The goal of this research was to understand *Kolam*, from a three layer perspectives: illustration, narration and metaphor, which is practiced for centuries by women in Tamil Nadu, India. The elements of Kolam are dots and lines made with rice flour at the labyrinth of a house every morning. Although the art appears simple in structure when analyzed layer after layer it unfolds unfathomable encoded meanings of a living culture. Previous studies undertaken overlooked the correlation of illustration, narration and metaphor in Kolam which is argued in this study to be the heart of this art. The study used qualitative multimethod approach throughout the research process. Data was collected from multiple sources of selected rural and urban areas of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka with multiple methods. The description, analysis and interpretations lead to the conclusion that a Kolam narrates deep seated legends and living experiences passed over from generation to generation through an art form. Kolam is not just an art practiced in society, but an art that binds together the life of a society. An insider lives and continues the culture through it; an outsider learns to appreciate and respect the culture by it.