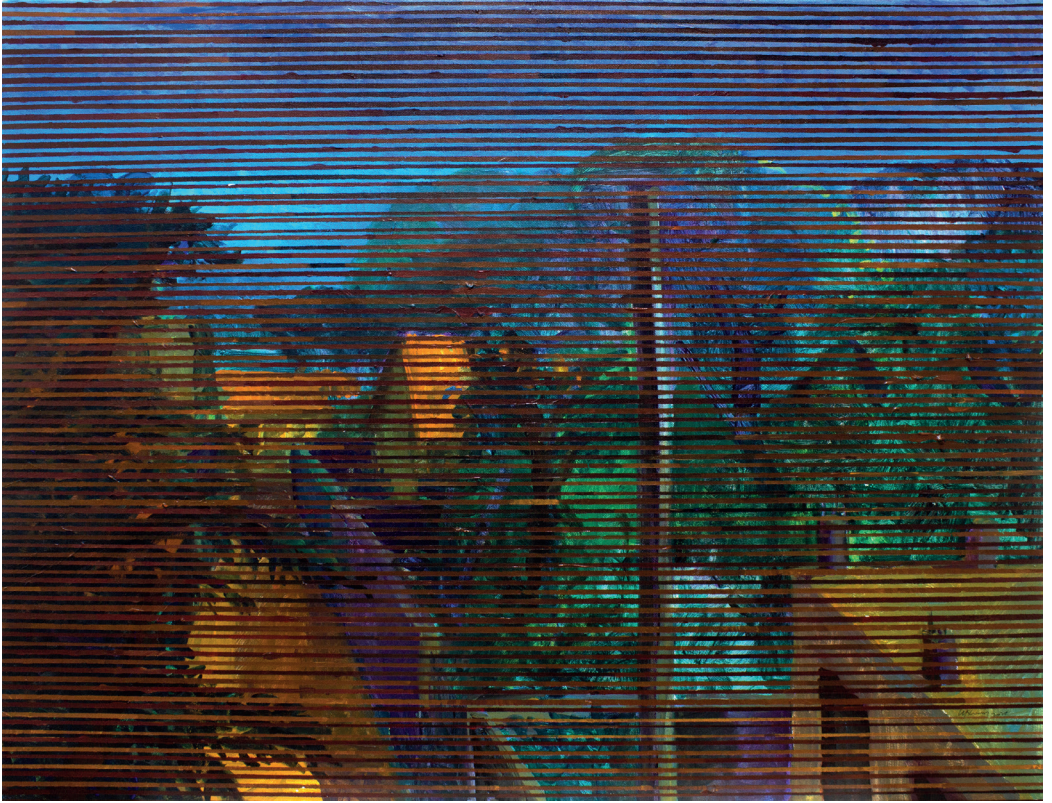


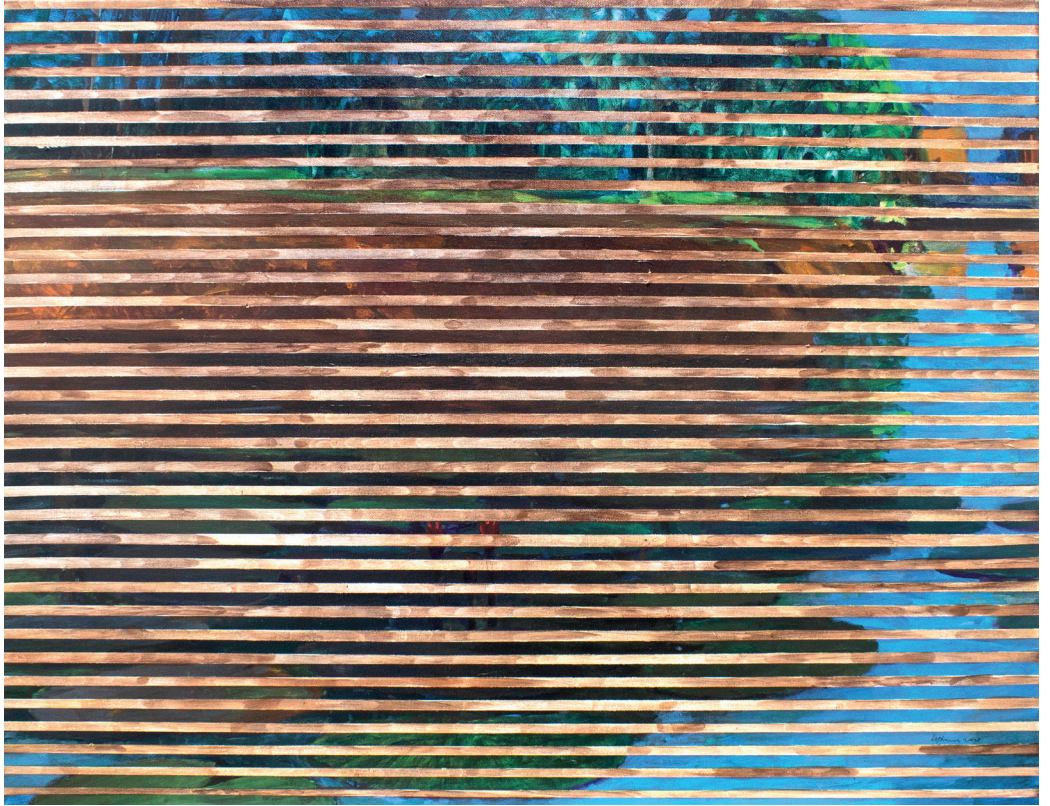
BLINDS

CHANDGRAGUPTHA THENUWARA

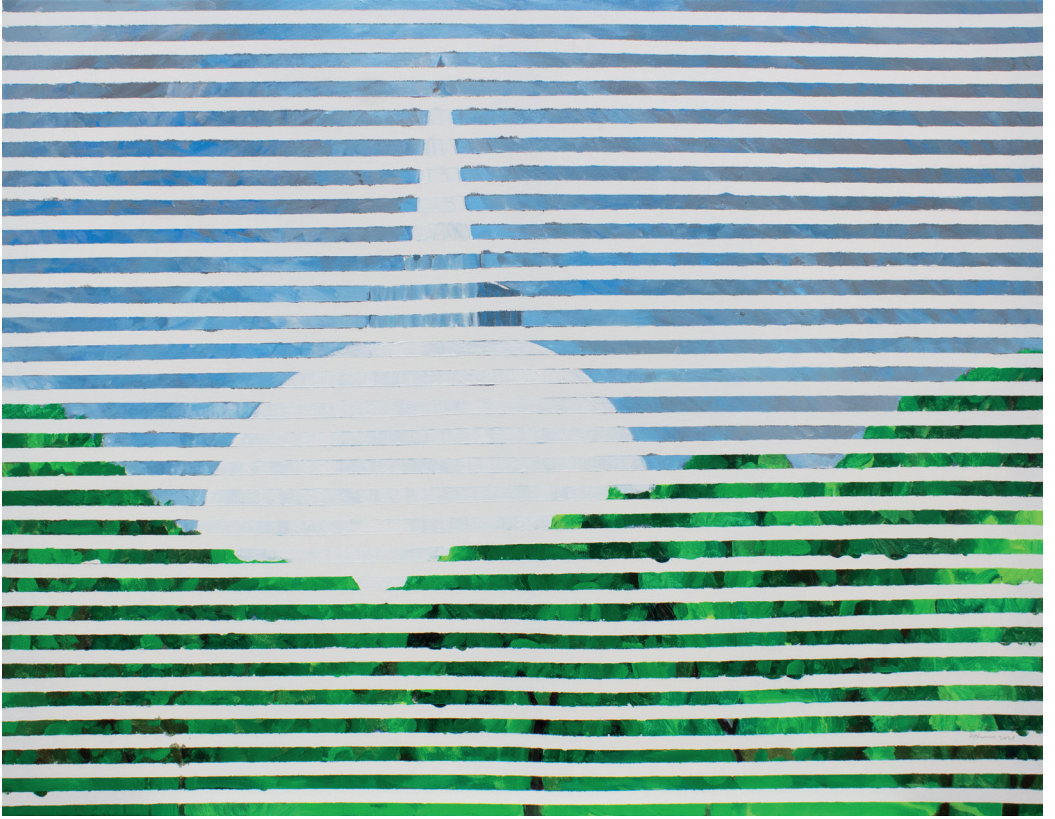
23.07.21 - 20.08.21



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Landscape,
Acrylic on Canvas,
70cm x 90cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara ,
BLINDS: Waterbody,
Acrylic on Canvas,
70cm x 90cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Ruwanweli,
Acrylic on Canvas,
70cm x 90cm

Most of us spent more time looking out of the windows of our homes this last year than in any other year. So, it is perhaps no surprise that one of the works in Chandraguptha Thenuwara's latest exhibition, simply titled *Landscape*, is a meditation out of the artist's studio in his home. The effects on the artist of a year spent in and out of lockdown may be why this most recent selection of works feels particularly intimate, even vulnerable. With widely ranging subjects from the Madonna, to Themis; from Ruwanweliseya to China, the works are united by the ways they underscore humanity's mistakes and weaknesses. While *Lamenting Themis* is sober-hued, the image of Madonna is titled *Hope* and she is seen against a gleaming gold backdrop. Yet one wonders what the gold signifies – through Thenu's deft marriage of figurative and the abstract depictions, the painting merges foreground and background and we are not sure if the figures in the painting have become part of the abstraction or if they are merely concealed beneath it.

The blinds running through the entire series of works in this exhibition are not mere screens, partially obscuring the "real". They are part of that reality, part of its narrative. They ask us to look closely and from afar. They remind us that our perceptions are tied to our own position in time and space. *Gold Square* optically vibrates through a range in values of the blues, greens and browns comprising its alternating striations. In this work, we do not know which layer conceals which. In *Glitch*, a monochrome work, the layers appear to merge. The recursive themes in Thenu's oeuvre are suggested through this painting, given his longstanding interest in the notion of the glitch.

The glitch, like blinds, speaks to the mediated qualities of vision, and by extension, understanding. In *The Newsreader*, the bright acrylic shades over the portrait are in stark contrast to the painting's subject, a murdered journalist. In *The White Line* triptych, the visual noise reminds us of electronic media and yet retains the sense that this is a man-made glitch thereby remaining informative even as noise. To quote Marshall McLuhan's "The Medium is the Message," or perhaps as the book (mistakenly) ended up being titled, "The Medium is the Massage." A glitch very much along the lines of Thenu's sense of humour.

Thenu uses his humour to appeal to us to look closer and to look wider. He returns to his reference of Magritte's "C'est ci n'est pas une pipe/This is not a pipe" phrase to remind us of *The Treachery of Images*. Building on previous works *This is not a White Flag* and *This is not White*, Thenu insists that we question perceptions. In this exhibition, *This is not a Pollock*, a large format work on aluminium reminds us that an artist's work is not just a matter of technique.

Although he is formally trained as a painter, Thenu's oeuvre includes many three-dimensional works. This exhibition is remarkable in that it is constituted entirely of paintings, and yet they are not wholly two-dimensional. *Impasto voxels in White Line No. 1* and *The Pandol* push back through the blinds, which here we can read as being the contrasting lines with flattened paint application. Through this subtle gesture Thenu suggests the agency of the reality beyond those blinds, whether they are metaphorical or physical.

In *Waterbody*, two crimson waterlilies peek through the blinds. Previous depictions of the flower by Thenu, like *Waterlilies in 2006*, hinted at the symbolism of the flower and its ties to national identity (the purple water lily is Sri Lanka's national flower). In this work, once more a view from the artist's home, the landscape unites the seemingly incompatible qualities of being vivid and murky on one canvas. Amazingly, this is the sense I glean from these paintings, a notion the events of this exceptional year have driven home; what is out there is muddy and uncertain, but it still glimmers with hope.

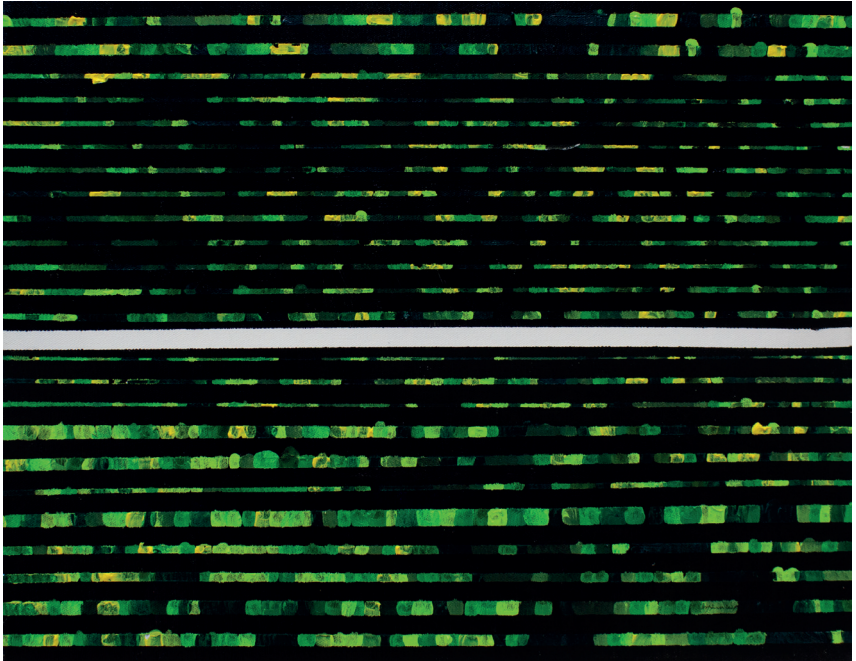
Shayari de Silva
Colombo, July 2021



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Glitch,
Acrylic on Canvas,
40cm x 50cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: The Newsreader;
Acrylic on Canvas,
40cm x 50cm

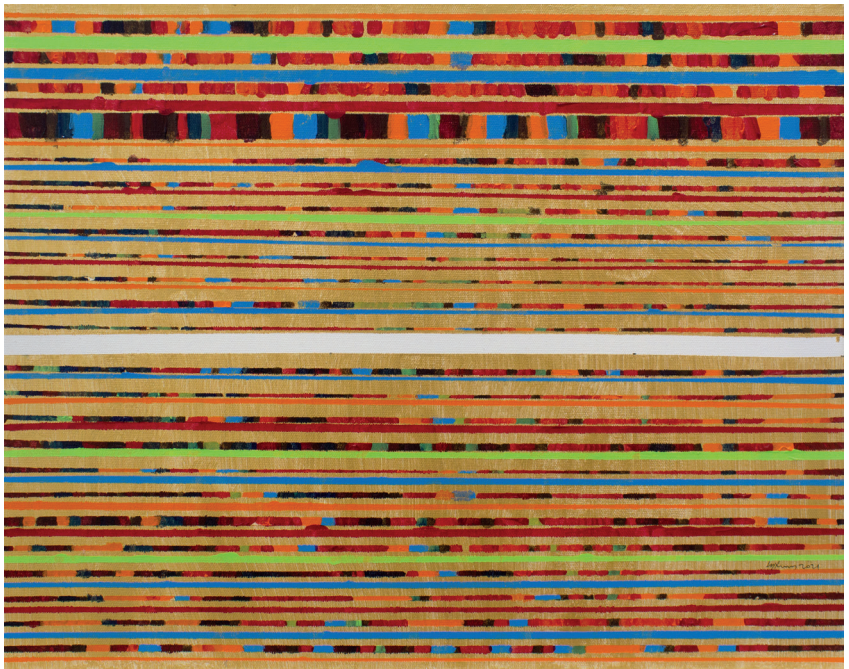


i.

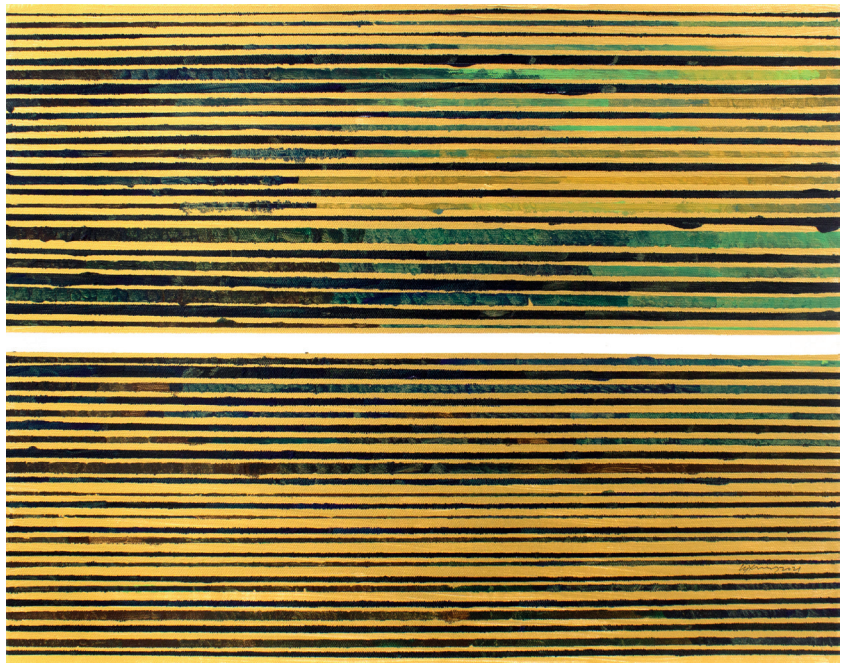
i. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Lines No. 1,
Acrylic on Canvas,
40cm x 50cm

ii. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Lines No. 2,
Acrylic on Canvas,
40cm x 50cm

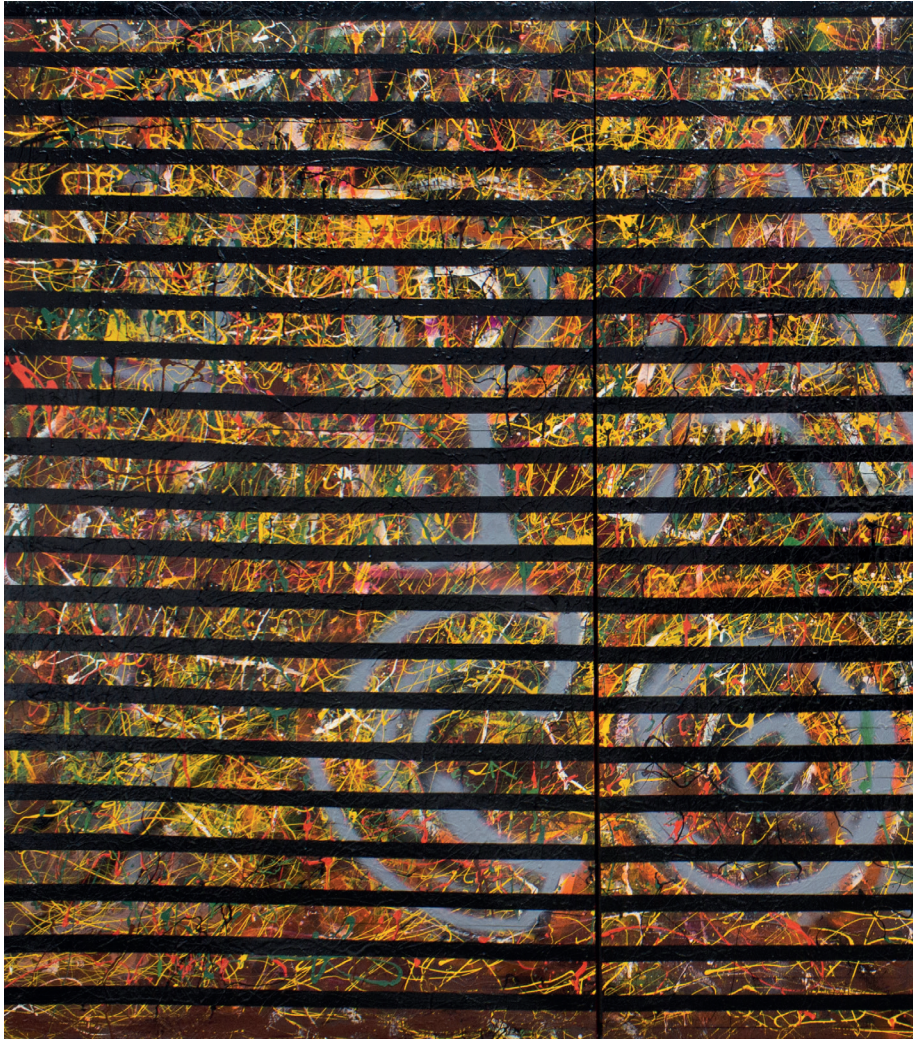
iii. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Lines No. 3,
Acrylic on Canvas,
40cm x 50cm



ii.



iii.

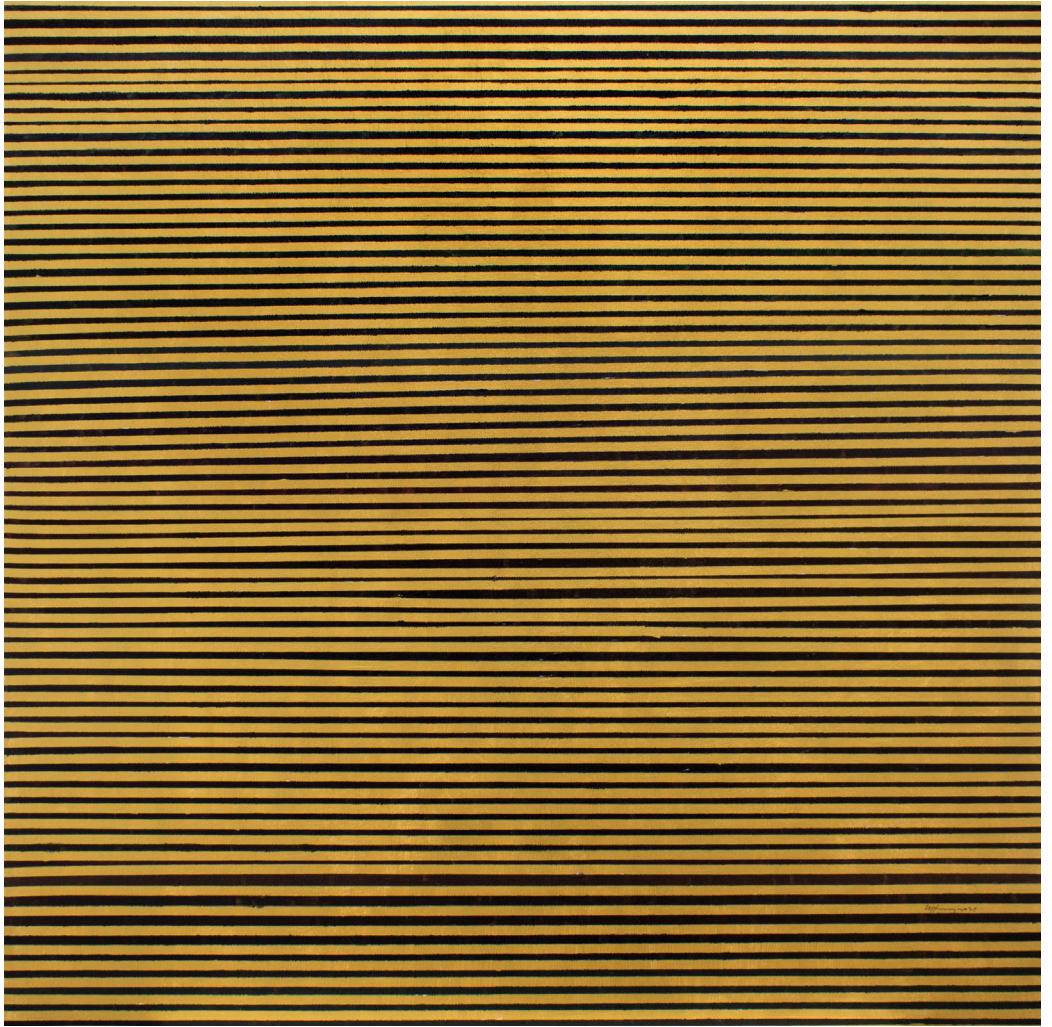


Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: PASS COUP,
Triptych, Acrylic on Canvas,
70cm x 90cm (x3)





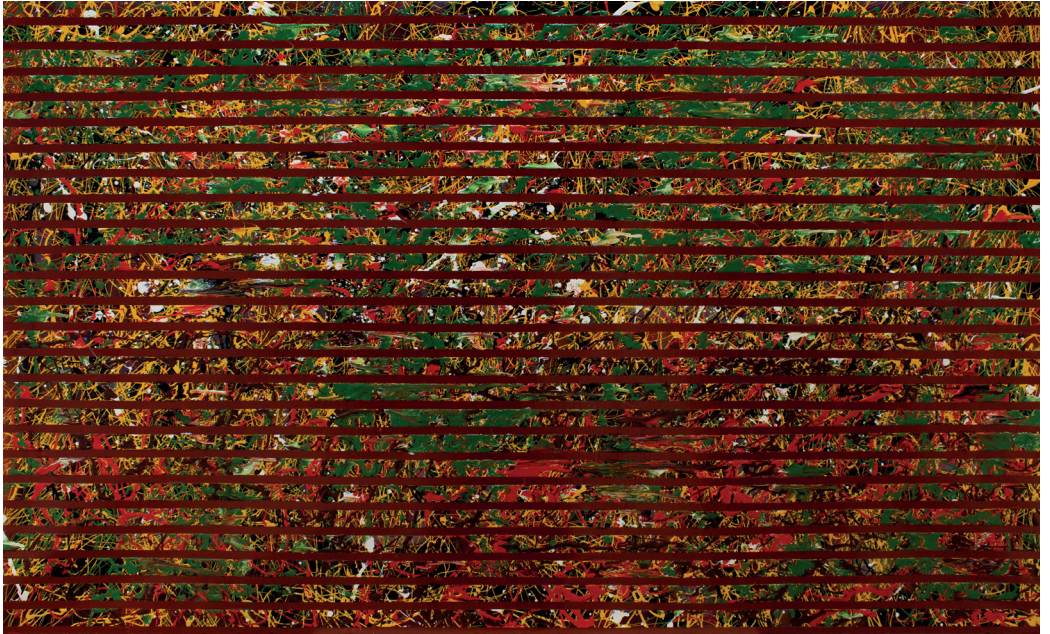
Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Hope,
Acrylic on Canvas,
92cm x 153cm



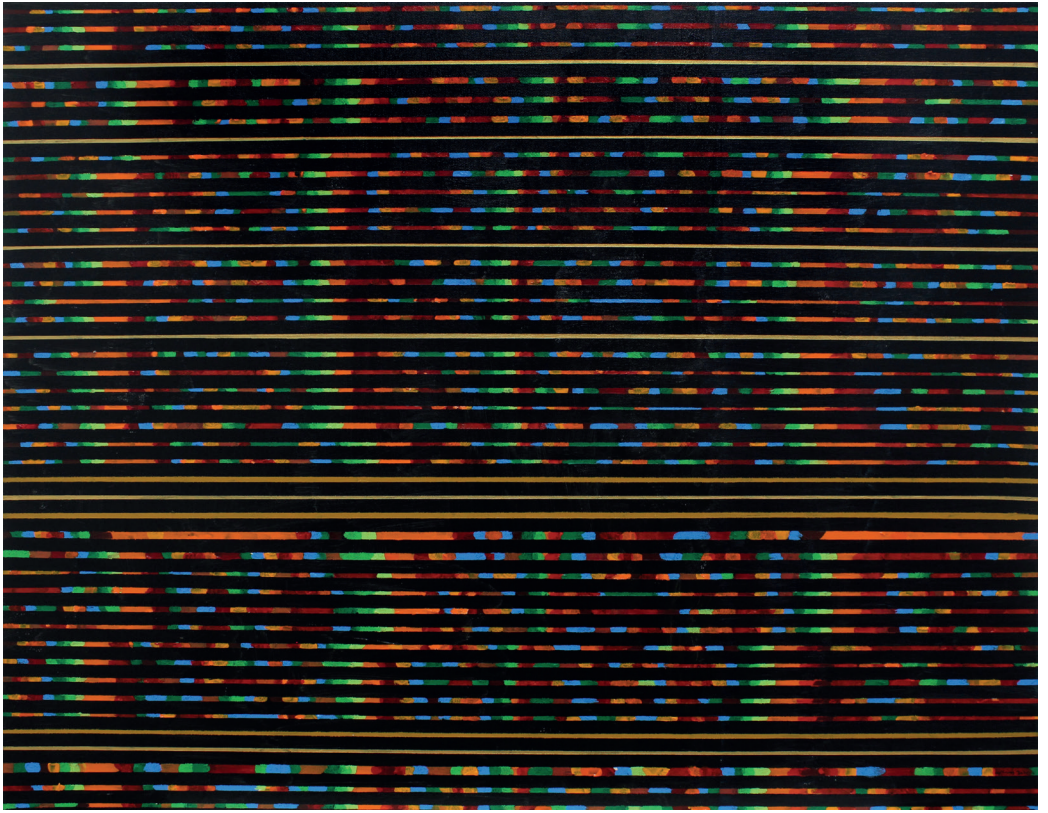
Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Gold,
Acrylic on Canvas,
90cm x 90cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Chinese,
Acrylic on Canvas,
92cm x 153cm



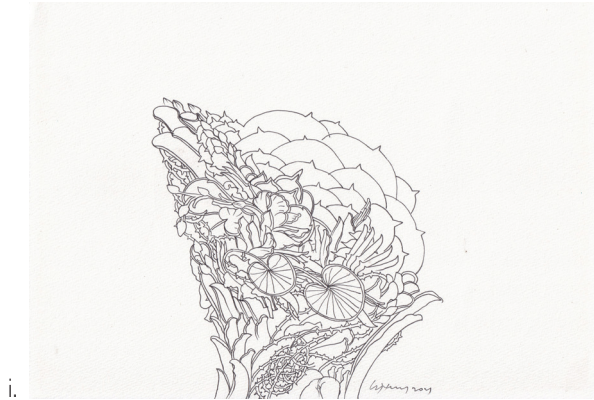
Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: This Is Not A Pollock,
Acrylic on Canvas,
92cm x 153cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
BLINDS: Pandol,
Acrylic on Canvas,
70cm x 90cm

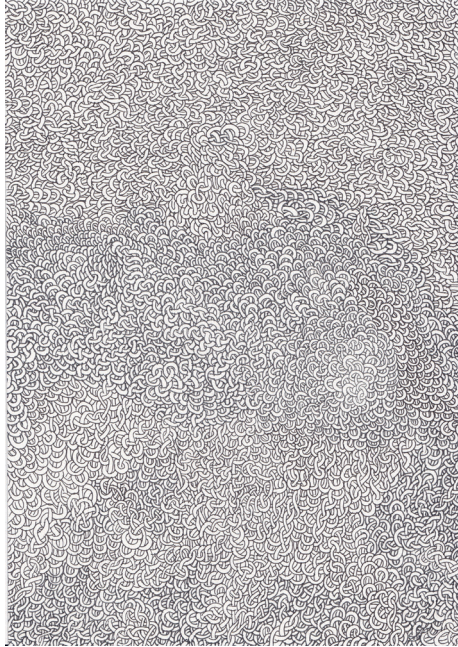


Chandraguptha Thenuwara, 2021,
BLINDS: Lamenting Themis,
Acrylic on Canvas,
90cm x 90cm

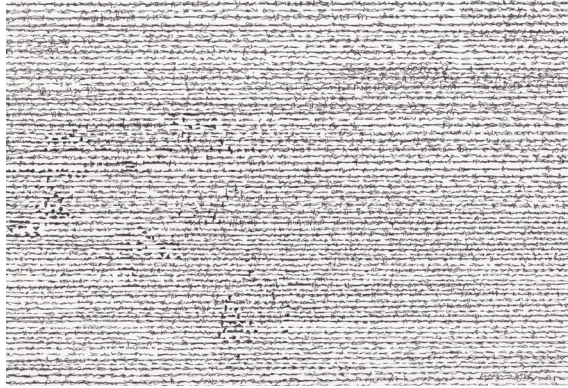


i. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Untitled II,
Ink on Paper,
21 cm x 30 cm

ii. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Untitled III,
Ink on Paper,
21 cm x 30 cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Untitled I,
Ink on Paper,
30cm x 21 cm



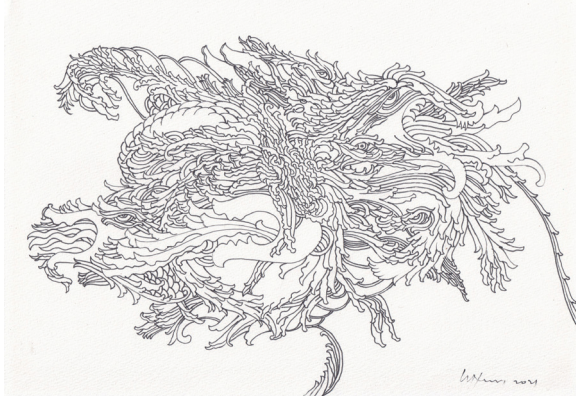
i.



ii.

i. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Line I,
Ink on Paper;
21 cm x 30 cm

ii. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Line II,
Ink on Paper;
21 cm x 30 cm



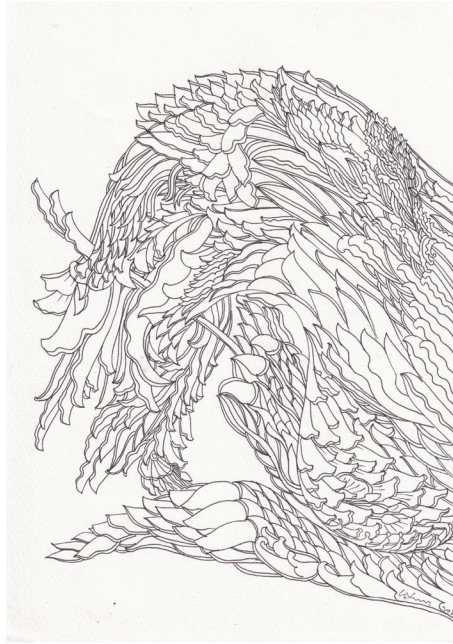
i.



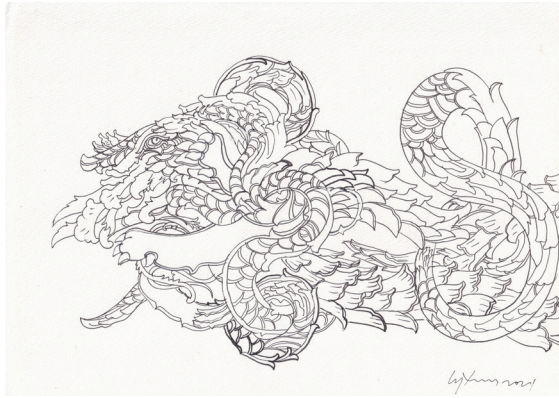
ii.

i. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Lion/Dragon II,
Ink on Paper;
21 cm x 30cm

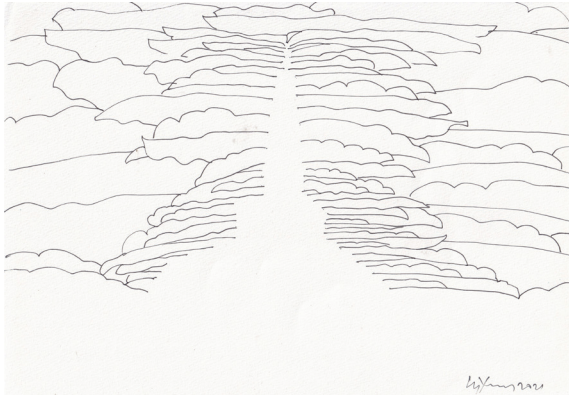
ii. Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Lion/Dragon III,
Ink on Paper;
21 cm x 30cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
2021, Lion Dragon I,
Ink on Paper,
30cm x 21cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Lion/Dragon IV,
Ink on Paper,
21 cm x 30 cm



Chandraguptha Thenuwara,
Ruwanweli,
Ink on Paper,
21 cm x 30 cm

CHANDRAGUPTHA THENUWARA b.1960

Education

2005-2006 M. Phil, Postgraduate Institute of Archeology, University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1985-1992 Masters of Art with Honors, Moscow State Art Institute named after Surikov, Moscow, Russia
1979-1981 Bachelor of Arts, Institute of Aesthetic Studies, University of Kelaniya, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Solo Exhibitions

2020 Atmosphere At/Most/Fear | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2019 M.O.B. | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2018 Executive Demon | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2017 Glitch+ | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2016 Glitch | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2015 Electric Chair for Sale | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2015 Chandraguptha Thenuwara | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2014 Drawing Series | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2014 Monotony | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo Sri Lanka
2013 Beautification | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2012 The Monument and Other Works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2012 Thorn & other Images | Hivos, 16 Raamweg, Den Haag, Netherlands
2011 The Wall and other works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2010 Visual Responses during the War: Selected Works of Artists | Lionel Wendt Gallery & Harold Pieris Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2010 Vigil and Other works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2010 Black Paintings & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2009 Post-Barrelism: Erasing Camouflage | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2008 Dhammapada & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2007 Neo-Barrelism | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2006 Wall of Death & Other Works | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2006 Barrelism:Camouflage | Maroondah Gallery, Victoria, Australia
2004 Camouflage and other works | VAFA Gallery, Ethul Kotte, Sri Lanka
2001 Recent Paintings | Paradise Road Galleries", Colombo, Sri Lanka
1999 Camouflage | VAFA Gallery, Ethul-Kotte, Sri Lanka
1998 Barrelism & Recent works | The Heritage Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1997 Barrelism & Other works | The Heritage Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1995 In Spacetime | 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.
1992 The City Gallery, Izhevsk City, Republic of Udmurtia, Russia
1992 Moscow Paintings | The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1991 Retrospective of Paintings | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1983 Paintings & Drawings | Soviet Cultural House, Colombo, Sri Lanka
1978 First Exhibition | Samudra Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Group Exhibitions (selected)

2020 one hundred thousand small tales | Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Colombo Sri Lanka
2020 12th India Art Fair | New Delhi
2019 Shades of Black and White | J.D.A Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
2019 A Cross Section – Sri Lankan Contemporary Art | Jaleh Gallery, Tehran, Iran
2019 Crossing Place | Baik Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2018 Seven Plus One: 25th Anniversary Show of VAFA | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka

- 2018 Riot: Slow Cancellation of the Future | ifa Gallery Berlin and Stuttgart, Germany
- 2016 Sculpture Faculty Show | organized by the Department of Sculpture, Faculty of Visual Arts, JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 CNAPT Centre, Marcus Fernando Road, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2016 Disambiguation | Art Dubai 2016, Saskia Fernando Gallery, Dubai, UAE
- 2015 UVPA 10th Anniversary Show | JDA Perera Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2015 Shadow Scenes | Colomboscope - Curated by Natasha Ginwala & Menika Van Der Poorten, The Rio Complex, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Drawings by Chandraguptha Thenuwara & Jagath Weerasinghe | Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2012 Drawings by Chandraguptha Thenuwara & Jagath Weerasinghe | Breeze Little Gallery, London, UK
- 2012 Becoming | Colombo Art Biennale, JDA Perera Gallery and Other venues, Colombo
- 2011 Contemporary Art From Sri Lanka 2011 | Asia House, London, UK
- 2010 Visual Responses During the War: Selected Artists Works | Lionel Wendt Gallery & Harold Peiris Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2009 Imagining Peace | Colombo Art Biennale, Park Street Mews, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2009 One Year Drawing Project | Devi Foundation, New Delhi
- 2009 One Year Drawing Project | SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre), UTAC (University of Toronto Art Centre), University of Toronto, Canada
- 2008 Big in Falkirk | Scotland National Street Arts Festival, Falkirk
- 2007 Shanghai Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China
- 2007 The National Museum of Poznan, Poland
- 2006 Common Goods | Melbourne Museum, Melbourne, Australia
- 2003 Un-commemorative Commemoration | VAFA Gallery, Kotte, Sri Lanka
- 2003 Artists for Peace | Charles Hall, Batticaloa, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka
- 2002 John Moores University, The University of Art Collection Gallery, Liverpool, UK
- 2002 Art Peace | Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 2002 Moving Collection, Japan
- 2001 Theertha International Artists Workshop | Barefoot Gallery, Sri Lanka
- 2000 Art Exhibition for Peace & Reconciliation | Neelan Thiruchelvam Commemorative Program, 706 Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1999 1st Asian Art Triennale (The 5th Asian Art Show) | Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
- 1999-2000 Cities on the Move | KIASMA, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland
- 1999 Third International Artists' Camp Exhibition | National Gallery, Sri Lanka
- 1999-98 Cities on the Move | Hayward Gallery, London, UK/PS1 Gallery, New York
- 1998-99 Cities on the Move | Louisiana Museum, Denmark/CapsMuseum, Musee d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux, France / Vienna Secession, Austria
- 1998 Khoj Artists Workshop Exhibition, Modinagar, New Delhi, India
- 1998 In Dependence | Lionel Wendt Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1997 The 1st Annual Exhibition of VAFA | The National Art Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1996 Women in Art | The Mount castle Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1995 7th Asia Pacific Biennale | Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 1993 The National Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka
- 1994 The Academy of Arts, Moscow, Russia
- 1992 International Symposium on Open-air Sculpture, Izhevsk City, Russia

Collections

- Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- Queensland Art Gallery Australia
- Fukuoka Asian Art Museum Japan
- Lunuganga Trust Collection
- John Moore's University Art Collection Liverpool
- Fine Arts Museum of Udmurtia Izhevsk Russia

SASKIA FERNANDO GALLERY