Dystopia by Hashan Cooray

Posted on


BORN WITH?
HASHAN COORAY '24

A creative piece of work using charcoal on paper by Hashan Cooray.

Hashan Cooray is having his fifth art exhibition at the Saskia Fernando Gallery. His new artwork, ‘Dystopia,’ features gestural paintings and two installation works that explore the complex relationship between individuals and the socio-political systems within which they exist. The exhibition stirs a conversation on the inherent struggles of the human condition and its psychosis.

Hashan Cooray’s interdisciplinary practice that blends drawing, painting, digital art, installation, and mixed media breaks away from traditional portraiture to uncover the human psyche. Repurposing propaganda posters and commercial advertisements, Cooray attempts to confront how society is caught up in the web of nationalism, capitalism, and consumerism. His work has been featured in group and solo exhibitions at Saskia Fernando Gallery, Lionel Wendt Art Centre, and JDA Gallery.

Hashan Cooray has also been featured in the Imago Mundi Book Project published by the Benetton Foundation and in multiple private collections in Sri Lanka.

> Hashan Cooray’s interdisciplinary practice that blends drawing, painting, digital art, installation, and mixed media breaks away from traditional portraiture to uncover the human psyche.

Cooray’s work in the advertising sector deeply influences his art practice. He delves into Freudian psychology as he explores how capitalist and consumerist forces negatively impact the unconscious mind. Cooray chooses to externalize these concepts through the morphing and distortion of the human form, rejecting traditional conventions of art and reflecting the artist’s affinity with the anti-art movement.



Dance with God.



Devil Dancers.

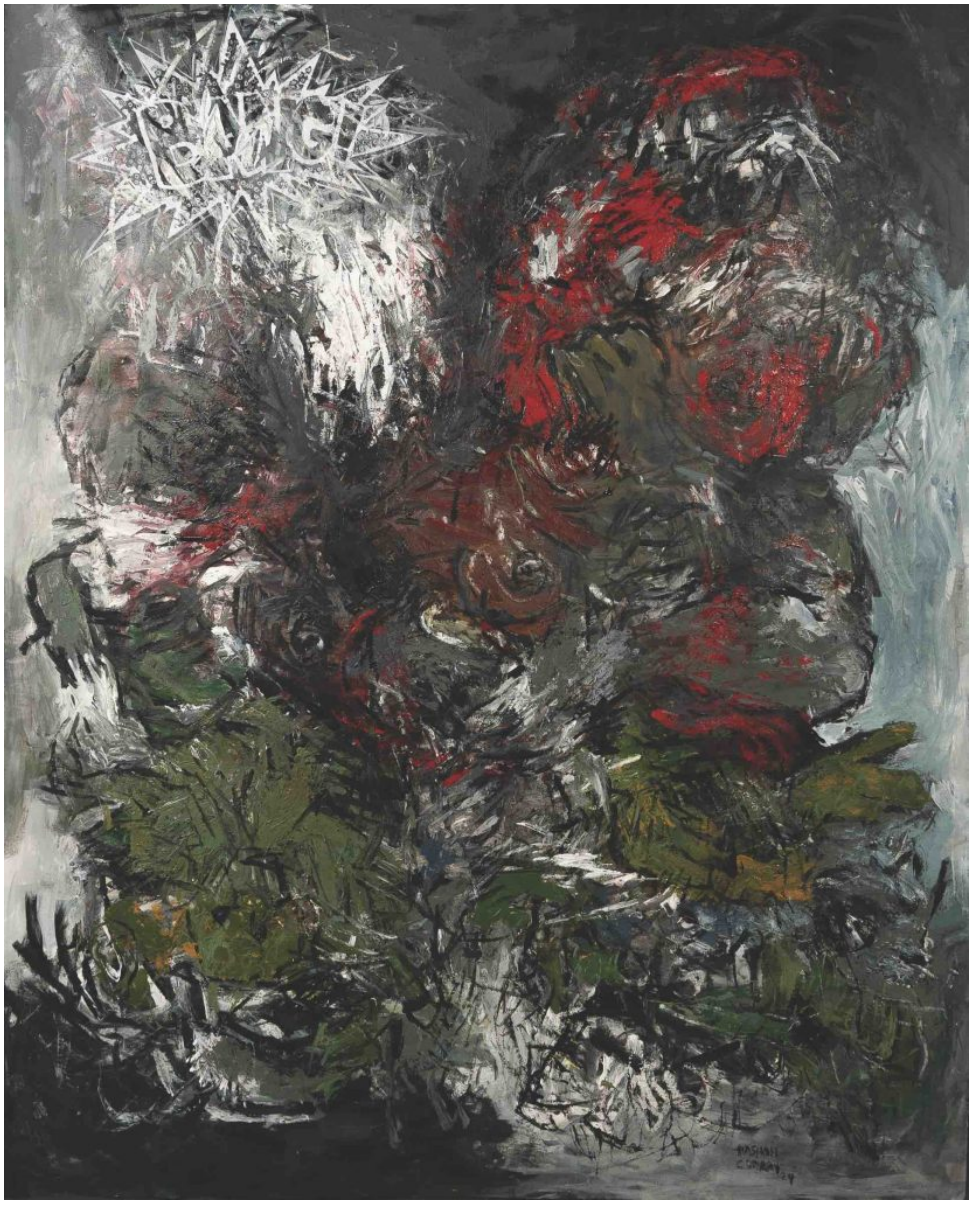
‘Dystopia’ will feature two installations, one of which comprises sixty meters of newspaper headlines from the 2022 Aragalaya protest movement and its aftermath. Cooray’s foray into installations in the exhibition furthers his conversation on the entanglement of individual lives with political systems and provides an interactive space for the audience to engage actively with these themes.

Elements from popular culture and advertisements appear within his compositions, disrupting Cooray’s portraits. These elements highlight the pervasive influence of media and advertising on society and challenge viewers to reconsider their participation in and attitudes toward a consumer-centric world. Hashan continues to question the concept of the public gaze, which has been explored in his previous exhibitions.

‘Dystopia’ will be at Saskia Fernando Gallery in Colombo 7 until July 20, 2024. The exhibition will include tours by the artists and practical sessions.



Artist Hashan Cooray.



The Lost Member.