

# AC&K

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L I T . F E S T

*Simply literature. Simply local.*

**14th & 15th May 2016**  
**10 am onwards**

Western Province Aesthetic Resort  
275/74 Prof Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha  
Colombo 07

## To My Annasi and Kadalagotu Friends...

Annasi and Kadalagotu comes to the literary calendar of Sri Lanka once again.

The theme is the same, an uncomplicated gathering of people who love and worship the written and spoken prose/poetry of Sri Lanka. It is tri-lingual and poured through carefully selected panels that are facilitated by competent moderators.

On stage would be the veterans and so would be the new comers. That is the theme, to give an opportunity to a wider range of authors and poets to make the festival colourful with experience and vibrant with new faces.

A special welcome is extended to the school children who participate in the 'poem of the year' competition.

It is with great joy we initiated this program as encouraging children to write has been a paramount theme in Annasi & Kadalagotu.

Sometimes people have been asking why Annasi& Kadalagotu?

Well, the name defines what this is all about. Simple and tasty and straight from the pavement. Nothing fancy, but we will do our best to dish out a concoction that will serve a different taste to different ages and in three different languages.

Blue skies...

**- Capt Elmo Jayawardena**



## Organising Committee

Capt Elmo Jayawardena

Keith Wijesuriya

Dhananath Fernando

Ruwan Weerawardana

Devaki Gomez

Aman Ashraff

Alann Lopez

Nadeera Wijegunawardana

Thamindri de Silva

Nishika Hassim

Dr Harshana Rambukwella

Stanis Thiwanka Madawa

Mithila Karunarathna

Julian de Valliere

Ishara Madushanka

Jason Wijesuriya

Shallen Dirckze

It's back! This time spanned over two days following the crazy outpouring of accolades we received after last year's inaugural event. This became surreal when I met the organizers of the Jaipur Lit Fest this year and learnt that they were aware of the AK LitFest. Frankly, I was stunned.

The AK LitFest remains true to its core mission to provide a platform for readers, writers and publishers to meet and engage in honest discussion and exchange of ideas. A platform for local authors and local publishers, to promote the Sri Lankan identity. We will continue to be an affordable festival attracting the everyday reader, and bringing together literary enthusiasts from all walks of life.

We welcome Sampath Bank PLC and Jetwing Hotels, who have come forward to help us keep the flame we lit last year, blazing brighter. A big thank you to our Festival partners as well for all the support. We are pleased to have PawPrint Publishing, Perera & Hussein, M D Gunasena and Vijitha Yapa joining us once again at our publishers' clinic, and welcome Vijitha Yapa, M D Gunasena and Deen the Bookman back at the book stalls. We would also like to thank all our anonymous benefactors for their assistance towards making the Lit Fest a reality.

We hope you enjoy the programme this year, and see you back in 2017!

**- Keith Wijesuriya**

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The Rotary Club of Colombo Regency is glad to be a partner in bringing forth the A&K LitFest in its second year.

Rotary International - a volunteer service organization, asks its members to focus on a variety of programme areas. Literacy and basic education is one such service area, and we are delighted to be a part of this festival that creates an interest in literature, and provides opportunities for up coming creative writers to present their work to a large audience for acceptance, at no cost to them.

The theme for Rotarians this year is *'to be a gift to the world'*. Opening the door to literature is a true gift that will perpetuate, and we are are thankful to the Organizers for their exhaustive work in presenting the LitFest this year on a bigger scale, and are happy to partner with them to present this event.

**- Ruwan Weerawardana**

## **PROGRAMME - Saturday 14th May**

# Hall 1 (Sampath Shalawa)

**1000 - 1030 hs**    **Opening ceremony**

**1030 - 1200 hrs**    **Opening Session**  
*Marching to one's own beat*  
**The Importance of being ...Sunil!**

**Presenter:**        Sunil Perera

**Moderator:**      Capt Elmo Jayawardena

**MEDIUM: SINGLISH**

**1230 - 1400 hrs**    **Book Launch - Session 1**

1. Quintus Fernando
2. Kanagesh Ramesh
3. Vihanga Perera
4. Ayathurai Santhan
5. Nazeela Siddique

**Introduced by:**    Rajitha Fernando

**Moderator:**        Thisantha Ameresekere with Aman Ashraff

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1430 - 1600 hrs**    **Panel 1**

*Crafting characters*  
**Scriptwriting for cinema & theatre**

**Panelists:**         Tracy Holsinger

Vishnu Vasu

Brandon Ingram

Chamara Peiris

Anthony Jeewa

**Moderator:**        Charu Thewarathanthri

**MEDIUM: SINHALA / ENGLISH**

**1630 - 1800 hrs**    **Session 2**

*Laughing matters*  
**The art & craft of humour in literature**

**Presenter:**        Ashok Ferrey

**Moderator**         Biman Kasun Wimalaratne

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH**

## **PROGRAMME - Saturday 14th May**

# Hall 2 (Jetwing Pavillion)

**1230 - 1400 hrs** **Panel 2**  
***Boldly going where many have gone before***  
**New faces in literature - PART 1**

**Panelists:** Abdul Razak 'Memon Kavi'  
Anupama Godakanda  
Madri Kalugala  
Chamindra Warusawithane

**Moderator:** Nadeera Wijegunawardana

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1430 - 1600 hrs** **Panel 3**  
***Write right***  
**Stories that win hearts and minds**  
**(and sometimes prizes!)**

**Panelists:** Ashan Jayatilaka  
Ayathurai Santhan  
Madubhashini Dissanayake Ratnayake  
Vasanthi Thayabaran

**Moderator:** Lal Medawattegedera

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1630 - 1800 hrs** **Panel 4**  
***Penning pain***  
**Writing that heals**

**Panelists:** Radhika Hettiarachchi  
Nivendra Uduman  
Umachandreaa Pragash  
Ramya Jirasinghe

**Moderator:** Ruwanthie de Chickera

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

## **PROGRAMME - Saturday 14th May**

# Hall 3 (Annasi Thotam)

1130 - 1300 hrs **Session 3**

***Lovinage Kathaawa***

**The Story of Mount Lavinia**

**Presenter:** Mohan Raj Madawala

**Moderator:** Dhananath Fernando

**MEDIUM: SINHALA**

1330 - 1500 hrs **Panel 5**

***Pongal & Prasadam***

**Deconstructing the dimensions of Tamil literature**

**Panelists:** Dr Kandiah Sriganeshan

Gayathree Srikandavel

Arivarasy Muthulingam

**Moderator:** Somasundrampillai Pathmanathan

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH (WITH TAMIL/SINHALA)**

1530 - 1700 hrs **Panel 6**

***Spiritually speaking***

**The influence of religion in literature**

**Panelists:** Deshabandu Jezima Ismail

Dr Shanthikumar Hettiarachchi

Dr Kandiah Sriganeshan

Dr Harshana Rambukwella

**Moderator:** Arun Dias-Bandaranaike

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

## **PROGRAMME - Saturday 14th May**

### Hall 4 (Lit Aid Station)

**1100 - 1300 hrs** **Workshop 1**  
*Writer's block*  
**Creative writing workshop**  
**Facilitator:** Delon Weerasinghe  
**Moderator:** Nadeera Wijegunawardana  
**MEDIUM: ENGLISH**

**1400 - 1600 hrs** **Publisher Clinic**  
**How *NOT* to get your book rejected**  
PawPrint Publishing  
Perera & Hussein  
M D Gunasena  
Vijitha Yapa  
**MEDIUM: SINGLISH**

### Open Air (Ambagaha Yata)

**Caricature sketches** - Douglas Paul  
(throughout the day)

#### **Lunchtime entertainment**

**Annasi and Kadala kaarayas**  
(Aimlessly walking. Stop them. Give their life some purpose. Enjoy the taste)

**Open Mic sessions (1800 hrs onwards)**  
(Lashed with *isso wadai* and the rhythmic beat of *kottu roti* in the making)

**- END OF DAY ONE -**

## **PROGRAMME - Sunday 15th May**

# Hall 1 (Sampath Shalawa)

### **1030 - 1200 hrs Book Launch - Session 2**

1. Diloginy Moses
2. Chammi Rajapatirana
3. Madri Kalugala
4. Rev Fr Jesuthas
5. Chamindra Warusawithane

**Introduced by:** Rajitha Fernando

**Moderator:** Mahen Panagoda with Ameen Sha Al Hameed

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

### **1300 - 1500 hrs Panel 7**

***Peanuts, monkeys and going bananas***

**Copywriting in advertising**

**Panelists:** Dileepa Abeysekera

Suminda Gamage

Chandini Rajaratnam

Ransley Burrows

**Moderator:** Dileepa Jayakody

**MEDIUM: SINHALA/ENGLISH**

### **1600 - 1700 hrs Poetry competition**

***Today's kids are NOT tomorrow's goats***

**Hope for the future!**

**Moderator:** Nadeera Wijegunawardana

**MEDIUM: SINHALA/ENGLISH**

## **PROGRAMME - Sunday 15th May**

# Hall 2 (Jetwing Pavillion)

**1100 - 1300 hrs Panel 8**

***The open road...***

**Travel literature**

**Panelists:** Douglas Ranasinghe  
Neranjana Gunetilleke  
Mihiri Wikramanayake  
Kusumsiri Wijayawardana  
Murugesu Ponnambalam

**Moderator:** Keith Wijesuriya

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1430 - 1600 hrs Panel 9**

***Boldly going where many have gone before***

**New faces in literature - PART 2**

**Panelists:** Prasad Polwatte  
Jayani C Senanayake  
Major Sha Hameed  
Grace Wickremasinghe  
Rameez Abdullah

**Moderator:** Capt Elmo Jayawardena

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

## **PROGRAMME - Sunday 15th May**

# Hall 3 (Annasi Thotam)

**1100 - 1300 hrs Panel 10**

***More than just a Blog***  
**Writing online**

**Panelists:** Chris Dharmakirti  
Yudhanjaya Wijeratne  
Subha Wijesiriwardena  
Daya Dissanayake

**Moderator:** Nalaka Gunawardene

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1330 - 1500 hrs Panel 11**

***Stop Press!***  
**Writing with courage and conviction**

**Panelists:** Indika Sakalasooriya  
Bharathi Irajanyayam  
Sachitra Mahendra  
Vindya Amaranayake

**Moderator:** Gaston de Rosayro

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

**1530 - 1700 hrs Panel 12**

***Lines & Stanzas***  
**Poetry and Music**

**Panelists:** Saumya Liyanage  
Neranji Sulakkana Ekanayake  
Hiranyada Dewasiri  
Malinda Seneviratne  
Mohan Premathilake

**Moderator:** Laxman Piyasena

**MEDIUM: ENGLISH/SINHALA/TAMIL**

## **PROGRAMME - Sunday 15th May**

### Hall 4 (Lit Aid Station)

**1130 - 1300 hrs**    **Session 4**  
***Kidspeak***  
**Literature for Children**  
**Presenter:**        Sam Perera  
**MEDIUM: ENGLISH**

**1400 - 1530 hrs**    **A discussion around the book**  
**Panelists:**        Kalasuri Dharmasiri Bandaranayake  
                              K Jayakumaran  
**Moderator:**        Dhananath Fernando & Ameen Sha Al Hameed  
**MEDIUM: SINHALA/TAMIL**

### Open Air (Ambagaha Yata)

**1300 hrs**            **ReadMe.lk Magazine launch**

**1640 - 1730 hrs**    **Performance poetry**  
Vathiri S Raveendran  
Thahir Noorul Isra  
Abdul Razak 'Memon Kavi'

**Caricature sketches**    - Douglas Paul  
*(throughout the day ...for those who missed out yesterday)*

**Annasi and Kadala kaarayas**  
*(Continue walking. Thank you for supporting them yesterday. Continue enjoying the taste)*

**- END OF DAY TWO -**

# Outer Festival

## **The A&K Bookshop**

Buy autographed books of the authors at the Festival, from our very own AK Lit Fest bookshop.

Also available are AK LitFest mementos like bookmarks, badges, etc.

## **Other Bookstalls @ The Fest**

Deen the Bookman

M D Gunasena & Company Printers Ltd

Vijitha Yapa Bookshop

## **Festival Artists**

Enjoy some art! Have your picture done by Douglas Paul, a renowned caricature artist.

## **Annasi and Kadalagotu**

Get back to our roots: There will be spicy, tasty annasi and kadalagotu available at the venue, for that quick bite between sessions.

## **Seasons**

Our official caterer is **Seasons**. Snacks throughout the day will be available on sale at the venue.

Soft drinks will also be on sale at the Bollywood Café.



# Profiles

of the Panelists, Presenters & Moderators  
(in alphabetical order)



### **Aman Ashraff**

A self-confessed coffee addict, an avid cinephile and hardcore comicoholic, Aman's passion for his brands is only rivaled by the love for his family and friends. A qualified Television Producer, Aman has also been serving in the capacity of an Advisory Board Member at the Nashville Film Institute (USA), since 2008.

With over 18 years of experience in the leading international advertising agencies of Sri Lanka before setting up his own shop, this strategic thinker has struck metal internationally at Adfest and Spikes Asia, while locally at The Chillies and SLIM Awards. He is presently a Board Member of the Sri Lankan Chapter of the 4As (Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies)



### **Ameen Sha Al Hameed**

An English teacher, was a student of English Language and Literature at the University of Kelaniya. Speaks Tamil, Sinhala and English. Interested in poetry and prose.



### **Anthony Jeewa**

Anthony Jeewa is one of the well-known writers whose origins are from Sri Lanka's hill country. He is the editor of *Kozhundhu* magazine and his contribution to Tamil magazines and drama is invaluable. He is currently working on publishing yet to be published works from the hill Country.

He has written his life experiences in the name of Oru Vaanampaadiyin Kadhai in Jeevanadhi and is the author of several books including *Thirundhiya Asogan* and *Oru Vaanampaadiyin Kadhai (Thun Kadhai)*, both published in 2014.

Details of Anthony Jeeva can be found in the Noolgam site.



### **Anupama Godakanda**

Born in 1971, a Teacher by choice. Dabbles in short fiction and poetry. Interests: reading, gardening, writing, hiking. Better with children and dogs.



### **Arivarasy Muthulingam**

Arivarasy is a product of Vembadi Girls' High School Jaffna and a Graduate from the University of Jaffna with a B.A. (Special) Degree in English Literature. She is the Assistant Lecturer in English Literature at the Department of Linguistics & English, Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna.

She has many Research papers and publications to her credit, which include '*Colonial Superiority*' as reflected in the novel '*Monsoons and Potholes*' by Manuke Wijesinghe, presented at the 22nd Annual Sessions - Jaffna Science Association 2016 and 'Feedback as a way of Motivation for Self-Editing among ESL students' presented at the 9th Annual Research Conference - The Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka.



### **Arun Dias Bandaranaike**

Professional radio and TV presenter on the national channels, with around two and a half decades of having been a presenter, interview host and moderator. Is also known as a professional emcee at numerous state and corporate events and conferences.



### **Ashan Jayatilaka**

Ashan first developed a love for writing while still in school. He created his own imaginary world, writing short stories for fun and making characters out of friends and teachers to escape from the boredom of solving mathematical equations in class. His debut novel – *Tristan's Conquest: Knights of Olympus*, is the first of a fantasy trilogy with a Sri Lankan protagonist and inspired by Greek Mythology, which went on to win the State

Literary Award for Best English Novel in 2015.

He is currently working on the sequel. With his flair for writing, Ashan works as a Corporate Communications Specialist.



### **Ashok Ferrey**

Ashok is the author of five books, four of them shortlisted for the Gratiaen Prize, and the fifth for the State Literary Award. Sadly, nothing ever won, so always the bridesmaid, never the bride. He read Pure Mathematics at Oxford University, and was a builder in London before becoming a writer.

He is currently a guest lecturer at the Colombo School of Architecture where he lectures unsuspecting students on the glories of Western architecture. Luckily for him, they know even less than he does. By day, Ashok is a personal trainer to the rich and infamous of Colombo.



### **Ayathurai Santhan**

He has authored two novels, *Rails Run Parallel*, which shared the Fairway National Literary Award, 2015, and *The Whirlwind*, both short listed for the Gratiaen Literary Prize (2009 and 2014) and three collections of short stories *In Their Own Worlds*, (State Literary Award 2000), *The Sparks*, and *The Northern Front* and a prose poetry collection, *Survival and Simple Things*. An outstanding writer in Tamil as well and an engineer by profession, Santhan lives in Jaffna.



### **Bharathi Irajayayam**

Bharathi Irajayayam who is the editor of the Sunday Thinakkural has more than 25 years experience in the field of journalism. Bharathi who worked for the Eelamurasu and the Murasoli news papers was forced to leave Jaffna and come to Colombo and work for the Veerakesari news paper. He later joined the Thinakkural.

The historical series he wrote on the ethnic Conflict of Sri Lanka, while at Veerakesari, has earned him a unique place as a political columnist.

He is the secretary of the Tamil Media Association of Sri Lanka and has earned a name for himself as someone who raises his voice for the rights of the journalists. Bharathi served as its president for a long period of time.



### **Biman Kasun Wimalaratne**

Biman is an actor, a salesman and an aspiring writer whose works are still in the works. He is an extrovert who revels in public speaking. He has a zest for discussions and has worked alongside local and international directors, moderating in many forums. He is excited and honoured to be working with Ashok Ferrey at the A&K Lit Fest, one of Sri Lanka's most engaging and popular authors.

His belief, "everything in moderation, even moderation". Peace.



### **Brandon Damian Ingram**

Brandon is a storyteller, inspirational speaker, creative strategist and shameless romantic who currently resides in Colombo. He is the Founder of Brand On Thinking — a series of workshops designed to challenge cultural, social, and personal preconceptions through the principles of perspective and thought evolution.

Brandon has eleven years of experience developing effective communication for both local and international brands and a little over nine years

of experience in theatre. He is a singer, lyricist, and novelist whose books are published by the Perera-Hussein Publishing House, and are available in both Sri Lanka and Singapore.



### **Capt Elmo Jayawardena**

Winner of the Gratiaen Prize, State Literary Award and short listed to Singapore Literary award, for three different books. Recipient of 'Sahityaratna' award for contributions to English Literature. Founder/President of CandleAid Lanka, a Moratuwa based humanitarian organisation. 'Everyday Hero' award from Reader's Digest for working with people in need.

Among other things, flew aeroplanes for more than four decades as an international Captain and now trains pilots for the Boeing Co in their Singapore campus. At heart, and in total commitment, a Sri Lankan.



### **Chamara Peiris**

Chamara Peiris is popular in the local teledrama industry as a Teledrama Director & Scriptwriter with a different dimension. His first teledrama *Ayal* (2010), became a hit, grabbing the state honours for best direction and best teledrama.

His media career of 17 years started at Lake House, where he served for 11 years. He has experience as an International Media Correspondent, Journalist, Graphic Designer, Chartered Landscape Architect and Programme Producer. Having graduated from the Moscow Architecture Academy and University of Moratuwa as a Landscape Architect, he currently serves as the Director- Programming at Stein Studios – Capital Maharaja Organization. He is also a media consultant and a visiting lecturer at the Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo..



### **Chandini Rajaratnam**

Better known as C, she started working as a Computer Programmer and Systems Analyst and found her true love, advertising, quite by chance. There was no stopping C since then, from a trainee writer to Vice President, Chief Creative Officer JWT Colombo and member of JWT's South Asian Creative Council.

As a highly respected advertising professional, she has been invited to be a jury member at many local and international Awards.

C was the recipient of the 'Zonta Woman of Achievement 2009' and named 26th most powerful woman in business by Echelon magazine in 2014. She received the Gold award for Professional & Career Women Awards 2014 in the Advertising Category. Art TV featured her on their programme 'Pride of Sri Lanka'.



### **Charu Thewarathanthri**

Charu Thewarathanthri never intended to write books. A civil engineering graduate from the University of Moratuwa, she is a stay-at-home mother of four, who once taught Physics and Mathematics to A/L students at the British School and St Thomas' College, Mt Lavinia.

She first began writing after the loss of her father, Mr Tissa Abeysekera, who himself was an Author. Her first novel *Autumn Leaves* was shortlisted for the 2011 Gratiaen Awards.



### **Chris Tilaka Sri Dharmakirti**

Chris Tilaka Sri Dharmakirti's illustrious career in the media industry covers the entire gamut, having entered the sector with print Journalism in Sri Lanka in 1982. In 1984 he was the youngest person to be appointed as the Asia Pacific Editor for a New York publication.

His media industry exposure led him to the advertising industry where he won many international awards including the best Copywriter award at the London International Awards.

He subsequently worked at DDB NEEDHAM, as the creative director for new business development in Asia, and during his tenure, DDB NEEDHAM Hong Kong won the Best Advertising Agency in the World Award. Chris then went on to launch the world's first instore television network in Hong Kong

His passion for innovation and development of new business models and technologies landed him a job at Intel Capital, where he was put in charge of an investment fund to back internet and broadband.

He continues to maintain his media industry and venture capital links internationally and is quite active on social media as a founder moderator of several discussion groups.



### **Daya Dissanayake**

An award winning bi-lingual author, the only Sri Lankan to have won the State Literary Award for English Novel thrice. He won it for the first time in 1998 for *Kat Bitha* which was his first novel. *Eavesdropper* won the award in 2007, and *Miracle Under the Kumbuk Tree* in 2013. His *The Saadhu Testament* is the first electronic novel by an Asian Author. He followed it up by releasing *Wessan Novu Wedun* also as an e-novel thus

becoming the first to publish a Sinhala electronic novel. Both books are available for free online reading at this website - <http://www.saadhu.com/>

He shared the Swarna Pusthaka Award for the Best Sinhala novel 2007 for *Chadraratnage Bhavantara Charikava*.



### **Delon Weerasinghe**

Delon Weerasinghe has written professionally for the stage, print, screen, web and radio. Best known perhaps as a playwright, his play *'Thicker than Blood'* won the Gratiaen prize in 2005.

Delon has written commissioned work for The Royal Court Theatre in London and BBC World Service radio. A filmmaker by profession, his screenwriting credits are varied from children's comedies to corporate videos to documentaries on violence against women.

He has also contributed to many national and international newspapers and magazines and was also responsible for the creation and management of WriteClique.net, the British Council's writing website.

In recent years, he has conducted many successful workshops on creative writing and writing for theatre and television in both English and Sinhala.



### **Dharmasiri Bandaranayake**

Kala Suri Dharmasiri Bandaranayake is a Sri Lankan film director and playwright. His debut *Hansa Vilak* in 1980 dealt with facets of a society at odds with itself. His other films like *Thunveni Yamaya* (1983), *Suddilage Kathaawa* (1984), *Bawa Duka* and *Bawa Karma* (1997) followed similar themes. *Bawa Duka* and *Bawa Karma* challenged the repressive dogma of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

Common arcs in Bandaranayake's films follow the conflicted lives of men and women, transformation of private lives into public affairs, the unpleasant reality of marriage and society and the dark side of human desire.

Dharmasiri Bandaranayake is an acclaimed dramatist. *Eka Adhipathi*, *Makarakshaya*, *Dhawala Bheeshana*, *Yakshagamanaya* and *Trojan Kanthavo* have all dealt with current issues of national and political importance.

He is an artist who attempts to connect the sociopolitical environment with the civil society through art.



### **Dhananath Fernando**

Dhananath is a young amateur blogger. He is a free thinker and shares his thoughts and his diverse experience in travel via his blog 'Soul of Dhana'.

He is a liberal activist who is networked to many Think Tanks in the Asian region. He is also a volunteer social worker.

By profession he is a consumer and finance market researcher and has graduated from the University of Colombo. In his own words he learns the most from life's lessons.



### **Dileepa Abeysekera**

The accomplished creator of some of Lanka's most memorable advertising, Dileepa Abeysekera is also a sometime poet, occasional songwriter and infrequent magazine contributor.

His Sinhala version of 'Chinaman: The Legend of Pradeep Mathew' was his first foray into the world of fiction and prose. He studied at Asoka Vidyalyaya and Ananda College in Colombo and at Webster University in Geneva, Switzerland.

He has dabbled in theatre, dipped into teledrama, and is now involved in several unfinished film projects.



### **Douglas Paul**

He is an artist, sculptor and designer of great acclaim. He started his working career in the handicraft and ceramic industries of Sri Lanka, where he honed his artistic talents until the mid eighties when he joined the creative field of advertising.

He has served with distinction at international agencies such as JWT and Minds FCB creating communication platforms and identities for some of Sri Lanka's leading brands. His work has earned him numerous accolades by the country's governing bodies for marketing and advertising. Douglas is currently serving in the capacity of a Senior Art Director at Grant McCann Erickson.



### **Gaston de Rosayro**

Gaston de Rosayro is a professional writer and media consultant with more than 40 years of journalistic experience, both in Sri Lanka and the Asian region.

He contributes regularly to several local and international publications. His has designed in-house staff training programmes and workshops for media professionals. He has also been a TV narrator for documentaries in the region.

Gaston de Rosayro has authored highly acclaimed books which include the biography of Rienzie T. Wijetilleke and another book on satire titled '*The Serendib Spirit*', both which earned him rave reviews.



### **Gayathree Srikandavel**

Born in Alaveddy, Jaffna, Gayathree followed B.A. (Special) Degree in Translation Studies and is presently working as a Temporary Lecturer at the University of Jaffna. She schooled at the Jaffna Vembadi Girls' High School. During her school days, she served as School Prefect, President of Hindu Union, Member of the Interact Club and Secretary of the Library Union.

She took part in extra-curricular activities along with formal education. She was also awarded Gold Medals for Music and religious songs at district level and received the Best Speaker Award from the Public Library of Jaffna.

She has been writing reviews and poems which appeared in National papers and local magazines. She presented papers in literature and translation studies at the Galle Literary Festival - 2016 and the First Saiva Conference - 2016.



### **Grace Wickremasinghe**

Grace is 20 yrs old.

She performed at the International Slam Poetry Festival in New Delhi. Her accolades include, author of *Perception : a poetry collection*.

Shortlisted for the World Poetry Festival - Blackwater Festival for International Poets held in Ireland.

Shortlisted for the Gratiaen Prize 2016 - *Closure: a collection of poetry and prose*.



### **Harshana Rambukwella**

Dr Harshana Rambukwella is Director at the Postgraduate Institute of English, The Open University of Sri Lanka. He is also Hony Assistant Professor at the School of English, University of Hong Kong. He has published in journals such as Journal of Commonwealth Literature, boundary 2 and The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities. His primary research interests are in post-colonial literatures and theory, representations of

nationalism in the South Asian context and the role of historical narratives and historiography in community identity.



### **Hiranyada Dewasiri**

Hiranyada Dewasiri is a 20 year old lover of literature. She is currently a student at the Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo. She published '*Sons and Daughters of a Revolution*' a bilingual biographic writing on the lives and work of Karl Marx and his children (2014).

Hiranyada took part in the SAARC Literary Festival - 2015 held in Bangalore, India. She is also a lover of photography. Her blog of poetry is [hiranyadadewasiri.wordpress.com](http://hiranyadadewasiri.wordpress.com).



### **Indika Sakalasooriya**

Indika joined The Nation, a weekly newspaper which began printing in 2006, as a freelance journalist. Upon graduating from the University of Kelaniya, he was made a staff reporter and subsequently made the newspaper's Deputy Business Editor. In 2008, the Editors Guild and the Sri Lanka Press Institute recognized him as the 'Business Journalist of the Year'.

In 2011, he joined the Daily Mirror and currently is the Business Editor, managing the Mirror Business supplement. He is an avid reader and a movie buff.



### **Jayani C Senanayake**

Essentially a dreamer who began scribbling her thoughts on paper at a very young age, Jayani is a poet, a writer and also the author of the food blog [www.peckishme.com](http://www.peckishme.com). Having had her work published both locally and internationally,

Jayani published her maiden collection of poetry "Scattered" in 2012 and is currently working on her debut novel as well as a second collection of poetry. Jayani who is a graduate

of the University of Kelaniya, is also the former treasurer of the English Writers Cooperative of Sri Lanka.



### **Jezima Ismail**

Deshabandu Jezima Ismail is a renowned Educationist. She is a Founder & Former President of the Sri Lanka Association for Advancement of Education (SLAAED) and has also served as the Chancellor of South Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

She is also a fervent Social and a Human Rights Activist and is currently the Chairman of PAFFREL and a Member of the Board of Management, Centre for Human Rights, University

of Colombo. She was the former Commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka.

Mrs Ismail is among the 500 Most Influential Muslims 2010 as published by Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordon Governor - Marga Institute (Sri Lanka Centre for Development Studies).



### **Kandiah Shriganeshan**

Dr Kandiah Shriganeshan is a Senior Lecturer attached to the English Language Teaching Centre at the University of Jaffna. He obtained his PhD in English from the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, India in 2009. He was also accredited as a Teacher in Higher Education from the Staff and Educational Development Association in England. Currently he is the Co-ordinator, Translation Studies at the University of

Jaffna, formerly Head, English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU), Vavuniya Campus, University of Jaffna, and Course Academic Coordinator for the Extension in English of the Campus. He has authored many books, published several research articles in refereed journals, translated poems and articles, edited magazines and journals and written, directed and acted in plays.



### **Kavithayini Delthota Isra**

Kavithayini Delthota Isra was born and raised in the Hill country. Her primary education was at K/ Enasalgolla Central College where she commenced her literary journey. She was on the editorial board of 'Valarmathi' magazine. Her first poem appeared in 'Sudar Oli' newspaper in 2000. In 2009 while studying at the University of Peradeniya, she published a book in Tamil titled '*Successful Learning Techniques*'. In 2010 she

released the CD named '*Pesum Ullangal*' or '*Talking Minds*'. While reading for her Sociology MA in India, '*Thiravukol*', a documentary film she produced, was selected as the best documentary.

She got her M. Phil in 2014. She is a rehabilitation counsellor in the Rehabilitation Authority and is also a visiting lecturer at the National Social Development Centre. She works for many volunteer organizations such as 'Caring beyond Curing'. She has also published over ten research papers on the subject.

Isra possesses many skills and her poetry is relevant to today's society.



### **Keith Wijesuriya**

Lives the mantra - '*Never put off for tomorrow, what you can put off for the day after!*' and believes that the journey is sometimes more important than the destination.

#Adman #MediaStrategist #Designer #WildlifeEnthusiast  
#AmateurPhotographer #Birder #Humourologist #Tenor  
#Guitarplayer



### **Lal Medawattegedara**

Lal Medawattegedara teaches English Literature and Creative Writing at the Open University of Sri Lanka. He has published two collections of short stories: '*The Window Cleaner's Soul*' (short-listed: 2002 Gratiaen Prize) & '*Can you hear me running*' (Zeus Publications: 2007).

His creative writing has been featured on BBC Radio 4 & BBC World Service and in The Times of India, The Khaleej Times & The Himal Journal. '*Playing Pillow Politics at MGK*', his first novel, won the Gratiaen Prize in 2012. This novel is currently being translated into Sinhala and will be made into a movie, shortly.



### **M A M Rameez**

M A M Rameez is a Senior Lecturer at Southeastern University. He is the Head for the Department of Languages. His research focuses on Modern Literature, Folk Literature, Sri Lankan Ethnic Studies and Social Harmony. He holds Ph.D. and Specializing Journalism and Counseling. He can be reached at [rameezmam2009@gmail.com](mailto:rameezmam2009@gmail.com)



### **Madhubhashini Disanayaka Ratnayake**

Madhubhashini won the Gratiaen Prize in 2011 for her novel 'There is Something I Have to Tell You', having been shortlisted for her short story collections 'Tales of Shades and Shadow' and 'Strange Tales of Love'. She has also written books for learners of English as a Second Language, the newest being a five-book set of trilingual readers for children.

She has been editing a monthly creative writing page named '100 Words' for the Sunday Times newspaper since 1997, and also a more recent 'Flash Fiction' page. Twice a month, she creates a page that teaches grammar through literature in the same newspaper. She is the former Head and a senior lecturer in the English Language Teaching Unit of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura.



### **Madri Kalugala**

Madri Kalugala began writing poetry at the age of seven, and has been contributing both children's poetry and later adult poetry to newspapers and magazines. Following her passion for literature and the fine arts, she moved on to pursue English Literature as her Major at the University of Colombo, where she is currently a final year student.

Great-grand niece of veteran Sinhalese poet Ananda Rajakaruna, from whom she believes she received the legacy of poetry, she also extends her talents into experimental prose, image poetics and theatre. An Almond Moon is her first publication.



### **Malinda Seneviratne**

Malinda Seneviratne is a freelance writer who was the former Editor of 'The Nation'. He has attended the University of Peradeniya (Sri Lanka), Harvard University (Massachusetts), The University of Southern California (Los Angeles) and Cornell University (Ithaca, NY). His first book, *Epistles: 1984-1996* was published in 1999. Five of six collections he wrote were

shortlisted for the prestigious Gratiaen Prize between 2007 and 2013. The last, *Edges* won the Gratiaen for the year 2013. His other collections are *Threads*, *The Underside of Silence*, *Stray Kites*, *Some Texts are made of Leaves*, and *Open Words are for Love Letting*.

He won the H A I Goonetilaka Prize for the best translation, awarded by the Gratiaen Trust, for his much acclaimed *Sansaaraanyaye Dadayakkaraya (The Hunter in the Wilderness of Sansara)*. He is currently in the process of completing the translation of the epic poetic work of Mahagama sekara, *Prabuddha*.



### **Mihiri Wikramanayake**

Mihiri travels. For fun. For work. For enrichment. People often tell me how lucky I am to be able to travel. I tell them it's not luck but a passion...to see new places, to enjoy the outdoors and to appreciate the beauty of this country.

My blog, Mihipedia is about my experiences and memories. My journeys through geographies.

And I write with the hope that my stories will inspire others to travel and enjoy the incredible sights of Sri Lanka and beyond.



### **Mohan Premathilake**

Mohan Premathilake, had his primary education at Kendaliyaddapaluwa Jayakody Maha Vidyalaya and Carey College, Colombo. He learnt music under the guidance of the great M R Chulasinghe. Later he learnt to play the piano under the tutelage of Harsha Makalanda and vocals under Sangeet Nipun Sanath Nandasiri. He mastered the classical guitar under Capt Jude Peiris and has successfully completed Trinity

College of Music exams. He is a professional classical guitarist who delights both local and international audiences having performed in several South East Asian countries. He composed music for short films, theater productions and ballets.

Mohan composed his first Symphony in 2016. He is a teacher as well as a sound technician. Ever a student, Mohan continues his explorations in music through the ABRSM programme.



### **Mohan Raj Madawala**

Upon completion of a BA Degree at the University of Colombo, Mohan Raj went on to work in many established media corporations and has over 15 years experience. He worked in organizations such as Rupavahini, ITN, Hiru FM as the Promotional Manager, Sri FM and Swarnawahini as the Programme Director and has been the General Manager for Siyatha.

His first literary work was a short story by the name of 'Bodhima' which was published in the year 1994. Since then he has written a number of novels which have won him countless Sri Lankan literature awards such as the Swarana Pusthaka Sahithya Sammanya and the Godage Literature award. Some of his notable works are *Magam Soliya*, *Lovina* and *Adaraniya Victoria*.



### **Murugesu Ponnambalam**

Murugesu Ponnambalam, better known by his pen name Mupoo, hails from Jaffna. He is part of Sri Lanka's Second generation of Tamil writers. He was selected to represent the Sri Lanka's Tamil poets at SAARC festival of literature held in New Delhi in 2011 and is the only Tamil poet selected by the library of congress New Delhi in 2002 for poetry recordings.

His first collection of poetry was published in 1968. He has won several state literary awards and the Colombo North Eastern awards for his creative writings. His English poetry collection - *A Country Entrapped* - published by Athena press London was well received by foreign critics.



### **Nadeera Wijegunawardana**

Nadee as she is fondly known, is a graduate from University of Colombo with a B.A. in English Language and Literature and has also read for her LLB from the University of London, External System.

During her undergraduate studies she has volunteered at SLACLAS conferences as well as Education Fairs organized by British Council. She has worked in research with organizations such as IOM, Transparency International and WICPER and is currently working as a visiting lecturer at KDU.



### **Nalaka Gunawardene**

Born in a country that did not have a single computer at the time, Nalaka Gunawardene is a 'Digital Immigrant' who first encountered new media as a working journalist - and has been trying to keep up ever since. Trained as a science writer, Nalaka has worked in public media for over 25 years in various capacities, and takes a keen interest in the social and cultural impacts of information technologies. He remains a 'hybrid creature' by writing columns in national newspapers

and business magazines, while also blogging and tweeting regularly. <http://nalakagunawardene.com> | <http://twitter.com/NalakaG>



### **Neranjala Gunatillaka**

This volume is obviously compiled by real heirs to our unique tradition, intent on sharing their great love for the land...” read an e-mail we received from a reader. And that about sums up the team. We are just four Sri Lankans who wanted to give life to what we felt for Sri Lanka through what we love to do – travel. What we did not expect was for the process to take so long, and for the end product to be something that so many people

seem to love.

The Back of Beyond Travel Guide ‘Sigiriya & Beyond. To Dambulla, Habarana, Kekirawa, Galewela’ was put together by Neranjana Gunetilleke, Prabodha Abayawardane, Priyanjan De Silva and Yohan Weerasuriya.



### **Neranji Sulakkana Ekanayake**

Neranji Sulakkana grew up in the Colombo suburbs and takes an interest in the Colombo dwellers and their lives which is reflected in her writing. She is a blogger with a penchant for poetry, prose, cinema reviews and short film scripts. Neranji is a second year under graduate student and has followed a Diploma in Television at the Sri Lanka Press Institute. She started her career as a freelance journalist for Ravaya and Lakbima newspapers respectively and has now moved on to

teach at Lyceum International School, Nugegoda.

She is also an adult leader at the Sri Lanka Girl Guides Association (SLGGA). Although she is busy teaching kids at Lyceum, she is pursuing her love for literature and social adaptation and education of children.



### **Nivendra Uduman**

Nivendra Uduman is a Counselling Psychologist and Psychotherapist attached to Samutthana- The King’s College London Resource Centre for Trauma, Displacement and Mental Health. He has over two years of experience in the field of mental health in Sri Lanka, both in capacity building and clinical work. He has special interests in LGBTIQ issues, trauma, and counsellor training.

Apart from mental health, writing is a major part of Nivendra’s life, both at his clinic, and in his personal life. He uses writing as a means for advocacy, and healing. He is also interested in poetry, writing, music, and letter writing. He is the founder of ‘*Letter Earthlings*’, a generosity based movement spread across six countries with the intention of spreading love and hope through handwritten letters.



### **Prasad Polwatte**

He is a distinguished product of Ananda College, Colombo. Prasad Polwatte, is an accounting and banking professional with over 25 years of broad-based experience in banking, finance and industry. He is a Fellow of both the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Sri Lanka and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants – UK. Prasad is also an Associate of the Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka and the Institute of Data

Processing Management – UK.

In his illustrious career, he has held senior managerial positions in some of the leading state and non-state corporates of Sri Lanka.



### **Radhika Hettiarachchi**

Radhika Hettiarachchi is a development practitioner and researcher and has worked with the UNDP and with International Alert on socio-economic stability, conflict transformation and peacebuilding. She currently works at Development Strategies Group.

She is involved in the Arts in Sri Lanka as a means of creating space for civil society discourses. She was the curator of Colomboscope, which focused on tackling issues of history, representation and politics through various forms of art. She is on the Artistic Advisory Board of the Colombo Art Biennale and is currently curating a public art project for British Council. Most recently, she exhibited the 'Herstories' project locally and in England, Canada and Afghanistan. Designed and conducted by her, the project is a collection of oral histories of war-affected women from Sri Lanka that is now a part of the National Archives of Sri Lanka as its first women's oral history collection. She read English and Communications at York University, Toronto and holds an MSc in Development Management from London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), U.K.



### **Rajitha Fernando**

An all round public relations personality. Singapore Airlines trained, he worked for the Airline for 28 years starting as Reservations Manager and then moving on to be as Customer Services Manager. Subsequently he was made General Manager Aitken Spence Property, and then went on to be the Resident Manager Hudhuranfushi Resort Maldives.

Short listed nominee for V Awards by UN Volunteers in 2011 for Outstanding Service rendered to the people of Sri Lanka. Rajitha is a Founder Director of CandleAid Lanka, a humanitarian organisation, serving the needs of the poor in Sri Lanka



### **Ramya Chamalie Jirasinghe**

Ramya is the author of *Rhythm of the Sea*, and *Trinity*. Her book of poetry, *There's an Island in the Bone* won the 2011 State Literary Joint Award for poetry. Ramya was longlisted for the Fish Poetry Prize, of Ireland in 2011 and was a joint runner-up to the UK's Guardian Orange First Words Prize of 2009. The TimesOnline of UK featured her in its 2009 selection of contemporary war poetry. In 2001 she represented Sri Lanka at the Medellin Poetry Festival, Colombia, in South America. Her poetry has been published by The Poetry Journal, Chicago and by Osprey, Scotland. Ramya is also a food cynosure and was a panellist for the Miele Guide, Asia's first independent restaurant guide, published by Ate Media, Singapore.



### **Ransley Burrows**

Writer, thinker, autodidact, ad man, and master of cock and bull – Ransley Burrows is a Senior Creative Director at Phoenix Ogilvy with over 15 years of experience in advertising. Ransley believes advertising is about good storytelling. "A story is an analogous device that creates a virtual reality. I believe that books are the original Oculus Rifts. Every story has a voice that teleports the listener to an alternate universe, where circumstances and issues press upon the listener making him or her smile, tear, fear, love or hate. People connect with feelings, not with plots. They buy into an emotion they can relate to. Because it is emotions that feed man's atavistic hunger for life."



### **Rev Fr Jesuthas**

Reverend Father Jesuthas was born in Mannar, Vanchiyankulam. He joined the Negombo St. Claret Minor Seminary for priestly formation in 2002 and did his Philosophical studies at the St. Francis Xavier's Major Seminary, Jaffna. He went on to do Theological studies at Our Lady of Lanka National Seminary Ampitiya, Kandy and was ordained a priest in the year 2015.

Fr Jesuthas always loved writing poetry and his Poems have even been published in the national newspapers. He published his first poetry book in April 2016 and it is currently being translated into Sinhala.



### **Ruwanthie de Chickera**

Ruwanthie is one of the foremost playwrights and theatre directors in Sri Lanka. Her plays have been produced in Sri Lanka, the UK, Japan, India, Australia and the Philippines. An Eisenhower Fellow, she is currently responsible for drafting the National Cultural Policy in Sri Lanka.

Ruwanthie's first screen play '*Machan*', produced in 2008, won 11 international awards, including the award for Best Film at the 2008 Venice Film Festival

In 2001, Ruwanthie co-founded 'Stages Theatre Group'. She currently serves on the National Drama Panel of Sri Lanka, and works as a Visiting Lecturer at the National University for Performing and Visual Arts and the Open University of Sri Lanka. She is an artist in the ARIADNE group.



### **S Vishvanathan**

A pioneer in Television broadcasting in Sri Lanka with over 34 years of progressive experience as broadcast director, instructor, administrator, producer, writer, reporter and news caster. Well known television icon, mainly among the Tamil and Muslim audience.

Proven track record of working in diverse television programmes such as Current Affairs, Documentaries, Dramas and variety of performing arts. In-depth knowledge of broadcast rules, regulations, guidelines, production and technical standards.



### **Sachitra Mahendra**

Sachitra was educated at Ananda College and the University of Kelaniya. Currently the Deputy Features Editor of Daily News, Sachitra has authored four books: two in Sinhala and two in English. His novel *Didulana Duhuvilla* was awarded the best novel with Buddhist theme at the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress in 2012. His writings appear on sachitramahendra.blogspot.com. He will be publishing his fifth book, a collection

of renarrated inspiring tales, hopefully within 2016.



### **Saumya Sandaruwan Liyanage**

Saumya Sandaruwan Liyanage, a freelance writer by profession, has worked in well-known print and television media institutions. He has been writing poetry since the year 2000, contributing to newspapers as well as blogs devoted to literature and especially poetry.

His very first volume of poetry, *Haete Vatte Magdalena* (Magdalena of [a shanty community of that name] 'Lot 60') won the First Prize at the State Literary Awards 2013 in the poetry category. This is a testimony to the immense talent he has in creative writing. Saumya works in various fields where his and looks to horizons yet unexplored, especially in the sphere of literature.



### **Sha Hameed**

An old boy of Trinity College Kandy, he joined the army in 1995 and after training was posted to the Commando Regiment. Major Sha is the recipient of two of the highest gallantry medals in battle - *Ran Sura* and *Rana Wickrama* medals and is the author of the book '*Echo Group*' which incidentally is the first English book written on the war by an active soldier.

In 2015 after completing 20 years he retired from the Army.



### **Shanthikumar Hettiarachchi**

Dr Shanthikumar Hettiarachchi (PhD in majority-minority ethnic and religious conflict, MCD University of Divinity, Melbourne): Honorary Researcher of the University of Divinity. Visiting lecturer, Universities of Colombo and Kelaniya. His recent publication '*Faithing the Native Soil*' (2012) indicates his grasp of Sri Lanka's religious landscape and its socio-political contestations in its post-colonial dynamics and the post war

developments on an island-nation of South Asia.

He is currently working on his next book, Buddhist and Christian Discipleship: A Critique of their Radical Socio-political Engagements. Senior trainer of trainers for both public and corporate sector bodies on cross-cultural competence, mentorship and social adjustment.



### **Somasundrampillai Pathmanathan**

Somasundrampillai Pathmanathan, who is also fondly known as Sopa is a B.A. ( Hons.) Graduate from the University of Jaffna. He is also a British Council Scholar and is the winner of several prizes and awards including the Governor's Award. He has authored three collections of poetry in Tamil, many of which have been translated and appeared in prestigious journals like *Journal of South Asian Literature*, Michigan (1987), Penguin

*New Writing in Sri Lanka* (1992) and *Mirrored Images*, National Book Trust, Delhi (2013). He has been an English Lecturer and was the Principal of Palaly Teachers' College for 3 years. Currently he is Visiting Lecturer, Translation Studies, at the Jaffna University.

He has presented papers at the SARRC Literature Festival in 2013, 2015 and 2016. He has been invited by the Goethe Institut to participate in the Poets Translating Poets Project involving 46 poets from South Asia.



### **Subha Wijesiriwardena**

A writer, feminist, media and sustainability enthusiast from Colombo, Sri Lanka. She spent the last three years living in Bangalore, India, completing an undergraduate degree in Communication Studies from Mount Carmel College. Subha has over five years of experience in the fields of theatre (as an actor, producer and manager) and in arts-management (managing international literary and design festivals) in

Sri Lanka, with exposure overseas during an internship at the Royal Shakespeare Company (UK) and as a summer resident at Europe's leading contemporary dance conservatoire, Laban (UK).

Subha's writing has been published in print and online, in Sri Lanka, India, and the UK. <https://blogsmw.wordpress.com/about/>



### **Suminda Gamage**

Summa as he's known, kicked off his career as a Freelance Technical Assistant, for local television productions. From Assistant Director for popular teledramas, to writing short stories for alternate newspapers and magazines, to helping translate post-modern literature and philosophy, to directing and exploring experimental Sinhala theatre, Summa went on to become the Programme Executive at a leading television

station in Colombo. He then decided to try his hand in advertising and joined an agency as a copywriter in '94. Here Summa finally found his calling.

He joined JWT as a Creative Director and is now the Senior Creative Director and Associate Vice President. He is a recipient of many prestigious local ad awards. He was also instrumental in launching '*Balaya*', an industry first, which represents a unique face for appreciating the local idioms and society, Summa has since then helped spice up the advertising scene here in Sri Lanka!



### **Sunil Perera**

Sunil is a Sri Lankan vocalist, guitarist, songwriter and composer. He is the leader and the lead vocalist of the popular Sri Lankan band, Gypsies and is an entertainer par excellence.

On leaving school, Sunil joined the band The Gypsies, which was formed by his father Anton Perera, as the main vocalist.

Sunil remains one of the most famous singers in the country, while his band Gypsies is one of Sri Lanka's biggest musical franchise for the past three decades, with regular foreign tours, several hit albums and sold-out concerts.

Sunil Perera recently came up with his own ideology about the sociopolitical situation in the country and his songs such as '*I don't know why*' addresses mere sociopolitical issues through humor.



### **Thisantha Ameresekere (Tad)**

Tad is a development practitioner, with roots in marketing and communications. With decades experience in both private and development sectors, he is passionate about looking into alternate and innovative ways of building partnerships and developing programming to help people in need in Sri Lanka and in the broader South Asia region.

He started his career as a freelance writer, editor and at the peak of his stint in the private sector, was the head of business unit of a leading direct marketing creative agency in the country. He enjoys the occasional compeering and public speaking gigs and is committed to helping people overcome communication shortfalls.

Tad is also an advocate of affordable housing and works tirelessly to ensure the most vulnerable communities in Sri Lanka have access to durable housing solutions.



### **Tracy Holsinger**

She is the Artistic Director of the Mind Adventures theatre company, and has gained graduate and postgraduate qualifications in drama and theatre from Goldsmiths College and Trinity Guildhall (UK). A director, actor and writer, Tracy enjoys serving as editor and advisor to several Sri Lankan novelists, poets and playwrights, and her writings for theatre include *The Travelling Circus*, *Rondo* and *Legend of The Amazon: The Secret of Wonder Woman*.

In addition to sustaining Mind Adventures as a full time venture, Tracy also hosts the weekday morning show on TNL Radio.



### **Umachandras Pragash**

Umachandras Pragash is a manager at Shakthi TV. She's been a Senior Executive (Programming) in Shakthi FM and the Media Manager in Express Newspapers (Virakesari). She released her book '*Pettagam*' in 2015 and will be releasing her 2nd book '*Nallur*' in August 2016.

She hails from Chavakachcheri, Jaffna and received her education at Chavakachcheri Ladies College. In the year 2010 she participated at the World Chemmoli Conference held in India. She won a Bronze Award in 2010 for the 'Most favourite website' to [www.yarlmann.lk](http://www.yarlmann.lk) & in 2012, she won a Merit Award for the best web.lk competition to [www.yarlmann.lk](http://www.yarlmann.lk) conducted by Sri Lanka LK Domain Registry.

She compeered several Radio, TV and Stage programs. Currently she is doing political talk show '*Ethioli*' on Shakthi TV. She played a key role in the Exhibition namely 'Lifestyle of Jaffna held at the University of Jaffna. She is a holder of Diploma in Journalism from University of Colombo.



### **Vasanthi Thayabaran**

Vasanthi was born and bred in Colombo. She is a former banker and now sworn translator and was a committee member of the Colombo Tamil Sangam.

In addition to this, Vasanthi actively participates in book reviews, literary meetings and other fora and is a regular writer to the local newspapers and literary magazines. Her previous publications include a Short-story book, '*Kaalamaam Vanam*' and four other works of literature for Children. She is the Literary Secretary of Thakavam, a forum which promotes and recognizes local talent in Tamil fictional writing in Sri Lanka.



### **Vathiri S Ravindran**

Vathiri S Ravindran is an outstanding Sri Lankan Tamil Poet. He is also called the '*Vaanampaadi*'. (synonymous with nightingale). He was born in Chavakachcheri, resided at Vathiri, and then moved to Colombo. He was thus exposed to diverse cultures and people. His first poem was titled '*Poompolil*'. Although he wrote short stories and essays, and reviewed dramas, he was identified mainly with his poetry. He studied at Chavakachcheri College, Vathiri Methodist College and Karavetti Thevariyaali

Hindu College. While in school he showed great interest in drama and acted in many dramas under the guidance of great scholars such as Dr K Sundarampillai, Mr Ilavarasu Alvarpillai and the writer Dheniyan.

His was a popular columnist in many national newspapers. He is also a lyricist, orator and a football lover.

He won the National Literary award in 2012 for his collections of poems '*Meendu vantha Naatkal*' which was published by Godage publishers.



### **Vindya Amaranayake**

Vindya Amaranayake is a journalist at Ceylon Today. She has been in the media industry for 10 years. A graduate of the University of Colombo with a BA (Hons) degree offering English as the special subject, she joined The Nation newspaper as a trainee journalist in 2006. During a short span of five years, she was promoted as Features Editor. She is now a Deputy Editor at Ceylon Today. Apart from contributing features, news stories to the newspaper, she primarily functions as a sub editor. Her

responsibilities include rewriting news and features.



### **Vishnu Vasu**

Born in Sri Lanka, Vishnu had his primary education at Kingswood College, Kandy. Vishnu migrated to India to study broadcast journalism after finishing his high school.

He returned to Sri Lanka, and joined McCann Erickson as a native language copy writer. With the dawn of the new millennium he left his illustrious career as an Associate Creative Director to volunteer with many social service organizations both in

Sri Lanka and abroad.

During the thick of the war, Vishnu traveled across Sri Lanka to build peace bridges, working closely with community leaders. In 2005 he released his first ever documentary '*Sacred Joy*', a film on His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Deeply concerned with day to day human suffering, Vishnu's focus was always on social issues. He released his second documentary film titled '*Gandhi's Children*', based on his personal journey across India searching for non-violent activists. '*Butterfly*' is his third major work which has already travelled to over fifteen film festivals around the world.



### **Yudhanjaya Wijeratne**

Yudhanjaya aka Icaruswepit, is a political blogger and a data geek. He explores the crossroads of storytelling, technology and culture. Formerly the editor of Readme.lk, Yudhanjaya now works at WSO2, working on moonshot projects bringing enterprise tales to light.



### **Dileepa Jayakody**

Dileepa speaks for over 20 years in the wonderful world of advertising. Needless to say he has crafted countless number of campaigns that have entertained and communicated with generations.

An avid reader, he has taken his passion for books a step further by translating some iconic literary works to Sinhalese.

Also his own novels and short stories adding to the ongoing list. To date, he boasts of nearly 30 such creations while also being responsible for the screen plays of several TV magazine programmes, documentaries and one tele-drama as well as a full feature length film.

A believer of good food and health, Dileepa's passions away from work include yoga and traditional Sri Lankan food. A Creative Director at TBWA\Sri Lanka and, despite more 20 years' experience in the industry, he still finds it as exciting as ever.



### **Kusumsiri Wijayawardana**

A B.Comm (Special) graduate from the University of Kelaniya and a Master of Archeology from the Postgraduate Institute of Archeology, Kusumsiri Wijayawardana is a renowned journalist and copywriter. He currently works at Deshaya Sunday Newspaper. In 1991 he commenced with '*Lendora Haerayama*' a travel book and went on to write books such as '*Paradisayata Gamanak*', '*Wan Meh Aranne*', '*Giridurga Osse*', '*Soduru*

*Sirilaka*', '*Chaarika Satahan*' and '*Sundara Dumbara*'.

In addition to the above literary works he has also published several books based on his own travels and explorations '*Mahanuwara Loka Uruma Nagaraye Sthamaka*', '*Shri Lankawe Rajamaha Vihara, Shri Lankawe Tampita Vihara*', '*Sirilaka Dalada Maaliga*'. He is well known for investigating into the historical and archeological values of different locations in his travel literature.



### **Lakshman Piyasena**

A Bachelor of Arts from the University of Peradeniya, Lakshman Piyasena is a veteran newspaper journalist with over 25 years' experience and has over 8 literary works as well as 3 poetry publications. He is the present editor-in-chief at Silumina. His new poetry publications include '*Adara Nil Maenika Mihira*', '*Saehaelluwe Genawa*' (2008) and '*Niwena Mihira*' (2009).

He also authored '*Danna Kathawak*' (2014), an investigative piece on Sri Lankan media and the degradation of its ethical principles and '*Waediya Borawa*' (2008) a fictional novel as well as 3 other investigative literary works.

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*Thoughts while at the Festival...*

*More thoughts...*

*Even more thoughts...*

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- The Organising Committee

Thank you for coming.

See you all in 2017...

...and until then,  
may we always remain  
*Annasi & Kadalagotu* at heart

**A&K**  
L I T . F E S T

*Simply literature. Simply local.*