

Textile Designer and Technologist honored

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Sri Lankan Textile Designer and Chartered Textile Technologist Chandramani Thenuwara was presented with The Institute Medal 2019 for Design at the 109th AGM and Award Ceremony of The Textile Institute of United Kingdom. This is the first time that a Sri Lankan has won this award.

The award is for professional designers/group of designers who have devoted themselves to and made substantial contributions in the field of textile design as well as design management. The medal was presented to Chandramani Thenuwara by Helen Rowe, Chairman, Textile Institute, UK, in the presence of Professor Rohana Kuruppu, Chairman, Textile Institute, Sri Lanka Section in a ceremony held at The Lowry, Salford Quays, Manchester, UK. She was proposed and nominated for this award by Professor Rohana Kuruppu, Chairman, Textile Institute – Sri Lanka Section, FTI CText and the Head of Brandix College, Ratmalana.

A Textile Designer by profession, Chandramani Thenuwara was the first Sri Lankan woman

to qualify as a Chartered Textile Technologist. She went on to become the first Sri Lankan woman Fellow of The Textile Institute UK. She was felicitated by Department of Integrated Design, the University of Moratuwa, in appreciation of her lifetime contribution towards the field of Design.



(L-R): Helen Rowe, Chairman, Textile Institute, UK; Chandramani Thenuwara; and Prof Rohana U Kuruppu, Chairman, Textile Institute, Sri Lanka Section.

She used her artistic talents gained as a student of Cora Abraham, among the rural artisans of Sri Lanka. She empowered a large number of weavers with her creativity. Upon being asked why she chose the Handloom industry, she states, “Hand-weaving let me experiment. I worked in a Government Design Center, which was the ideal place for experimenting, and the weavers I worked with were happy to weave my designs. I chose hand-weaving because it accommodated the true freedom of expression, which is essential in creative work.” For her dedication to the Sri Lankan Handloom industry, she was presented a national award by the Department of Textile Industries, Sri Lanka for ‘Immeasurable Service to the Handloom industry in Design and Creativity.’

Chandramani Thenuwara spoke on receiving The Institute Medal 2019 for Design: “I am a designer, not a weaver. My designs would have remained on paper without the hand-weaving artisans of Sri Lanka. This is their award as well because they skillfully translated my work into fabric throughout my career as a Textile Designer.”