

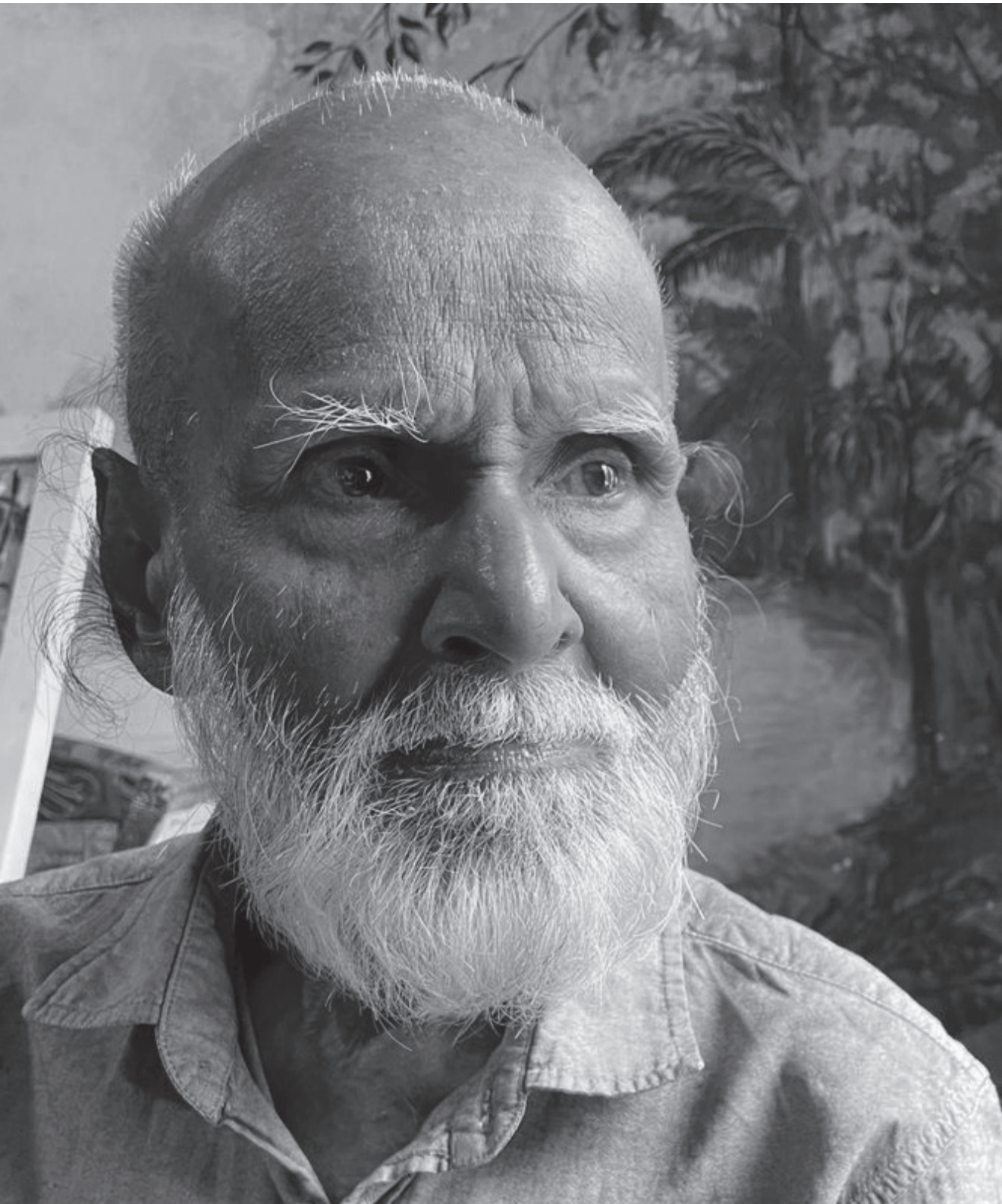
Abayawadana

Kuruwita Abayawardana

Art exhibition

Mar 8th - Mar 31st 2025 | Siam Nivasa Colombo | 10 am-5 pm





A Long Journey

in Few Words

I was born on February 22, 1935, in a humble clay house with a thatched roof in the village of Kuruwita, a beautiful village near Ratnapura. Just three days later, my uncle took me to the only two-story house in our village, accompanied by a calf and a dairy heifer named *Ratthi*, as I was to be nourished with cow's milk in the absence of my mother's.

Tragedy struck early when my father passed away. I was raised by my adoptive mother's family, whose generosity in providing milk earned their home the name 'Milk House.' School was a struggle—I often arrived late, skipped classes, and napped on reed beds. My truancy led to a Rs. 5/- fine for my adoptive mother, a moment that changed me forever. From then on, I worked hard and excelled in school.

From a young age, I found solace in art, drawing flowers, birds, and temple murals with a stone stick. My schoolteacher often displayed my work with pride. By the 7th grade, I was illustrating death notices in exchange for white cloth and colored pencils. Soon, villagers entrusted me with portraits of their deceased loved ones—a poignant but meaningful task.

Vesak ignited my creativity further; instead of lanterns, I designed airplanes and ships. By nine, I had mastered human figures, and my teacher used my sketchbook as a teaching tool. Many of my early drawings still decorate homes in my village today.

In 1952, I completed my Ordinary Level exam and pursued further studies at Kuruwita Maha Vidyalaya. My artistic reputation grew as I painted portraits for funeral pandals. Encouraged by relatives, I joined Heywood Art Institute in 1957, overcoming financial hardship with my brother's support. At Heywood, I thrived, impressing instructors like Mr. David Painter with my watercolor work.

In 1960, I took up a night laborer position at the Wellawatte Textile Mill, earning Rs. 80 per month. I received a Rs. 50 scholarship and invested all of it in my art education. My talent caught the attention of Mrs. Stanley Abhayasinghe, an official at the textile factory, who transformed my career by introducing me to textile design. My artistic reputation grew, particularly after I painted a portrait of a foreigner's wife, which garnered widespread appreciation. I gained a lot of knowledge about painting and materials, many of which I still use today.

On January 4, 1967, I became a government art teacher, first in a school of Embilipitiya, later in Kuruwita Central Collage . For 28 years, I nurtured generations of students, guiding them in Vesak and Poson decorations, sports festivals, and competitions where their talents shone nationally and internationally.

After a few years of retirement, I resumed teaching children while gradually returning to painting. During this time, I began to annotate my memories in different forms—whether as poetry, essays, or sketches on paper. I focused on capturing the changes in my surrounding village, documenting its transformation over time. These sketches were later transferred onto fabric, much like I did in my younger years.

My work reflects the essence of my life experiences: the beauty of Sri Pada, the Delgamuwa temple, the Kuruganga River, the lush paddy fields, and the vibrant life of the village. I drew inspiration from the people's daily activities, including gem miners, farmers, and the animals that accompanied them. These memories have become an integral part of my art. Even now, I find inspiration in the present—whether from captivating images in the newspaper or television, they spark new ideas. I have always been drawn to beautiful colors, and now I no longer aim for strict realism. Instead, I approach my art more artistically. I dream, sketch, and paint quickly, driven by the eagerness to express my thoughts. My brush and imagination flow freely, unrestrained by any boundaries.

It was not an easy journey, as I had not painted extensively for many years. However, the process brought immense joy and fulfillment. Over the last two decades, my art has evolved into new styles, reflecting my experiences and emotions. For me, painting is a way to express my feelings and capture even the simplest moments of life.

I am spending my life contentedly, surrounded by my beautiful wife, lifelong partner *Padmini*, and my children and grandchildren, still working with a deep sense of purpose. I have transformed my home into a unique gallery, "*Abayawardana Kalagaraya*," and created a library filled with books for art enthusiasts and children. I participate in school events as the oldest alumnus and the teacher. I humbly accept the recognition I have received, including awards like "*Kalabushana*" and many other accolades from local institutions. Additionally, I initiated a small temple near the village's grand *Bo* tree, with stunning Sri Pada view and the river gently flowing around it, creating a serene space that embodies the harmony of nature.

It brings me great joy to know that others find meaning and delight in my artwork. To me, this is a life worth cherishing—an unending journey of artistic discovery, where beauty is shared and experienced by all, just as my name "*Abayawardana*" reflects the essence of offering protection and kindness.

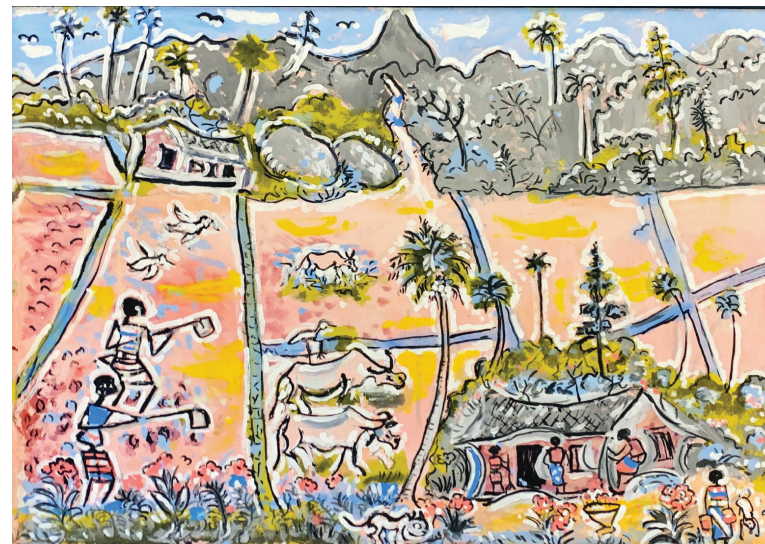




Kuruwita village - World war ii period, 2023
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 130cm x 115cm
 #01



Tea estate in Kuruwita, 2024
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 112cm x 82cm
 # 02



Kuruwita-The village, 2023
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 112cmx82cm
 # 03



Kuruwita-The village paddy field, 2023
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 112cmx82cm
 #4



Delgamuwa Perahara, 2022
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 112cmx82cm
 # 5



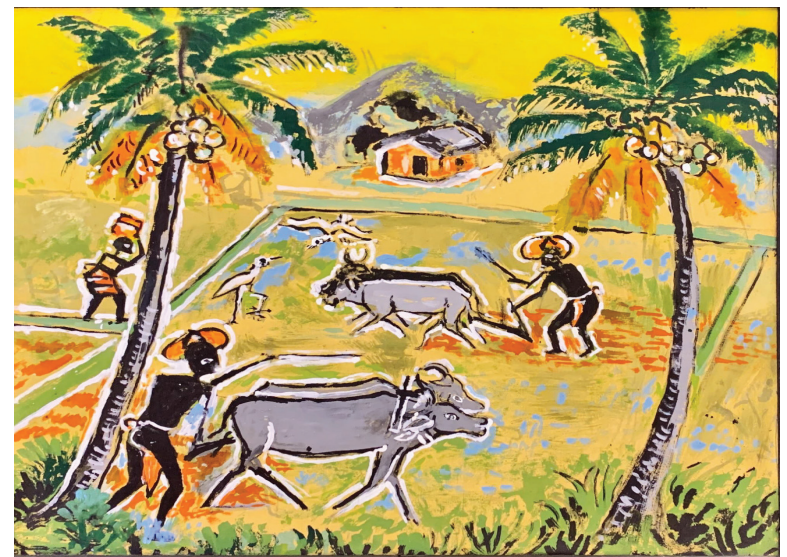
Paddy field , 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
100cm x 85cm
#6



Flood, 2023
Acramine Color on Fabric
112cm x 80cm
7



Zoo, 2022
Acramine Color on Fabric
112cm x 80cm
8



Village paddy field, 2024
Acramine Color on Fabric
84cm x 70cm
#9



Traditional Dance , 2024
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 75cm x 65cm
 # 10



Tusker of Task, 2025
 Acramine Color on fabric
 35cm x 61cm
 #11



Our Wedding day -crossing the Kelani river, 2023
 Acramaine Color on fabric
 77cm x 47cm
 # 12



Kuruwita village with surrounding , 2024
 Acramine Color on fabric
 69cm x 41cm
 #13



Kithul Harvesting, 2022
 Acramine Color on fabric
 60cm x 50cm
 #14



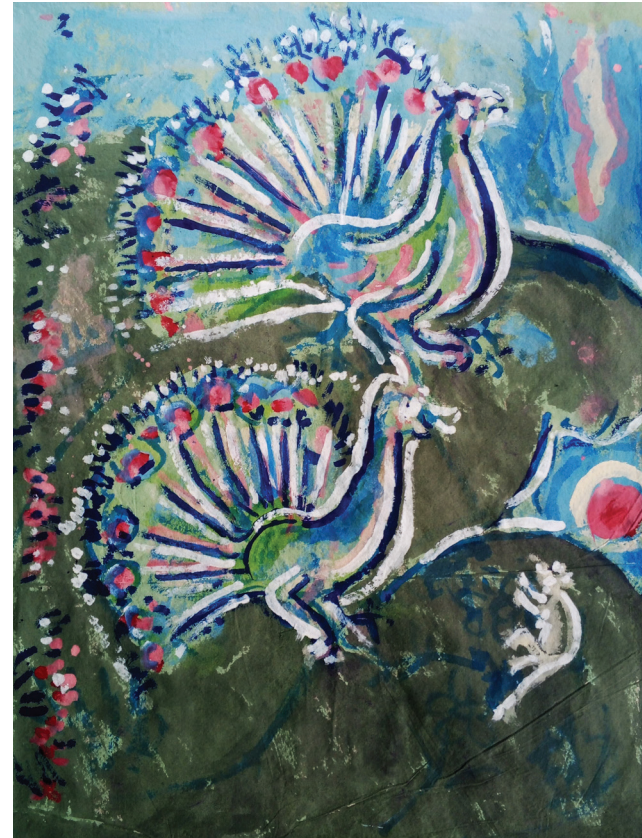
Katina Ceromany, 2024
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 30cm x 40cm
 #15



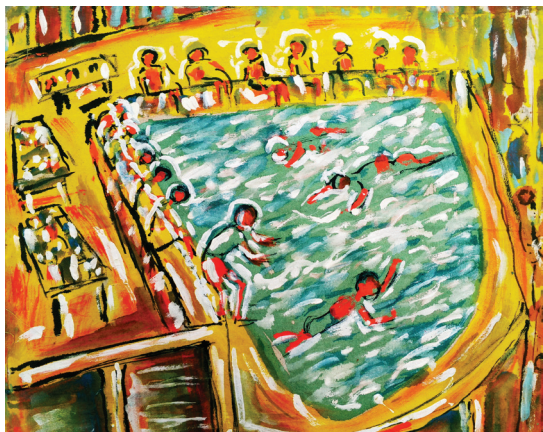
Two women with mortar and pestle, 2024,
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 38cm x 52cm
 #16



Bird feeding tray, 2023
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 64cm x 90m
 #17



Peacock dancing, 2025
 Acramine Color on Fabric
 38cm x 52cm
 #18



Swimming Pool, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm
#19



The lovely farmer couple, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm,
#20



Rooster Fight, 2024
55cm x 45cm
Acramine Color on fabric
#21



Dual Mind, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm
#22



The elephants are bathing at Kuru Ganga, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
52cm x 42cm
#23



Wheel barrow, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 45cm
#24



Casava pulling out, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
69cm x 42cm
25



Carring banana, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
43cm x 53cm
#26



'Padmini' My Life Partner, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
70cm x 55cm
#27



Fish of Kuru Gaga, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
40cm x 33cm
#28



Wonderful Things, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
90cm x 55cm
#29



Wildlife, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
45cm x 53cm
#30



Deer couple, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 44 cm
#31



Wandana Gamana, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm
#32



The Elephant herd crosses the river, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 44cm
#33



In the forest of bats, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 35cm
#34



'Kammala' traditional Metal workshop, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
39cmx30cm
#35



Boat, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
52cm x 38 cm
#36



Wheel barrow, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
45cm x 55cm
#37



Attack, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
60cm x 40cm
#38



Consuming Toddy, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 41cm
#39



Riding A Bicycle, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 40cm
#40



Village House, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
35cm X 30cm
#41



Women playing raban (drum), 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
36cm x 28cm
#42



Sabaragamu Dance, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 44cm
#43



Beautiful Kuruwita, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
66cm x 40cm
#44



Beautiful Flower, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 40cm
#45



Old people, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
38cm x 29cm
#46



Gem Panning, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
48cm x 31cm
#47



Village Kitchen, 2024
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 30cm
#48



Village Avurudu festival, 2025
 Acramine Color on fabric
 55cm x 53cm
 #49



Delgamuwa Temple Festival, 2025
 Acramine Color on fabric
 87cm x 58cm
 #50



Bathing at Seetha gangula, 2025
 Acramine Color on fabric
 80cm x 50cm
 #51



The buddhist Festival of Delgamuwa Temple, 2025
 Acramine Color on fabric
 83cm x 66cm
 #52



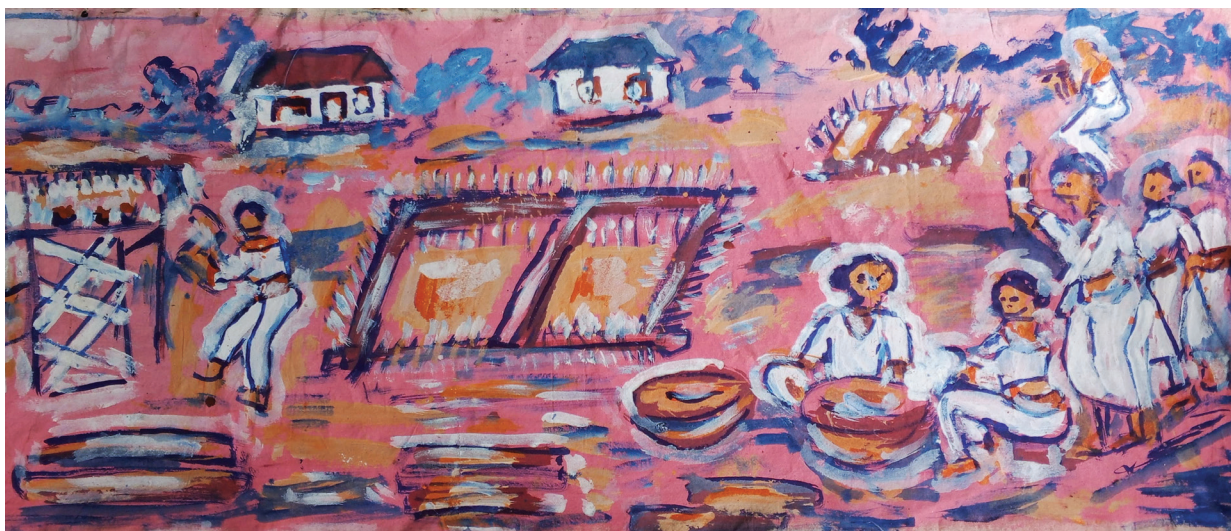
Dancer and drummer, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
47cm x 35cm
#53



Banana farmer couple, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm
#54



Village scene, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
40cm x 32cm
#55



The gem miners of Kuruwita, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
108cm x 43cm
#56



Hunting, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
50cm x 35cm
#57



Tourists are enjoying the sea, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
40cm x 27cm
#58



Happiness of the Roosters, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
43cm x 30cm
#59



Sea Vessels, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
55cm x 45cm
#60



Farmer Family, 2025
Acramine Color on fabric
40cm x 27cm
#61



Fishermen, 2023
Acramine Color on fabric
112cm x 82cm
#62

“Abayawadana”- First Art exhibition of Kuruwita Abayawardane in Colombo

This exhibition is a dream come true for the artist—a moment of joy and fulfillment.

Our deepest gratitude to the Royal Thai Embassy for their generous invitation. A special thanks to H.E. Mr. Paitoon Mahapannaporn, Ambassador of Thailand to Sri Lanka, for his gracious support. A heartfelt thank you to Mr. Arthit Prasartkul Head of Chancery and Minister Counsellor for recognizing our journey, continuously reaching out, and making this opportunity possible, along with the unwavering support of his dedicated staff, including Ms. Sachini De Silva, Ms.Patalee Warnakulasooriya and Ms.Rasaiya Sanjeewani

I always remember my teachers, mentors, and colleagues on this journey—Rev. Madalagama Wajirambuddhi, Rev. Mahallae Wiputhissa, and Siril Gunawardana—none of whom are with us anymore. Their guidance and wisdom continue to inspire me.

I extend my sincere appreciation to my Abayawardana family—my beloved wife, Padmini, my children, and their families. I am profoundly grateful for the boundless love and encouragement from all my grandchildren, especially Subashi and Subash. A special thank you to Chathurika, Thasakya, Dumindu, and Rajitha Madubasha for their invaluable assistance.

To all art buyers and well-wishers—this exhibition is for you. Your encouragement and belief in this journey make it all the more meaningful.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Kuruwita Abayawardana

“Abayawadana Kalagaraya” Sarasavi, Thembiliyana , Kuruwita

For any inquiries contact - Prabodha Abayawardana , 071 8693606, prabodhaa@gmail.com



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අහස 90+
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