

The Moon Under the Sea

Posted on

The captivating exhibition 'The Moon Under the Sea' by Sivasubramaniam Kajendran.



The figure of the mother becomes a recurring motif, the embodiment of divine femininity.

The Indian Ocean serves not only as a source of livelihood for the coastal inhabitants of Sri Lanka but is deeply intertwined with the very essence of their existence. It shapes their culture, spirituality, and daily lives, acting as both a provider and a silent witness to the resilience of these coastal communities.

In 'The Moon Under the Sea', Kajendran embarks on a profound exploration of the intricate relationship between the coastal communities of Sri Lanka's Northern and Eastern regions and the seas that sustain them. He delves into how the rhythms of the tides are intricately woven into the collective consciousness of these communities. With its shifting tides and abundant waters, the Indian Ocean stands as a living archive, preserving the memories and struggles of generations who have forged their lives on its shores. The ever-present push and pull of the tides encapsulates the ebb and flow of experience—loss and renewal, tradition and transformation, grief and hope. Through Kajendran's powerful lens, the ocean emerges not just as a life force but also as a custodian of the narratives that tether coastal people to their land and history.

Kajendran masterfully captures the essence of coastal life, seamlessly blending everyday scenes with rich mythical and natural imagery. His figures, drenched in deep blacks and blues, embody a powerful duality, representing both the burdens and strengths derived from their deep connection to the ocean. Birds, fish, and tropical fruits nestle on figures that mirror the movements of marine creatures, creating a vivid tapestry of life. These anthropomorphic shapes blur the lines between the coastal environment and the communities that call it home. A central theme in Kajendran's work is the mother figure, symbolizing the nurturing yet formidable presence of the sea. For the

coastal communities of Sri Lanka, the ocean is not merely a life-giver; it is also a force that evokes fear, a reality starkly illustrated by the harrowing memories of the 2004 tsunami.



Incorporating vibrant mythical elements and natural imagery.



The human form often mutates into humanoid creatures with animalistic features, blurring the lines between nature and humanity.



Kajendran reveals to the viewer the profound ties between the coastal communities of Sri Lanka and the Indian ocean.



Colonial legacies have shaped the historical narratives of the coastal landscape and its inhabitants.

In 'The Moon Under the Sea,' Kajendran dives deeper into the historical narratives of the coastal landscape, examining how colonial legacies have shaped the land and its peoples. His textured and layered collages vividly portray melancholy figures slumped beneath church steeples, evoking a sense of disconnection wrought by forced conversion and colonial violence. This body of work powerfully speaks to the enduring impact of colonialism, revealing the intricate ties between past and present that continue to influence the landscape. Kajendran also sheds light on the trauma of civil conflict and the relentless resistance of communities, especially in the North and East, where military rule casts a long shadow. He adeptly navigates the tension between reconciling past traumas and the ongoing fight for justice and freedom, highlighting the resilience of those who inhabit these coastal regions.

*Till March 18
Paradise Road Saskia Fernando Gallery*

