

Thank you for coming to
TEDxChoiceSchool
x = independently organized TED event

Diya Isha

Diya Isha is the student speaker for the second edition of The TEDxChoiceSchool. She will be giving a talk on "The Correlation Between Beauty And Truth".

She will talk on how **beauty** is interpreted in different ways by the many different cultures in the world and how it changes as time passes just like the **truth**. Just like how the ideal body changes over time, from the slim symmetrical bodies in the Egyptian era to the chubby bodies and the cinched waists during the Victorian age. Her inspiration for the talk is a book written by Naomi Wolf, **'The Beauty Myth'**, which gave her a different perspective on feminism.

As time passes both the trends and the views of people will change. Polygamy which was accepted in the middle ages is now a taboo. Even her views on the book will change 10 years from now. What she wishes to convey through her talk is that beauty does not remain the same throughout the passage of time and it depends on the current trend. She wants everyone to be healthy in their skin so that they can be accepted.



Mayankutty Mather

Did you know that Mayankutty Mather was an **atheist** and believed in communism? He worked for the Communist Marxist Party in Kerala and was against religious beliefs. But his life took a turn when he responded to the call of God in 1995. He set out in a quest to find the true religion and in

his journey, he had an opportunity to read many religious texts. He **chose Islam** as the true religion and is now a strong follower. He has read all the three holy books and gives influential lectures on the Islamic edicts and professes the religion well. He is an eminent lawyer practicing in the High Court of Kerala and an expert in property, criminal, family, divorce and consumer cases. A renowned face on social media with a unique perspective about life.



Kirthi Jayakumar

An Indian Social Rights Activist, a lawyer, a writer, an entrepreneur and a recipient of the **US Presidential Medal**, Kirthi Jayakumar has for the last nine years, has worked hard to achieve **gender equality** and social justice. She has defined what it means to be humane.

When asked about one of her biggest life changing moments, she pauses to tell us an anecdote. When she was 21, she had an opportunity to teach dance in a school, for a short time. She helped choreograph the steps and taught it to the children. All this time, she ignored a student at the back of the class. She was slender, very petite and had oily hair. However, the day before the performance, she noticed a boy jostling with the girl. In moments, she was down on the floor. A teacher separated them, and asked the boy if he remembered her warning the previous time this had happened. She (Kirthi) took the girl outside the class, and they sat down on the stairs. Not much was said, but a lot was conveyed. Finally, when the girl stood up to leave, she asked her one question that had been nagging her, "Does this happen to you every day?" And she gave the slightest of nods.



Two weeks later, she had an opportunity to teach a class again. Two days in, she asks the students to share their own life backgrounds. There was a girl in her class who was repeatedly bullied and hence always remained silent. However, today, hers was the first hand up. This was her story. She was from a broken home. Her father was a very violent man, and regularly beat up her mother.



The Red Elephant Foundation

And in an effort to save her mother, she used to sort of push herself between them, and she was hit instead. She then looked into the eyes of the bully and said that what he did to her every day was a traumatizing remembrance of the circumstances at home. The bully then walked up to her and gave her a warm hug. He then told his story. He was from a broken home. His father was a very violent man, and regularly beat up his mother. And in an effort to save his mother, he used to sort of push himself between them, and he was hit instead. The difference between them was that the boy realized that something had been taken away from him and he donned the cape of his father to take back what was taken. When Kirthi went home that day, she decided to work towards one goal: to end bullying. As a means to reach this goal, she founded **The Red Elephant Foundation**, which works for gender equality and peace through storytelling. Having already spoken at a TEDx event earlier, she is ready to take the stage to share with us her quest for truth and the myriad of discoveries she made along her journey.

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TED(Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a media organization which posts talks online for free distribution, under the slogan "ideas worth spreading". A TEDx event is a local gathering where live TED-like talks and videos previously recorded at TED conferences are shared with the community. TEDx events are fully planned and coordinated independently, on a community-by-community basis.

TEDxChoiceSchool is an event organized by the students of Choice School. For the second edition of TEDxChoiceSchool the theme is "The Quest For Truth." This year's speakers are an eccentric bunch. We have a speaker who has overcome cancer without chemotherapy and only her pure willpower to keep her going, A four time national film award winner, A woman's rights activist, a lawyer who, after reading all three of the Holy Books, is a strong follower of Islam and the student speaker who will change your view on the concept of beauty. At TEDxChoiceSchool we aim to break the illusion of lies we are surrounded by and discover a new world in The Quest For Truth.

The Quest for Truth

Once there was a king who received a gift of two magnificent falcons.

They were peregrine falcons, the most beautiful birds he had ever seen. He gave the precious falcons to his head falconer to be trained. Months passed, and one day the head falconer informed the king that though one of the falcons was flying majestically, the other bird had not moved from its branch since the day it had arrived. The king summoned healers and sorcerers from all the land to tend to the falcon, but no one could make the bird fly.

He presented the task to the member of his court, but the next day, the bird had still not moved from its perch. Having tried everything else, the king thought to himself, "Maybe I need someone more familiar with the countryside to understand the nature of this problem". So he cried out to his court, "Go and get a farmer."

In the morning, the king was thrilled to see the falcon soaring high above the palace gardens. He said to his court, "Bring me the doer of this miracle."

The court quickly located the farmer, who came and stood before the king. The king asked him, "How did you make the falcon fly?"

With his head bowed, the farmer said to the king, "It was very easy, your highness. I simply cut the branch where the bird was sitting."

Most of us are like the first falcon: eager to stay in our own comfort zone. And in doing so, we miss the fundamental truth that we are destined for something bigger and beautiful.

Here at TEDx Choice School 2017, we hope to break the boundaries of our narrow, constrained thoughts and open our minds to the world beyond. This year's motto, "The Quest for Truth" is aimed at inviting people to step out of their own comfort zones and to try something different. The real magic happens outside your comfort zone. All it takes is just one tiny leap of faith.

Asha Krishnan

An enkindling personality who worked her way through the odds with just her zeal and impeccably calm personality. Asha Krishnan is a non practicing lawyer, who has also worked in the field of journalism. After her inspiring breakthrough over her extreme condition of cancer without being subjected to chemotherapy, she ventured into business as a strong, brave and independent woman.

We had the honour of interviewing her. Here's the transcript.
(T - TEDx Journalism Team, A - Asha Krishnan)

T: How important do you feel that platforms like TEDx are for expressing opinions , thoughts and sharing stories?

A: Such platforms provide a basic level to not just give an insight of the person talking, but also give a sense of independence to the articulation of various perspectives.

T: What are you going to talk about in TEDx this time?

A: I will be talking about how my experience fighting cancer was, the reason behind it's build up and how I came through.

T: Can you tell us a little more about your condition?

A: For now, I'm out of the clutches of cancer and I'm extremely happy. Not just that, I feel all the more bolder and stronger than ever before, after my experiences with ill health.



T: When did you first find out that you had to deal with such an extreme condition and what was your reaction?

A: The first time I diagnosed my condition was in 2010. It wasn't very comforting, but I did not mind it much and came to terms with it pretty soon. I carried it for nearly 4 years.

T: How did your personal life help you arrive through everything?

A: I owe all my support to majorly my brother-in-law, Dr. TNV Nair, who is now working in Lakshmi Hospital, Pallimuku. There were a lot of obligations from my family and moral imperatives towards the society. This did not bring me down, but helped me fight all odds.

T: Speaking about everything you went through and how you came out of it, what do you think can teach all of your listeners?

A: I want everyone to know that breast cancer is nothing to be afraid of and gravely mourned, provided you know how to keep up your health by following various precautions and important steps like taking supplements and staying away from pollution. Mental happiness and being calm are also vital elements to work your way through all the obstacles you come across.

T: Do you think the decisions you took at the point of your condition and even now help you learn and grow? How?

A: Definitely. Understanding and coping with this life as an ordinary man with no medical background has been facilitated only by the decisions and paths that I chose to take throughout my journey. I had a laid-back attitude towards everything which immensely helped me keep my calm and stay focused on working my way out.

Sabu Cyril

His interest in the world of entertainment began with his visit to the Vauhini Studios in Madras during the making of the Bollywood film 'Prem Nagar'. From then on, his actions were directed towards pursuing a career in the world of make-believe. This passion led him to decided to study in Madras School Of Arts and Crafts as recommended by his uncle A. Vincent, who was an established cinematographer at the time. Along with completing his studies at the university, he also worked as a freelance graphics designer for multinationals and corporate companies such as the Taj Group of Hotels, Welcomgroup Hotels, etc. This freelance experience gradually brought him a number of professional film projects later, which grew his fascination with cinema even more, and with it, his success in the field as well. Using the basic principles of Chemistry, Physics and Engineering that he acquired while growing up, he completed many projects for various different films. Being a Production Designer, his job is to be responsible for the overall look of the film. Working directly with the director, cinematographer and the producer, he plays his creative role by selecting the style and the settings of the film in order to visually tell the story. Popular films such as 'Om Shanti Om', 'Enthiran (Robot)', 'Ra.One' and the very famous 'Baahubali' are just a minuscule fraction of the ever-growing number of films his work can be observed in. Cyril has won four National Film Awards for Best Production Design and **has won the National Filmfare Award for Best Art Direction five times**. He was also nominated at the 42nd Saturn Awards. He has directed over 2,500 advertisements, 3 teleserials, 115 feature films in around five languages, and has also designed several stage shows, including the stage design for the **Miss World beauty pageant** in 1996. His passion and creativity has brought him a lot of



success in his career life, which is probably what lead him to emerge as the most celebrated art director of the country over the years.