

THE
art
OF
NEW

ALTERNATIVES

Nation-Building and the
Creation of a
›New Community‹
in Contemporary
Sri Lankan Art

09 — 11
MARCH 2022

📍 HSZ/ E01
and digitally via ZOOM

PROGRAMME

wed March, 9th

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

- 14:30 **Welcome Address**
Roswitha Böhm (Vice-Rector University Culture)
- The Background:
Inventory and Analysis of the Current
Situation in Sri Lanka**
Holger Seubert (German Ambassador to Sri Lanka and
the Maldives)
- The Art of New Alternatives?
Nation-Building and the Creation of a
›New Community‹ in Contemporary Sri Lankan Art**
Stefan Horlacher (TU Dresden)
Birte Heidemann-Malreddy (TU Dresden)

PANEL I TERRITORY, IDENTITY, COMMUNITY AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN POST-WAR SRI LANKA

- 15:15 **Territorial Anxieties:
Identity Politics and the Antinomies of
Community in Sri Lanka**
Benedikt Korf (University of Zurich)
- Making ›Us‹ from ›Them‹:
Identity Politics in the Peripheries**
Thamali Kithsiri (University of Peradeniya)
- Affective Justice for an Ineffective Transition?
The Arts and Transitional/Transformative
Justice in Post-War Sri Lanka**
Lars Waldorf (University of Essex)

17:00 CONFERENCE WARMING

19:30 CONFERENCE DINNER

thur March, 10th

PANEL II MEMORY, ARCHIVE AND COMMUNITY IN SRI LANKAN VISUAL ARTS

- 09:30 **Space and Emotions, Remembering Traumas:
The Politics of Post-War Sri Lankan Visual Arts**
Priyantha Udagedara (University of the Visual and
Performing Arts, Colombo)
- Traitors and the Art of Self-Censoring**
Thamotharampillai Shanaathanan
(University of Jaffna)
- Remembering Eelam:
Materiality and Memory at the ›Tamils of Lanka:
A Timeless Heritage‹ Exhibition (London 2019)**
Rachel Seoighe (University of Kent, Canterbury)

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

PANEL III PEACE, CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY IN POST-WAR SRI LANKAN FILM

- 11:30 **A Crisis of Nationhood:
Post-War Sri Lankan Cinema and
the Revisiting of History**
Neluka Silva (University of Colombo)
- Documenting Dissonance:
Revisiting Sri Lankan Conflict Narratives
through Jude Ratnam's *Demons in Paradise***
Nilanjana Premaratna (University of Newcastle)
- The Bee and the Butterfly:
Metamorphosis of the Queer Protagonist
in Sri Lankan Cinema and Politics**
Visakesa Chandrasekaram (University of Colombo)

13:00

13:00 LUNCH BREAK



March, 10th

CONTINUED

PANEL IV AUTHENTICITY, TRUTH AND WITNESSING IN POST-WAR FICTION AND NON-FICTION

14:00

Recording Post-War Sri Lanka: Ethnographic and Narrative Perspectives
Samanth Subramanian (Cambridge, UK)

Sri Lankan Witness Literature: Writing Truth and Truthiness
Minoli Salgado (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Writing in the Shadow of Authenticity: Sri Lankan Writing in English and Discourses of Authenticity
Harshana Rambukwella (Open University of Sri Lanka, Nugegoda)

15:30

15:30 COFFEE BREAK

PANEL V ENACTING COMMUNITY IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES

16:00

The Enactment of Community in Sri Lankan Artistic Practice: Performance, Public Space, Politics
Ruhanie Perera (University of Colombo)

The Community Will Hate You: War, Violent Families, and the Visceral Queer Diasporic Sri Lankan Tamil Body in *A Marriage of a Thousand Lies*

Shermal Wijewardene (University of Colombo)

17:00

PUBLIC READING ART AND THE TRAUMA OF WAR

19:30 Minoli Salgado | Samanth Subramanian | Visakesa Chandrasekaram
at The Saxon State and University Library Dresden



March, 11th

PANEL VI CONNECTING (ACROSS) COMMUNITIES IN SRI LANKAN ANGLOPHONE LITERATURE

09:30

Imagining Peace and Community in Selected Contemporary Sri Lankan Fictional Texts
Ruvani Ranasinha (King's College, London)

Diasporic Fractures and Community-Making in Channa Wickremesekera's Fiction
Mahendran Thiruvarangan (University of Jaffna)

11:00

Car-Sharing and Nation-Building: *Noontide Toll* and the Postcolonial Chauffeur
Wieland Schwanebeck (TU Dresden)

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

PANEL VII PEACE, MORALITY AND HOPE(LESSNESS) IN SRI LANKAN ANGLOPHONE LITERATURE

11:30

Explorations of Complicit Enfoldings and (Radical) Unfoldings in Contemporary Sri Lankan Fiction
Cornelia Wächter (TU Dresden)

»You must go on. I can't go on. I'll go on«: *Story of a Brief Marriage* and the Point Zero of Signification

Stefan Horlacher (TU Dresden)
Thilini Meegaswatta (TU Dresden)

13:15

The Ontologies of Morality in Anuk Arudpragasam's *A Passage North*
Neloufer de Mel (University of Colombo)

13:15 LUNCH BREAK & FAREWELL

With its long pre-colonial Sinhalese and Tamil history in addition to its unique legacy of successive colonisation by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, Sri Lanka can be seen as an exemplary test case for post-colonial societies and nations but also for theories and models of hybridity, syncretism, multiculturalism, community and nation-building; a model case for dealing with difference and diversity, religions and ethnicities, traditions and histories as well as ideologies and political doctrines in a highly traditional and stratified society against the backdrop of a convoluted past.

This conference sets out to ask for new, different and more creative solutions of what multiethnic and multireligious life in Sri Lanka might look like; to ask for concepts of community and nation-building, of negotiation, hybridity and unity-in-difference which transcend political rivalries, ethnic and religious rifts as well as economic dependencies, and to offer alternatives to the present (and historical) deadlock.

This conference will be held in a hybrid format.

For those who wish to take part in the conference or follow individual panels, either in person or digitally, please register in advance via e-mail:

 new_alternatives@tu-dresden.de

For more information visit our [website](#).

ORGANISING TEAM

Prof. Dr. Stefan Horlacher
Dr. Birte Heidemann-Malreddy

AND

Franziska Röber, Jacqueline Steven,
Lina Bräu, Heidi Lachmann, Josefine Eckert,
and others