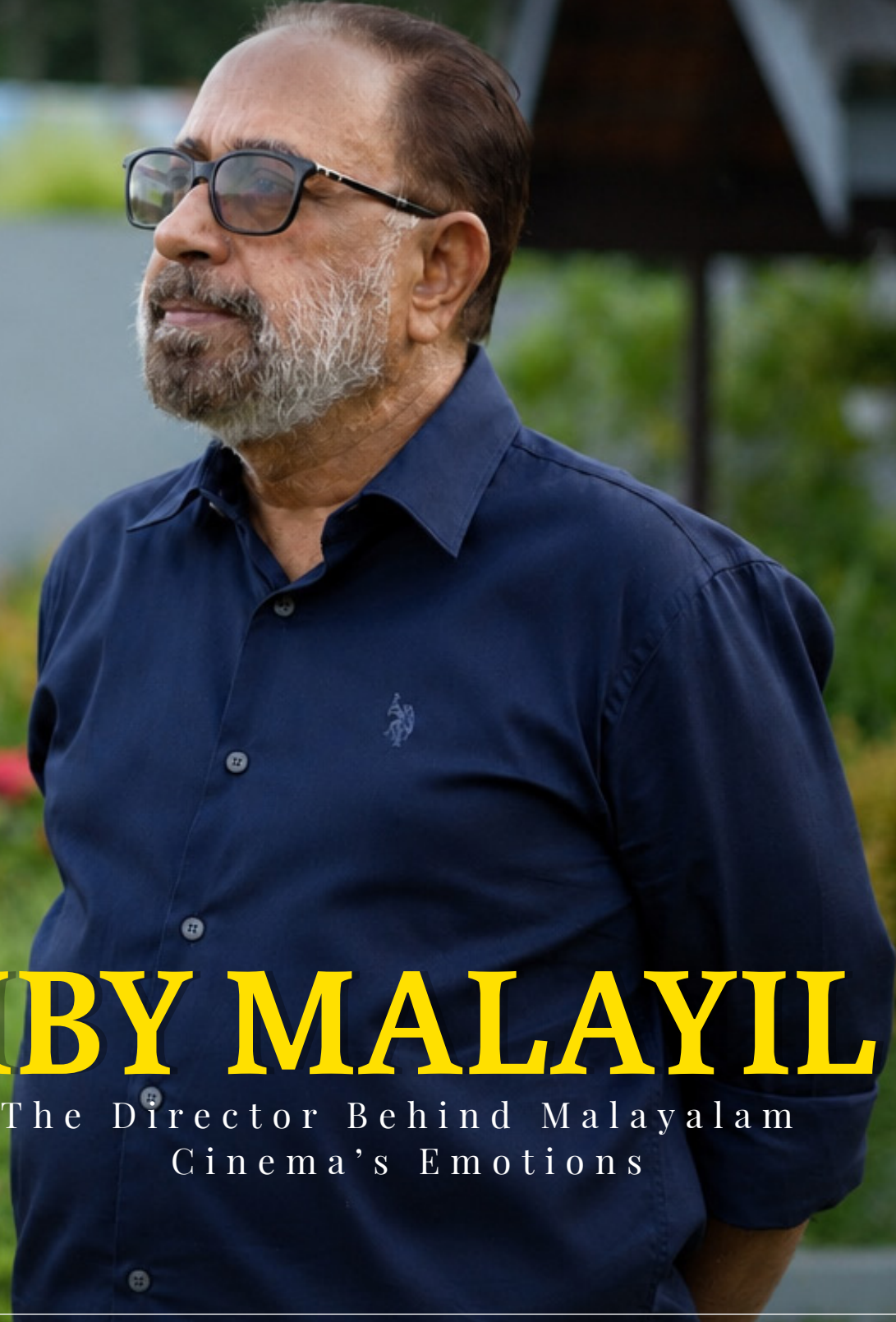


THE UK'S NO.1 MALAYALAM BUSINESS AND LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

Outstanding KERALA

ISSN 2979-2673

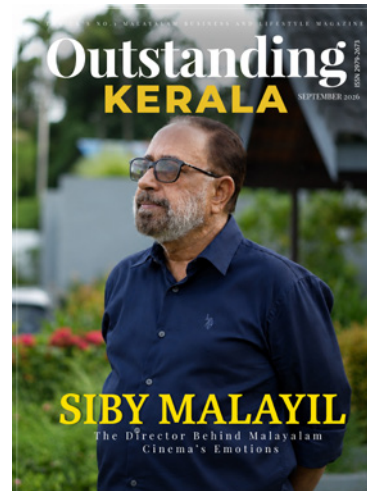
SEPTEMBER 2026



SIBY MALAYIL

The Director Behind Malayalam
Cinema's Emotions

CREATIVE TEAM



September 2026 Edition

EDITOR IN CHIEF

SIBIN CYRIAC

MANAGING EDITOR

PHILIP DEVASIA

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

AMALA ANUGRAHA BABU

ART DIRECTOR

ASWANI M MENON

DESIGN

NEO DIGITAL

DIRECTOR & CEO

BENJITH BENNY

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER

PETER GRAY

PHOTOGRAPHY

FUHADH SANEEN
JOJI GRAISON

TECH DIRECTOR

KEVIN TOM

IT

TGI TECHNOLOGIES



magazine@outstandingkerala.com
www.outstandingkerala.com

Outstanding Kerala
ISSN 2979-2673

A Publication By The Paper Fuel Ltd.

Frequency: Monthly

Publisher: The Paper Fuel Ltd.

Liverpool, United Kingdom



Outstanding Kerala
The Paper Fuel Limited
96 Rhodesia road
Fazakerley
Liverpool
United Kingdom- L99BX

© 2026 The Paper Fuel Limited. All rights reserved.

The Outstanding Kerala Magazine is published by The Paper Fuel Limited. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the publisher. The views and opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher. All advertisements and sponsored content are subject to our terms and conditions, available online.

SIBY MALAYIL

The Director Behind Malayalam Cinema's Emotions

SUMMARY

Siby Malayil is one of the most respected filmmakers in Malayalam cinema, known for films that place human emotions and relationships at the centre of their stories. His collaborations with writers such as A. K. Lohithadas and M. T. Vasudevan Nair, along with leading actors of different generations, produced some of Malayalam cinema's most memorable films. Even after decades behind the camera, he continues to contribute to the industry through filmmaking, leadership and film education.

The Making of a Filmmaker

Born on May 2, 1956, in Alappuzha, Siby Malayil studied at St. Berchmans College before entering the Malayalam film industry. His early career was spent learning the craft alongside established directors.

He worked as an associate with filmmakers including Fazil and Priyadarshan. This period gave him valuable experience in different aspects of filmmaking and allowed him to observe how stories, performances and technical elements come together on a film set.

Among the films associated with his early career were Manjil Virinja Pookkal, Ente Mamattukkuttiyammakku, Poochakkoru Mookkuthi and Manichitrathazhu.

In 1985, Siby Malayil made his directorial debut with Mutharamkunnu P.O., beginning a career that would eventually become one of the significant directing journeys in Malayalam cinema.

Finding His Voice

Siby Malayil's early directorial work quickly showed his interest in stories driven by ordinary people and their emotional struggles. Films such as *Doore Doore Oru Koodu Kootam*, *Rareeram* and *Thaniyavarthanam* established his ability to handle serious subjects without losing their accessibility.

Thaniyavarthanam, written by A. K. Lohithadas, was particularly important. The film examined the impact of social beliefs and family perceptions on an individual, creating a deeply personal story around mental health, family and social pressure.

His collaboration with Lohithadas became one of the most important creative partnerships of his career. Together, they created several films built around characters facing difficult choices and circumstances.

The late 1980s brought *Kireedam*, *Vicharana*, *Mudra* and *Dasharatham*. *Kireedam*, in particular, became one of Malayalam cinema's most enduring films, portraying how circumstances can dramatically change a young man's life and relationship with his family.

A Golden Creative Period

The early 1990s marked the most celebrated phase of Malayil's career.

His Highness Abdullah combined music, family drama and intrigue, while *Bharatham* explored the complicated relationship between two brothers and the pressures surrounding artistic talent. Mohanlal's performance in *Bharatham* earned him the National Film Award for Best Actor.

Malayil followed it with *Sadayam* and *Kamaladalam* in 1992. *Sadayam*, written by M. T. Vasudevan Nair, explored difficult psychological and moral questions, while *Kamaladalam* revolved around dance, ambition and personal struggle.

In 1993, *Akashadoothu* and *Chenkol* further strengthened his reputation. *Akashadoothu* became known for its emotional treatment of family and loss, while *Chenkol* continued the story established in *Kireedam*.



“
I communicate better through visuals than words—and that is my strength.”



A Director Who Understood Performers

One of the most enduring aspects of Malayil's cinema has been his relationship with actors. His films have provided performers with characters driven by internal conflict rather than simply plot requirements. This was particularly evident in his collaborations with Mohanlal, with films such as Kireedam, Dasharatham, His Highness Abdullah, Bharatham, Sadayam, Kamaladalam and Chenkol becoming important landmarks in the actor's career.

But Malayil's contribution cannot be reduced to any single actor or writer. His filmography includes collaborations with several generations of performers, writers, composers and technicians.

His approach often placed emotional credibility above visual spectacle. Characters were allowed to hesitate, make mistakes, suffer consequences and reveal vulnerabilities. That quality helped many of his films remain relatable even as the filmmaking landscape around them changed.

Beyond the Familiar Classics

Although his best-known work is concentrated in the 1980s and 1990s, Malayil continued directing films through the following decades.

Pranayavarnangal and Summer in Bethlehem in the late 1990s showed a different side of his filmmaking, while Ustaad continued his association with emotionally layered mainstream cinema. Devadoothan, released in 2000, was another notable entry in his filmography.

He followed it with films including Ishtam, Ente Veedu Appuvinteyum, Jalolsavam, Amrutham, Alice in Wonderland, Flash, Aayirathil Oruvan, Apoorvaragam, Violin, Unnam and Njangalude Veettile Athidhikal.

His later directorial works included Saigal Padukayaanu in 2015 and Kotthu in 2022. The latter marked his return to cinema after a period away from directing. His career, therefore, has not followed a straight line of continuous releases, but rather one shaped by changing circumstances and the evolving Malayalam film industry.





Recognition and Awards

Siby Malayil's films received recognition at both national and state levels.

Doore Doore Oru Koodu Kootam won the National Film Award for Best Film on Other Social Issues. Akashadoothu received the National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare, while Kanakkinavu won the Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration.

His direction was also recognised at the Filmfare Awards South. He won Best Director – Malayalam for Bharatham in 1991 and Sadayam in 1992.

In 2003, Ente Veedu Appuvinteyum brought him the Kerala State Film Award for Best Director. The film also received the award for Best Film with Popular Appeal and Aesthetic Value.

“The failure of Devadoothan hurt so deeply that it made me want to walk away from cinema.

- SIBY MALAYIL



Understanding Characters

One of the defining strengths of Siby Malayil's filmmaking has been his ability to create space for actors to explore complicated characters. His association with Mohanlal produced several memorable films, including Kireedam, Dasharatham, His Highness Abdullah, Bharatham, Sadayam, Kamaladalam and Chenkol.

But his contribution extends well beyond one actor or one writing partnership. His films brought

together many leading performers, writers and technicians, with character-driven storytelling remaining central to his approach.

Rather than relying primarily on spectacle, Siby Malayil often built his films around emotional credibility. His characters could make mistakes, experience failure and face the consequences of their choices. That human quality has helped many of his films remain relevant to audiences.

A Role Beyond Direction

Siby Malayil's contribution to Malayalam cinema has also extended beyond filmmaking.

He has been associated with the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA) and has served as its president. His involvement reflects a broader role within the industry, representing and engaging with issues concerning film workers and technicians.

He has also remained involved in film education through Neo Film School in Kochi. His experience across several decades of Malayalam cinema gives him an opportunity to interact with and mentor younger aspiring filmmakers.

A Lasting Legacy

Siby Malayil's legacy cannot be measured only through awards or the number of films he has directed.

His lasting contribution is found in the emotional world of his cinema. His stories frequently dealt with families, relationships, ambition, loneliness, mistakes and redemption — subjects that audiences could recognise in their own lives.

From his early days as an associate director to becoming one of Malayalam cinema's most recognised filmmakers, Malayil's journey has been shaped by a consistent interest in people and their emotions. His films remain a reminder of the power of strong writing, sensitive direction and performances rooted in human experience.



Outstanding Entrepreneurs of Kerala

Outstanding Kerala is a premier business and lifestyle magazine published by The Paper Fuel Limited, dedicated to showcasing the exceptional talent and Outstanding individuals from Kerala to a global platform.

SUBSCRIBE
NOW →



www.outstandingkerala.com