
'Life'; S. H. Sarath's painting exhibition opened

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'Life', the exhibition of the well-known Sri Lankan painter Mr. S.H. Sarath was declared open by Mr. Pierre Le Loarer, the Chief Librarian and President of the Cultural Activities Committee of the United Nations in Geneva and Dr. Dayan Jayatileka, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva on Tuesday, 22nd July 2008, at 6.30 P.M. at the United Nations premises in Geneva.

The exhibition is currently being held under the joint patronage of the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations in Geneva and the United Nations Cultural Activities Committee. The opening ceremony was also attended by Mrs. Sanja Jayatileka, Ambassador Jayatileka's wife, the staff of the UN Cultural Activities Committee, the staff of the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka as well as a number of invitees. Opening the ceremony on behalf of Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director General of the UN Office in Geneva and presenting his best wishes to Mr. S.H. Sarath, Mr. Le Loarer welcomed the guests on behalf of the UN Cultural Activities Committee. After briefly introducing the artist who has hitherto held 80 exhibitions - of which 40 exhibitions of his own - in very many countries of the world, Mr. Le Loarer said that the UN specially welcomes the title of the Sri Lankan artist's exhibition, 'Life', because Mr. S.H. Sarath's paintings are a hymn to life, love, peace, nature, its conservation and the protection of the environment; all of which are among the values the United Nations upholds fully. He described Mr. S.H. Sarath's paintings as modern art enriched by elements of the artist's cultural background, his personal convictions and traditions of his country. Mr. Le Loarer found the artist's style to be symbolic, and his perception of life ironic, satirical and almost meditative at times. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Jayatileka stated that Mr. Sarath's Geneva exhibition coincides with the 40 year celebration of his career as a painter: the artist has held his first ever exhibition, which was opened by Mr. Martin Wickremasinghe, the best Sri Lankan writer at the time, in 1968. Dr. Jayatileka described Mr. Sarath as one of Sri Lanka's best contemporary painters and stated that it was an honour to be able to have him representing Sri Lanka at the UN Geneva. This, he said, gives Sri Lankans an opportunity to show the world that Sri Lanka is not only about war. On the contrary, Sri Lanka has a lot to offer the world, for instance, the work of the artists of the calibre of Mr. S.H. Sarath. At the end of the exhibition, Mr. Sarath will donate one of his paintings to the United Nations Office in Geneva. The opening ceremony of the exhibition was followed by a reception hosted by the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka. Ambassador Dr. Dayan Jayatileka addressing the gathering Mr. S.H. Sarath and Mr. Pierre Le Loarer, Chief Librarian & President of the Cultural Activities Committee in the background Mr. Pierre Le Loarer, Chief Librarian & President of the Cultural Activities Committee, addressing the gathering. Ambassador Dayan Jayatileka and wife Sanja in conversation with the artist, Mr. S.H. Sarath Mr. N.C. Magederagamage, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to WTO -World Trade Organization, (3rd from left) and Ms. Ruwanthi Ariyaratne (2nd Secretary of Sri Lanka to WTO (4th from left) with other guests Participants at the opening ceremony Ambassador Jayatileka talking to Ambassador of Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament with another Sri Lankan guest. Ambassador Jayatileka talking to the North Korean Ambassador Ambassador of Nepal talking to Mr. S.H. Sarath Dr. Rohan Perera - Former Legal Advisor Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conversation with Mr. Ameerajwad (Counsellor- Sri Lankan Mission Geneva) Mr. S.H. Sarath and Mr. Le Loarer, President -UN Cultural activities Committee, with another invitee admiring the painting to be donated to the United Nations Mr. Sarath's painting exhibition will be open to public at the Palais des Nations until 5th August 2008. Those who wish to see the exhibition are kindly requested to contact the Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to obtain an entrance pass to Palais des Nations.