

May 2022

Artist Pradeep Thalawatta and Friends Speak about Extra Special Friendships at MMCA Sri Lanka

On Friday, 20 May from 6 pm to 7 pm, Pradeep Thalawatta (b. 1979) and five of his friends who appear in his artwork, 'Athi Vishesha (Extra Special II)' made in 2008 will be in conversation at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Sri Lanka (MMCA Sri Lanka).

Friendships shape and form each of us. The MMCA Sri Lanka's current exhibition 'Encounters' takes the idea of friendship as a starting point for a display that places Thalawatta's work in conversation with a painting by George Keyt (1901-1993) on loan from the George Keyt Foundation art collection. Both works explore the subject of friendship as something that is not only special but also intimate. The pairing of artworks by the MMCA Sri Lanka's curators brings attention to the way this timeless subject has been explored by artists from different generations and through different media. Seeing the two artworks opposite one another invites comparisons about how the subject of intimacy is represented. Keyt's painting, titled 'The Friends' from 1982, depicts a blurring between male and female and the two heads appear to be more intimate than friends. Both works draw attention to the physical and sensual aspects of friendship, whilst also pointing to the ways in which such friendships are understood and seen through the same gender.

Join the discussion at the MMCA Sri Lanka, located at Crescat Boulevard, Colombo 03, on Friday, 20 May 2 at 6 pm. All events of the public programme at the museum are free-of-charge. 'Encounters' is generously supported by Asian Hotels and Properties PLC, the European Union, Foundation for Arts Initiatives, John Keells Foundation, and Nations Trust Bank. The MMCA Sri Lanka is a cultural initiative focused on building a museum of modern and contemporary art for the country and fostering learning and engagement for as wide a public as

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possible. To complement its curated exhibitions and education programmes, the museum practices trilingual access and is one of the only cultural institutions to do so in Sri Lanka.

For more information, visit www.mmca-srilanka.org or follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mmcasrilanka and Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/mmcasrilanka/> for updates.