

ATHULA CHANDRAGUPTHA THENUWARA

Date of Birth

04.04.1960 | Galle, Sri Lanka

Current location

Home - Ethul Kotte, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Studio - Athurugiriya, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Education

1979-1981 Bachelor of Arts, Institute of Aesthetic Studies, University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka/ studied under S.P. Charles, H.A. Karunaratne & Stanley Abeysinghe

1985-1992 Master of Fine Art with Honors, Moscow State Art Institute named after Surikov, Moscow, Russia/ studied under Tahir Salakov

2005-2006 M. Phil, Postgraduate Institute of Archeology, University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Influences

Classical Masters - Rembrandt, Da Vinci, Goya and Ilya Repin

Cubism, Suprematism, Constructivism, Abstract Expressionism, Arts and Craft Movement, Conceptual Art, Minimalism, Realism, and Dada

Russian Icons, Sigiriya Paintings, 19th Century Temple Paintings, Traditional Masks of Sri Lanka, Other Folk Art like Kolam and Rangoli, and Australian Aboriginal Art of Australia

Accolades & Recognition

1985 Scholarship | MFA | Moscow State Art Institute, Moscow, Russia

2004 Sri Lanka Presidential Award | Best Art Director | Film Mille Soya

2004 Sri Lanka Sarasaviya Film Award | Best Art Director | Film Mille Soya

2004 Sri Lanka | Signis Award | Best Art Director | Film Mille Soya

Solo Exhibitions

1978 First Exhibition | Samudra Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

1983 Paintings & Drawings | Soviet Cultural House, Colombo, Sri Lanka

1991 Retrospective of Paintings | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

1995 In Spacetime | The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- 1992 One Man Show | The City Gallery, Izhevsk City, Republic of Udmurtia, Russia
- 1992 Moscow Paintings | The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1995 In Spacetime | The British Council, Kandy, Sri Lanka
- 1995 Drawings | The Union Gallery, Izhevsk City, Republic of Udmurtia, Russia.
- 1997 Barrelism & Other works | The Heritage Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1998 Barrelism & Recent works | The Heritage Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1999 Camouflage | VAFA Gallery, Ethul Kotte, Sri Lanka
- 2001 Recent Paintings | Paradise Road Galleries, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2004 Camouflage and Other Works | VAFA Gallery, Ethul Kotte, Sri Lanka
- 2006 Wall of Death & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2006 Barrelism: Camouflage | Maroondah Gallery, Victoria, Australia
- 2007 Neo-Barrelism | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2008 Dhammapada & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2009 Post-Barrelism: Erasing Camouflage | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2010 Visual Responses during the War: Selected Works of Artists | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery & Harold Pieris Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2010 Vigil and Other works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2010 Black Paintings & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2011 The Wall and Other Works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 The Monument and Other Works | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Thorn & Other Images | Hivos , Den Haag, Netherlands
- 2013 Beautification | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2014 Open Day Exhibition of Residency | UZ Arts, Glasgow, Scotland
- 2014 Drawing Series | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2014 Monotony | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 Electric Chair for Sale | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 Chandraguptha Thenuwara | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 Glitch | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2017 Glitch+ | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2018 Executive Demon | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2019 M.O.B. | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- 2020 Atmosphere At/Most/Fear | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2021 Blinds | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2022 Ecce Homo | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2023 Delusion | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2023 Covert | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Institutional Exhibitions

- 1998 Group Show | VAFA Gallery, Ethul Kotte, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2000 VAFA Faculty Show | VAFA Gallery, Kotte, Sri Lanka
- 2002 VAFA Faculty Show | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2003 Un-commemorative Commemoration | VAFA Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2003 VAFA Faculty Show | VAFA Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2004 VAFA faculty Show | VAFA Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2006 VAFA Faculty Show | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2007 VAFA Faculty Show | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2018 Seven Plus One: 25th Anniversary Show of VAFA | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2020 One Hundred Thousand Small Tales | Museum of Modern and Contemporary Sri Lankan Art, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Group Exhibitions

- 1978 Friends | First Ever Open Air Art Exhibition in Sri Lanka, Sigiriya, Sri Lanka
- 1985 PASO Exhibition | The Public Library, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1989 NyuNagatha Exhibition | Fine Arts Museum, Izhevsk city, Russia.
- 1989 City Museum, Votkinsk, Russia.
- 1989 LODKA | Avant-garde exhibition, Izhevsk, Russia.
- 1991 Galerie Biemold belang | Groningen, Netherlands.
- 1992 Izhevsk Collection 92 | International symposium on open-air sculpture, Izhevsk city, Russia.
- 1993 New Approaches in Contemporary Sri Lankan Art | The National Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1994 The Academy of Arts | Moscow, Russia.
- 1996 Women in Art | The Mount castle Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1997 Cities on the Move | Vienna Secession, Austria.
- 1997 Artist Camp Exhibition | The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1997 Artists Camp Exhibition | Alliance Francaise de Kandy, Sri Lanka

- 1997 The First Annual Exhibition of VAFA, The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1998 Khoj Artists Workshop Exhibition | Modinagar, New Delhi, India.
- 1998 Cities on the Move | PSI Gallery, New York, USA
- 1998 Cities on the Move | Caps Musée, Musée d'art contemporain de Bordeaux, France
- 1998 IN DEPENDENCE | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1999 Cities on the Move | KIASMA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland.
- 1999 Third International Artists' Camp Exhibition | The National Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- 1999 Cities on the Move | Hayward Gallery, London, UK.
- 1999 Cities on the Move | Louisiana Museum, Denmark.
- 2000 Cities on the Move | KIASMA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
- 2001 Theertha International Artists Workshop Exhibition | Barefoot Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2001 Art Exhibition for Peace and Reconciliation | Neelan Thiruchelvam Commemorative Programme, 706 Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2002 Crafty Thoughts | John Moores University, The University of Art Collection Gallery, Liverpool, UK
- 2002 ART PEACE | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2002 Moving Collection | Japan
- 2003 Artists for Peace | Charles Hall, Batticaloa, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka
- 2006 Common Goods | Melbourne Museum, Melbourne, Australia
- 2007 Soft Power: Asian Attitude | Shanghai Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China
- 2007 Asia Europe Mediation | The National Museum of Poznan, Poland
- 2008 Group Exhibition of Sixty Painters to celebrate Sixty years of Independence of Sri Lanka | Mona Bismarck Foundation, Paris, France
- 2008 Big in Falkirk | Scotland National Street Arts Festival, Falkirk, Scotland, UK
- 2009 Asia-Pacific Triennial | Queensland Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- 2009 One Year Drawing Project | Devi Foundation, New Delhi, India
- 2009 One Year Drawing Project | SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre) in collaboration with UTAC (University of Toronto Art Centre), University of Toronto, Canada
- 2010 Visual Responses during the War: Selected Works of Artists | Lionel Wendt Gallery and the Harold Pieris Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2010 Inaugural Exhibition | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2011 Contemporary Art From Sri Lanka 2011 | Asia House, London, UK

- 2011 Script at Amangalla Hotel | Organized by Saskia Fernando Gallery, Galle, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Drawings by Chandraguptha Thenuwara & Jagath Weerasinghe | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Drawings by Chandraguptha Thenuwara & Jagath Weerasinghe | Breese Little Gallery, London, United Kingdom
- 2015 UVPA 10th Anniversary Show | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 Shadow Scenes: Cinnamon Colomboscope | Conceptualized and implemented by EUNIC which consists of the Goethe Institut (German Cultural Centre), Alliance Francaise de Kotte and British Council with partners, the European Union. Title partner is Cinnamon Hotels and Resorts, Rio Cinema, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 The Present: Colombo-Bangalore | Collaborative exhibition, Shanthamani Muddaiah & Chandraguptha Thenuwara, an Exhibition organized by National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru, Ministry Of Culture, Government of India in collaboration with India-Sri Lanka Foundation, at National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru, India
- 2015 Colombo-Bangalore | Chandraguptha Thenuwara & Shanthamani Muddaiah, JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 Disambiguation | Art Dubai 2016, Saskia Fernando Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2016 Sculpture Faculty show | Organized by the Department of Sculpture, Faculty of Visual Arts, JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 Group Show | CNAPT Centre, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2018 Human Rights Arts, Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara, participated Artists: Chandraguptha Thenuwara, David Cotterrell, Senaka Weeraman and Ruwanthi De Chickera, JDA Perera Gallery, supported by NTT and CPA
- 2018 Riot: Slow Cancellation of the Future | ifa Gallery Berlin and Stuttgart, Germany
- 2019 A Cross Section – Sri Lankan Contemporary Art | Jaleh Gallery, Tehran, Iran
- 2019 Crossing Place | Baik Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2019 Black and White | Curated by Manoranjana Herath, JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2020 12th India Art Fair | New Delhi, India
- 2021 The Gift | Lunuganga, Sri Lanka
- 2023 India Art Fair | New Delhi, India
- 2023 Notations of Time | Curated by Sandhini Poddar, Ishara Foundation, Dubai
- 2023 Pop South Asia: Artistic Explorations in the Popular | Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, India

Biennials and Recurring Exhibitions

- 1982 5th Triennial | New Delhi, India
- 1983 2nd Asian Biennale | Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 1995 7th Asia Pacific Biennial | Dhaka, Bangladesh

- 1999 First Asian Triennale | Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
- 2009 Imagining Peace | First Colombo Art Biennale, Park Street Mews, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Becoming | Colombo Art Biennale, JDA Perera Gallery and Other venues, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2017 One Hundred Thousand Small Tales | Dhaka Art Summit
- 2022 Covert, Personal Structures, European Cultural Academy | Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

Public Collections

- Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA
- Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
- Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
- Lunuganga Trust Collection, Sri Lanka
- John Moores University Art Collection, Liverpool, United Kingdom
- Fine Art Museum of Udmurtia, Izhevsk City, Udmurtia, Russia

Curatorial Projects

- 2010 Visual Responses during the War | Supported by The Centre for Policy Alternatives | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 UVPA 10th Anniversary Exhibition | Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara and Priyantha Udagedara | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo Sri Lanka
- 2015 Truth to Truth | Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara, Udaya Hewawasam, Kingley Gunatilake | Supported by The Centre for Policy Alternatives and Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo Sri Lanka
- 2016 Liminal Space | Wings of Art Festival | Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara and Priyantha Udagedara | Supported by The Arts Council of Sri Lanka | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 C/A/M/P | Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara and Udaya Hewawasam | Supported by The Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust and Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2017 Untold Stories | Supported by The Arts Council Sri Lanka | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2018 Human Rights Arts | Supported by The Neelan Tiruchelvam Trust and Centre for Policy Alternatives | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo Sri Lanka
- 2018 Seven Plus One, Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts Faculty Exhibition | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- 2018 Human Rights Arts Festival | Supported by The Arts Council Sri Lanka | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo Sri Lanka
- 2019 Sri Lanka Ten Artists Visual Arts Exhibition | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2023 Fragile | Curated by Chandraguptha Thenuwara, S.Pushpakanthan, Asanka Jayasinghe | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Publications/Articles/Films

- 1999 Darshana Medis | A conversation with Sri Lankan artist Chandraguptha Thenuwara | World Socialist Web Site | <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1999/11/barr-n25.html>
- 2007 One year Drawing Project | Artists: Chandraguptha Thenuwara, JagathWeerasinghe, T.Shanaathanan and MuhannedCader | Publisher: Raking Leaves
- 2008 Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai | Dhammapada and Other Works | Goundviews | <https://groundviews.org/2008/07/30/dhammapada-and-other-works/>
- 2009 Megara Tegal | What's the buzz? - It's Colombo Art Biennale | The Sunday Times | https://sundaytimes.lk/090906/Plus/plus_01.html
- 2010 Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai | Vigil and Other Works:An exhibition of installations,drawings and paintings | Passion Parade | <http://passionparade.blogspot.com/2010/07/vigil-and-other-worksan-exhibition-of.html>
- 2011 Josephine Breese | Sri Lankan Contemporary Art | The White Review | <https://www.thewhitereview.org/feature/sri-lankan-contemporary-art/>
- 2011 Dushiyanthini Kanagasabapathipillai | The Wall and Other Works | Passion Parade | <http://passionparade.blogspot.com/2011/08/wall-and-other-works.html>
- 2012 Chandraguptha Thenuwara | An Exhibition of Sculpture & Drawings 'The Monument and other works' | Wordpress | <https://lnwnewsbackup.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/chandragupta.pdf>
- 2014 Darshana Medis & Panini Wijesiriwardane | Beautification: An exhibition by Sri Lankan artist Chandraguptha Thenuwara | World Socialist Web Site | <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2014/04/04/then-a04.html>
- 2014 Political Art in Sri Lanka | International State Crime Initiative | <http://statecrime.org/state-crime-research/political-art-in-sri-lanka/>
- 2015 Alternative Art Teaching Manual for Art Teachers | Kotte: Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts
Authors: Chandraguptha Thenuwara, Kingsley Gunatillake, Udayahewawasam
- 2016 Drushyamana: Encyclopaedic Series of Glossary of Visual Art, Part I | Kotte: Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts,
Author: Chandraguptha Thenuwara
- 2016 Drushyamana: Encyclopaedic Series of Glossary of Visual Art, Part 2 | Kotte: Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts,
Author: Chandraguptha Thenuwara
- 2016 Drushyamana: Encyclopaedic Series of Glossary of Visual Art, Part 3 | Kotte: Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts,
Author: Chandraguptha Thenuwara

Societal Activism

Assassination of Lasanatha Wickrematunge in 2009, who was a high-profile Sri Lankan journalist, politician, broadcaster and human rights activist was a pivotal moment that catapulted Thenuwara to be a vocal activist and not merely a political artist.

Mission & Objectives

Human Rights, Right to Information, Freedom of Expression, Right to Life and Education

Academy & Programs

- 2007 to present Member Faculty Bord | Faculty of Visual Arts | University of Visual and Performing Arts | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2011 to 2014 Core Group Member | Purawesi Aithiya, Movement for Right to Information | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 to 2014 President | Faculty of Visual Arts Teachers' Association (FOVATA) | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2013 to 2014 Assistant Secretary | University of Teachers Association (FUTA) | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2013 to 2014 Member | Saamagi Jana Balawegaya Political Party | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2014 to present Chair and Board Member | Centre for Policy Alternatives | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2014 to present Core Group Member, Purawesi Balaya (Citizens' Power) | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2014 to 2015 President | University of Teachers Association (FUTA) | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 to 2018 President | Arts Council of Sri Lanka | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2018 to present Core Group Member | Civil Society and Trade Unions Collective (CSTUC) | Colombo Sri Lanka
- 2018 to present Founding Member and Co-Convener of University Teachers for Democracy (UT4D) | Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2020 to present Core Group Member | Aluth Kathabaha, a Civil Society Organization | Colombo, Sri Lanka

Published Articles on Activism

- 2011 Chandraguptha Thenuwara | National Youth Policy Drafted by Chandraguptha Thenuwara | https://www.ou.ac.lk/sites/nypsl/NYP%20ENGLISH_Final.pdf
- 2014 Lakna Paranamana | The govt. misled academics' Dr. Chandraguptha Thenuwara | Daily Mirror Sri Lanka | ['The govt. misled academics' Dr. Chandraguptha Thenuwara - Opinion | Daily Mirror](#)
- 2016 Lakmal Sooriyagoda | Contempt of Court case filed against former Chief Justice | Daily News Sri Lanka | <https://archives1.dailynews.lk/2018/12/15/local/171446/contempt-court-case-filed-against-former-chief-justice?page=15>

- 2016 Video by International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies | Talk by Chandraguptha Thenuwara | Filmed during 7th World Summit on Arts & Culture Valletta Malta
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRlcZSskKXI>
- 2018 English Editor | Three Senior Sri Lankan Academics file petition in Supreme Court seeking legal action against ex- Chief Justice Sarath Silva for allegedly making critical statements about judiciary amounting to contempt of court | Global Tamil News |
<https://globaltamilnews.net/english/three-senior-sri-lankan-academics-file-petition-in-supreme-court-seeking-legal-action-against-ex-chief-justice-sarath-silva-for-allegedly-making-critical-statements-about-judiciary-amounting-to-conte/>
- 2019 Inform Editor | Repression of Dissent in Sri Lanka before and after the Presidential Election | Inform |
<https://www.inform.lk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/RODJuly-dec2019.pdf>
- 2019 Civil Society Members | Letter to Sirisena from civil society: Your statements on CC and HRCSL are appalling | Sri Lanka Brief |
<https://srilankabrief.org/letter-to-sirisena-from-civil-society-your-statements-on-cc-and-hrcsl-are-appalling/>
- 2021 Webinar: The Politics of Memorialisation in Sri Lanka | Centre for Policy Alternatives Sri Lanka |
<https://www.cpalanka.org/webinar-the-politics-of-memorialisation-in-sri-lanka/>
- 2021 Roel Raymond | “I Believe Human Rights Are Important”: Prof. Chandraguptha Thenuwara | Roar Debrief |
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qaHRfzNtO-Q>
- 2023 Editor | Memory is the process; its result, the memorial: A chat with Prof. Chandraguptha Thenuwara | The Morning Sri Lanka | <https://www.themorning.lk/articles/115522>