



# SAARC Cultural Centre NEWSLETTER

December, 2017 | Vol 7, No. 4



## Editorial

The last quarter of 2017 was filled with activities and the culmination of a very successful year for the SAARC Cultural Centre. The last quarter commenced with the Meeting of the Governing Board of the SAARC Cultural Centre who has supported us in all our activities and enabled us to conduct our events successfully. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual SAARC Film Festival and Award Ceremony concluded successfully in Colombo, Sri Lanka in November, in a glamorous event participated by the Cinema lovers of Sri Lanka. This was followed by the SAARC Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance and the SAARC Exhibition and Workshop on Handicrafts held at the Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

A wonderful collection of paintings was submitted by the school children of Sri Lanka for the Annual SAARC Non-Violence Day Art Competition. Schools from all nine provinces of Sri Lanka submitted Paintings. The Award Ceremony was held in conjunction with the SAARC Charter Day on 8th December which concluded our activities for 2017.

In 2017, SAARC Cultural Centre was able to highlight South Asian Culture in all its forms through art, paintings, dance festivals, handicrafts exhibitions, film festivals and various forms of visual and performing arts, bringing the South Asian Region closer together.

## News in Highlight...

Editorial

Page no. 01

SAARC Cultural Festival on  
Traditional Dance

Page no. 02

Ninth Governing Board Meeting  
of the SAARC Cultural Centre

Page no. 05

SAARC Film Festival

Page no. 06

SAARC Exhibition and  
Workshop on Handicraft

Page no. 10

SAARC Non-Violence Day  
Art Competition for School  
Children

Page no. 12

SAARC Charter Day

Page no. 14





Director, SCC with Mr. Asaduzzaman Noor, Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh and the Deputy Minister of Economic Development from Maldives

# SAARC Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance, 2017

The SAARC Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance 2017 was held from the 30<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Official Nominations for participation was received from the host Member State of Bangladesh and the Member States of Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. The Programme was a true display of cultural integration, understanding and harmony. The Inauguration Ceremony was held under the auspices of the Chief Guest, Mr. Md. Ibraheem Hosein Khan, the Secretary to the Minister of Cultural Affairs in Bangladesh. Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, the Director of the SAARC Cultural Centre and Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky, the Director General of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy were Special Guests at this occasion. The Inaugural Ceremony and the Cultural Festival on Traditional Dance



Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director, SCC, Mr. Ibraheem Hosein Khan, Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy at the Inauguration Ceremony



Performers during the Closing Ceremony of the SAARC Traditional Dance Festival with the Director, SCC, the Cultural Minister of Bangladesh and the Director of Shilpa Kala Academy



took place at the Nandanmoncho open air venue and the entire area was transformed for the evening. A traditional Lathi Khela dance of Bangladesh took place prior to the inauguration. The Inauguration itself was spectacular with a joyous and festive atmosphere; the open-air venue added a different dimension to the occasion. More than 3,000 people participated at the Inauguration Ceremony, which included men, women, the young and old from all walks of life, enjoying the Traditional Dance of the SAARC Region.



Participants taking lessons at the workshop on Traditional Dance



Bangladesh dance performance



Artists from Bhutan

The primary aim of the Workshop component of the Programme was to create something unique and diverse but which is inherently familiar. To create something beautiful which the dancers could take back to their own countries and to share that artistic experience through dance and music. Every morning, the dancers would gather and use their creativity, knowledge and technique to choreograph an entirely new dance that incorporated all the main features of each traditional dance from the respective Member State.

The Chief Guest for the Closing Ceremony, the Hon. Minister for Cultural Affairs Mr. Asaduzzaman Noor, attended the Ceremony on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December held



Indian dance performance



The Closing Ceremony - The "Combination Dance" with the participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka



Artists from Sri Lanka performing a traditional dance item



at the National Theatre of Bangladesh. The highlight of the Closing Ceremony was the 'Combination Dance' which the participants had worked so tirelessly to create. It was particularly poignant as it enabled the audience to share the vibrant atmosphere and harmony felt amongst the participants and well-wishers, as they continued to share their experiences and dance steps. It was a truly spectacular event, one which epitomized the underlying theme of "Unity Within Diversity", and building bridges of friendship and understanding through the medium of dance.



Programme Assistant Nadarajah Harishnath, SCC receiving a souvenir from the Minister of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh



Deputy Director Programmes of SCC, Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara being invited to sing by the Director General of the Shilpakala Academy, Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky



Deputy Director Programmes, SCC sings on the request of the Director General, Shilpa Kala Academy



Artistes perform traditional 'Lathi Khela' at the Inauguration Ceremony



Seated from left to right

Mr. K. K. Gunathilaka Administrative Officer, SCC, Ms. Surayya Akhtar Jahan, Cultural Advisor (Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs Bangladesh), Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director, SCC, Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara, Deputy Director - Programmes, SCC, Mr. Mashud Summon, Asst. Director, Dept. of Drama & Film at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy





# The Ninth Governing Board Meeting of The SAARC Cultural Centre



Governing Board Members, 2017

The SAARC Cultural Centre hosted the Ninth Meeting of its Governing Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at the Mount Lavinia Hotel, Sri Lanka. The meeting was convened by Mr. Intisar Ahmad Sulehry of Pakistan, concluding the tenure of Pakistan as the chairperson of the Governing Board and handed the Chair to Sri Lanka for the next two years. Mr. D. Swarnapala, Secretary to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamaba Development and Cultural Affairs assumed his duties as the Chairperson of the Governing Board. Other distinguished members who represented the SAARC Member States at the Governing Board Meeting were:

1. Mr. Mohammad Shafiq Ahmadzai, Secretary to the Minister of Information and Culture in Afghanistan.
2. Mr. Syed Md. Matlubur Rahman, Additional Secretary Ministry of Cultural Affairs in Bangladesh.
3. Mr. Karma Weezir, Director General of the Department of Culture in Bhutan.
4. Ms. Alka Sharma, Under Secretary of International Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Culture in India.
5. Ms. Anita Kukreti, Attaché of the High Commission of India in Sri Lanka.
6. Ms. Umaira Mohamed, First Secretary of the Embassy of Maldives in Sri Lanka.
7. Ms. Dhana Kumari Joshi, First Secretary of the Embassy of Nepal in Sri Lanka.
8. Mr. Intisar Ahmad Sulehry, the Press Attaché of the High Commission of Pakistan in Sri Lanka.
9. Mr. D. Swarnapala, Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Wayamba Development and Cultural Affairs.
10. Ms. T.P. Dharmasena, Director of the SAARC Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sri Lanka.
11. Mr. M.H.M.N. Bandara, Director Education, Security and Culture of the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu.
12. Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director of the SAARC Cultural Centre.

After reviewing the progress of activities for 2017, the Programmes of the SAARC Cultural Centre for 2018 was unanimously approved by the Governing Board portraying their confidence, belief and support in the activities of the SCC.





# SAARC FILM FESTIVAL - 2017

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual SAARC Film Festival was held at the National Film Corporation Cinema Hall in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> November 2017. This year Feature Films, Short Films and Master Films (a Feature Film by a Master Film Maker) were shared with the Cinema lovers of Sri Lanka. The SAARC Cultural Centre invited Dr. Anne Demy-Geroe of Australia, Dr. Antonio Costa Valente of Portugal and Mr. Amir Masoud Soheili of Iran as Jury Members to select the winners of the SAARC Film Awards for 2017. The Jury Members also conducted a Film Workshop on "International Film Festivals and Cinema Education Opportunities in Asia, Europe and the Asia Pacific Region" providing valuable knowledge to an appreciative audience.



Moments from the Red Carpet



Ms. Yasoja Gunasekera, Senior Director General SAARC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka with Director, SCC and Mr. Intisar Ahmad Sulehry of the Pakistan High Commission



Mr. Asoka Handagama, Director, cast and crew of "Let Her Cry" with Deputy Director Programmes, SCC



Welcome Speech at the Inauguration by the Deputy Director Programmes, Ms. Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara



Guest of Honour, Mrs. Rosy Senanayake, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka



Moments from the Red Carpet - Dr. Lopamudra Maitra Bajpai, Culture Specialist ( Research) SCC, Ms. Dhana Kumari Joshi, Deputy Chief of Mission( Embassy of Nepal), Ms. Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara, Deputy Director Programmes, SCC, Ms. Rajashree Behera, Director, ICC, Ms. Swarna Mallawarachchi, Renowed Actress from Sri Lanka, Ms. Bindu Urugodawatte, Deputy Director Research, SCC





Mrs. Rosy Senanayake, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, graced the Award Ceremony as the Guest of Honour. Dignitaries from the High Commissions and Embassies of SAARC Member States in Sri Lanka, Film personalities from the nominated films and film professionals of Sri Lanka were part of this glamorous occasion. The SAARC Award for the Best



Ms. Bindu Urugodawatte DDP, SCC, Mr. Sitendra Senaratne, Chairman, National Film Corporation, Ms. Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara, DDP, SCC, Mr. Dhanushka Gunathilake, consultant SAARC Film Festival, 2017 at the Press Conference

Master Class workshop conducted by the Jury Members of the SAARC Film Festival, 2017



Guest of Honour and the Special Invitees at the SAARC Film Festival Award Ceremony, 2017



Audience gracing the Award Ceremony



Sri Lankan Film professionals at the Award Ceremony



Moments from the Red Carpet



Deputy Director Programmes addressing the audience during the Closing Ceremony of SAARC Film Festival



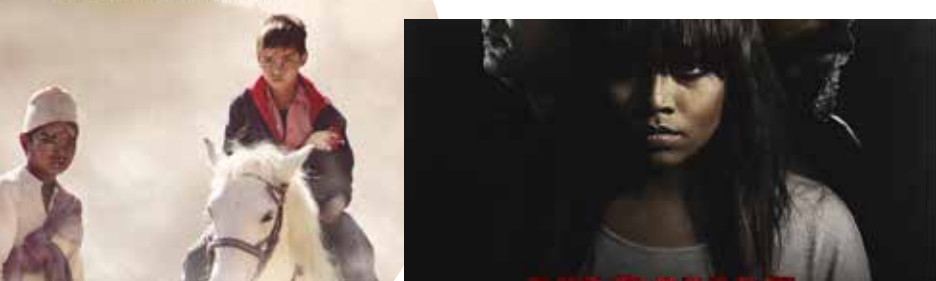
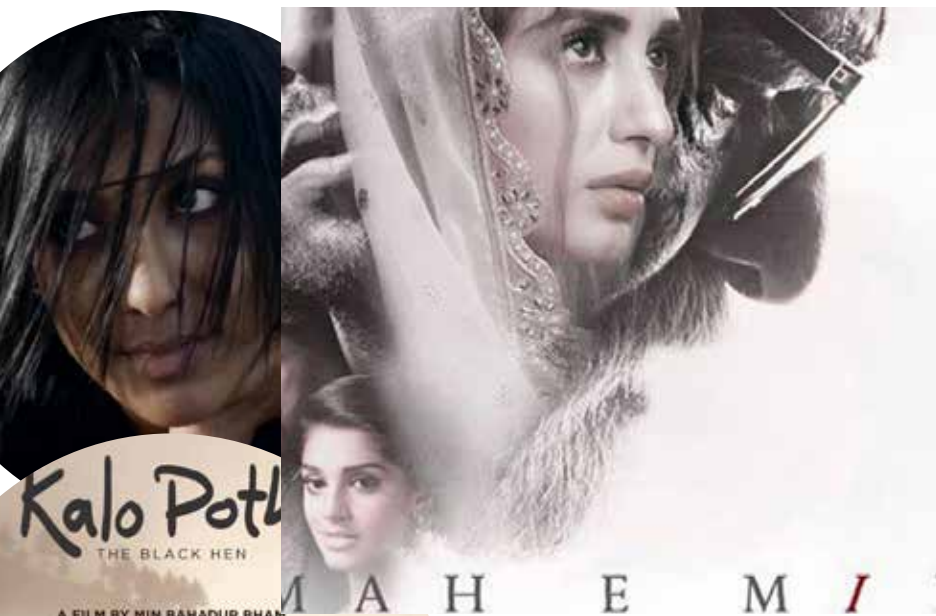
The Best Actress for the movie, Vishka (Maldives) with Ms. Umaira Mohamed, First Secretary (Maldives Embassy)





Feature Film and Best Director was awarded to "Let Her Cry" from Sri Lanka by Asoka Handagama and Best Actress was awarded to Aishath Rishmy from Maldives for the film "Vishka". The Best Actor was awarded to an ensemble of the film "Frangipani" from Sri Lanka.

This 5-day gala event was a beautiful reflection of the visual culture of the SAARC Region providing an enjoyable insight to the culture of the SAARC Countries.



December, 2017 | Vol 7, No. 4

**SPECIAL JURY AWARD**  
*PINKY BEAUTY PARLOUR - INDIA*

**SPECIAL JURY AWARD -  
SPECIAL MENTION**  
*FRANGIPANI - SRI LANKA*

**BEST SOUND DESIGNER**  
*RAKSHIT THANTRI (PINKY BEAUTY  
PARLOUR) - INDIA*

**BEST EDITOR**  
*BHUPENDRA ADHIKARI (DYING  
CANDLE) - NEPAL*

**BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY**  
*AHMAD ZIA ARASH (THE BIRD WAS  
NOT A BIRD) - AFGHANISTAN*

**SPECIAL JURY AWARD  
SPECIAL MENTION**  
*SWAPNIL SONAWANE (TANDAAY) -  
INDIA*

**BEST SCREENPLAY**  
*TAUQUIR AHMED (OGGATONAMA)  
- BANGLADESH*

**BEST ORIGINAL SCORE**  
*JASON KUNWAR (BLACK HEN) -  
NEPAL*

**BEST ACTOR**  
*DASUN PATHIRANA, JEHAN  
APPUHAMI & BHOOMI  
HARENDRAN (FRANGIPANI) - SRI  
LANKA*

**BEST ACTRESS**  
*AISHATH RISHMY (VISHKA) -  
MALDIVES*

**BEST SHORT FILM**  
*THE WATER - AFGHANISTAN*

**BEST DIRECTOR**  
*ASOKA HANDAGAMA (LET HER  
CRY) - SRI LANKA*

**BEST FILM OPEN**  
*BLACKHEN- NEPAL*

**BEST FEATURE FILM**  
*LET HER CRY - SRI LANKA*





অনিল বাগ্‌চীর  
একদিন

Pil



Afghanistan Charge D' Affaires to Sri Lanka, Mr. Munir Ghiasy accepting the Award for the Best Cinematographer for " The Bird was not the Bird" on behalf of Ahmad Zia Arash from Mrs. Rosy Senanayake, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka



Ms. Rajashree Behera, Director of the Indian Cultural Centre with the Awards won by India



The film "Let her cry" bagged the award for the Best Feature Film and the Best Director - The Award was presented by Dhanushka Gunuthilake



Director of SAARC Cultural Centre



Winner of the Award for Best Actor Bhoomi Harendran sharing a few words



Ms. Dhana Kumari Joshi receiving the Best Editor Award on behalf of Bhupendra Adhikari of Nepal for the Movie "Dying Candle" from Mr. Sitendra Senaratne, the Chairman, National Film Corporation, Sri Lanka



Ms. Aishath Rishmy receiving the Best Actress Award from the Internationally acclaimed cinematographer, Mr. M. D Mahindapala



Swarna Mallawarachchi, Actress of the Movie " Let her cry" receiving the award for the Best Director on behalf of Asoka Handegama from Internationally acclaimed Sri Lankan Film director and Producer Inoka Sathyanganie



Tauqir Ahmed ( Bangladesh) receiving the Best Screenplay Award for the movie "Oggatonama" from Mrs. Rosy Senanayake, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka



# SAARC Exhibition and Workshop on Handicraft

**30<sup>th</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2017 in Dhaka, Bangladesh**

The SAARC Exhibition and Workshop on Handicraft 2017 was organised in collaboration with the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from the 30<sup>th</sup> November to the 3<sup>rd</sup> December



Press Conference during the SAARC Traditional Dance Festival and Handicraft Exhibition



Director, SCC with the artists from the SAARC region during the Handicraft Workshop

2017. The Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka nominated teams of skilled Artisans - each individual an expert in his/her own individual craft - to participate in the SAARC Exhibition and Workshop on Handicrafts 2017. The opening of the Handicraft Exhibition took place on the 30<sup>th</sup> November at the Jataya Chitrasala Plaza and enjoyed a steady stream of visitors until the closing of the Exhibition on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December. There were handicrafts made of wood, metal, glass, coir,



Director, SCC with the artists from Bangladesh during the Handicraft Workshop



Display of traditional paintings in the stall during SAARC Handicraft Exhibition



Mr. Abdulla Mohamed, Deputy Minister of Economic Development of Maldives and delegates from Maldives during the SAARC Handicraft Workshop



Display of Handicraft in the stall during SAARC Handicraft Exhibition in Bangladesh with the Director General, Shilpakala Academy and Deputy Director - Programmes, SCC





Director, SCC and the Shilpakala Academy officials with the artist from Bangladesh during the Handicraft Workshop

cork, cloth, stones, etc, which displayed a wide range of talent, skill and knowledge. This knowledge was especially valuable to the participants during the Workshop component of the Programme. There were extensive discussions and exchange of know-how and techniques amongst the delegates, as they shared their experiences and skills of their crafts in various parts of the South Asian Region.



Sri Lankan artist on wood carving during the Handicraft Workshop



Bangladesh artist at work during the Handicraft Workshop



Director, SCC with the artists from Bangladesh and Bhutan during the Handicraft Workshop



Bangladesh Artist working on her creation during the Handicraft Workshop



Discussion during the Handicraft Workshop in Bangladesh



Display of work during the Handicraft Workshop



Artist at work during the Handicraft Workshop



# SAARC Non - Violence Day Art Competition for School Children



Guests of Honour to award the prizes to the Winners of Art Competition

The Non-Violence Day Art Competition for students across the island was held for the sixth consecutive year. The competition was held under two categories with the themes “Non-Violence is goodwill towards all life” for the Junior Category and “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind” for the Senior Category. The aim was to create awareness and inspire peace, tolerance, non-discrimination, co-existence and respect for lives among the students. Students from all 9 provinces of Sri Lanka participated in the competition with Ilma International Girl’s school of Colombo submitting the most number of paintings followed by Kadayamottai Muslim Central collage, Madurankuliya of Putlam District winning the second place and Yashodara Girl’s College in Colombo taking the third place. The Award Ceremony was held at Hotel Galadari to coincide with the SAARC Charter Day on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

**JUNIOR CATEGORY: “NON - VIOLENCE IS GOODWILL TOWARD ALL LIFE.”**

**SENIOR CATEGORY: “AN EYE FOR AN EYE MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD BLIND.”**



Senior 1<sup>st</sup> place  
W. Dhammi Aloka  
Gunasinghe,  
Gankanda National  
School, Ratnapura  
District receiving her  
cheque







Junior 1<sup>st</sup> place winner  
K.T. D. Nipuna Dihars  
of Mathugama Ananda  
Shastrala National School,  
Mathugama, Kalutara  
district receiving the  
certificate



Senior 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner  
A. G. Dinuka Madushan  
Siriwimala, Kadugannawa  
National School, Kandy  
District receiving the  
certificate



Junior 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner  
K.M. Anjuli Senethya of  
Nalanda Girl's College,  
Minuwangoda, receiving  
her cheque.



Senior 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner  
Yogaraththinam  
Vanushiya, Jaffna  
Central College, Jaffna  
District receiving his  
cheque



3<sup>rd</sup> place Junior Category  
winner D.M. Hansitha  
Disanayake, Badulla  
Dharmadutha National  
School, Badulla District  
receiving the certificate





# SAARC Charter Day, 2017



Welcoming the Chief Guest Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam the Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka



Director welcoming the Chief Guest Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam the Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka

The SAARC Cultural Centre celebrated the thirty-third SAARC Charter Day at the hotel Galadari on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017 with the attendance of dignitaries from the High Commissions and Embassies of the SAARC Member States, SAARC Observer States and the Diplomatic Corps in Sri Lanka. Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam, Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Ms. Yasoja Gunasekara Director General of SAARC Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Munir Ghiasy from the Embassy of Afghanistan, Ms. Maleka Parveen from the High Commission of Bangladesh, Mr. Niteen Subhash Yeola from the High Commission of India, Ms. Dhana Kumari Joshi from the Embassy of Nepal, Ms. Umaira Mohamed from the Embassy of Maldives and Mr. Intisar Ahmed Sulehry from the High Commission of Pakistan participated as Guests of Honour. Representatives from the SAARC Observer States of Australia and Iran joined the celebration. Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director of the SAARC Cultural Centre warmly welcomed the gathering and the messages for the SAARC Charter Day celebrations from H.E. the President of Sri Lanka, Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Hon. Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka and H.E. the Secretary General of the SAARC Secretariat were read out to the dignitaries invited at the occasion. *Saraswathi Abhinandana Pooja* dance by the State Dance Troup of the Cultural Department of Sri Lanka entertained this august gathering.



Members of the diplomatic corps and the other dignitaries at the reception





Director and Deputy Directors welcoming the representative from the Pakistan High Commission in Sri Lanka



Representatives from Australian High Commission, Bangladesh High Commission and Embassy of Maldives



Director welcoming the representative from Iran



Welcome address by the Director of the SAARC Cultural Centre



Director, SCC with the delegates from India and Pakistan



Deputy Director Programmes reading the message from the President of Sri Lanka



Ms. Yasoja Gunasekera, Senior Director General of SAARC Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka and Ms. Dhana Kumari Joshi from the Embassy of Nepal



Mr. Thusira Malawwethantri, Director General, Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation, Mr. Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director, SCC and Mr. Lionel Fernando Former Foreign Secretary of Sri Lanka



Director, SCC with the staff members of SAARC Cultural Centre



Culture Specialist - Programmes, Dr. Soumya Manjunath Chavan, SCC reading the message from the SAARC Secretary General



SAARC Cultural Centre staff welcoming the representative from the Indonesian Embassy in Sri Lanka, Mr. Dwatmaji Hanomanresi





# Announcements



SAARC Literary Award and Ceremony in Sri Lanka

SAARC International Women's Day in Sri Lanka



SAARC Culture Capital in Bhutan

Visit [www.saarcculture.org](http://www.saarcculture.org) for more information

## Culture Quote



*"Cinema's characteristic forte is its ability to capture and communicate the intimacies of the human mind"*

**Satyajit Ray (2<sup>nd</sup> May 1921 – 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1992)**

Indian filmmaker and author, widely regarded as one of the greatest filmmakers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Asia

### Executive Editor

Wasanthe Kotuwella, Director

### Editorial Team

Bindu Urugodawatte, Deputy Director - Research

Kishani Jayasinghe - Wijayasekara, Deputy Director - Programmes

Apsara Karunaratne - Research Assistant

Nadarajah Harishnath - Programme Assistant

### Layout and Design

Tenzin Yangchen (Intern)

### Published by

SAARC Cultural Centre, Sri Lanka



SAARC Cultural Centre

No. 224, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Tel : +94 11 2584451 Fax : +94 11 2584452

Email : [scc@saarcculture.org](mailto:scc@saarcculture.org)

Web : <http://www.saarcculture.org>

FB: <http://www.facebook.com/SAARC.CulturalCentre>

ISSN 2579 - 2423