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COLLATERAL

KOCHI MUZIRIS BIENNALE 2018

**MEYDAD ELIYAHU
AND
THOUFEEK ZAKRIYA**

A PUBLIC ART PROJECT REMINISCING
KOCHI'S FORGOTTEN JEWISH HERITAGE

CURATED BY
TANYA ABRAHAM

JEW TOWN, MATTANCHERRY, KOCHI

13TH DECEMBER TO 30TH MARCH 2019



KASHI

SUPPORTED BY THE
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION
FOR JEWISH CULTURE (MFJC)

Artists tour | 13.12 | opening event | 3 pm | meeting in front of Sarah Cohen's Embroidery Shop, Jew town
guided Tour | every day | 11am, 3pm | meeting in front of Sarah Cohen's Embroidery Shop, Jew town

Red Crown Green Parrot | art walk through Malabari Jewish sites

Tekkumbagam synaguge-

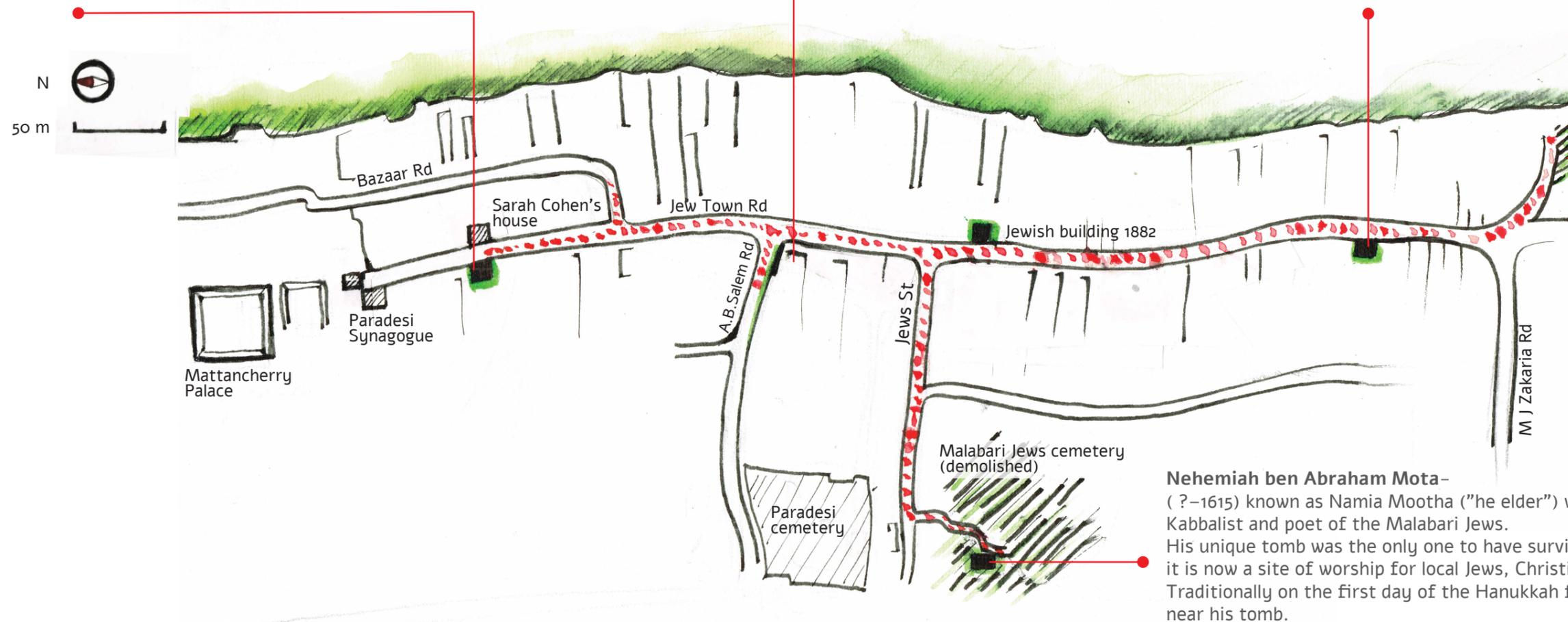
This Malabari synagogue, which has now completely disappeared, once stood in front of Sarah Cohen's famous house. In 1955, after most of the community left Kochi, the synagogue was demolished. At the end of the 20th century, a two-storey high residence was built on the same piece of land. The Torah ark of the Tekkumbagam synagogue is now part of the Magnes Collection, Berkeley, California, USA.

Abraham Barak Salem -

(1882-1967) Known as the "Jewish Gandhi", A.B. Salem was a lawyer, politician and activist for equality between the different groups of Jews in Kerala. Salem was the Malabari Jews' ambassador when the Israeli government delayed the community's massive immigration to Israel during the 1950's and eventually succeeded in allowing them to immigrate.

Kadavumbagam Synagogue-This Malabari synagogue built in 1549, is one of the oldest in Kerala. After the massive emigration of local Jews to Israel in the 1950s, the synagogue changed owners, until 1991 when the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, purchased the interior wooden structure and reconstructed it in the Museum. At present, only the bare structure remains. The original synagogue's Torah ark was brought to Israel by the early 1950s, but found its way to Nehalim, a village of European Jews.

Ruby "Rivka" Daniel- (1912-2002) was the first Malayali woman in the Indian Navy and the first Malabari Jew to publish a memoir, the book "Ruby of Cochin." Her research collaboration with Barbara C. Johanson dramatically changed the accepted picture of Kerala Jewish women's songs and the history of Mattancherry to add fascinating layer of ethnographic cultural knowledge.



Nehemiah ben Abraham Mota-

(?-1615) known as Namia Mootha ("he elder") was the most important Kabbalist and poet of the Malabari Jews. His unique tomb was the only one to have survived; it is now a site of worship for local Jews, Christians, Muslims and Hindus. Traditionally on the first day of the Hanukkah festival, Jews visit and pray near his tomb.

Red Crown Green Parrot is the walking route through Mattancherry which deals with the forgotten cultural heritage of the Malabar Jewish community from the viewpoint of the artists- a descendant of Malabar Jews, born in Israel and based in Jerusalem (Eliyahu) and a Muslim, born and raised in Kochi, now based in Dubai (Zakriya).

The presence of the Malabar Jews has vanished almost entirely from the physical space and collective memory in Mattancherry. The absence is a result of the massive emigration of the entire community to Israel.

Drawing inspiration from motifs such as Jewish women's folksongs, illuminated Ketubot (Jewish marriage contracts) and historical documents, the project will shed some light on the loss of the unique multicultural dialogue that characterized Mattancherry in the past.

We invite the city residents and visitors to walk through the streets and to discover the historical sites and recent artists' interventions.

For more information and contact -www.redcrownparrot.com

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