Kolamba Kamatha Festival

Posted on



Opening performance of Clown Compass.

Sri Lanka’s theatre landscape is poised for a groundbreaking transformation with the inaugural Kolamba Kamatha Festival (KKF) launching on March 27th, coinciding with World Theatre Day, at the BMICH in Colombo. This festival will showcase 22 remarkable plays over four days, celebrating the rich tapestry of Sinhala, Tamil, and English theatre.

Founded in November 2022, the Kolamba Kamatha, located within the BMICH, was conceived as a dynamic hub for both professional and student theatre and dance practitioners, offering affordable, high-quality spaces for creating and showcasing work that reflects Sri Lanka’s vibrant historical and contemporary performing arts traditions. The festival embodies this vision by establishing an annual celebration of theatre that brings together both established and emerging artists across six unique venues within the Kolamba Kamatha theatre village at the BMICH.

Each venue promises a distinctive experience, ranging from an intimate 80-seat ‘Artists Club’ to a spacious 300-seat open-air theatre. In conjunction with the festival, a new 235-seat theatre will be unveiled. Audiences will have the opportunity to choose from up to seven productions each day, spanning a variety of genres. The festival will also include dedicated children’s theatre performances in the mornings and adults-only productions at night, ensuring an engaging experience for everyone. Additionally, the three finalists of a national short-play competition will have their plays staged during the festival, showcasing emerging talent.

> The Kolamba Kamatha Festival is designed to be more than just a theatre event—it is a full-day experience.





Vassilisa by Fine Tune (Children’s Theater Sinhala) and Rajitha Dissanayake’s Nathuwa Bari Minihek play.

At its heart, the Kolamba Kamatha Festival is the realization of a long-held dream by BMICH Chairperson and former Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, a longstanding and highly engaged patron and friend of the arts. She is joined by Festival Curator Bimsara Premaratna, a celebrated theatre actor/ director and multi-faceted artist, and Festival Director Chanchala Gunewardena, known for her leadership of the Matara Festival for the Arts – who in turn are supported by the immensely experienced and committed team of the BMICH.

A Theatre Village Experience

The Kolamba Kamatha Festival is designed to be more than just a theatre event—it

is a full-day experience. Visitors are encouraged to immerse themselves in the Kamatha Village, bringing mats and picnic blankets to embrace the vibrant festival atmosphere. With food and drink offerings from venue partners,

attendees can relax in designated areas between performances, embracing the spirit of camaraderie and creative exchange that defines the festival. Inspired by the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and infused with the warmth of Sri Lanka’s creative community, the festival aims to become an annual highlight on the country’s cultural calendar.

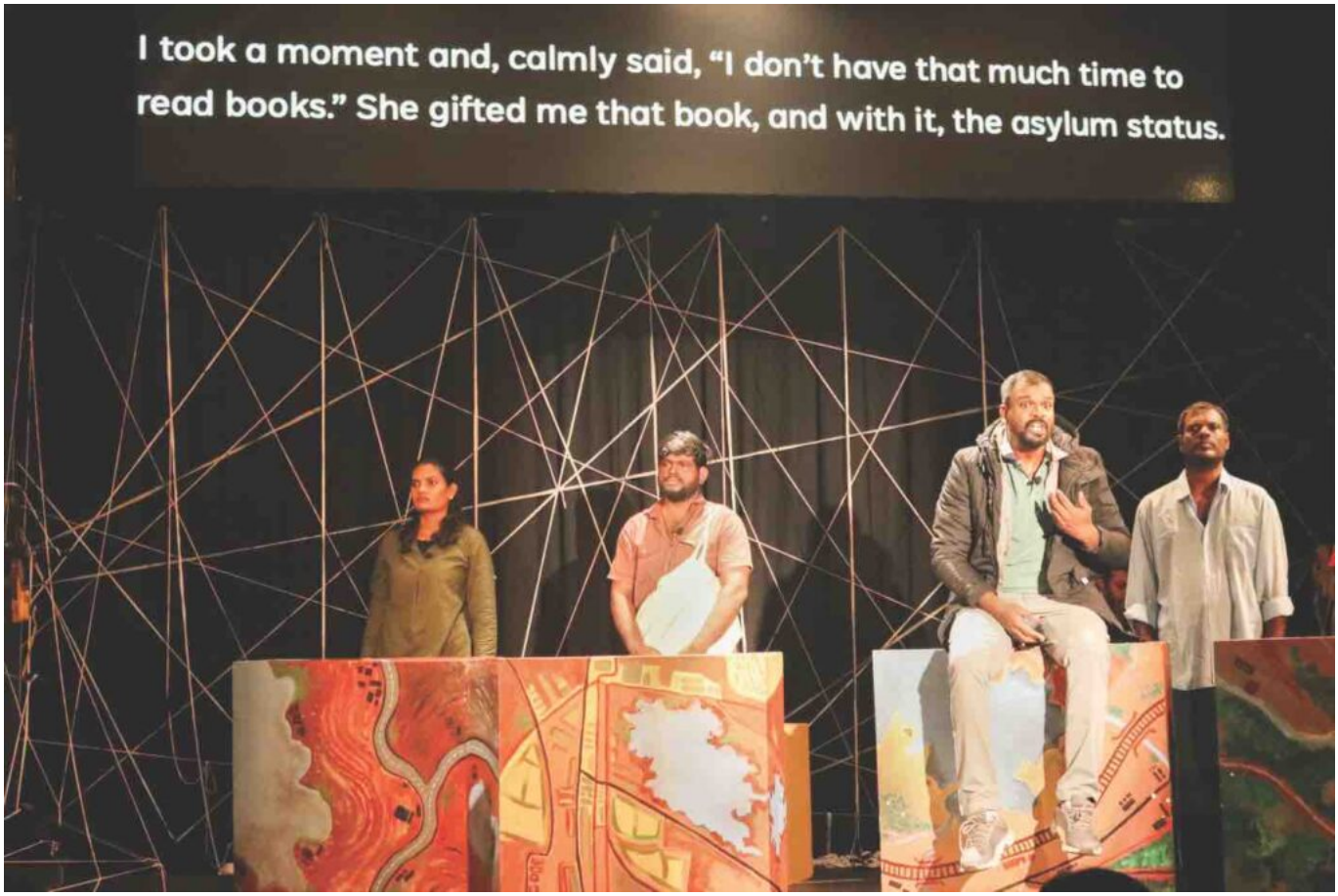
Workshops, Panels and Market

Beyond the stage, the festival will offer an array of workshops and panel discussions led by leading theatre practitioners. These sessions will provide behind-the-scenes insights—ranging from acting and playwriting to stage makeup demonstrations—as well as career guidance for aspiring artists, with discussions on professionalization, resume-building, and global theatre opportunities.

Adding to the vibrant atmosphere, the festival will feature a two-day arts and crafts market curated by the Good Market, where visitors can engage with interactive demonstrations and experience Sri Lanka’s rich artistic traditions firsthand.



A production by the Grassrooted Trust.


I took a moment and, calmly said, "I don't have that much time to
read books." She gifted me that book, and with it, the asylum status.


WET ZO
DRY ZO



I am Hungry Too by Kalam Collective, A performance by Mind Adventures Theatre and Un Daanawa Api Kanawa by children of the Athwela Nirmana Kavaya.

Festival Schedule: March 27

World Theater Day: Festival Opening – Andare's Kamatha by Clown Compass (Trilingual) – 45 minutes (on invitation)

March 28 (open to public)

Vassilisa by Fine Tune (Children's Theater Sinhala) – 80 minutes; 3.30pm; Studio

Demonstration: Putting on a Face – Makeup for the Theatre by Priyantha Dissanayake; in the Artist's Club (Sinhala) – 120 minutes; 3.30pm; Artist's Club

Workshop Players Present a Musical Theatre Songbook (English) – 90 minutes; 5.30pm; Open Air Theatre

Nathuwa Bari Minihek by Rajitha Dissanayake (Sinhala) – 105 minutes; 7pm; The New Theatre

The Grassrooted Trust Presents: What's Going On? Reflections on Othering in Sri Lanka (English-Adults only) – 60 minutes; 9pm; Studio

March 29 (open to public)

Masterclass: Scene study and audition prep for actors with Nimmi Harasgama (Ages 15-40 – Trilingual); 240 minutes; 9am; Studio

The Athwela Partnership presents Un Daanawa Api Kanawa by the Children of the Athwela Nirmana Kavaya (Children's Theater Sinhala) – 30 minutes; 10am; New Theatre

Short play competition; 3 finalists play (English) – 90 minutes; 10am; Canopy

From the Stage to the Boardroom: Transferrable skills between Theatre and the Workplace by Peter De Almeida (English) – 120 minutes; 10am; Artists' Club

Festival Market by Good Market; 10am–4pm; Terrace

I am Hungry Too by Kalam Collective (Tamil) – 90 minutes; 11.30am; Mihilaka Medura

De Profundis by Mind Adventures Theatre (English) – 60 minutes; 3pm; Studio

Bakmaha Akunu by Dayananda Gunawardena (Sinhala) – 90 minutes; 7pm; Mihilaka Medura

Sakwala Riya by Madushan Perera (Sinhala) – 80 minutes; 7.30pm; New Theatre

Patterns of Our Genocides by Stages Theatre Group.

Uthpalawarna & Luck by Trance by Sachithra Rahubadda (Sinhala -adults only – 2 short plays – 45 minutes each); 9pm

March 30 (open to public)

Masterclass: Writing for the Theatre by Rajitha Dissanayake (Sinhala) – 240 minutes; 9am; Mihilaka Medura

Heena Thuney Kathandarey (Children’s Theater Sinhala) – 270 minutes; 10am; New Theatre

Festival Market by Good Market; 10am–4pm; Terrace

Presentation: Breaking New Ground – Leveraging Digital Media to Expand Theatre Audiences and Engagement by Nishantha de Silva – (with Sinhala and Tamil Summary) – 90 minutes; 10am; Artist’s Club

Growthesque (English) – 120 minutes; 12.30noon; Canopy

Velichame (Oh Light) by Selvaraj Leelawathy (Tamil) – 20 minutes; 2.30pm; Mihilaka Medura

Panel discussion – beyond the curtain: Navigating challenges and celebrating Atharamediya by Nilanka Nisalangel.

Sri Lankan Theatre’s Journey from local to global with Nimmi Harasgama, Thushitha Jayasundara, Nadie Kammallawwerera, Nipuni Sharadhaa and Ruwanthie de Chickera (English and Sinhala) – 75 minutes; 3pm; Artist’s Club

Sanduda Watenne Sikuraadata by Chalaka Ranasooriya (Sinhala) – 60 minutes; 7pm; New Theatre

Patterns of Our Genocides & The Children of the Little Olive Park by Stages Theater Group (English) – 90 minutes; 6pm; Studio

Kottam by Janakaraliya (Tamil) 90 minutes; 6.30pm; Mihilaka Medura

Atharamediya by Nilanka Nisalangel (Showwave Productions) (Sinhala) – 90 minutes; 7.30pm; Open-Air Theatre

Venue: BMICH
kolambakamatha.com/ kolambakamatha@ bmich.com
Tickets: General Public: Rs. 3,000 per 3-Show Pass, Students: Rs. 500 per 3-Show Pass



Sanduda Watenne Sikuraadata play by Chalaka Ranasooriya



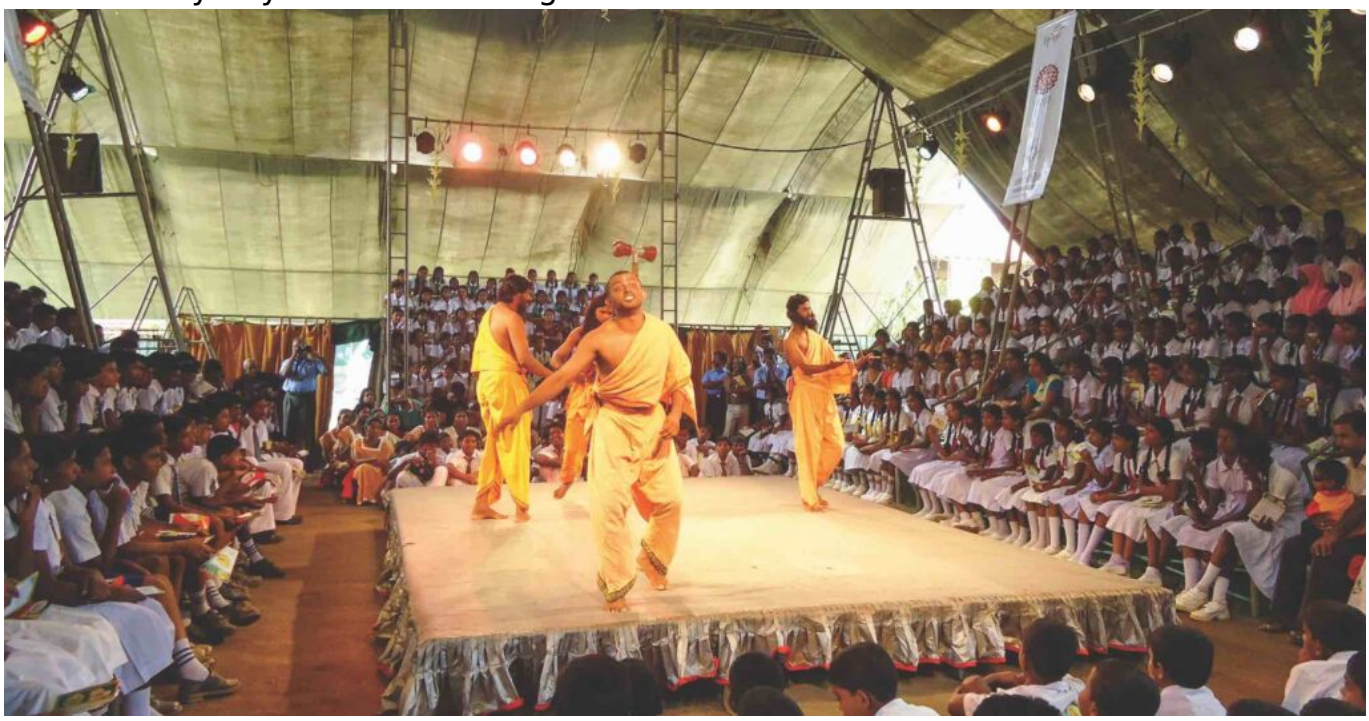
Uthpalawarna by Sachithra Rahubadda.



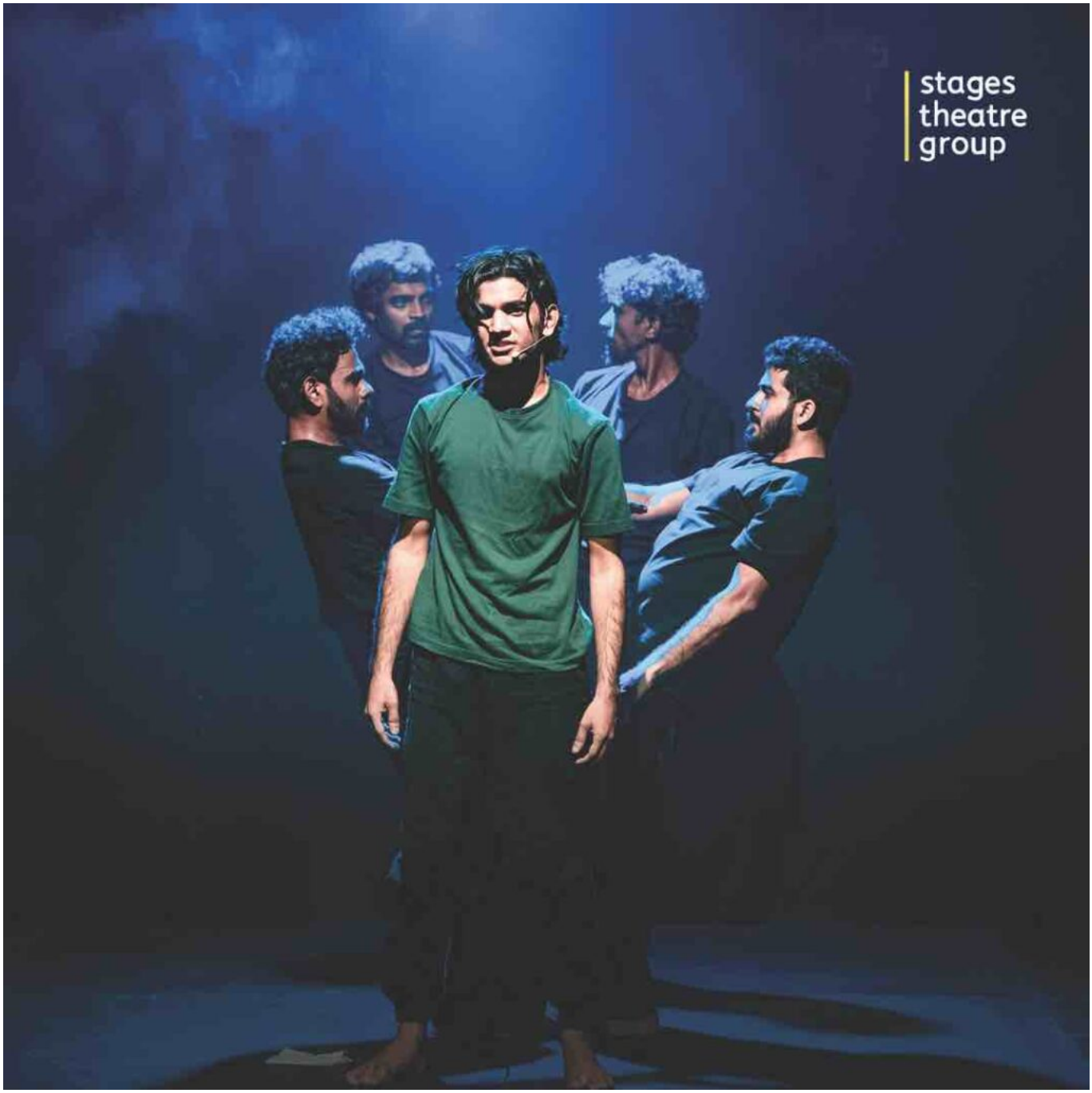
Velichame (Oh Light) by Selvaraj Leelawathy.



Atharamediya by Nilanka Nisalangel.



Kottam by Janakaraliya.



Patterns of Our Genocides by Stages Theatre Group.