

October 2023

### **The MMCA Sri Lanka Hosts Its First International Event**

The Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Sri Lanka (MMCA Sri Lanka) will be hosting its first international art event, presenting a specially curated selection of artworks by Sri Lankan artists in London this October. Happening alongside London's Frieze Week (11–15 October 2023), one of the most important events in the art world calendar, this event will feature a selection of video works from the MMCA Sri Lanka's current exhibition titled 'The Foreigners', and will be followed by a panel discussion.

The event will be held on 12 October at, and in partnership with The Photographers' Gallery London—a globally recognised museum which hosts the annual Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize.

The screenings from 'The Foreigners' will include works by Dinelka Liyanage, Hania Luthufi, Imaad Majeed, Nina Mangalanayagam, and Sumudi Suraweera. It will be followed by a conversation between Sharmini Pereira, Chief Curator and Sandev Handy, Curator at the MMCA Sri Lanka and artists Nina Mangalanayagam and Reginald S. Aloysius, led by the UK based curator, writer, and researcher Hammad Nasar.

Speaking about the event, Handy said that, "Taking a part of 'The Foreigners' to London, especially during Frieze week, is significant because of the way in which the works in the exhibition speak to the entangled experiences of foreignness; a subject at the forefront of discussions on migration, climate, and asylum across the world." He added that, "My hope is that this event will help bring local art histories of this island together to inform and fill the absences in global art histories, in turn resisting, reimagining, and re-mixing well-worn tropes of how otherness is categorised and foreignness is perceived."

This major event has been curated to bring greater international attention to the MMCA Sri Lanka, the country's first museum focused on the display, research, collection, and conservation of modern and contemporary art for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public, schools, and tourists. "Our partnership with The Photographers' Gallery in London during such an important time in the art world

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calendar will bring the MMCA Sri Lanka to the attention of a global audience,” noted Pereira, adding that, “We want to build on what has already happened in the international art scene by amplifying it further, and most importantly by shaping the conversation from a position of research, local knowledge, and growing expertise as the museum starts to take shape.”

Frieze London is one of the world’s most influential contemporary art fairs, focusing only on contemporary art and living artists. The 2023 edition of the fair marks its 20th anniversary. Speaking on this milestone for the MMCA Sri Lanka, Orlando Edwards, British Council Sri Lanka Country Director said, “we are delighted to support the MMCA Sri Lanka curators’ participation at The Photographers’ Gallery in London event alongside Frieze London, as part of the 75th anniversary celebrations of UK-Sri Lanka diplomatic ties in 23/24.” He further noted that, “‘The Foreigners’ has been a great success, having attracted large audiences in Sri Lanka, provoked a lot of discussion, and stimulated all sorts of interesting responses from different sectors of society”.

This event is also sponsored by Sifani Jewellers based in Sri Lanka, and their Director Raaid Sahabdeen stated that, “Sifani is proud to be supporting the MMCA Sri Lanka’s partnership with The Photographers’ Gallery in London, because we recognise the importance of bringing international attention to the work of the museum in its mission to establish the country’s first museum of modern and contemporary art.” He added that, “Sifani intends to contribute to the establishment of museums through its own work, which makes partnering with a museum like the MMCA Sri Lanka a good way to build community and increase the cultural offer beyond what we currently have, as far as museum experiences in the country are concerned.”

‘The Foreigners’ will close at the MMCA Sri Lanka on 22 October. The museum is open daily from 10am to 6pm (except on Poya days and public holidays) at the ground floor of Crescat Boulevard, Colombo 3, and entrance to the museum and all its public programmes is free. Information about the museum, and its exhibitions and public programmes can be found via their website [www.mmca-srilanka.org](http://www.mmca-srilanka.org), or on Facebook at [facebook.com/mmcasrilanka](https://facebook.com/mmcasrilanka) and Instagram at [instagram.com/mmcasrilanka/](https://instagram.com/mmcasrilanka/)