

FRIEZE MASTERS LONDON 2026 : H. A. KARUNARATNE

14.10.26 – 18.10.26

Regent's Park, London

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In a historic milestone for the Sri Lankan art ecosystem, Saskia Fernando Gallery is invited by the prestigious Frieze Masters London. The gallery, in collaboration with LYNEAR Wealth, will present the works of Dr H.A. Karunaratne (1929–2026), making him the second Sri Lankan artist to be featured at Frieze Masters, after Lionel Wendt in 2014. The artist will be featured in Frieze Masters Spotlight, the fair's section dedicated to under-recognised artists from the 20th-century, curated by Dr Devika Singh and Dr Sofia Gotti.

The presentation will feature works from the estate of the late Dr H.A. Karunaratne which holds a rare collection of pre-1980s works. Preserved alongside his family's private estate, these pieces have taken on a profound new significance in the year of his passing, serving as a vital testament to the sheer diversity and depth of Sri Lankan visual art. The selection of works offers insight into the artist's transition from figurative to abstract painting, and his use of bold colour and gestural brushwork. A key feature of the presentation is the rare 'Portrait of Thilani Karunaratne', created in the 1970s, depicting the artist's daughter. This will be the first dedicated global art fair presentation of the Estate of the late Dr H.A. Karunaratne

Beyond the country's traditional artistic trajectories, the 1960s marked a pivotal shift heavily influenced by Dr Karunaratne, who served as a revered Professor at the University of the Visual and Performing Arts in Colombo. In the context of South Asian art history, H.A. Karunaratne's practice is situated within a period when nation states were emerging, along with globalisation and exposure to new modes and mediums of artistic expression. Influenced by Abstract Expressionism and Zen Buddhist philosophy, Karunaratne's practice was shaped by a discipline committed to individual expression and the limitless possibilities of material, resisting easy categorisation within national or international identity. His inclusion in the Frieze Masters foregrounds the significant contributions of South Asian artists to global art discourse and deepens the understanding of Sri Lanka's role in shaping the region's artistic histories.

For inquiries and more information: www.saskiafernandogallery.com | harshi@saskiafernandogallery.com

