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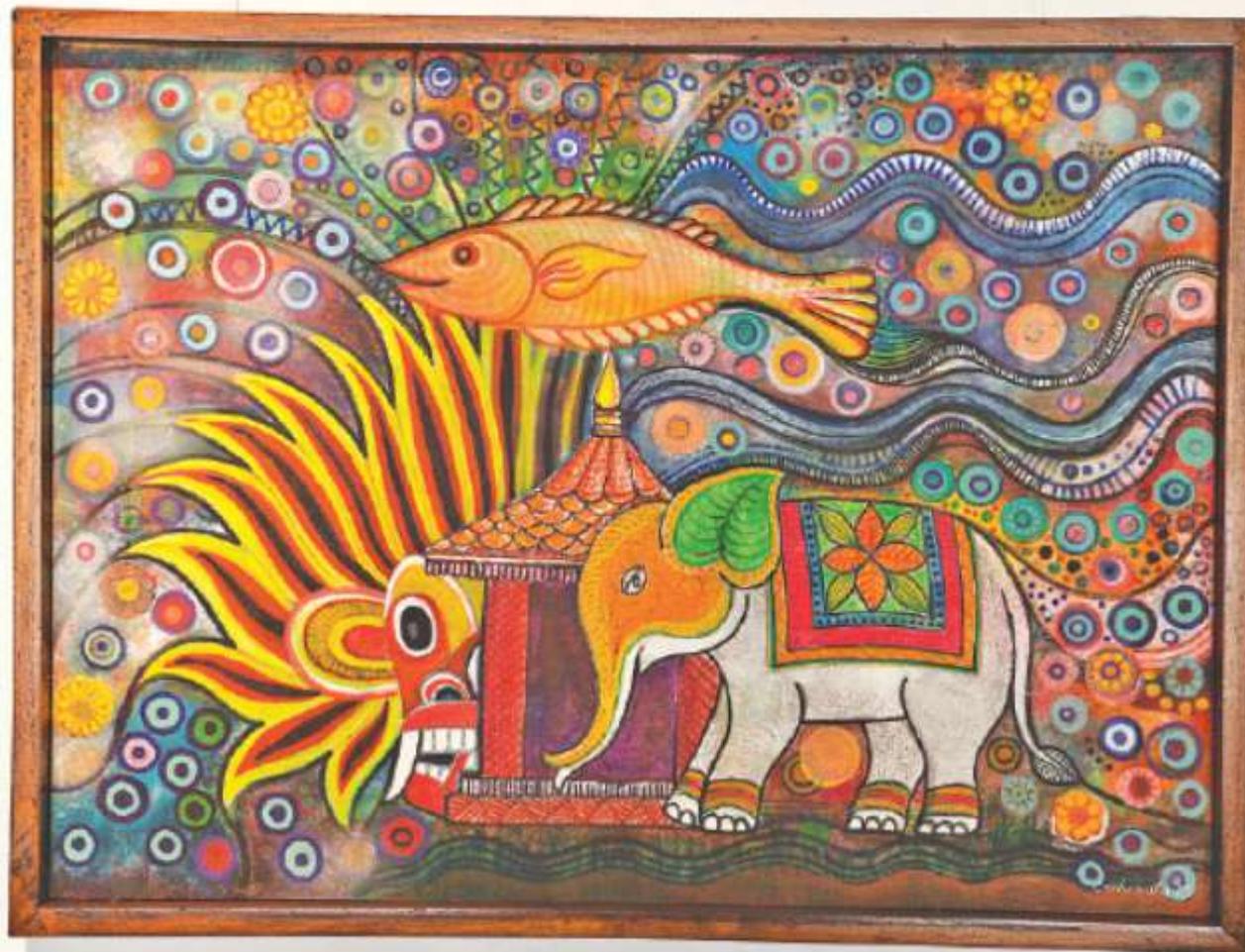


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Culture & Art

IMAGINATIVE FREEDOM: KRISHANTHA SUBHASH MARKS FOUR DECADES OF ARTISTIC EXPLORATION

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Veteran Sri Lankan artist Krishantha Subaash unveiled his latest solo exhibition, Imaginative Freedom, at Siam NIVASA on March 5, 2026, presenting a powerful retrospective of more than four decades of artistic exploration. The exhibition offers a comprehensive look at Subhash's creative journey; one that began in modest circumstances in Ambalangoda in 1984 and evolved into a distinctive visual language blending tradition, modernity, and personal philosophy. [👉 Visual Art & Design](#)

Held in the elegant cultural space maintained by the Royal Thai Embassy in Colombo, the exhibition highlights Subhash's lifelong commitment to artistic experimentation and cultural dialogue. The opening ceremony drew diplomats, artists, and cultural enthusiasts, including Thailand's Ambassador to Sri Lanka Paitoon Mahapannaporn and New Zealand High Commissioner David Pine, who attended as chief guests. Following the opening event, the exhibition opened to the public from March 6 to March 16, with free admission offered daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



For Subhash, Imaginative Freedom represents more than a display of  paintings—it reflects the evolution of a life devoted to artistic inquiry. His career began with his first exhibition at the Ambalangoda Town Hall in 1984, a formative experience that set the stage for decades of experimentation across multiple mediums and themes. Over time, the artist developed a style that bridges traditional Sri Lankan visual culture with contemporary artistic expression.  **Geographic Reference**

Subhash's work draws deeply from the rich cultural heritage of southern Sri Lanka. Traditional mask-making and puppet art, long associated with ritual performance and folk theatre in the region, serve as key inspirations. These forms are evident in his expressive compositions, bold colors, and stylized facial imagery. At the same time, his works reflect the influence of Kandyan-era aesthetics, particularly the strong linear qualities and decorative rhythm found in classical Sri Lankan temple and mural art.



By integrating these traditional elements with techniques inspired by modern Western art, Subhash has developed a distinctive visual language that merges Eastern aesthetics with contemporary artistic practice. The result is a body of work that feels both rooted in heritage and open to modern interpretation.

A recurring feature throughout the exhibition is Subhash's focus on human faces. Many of his canvases feature striking portraits, sometimes fragmented, sometimes symbolic that capture emotional states and psychological tensions.

[Beaches & Islands](#)

"Humans communicate most of their emotions through their faces," Subhash explained in an

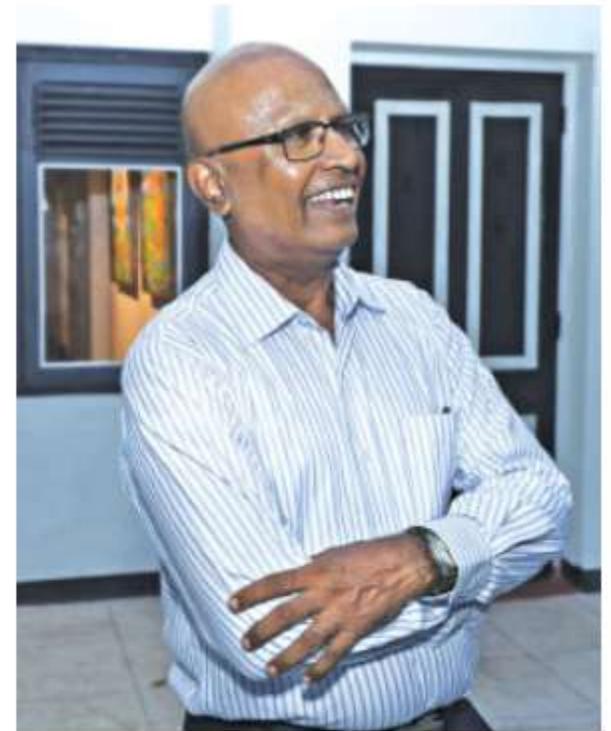
interview during the exhibition opening. "That's why I use faces in my art."

Through these faces, the artist explores universal themes such as identity, struggle, resilience, and empathy. The expressions depicted often move between serenity and turmoil, reflecting both the individual and collective human experience. In many works, the face becomes a symbolic landscape where social realities, spiritual questions, and personal memories intersect.

Beyond portraiture, the exhibition also engages with broader social and political concerns. Several works explore themes of power, inequality, and social struggle—subjects that the artist has increasingly incorporated into his visual narratives. Rather than presenting these themes through literal imagery, Subhash uses abstraction and symbolism to invite viewers to reflect on deeper questions about society and human behavior.

Environmental awareness is another prominent theme throughout the exhibition. Some paintings reference ecological fragility and the consequences of environmental neglect. According to Subhash, this sensitivity stems from his early years growing up in close contact with nature.

“I had a strong bond with the natural world from a young age,” he said. “I believe that love made me more aware of these issues. My motivation is to make the audience feel what I feel.” [🔗 Visual Art & Design](#)



This emotional approach to environmental themes reflects the broader philosophy underlying his work: art should not merely represent reality but evoke emotional and spiritual engagement with it.

One of the most striking aspects of *Imaginative Freedom* is the inclusion of a digital art series. While Subhash built his career primarily through traditional [🔗 painting](#), he has increasingly experimented with digital tools in recent years. The exhibition features several digital works that address socio-political ideas through layered imagery and symbolic visual structures.

Subhash believes digital technology provides new possibilities for artistic communication. Compared to traditional canvas painting, he notes that digital platforms allow ideas to be explored and refined more quickly.

“Digital is easy,” he said with a smile. “I can express my ideas more conveniently than with a canvas.”

Yet his embrace of technology does not signal a departure from tradition. Instead, Subhash treats digital tools as an extension of his existing artistic vocabulary, allowing him to expand the scope of his storytelling while maintaining the visual language that defines his style.

The artist also expressed optimism about the growing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in creative practice. While debates continue around AI's impact on art, Subhash views the technology as a potential source of inspiration rather than a replacement for human creativity.

According to him, AI can function as a brainstorming partner for artists seeking fresh perspectives. [🔗 Painting](#)

"Sometimes asking AI for ideas can be more efficient than asking a friend," he said. "It can give you directions you might not have thought of."

For Subhash, however, the essence of art remains deeply human. The emotional connection between artist and audience cannot be replaced by algorithms or automation. Technology may assist the creative process, but the core impulse—the need to express human experience—remains unchanged.

Visitors to Imaginative Freedom encounter a wide spectrum of artistic expressions—from traditional acrylic [🔗 paintings](#) to experimental digital compositions. Despite the diversity of mediums, the works share a common emotional thread: a search for meaning through visual form.

For Subhash, the exhibition represents a moment of reflection as much as celebration. Looking back on four decades of creative work, he sees his journey as both artistic and spiritual.

As audiences move through the exhibition space, they witness not only the evolution of an artist but also the unfolding of a personal philosophy shaped by heritage, observation, and imagination.

Imaginative Freedom will remain open to the public until March 16, offering visitors an opportunity to engage with a body of work that reflects one artist's enduring quest to transform experience into visual poetry.

Admission to the exhibition is free, and all proceeds from artwork sales go directly to the artist, supporting the continuation of his creative practice. [📍 Geographic Reference](#)

For art lovers, students, and cultural observers alike, the exhibition stands as both a retrospective and a statement: creativity thrives where tradition, imagination, and freedom intersect.

Pix by Malan Karunaratne