)".

Weekend #4

Thursday 20 Feb – 6:30pm-8:00pm, Debjani Bhaduri (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Scripting and Sculpting Characters of Stories](#)".

- Friday 21 Feb – 5:00pm-6:30pm, Anupamaa Venugopal (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Exploring Gender Issues Through Stories](#)".
 6:30pm-8:30pm, **Storytelling for adults** (10 of 12).
 6:30pm, [Veena Parveen Hasan](#) (Guwahati).
 6:50pm, [Debjani Bhaduri](#) (Chennai).
 7:10pm, [Rachna Chowla](#) (Mumbai).
 7:30pm, [Valentina Ortiz Pandolfi](#) (Mexico).
 7:50pm, [Denise McCormack](#) (New Jersey).
 8:30pm-10:00pm, Rebecca Lemaire (Spain) and Jim Brulé (New York), **Workshop:** "[A Transformational Journey: Dying and Living](#)".
- Saturday 22 Feb – 9:00am-10:30am, Audra Sisak (Washington State), **Workshop:** "[Storytelling and Autism](#)".
 10:30am-Noon, Ayushi Agrawal (Bangalore), **Workshop:** "[Emergent Stories: Stories Coming Alive Through the Arts](#)".
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 2:00pm-4:00pm, **Storytelling for adults** (11 of 12).
 2:00pm, [Haritha Kannan](#) (Chennai).
 2:20pm, [Lalitha Sastry](#) (Hyderabad).
 2:40pm, [Jenis Lunkad](#) (New Delhi).
 3:00pm, [Ramendra Kumar](#) (Bangalore).
 3:20pm, [Vandana Rao](#) (Visakhapatnam).
 4:00pm-5:30pm, Sridevi Srinivasan (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[The Art and Role of Story Reading \(Reading Aloud\) for Facilitating Literacy and Creativity](#)".
 5:30pm-7:00pm, Rohini Jayanti (Hyderabad), **Workshop:** "[Using Story to Reconnect with One's Inner Child](#)".
 7:00pm-8:30pm, Sowmya Srinivasan (Coimbatore), **Workshop:** "[Exploring Emotional Worlds through Sangam Landscapes](#)".
 8:30pm-10:00pm, Carol Birch (Connecticut), **Workshop:** "[It's How You Say It!](#)".
- Sunday 23 Feb – 9:00am-10:30am, Lavanya Srinivas (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Ways Nature Can Touch Hearts and Transform Lives](#)".
 10:30am-12:30pm, **Storytelling for adults** (12 of 12).
 10:30am, [Banumathy H.](#) (Coimbatore).
 10:50am, [Sowmya Srinivasan](#) (Coimbatore).
 11:10am, [Sridevi Srinivasan](#) (Chennai).
 11:30am, [Ayushi Agrawal](#) (Bangalore).
 11:50am, [Lalitha Thilak](#) (Chennai).
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 2:30pm-4:00pm, Haritha Kannan (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Small Yet Mighty](#)".
 4:00pm-5:30pm, Krishna Chaitanya (Hyderabad) and Lalitha Sastry (Hyderabad), **Workshop:** "[Burrakatha, Then and Now](#)".
 5:30pm-7:00pm, Shraddha Nigavekar (Pune), Debjani Bhaduri (Chennai), Meenu Sivaramakrishnan (Bangalore), and Pretigaya Haran (Chennai), **Workshop:** "[Improv to Improve!](#)".
 7:00pm-8:30pm, Les Shaffer (Virginia), **Workshop:** "[Speaking Comedy to Power](#)".
 8:30pm-9:00pm, **Closing Session.**