

Echoes of Resilience

Posted on

Contemporary Art from Jaffna



Echo: An exhibition of contemporary art exhibition at Kolam, Jaffna until April 2026.

For generations, Jaffna has stood apart as a vital center of artistic production and intellectual exchange in Sri Lanka, evolving largely outside Colombo's institutionalized art world. Rooted deeply in lived experience, art in Jaffna has long been intertwined with questions of identity, memory, and resistance, shaped by shifting social, political, and cultural forces.

Over the past two centuries, the region's cultural landscape has been profoundly influenced by European colonialism, Saiva revivalism, Indian nationalism, Western modernism, Tamil nationalism, and the enduring realities of war and displacement. Within this complex history, artist and art historian-led collectives such as Kala Nilayam, the Winzer Art Club, the Holiday Painters Group, and the Studio of A. Mark played formative roles in art education and exhibition-making.



Construction by Vinson Chanthiradas
Vimal.

Echo: An Exhibition of Contemporary Art brings together artists from Sri Lanka's North, East, and Central regions, all connected to Jaffna through training, memory, or belonging.

The University of Jaffna further strengthened this legacy by establishing Tamil-medium visual art education during a period of profound institutional change.

As the Tamil struggle for self-reliance escalated into decades of civil war, art in Jaffna transformed into a powerful site of exile and testimony—serving as both witness and refuge. Creativity became a means of survival, resilience, and quiet defiance.

Echo: An Exhibition of Contemporary Art brings together artists from Sri Lanka's North, East, and Central regions, all connected to Jaffna through training, memory, or belonging. Emerging from the post-armed conflict landscape, the exhibition works interrogate war and its aftermath through diverse media, personal narratives, and collective histories. Together, they articulate layered realities of survival, remembrance, and renewal—echoes that continue to shape Sri Lanka's cultural present and future.



No man's land (I) by Balachandiran Kajeepan.



No man's land (II) by Balachandiran Kajeepan.

Organized by the Manicka Mankayerkarasi Cultural Centre Trust, the Echo exhibiton at Kolam features the works of 26 artists: Pushpakanthan Pakkiyarajah, Jasmine Nilani Joseph, Susiman Nirmalavasan, Thavarasa Thajendran, Kanesh Thabendran, Tharmapalan Tilaxan, Kamala Vasuki, Rinoshan Susiman, T. Krishnapriya, Vaidehi Raja, Thamotharampillai Shanaathanan, Nillanthan, Mahatheva Gnananthiran, Mano Prashath, Balachandiran Kajeepan, Krishnanandan Iyngaran, Rupaneethan Pakkiyarajah, Hanusha Somasundaram, Vinson Chanthiradas Vimal, Anojan

Sundaram, Gopalapillai Kailasanathan, Muwais Ansari, Arunthathi Sabanathan Ratnaraj, Appuhamy Mark, Someetharan Sritharan, and Muththaiah Kanagasabai.

Till April 2026

Venue: Kolam, 199, Temple Road, Nallur, Jaffna



Haunting shadow by Mano Prashath.



Uterus by Hanusha Somasundaram.