LEGACIES: H. A. KARUNARATNE

Posted on



H. A. Karunaratne.

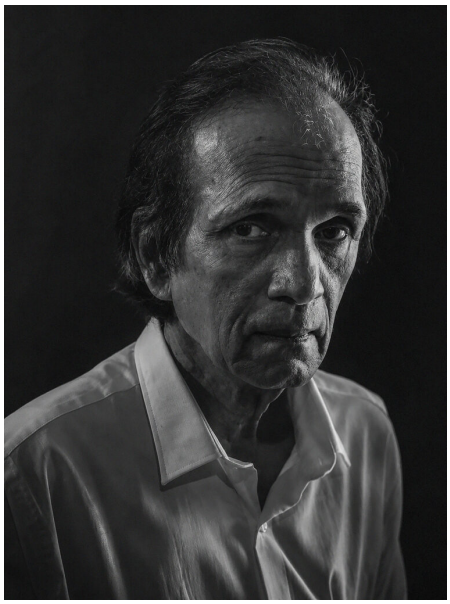


Untitled.

‘LEGACIES: H. A. KARUNARATNE’ serves as a homage to H.A. Karunaratne’s pedagogical contributions and his enduring influence on leading contemporary artists in Sri Lanka.



Journey



Rubert Soysa.

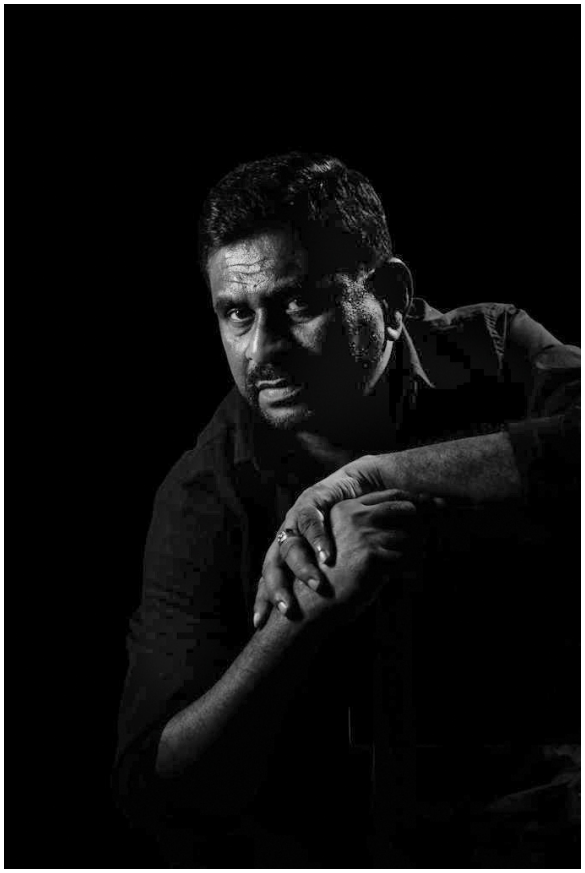
The exhibition brings together the works of S. H. Sarath, Rubert Soysa, Kingsley

Gunatillake, Jagath Weerasinghe, Chandraguptha Thenuwara, and Jagath Ravindra, artists who, over the years, either as his students or through mentorship, inherited his creative philosophy in various ways.

The exhibition opens ahead of the artist's presentation at the Frieze Masters London, the second artist of Sri Lankan origin to be featured at the platform since Lionel Wendt in 2014. In the context of South Asian art history, H. A. Karunaratne's practice emerged during a period when nation-states were emerging, alongside globalization and exposure to new modes and media of artistic expression.



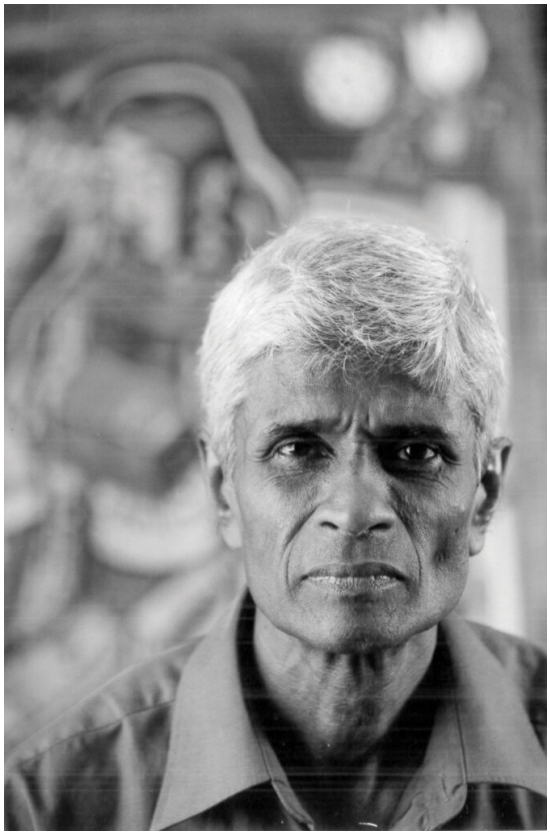
Meditation.


Kingsley Gunatillake.

However, Karunaratne’s practice resists easy categorization and does not immediately situate itself within a conversation about national or international identity. Instead, his approach to abstraction was shaped by Zen Buddhism’s emphasis on expressing one’s essence, becoming one with the work, and liberating the mind. Examining his practice against this backdrop reveals an artist shaped by a discipline committed to individual creative expression, which, in hindsight, created the space for artists to develop their practice independently of their mentor.



In between.

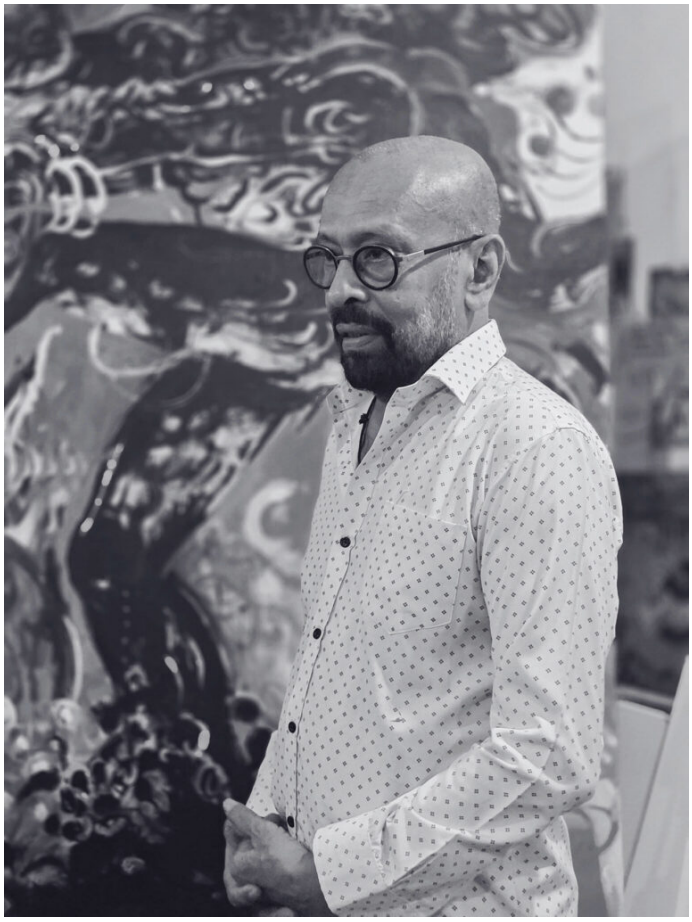


S. H. Sarath.

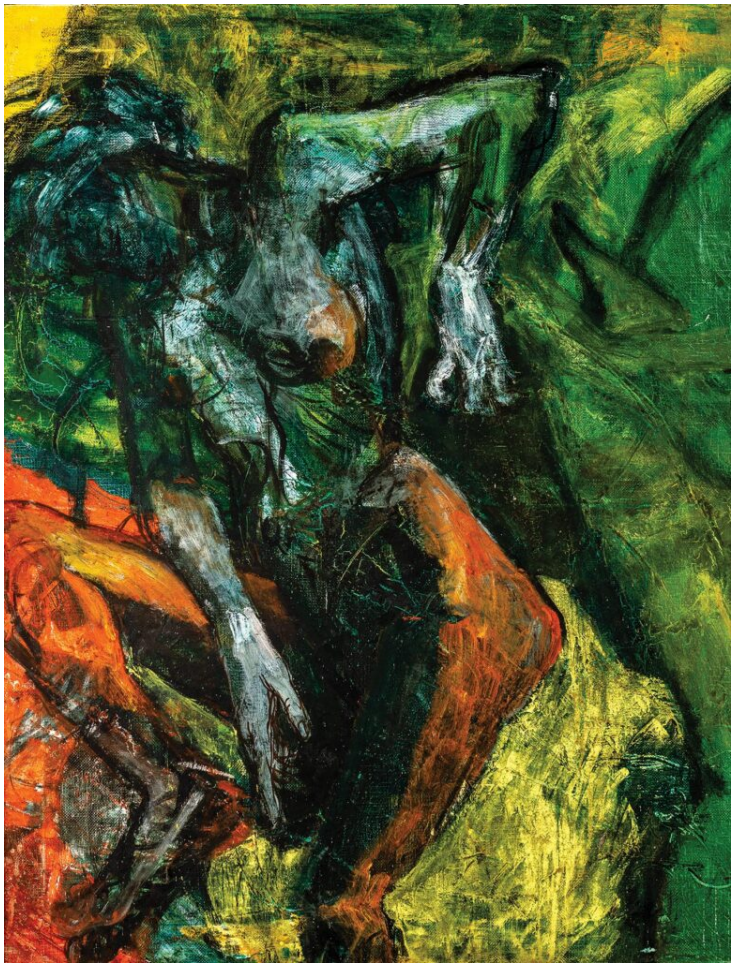
Characterized by a sense of rhythm, energy, and dissonance, Karunaratne experimented with materials ranging from tissue, wire, palmyrah, and fabric to metal over the course of six decades. Widely considered the father of abstract art in Sri Lanka, H. A. Karunaratne, through his engagement as an educator at the Institute of Aesthetic Studies (now the University of Visual and Performing Arts), resulted in a shift in arts pedagogy. He was pivotal in inspiring a generation of artists to move away from the figurative and embrace the visual grammar of abstract art.



A mother in Sri Lanka.



Jagath Weerasinghe.



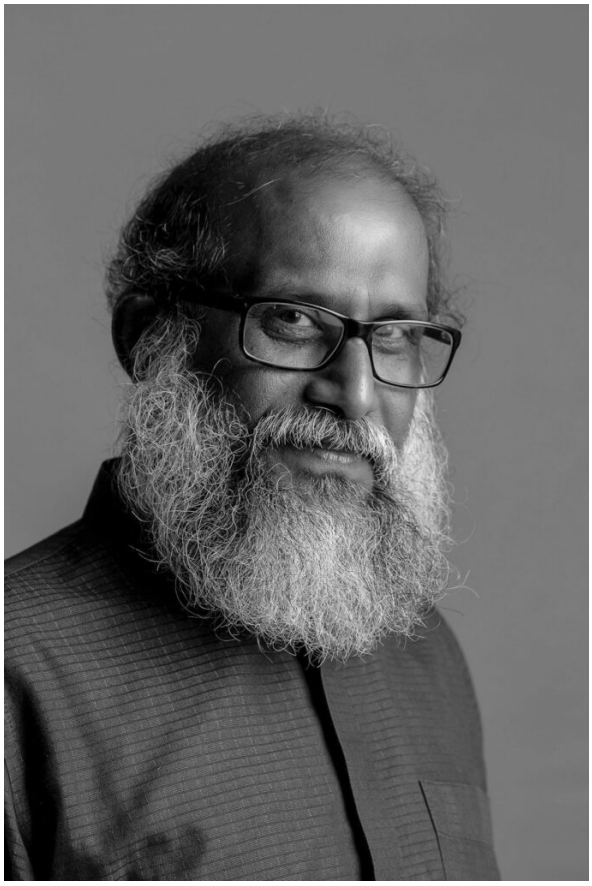
Woman



Chandraguptha Thenuwara.



Metaphors of the Soul XVIII.



Jagath Ravindra.

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Till October 31, 2026

Saskia Fernando Gallery

138, Galle Road, Colombo 3