

VINTAGE POSTERS of CEYLON

ANURA SAPARAMADU LAUNCHES VINTAGE POSTERS OF CEYLON

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Anura Saparamadu is obsessed with collecting vintage posters. Having started to collect old vintage posters around five years back, Anura Saparamadu's collection is rather extensive and definitely something to boast about. His book titled 'Vintage Posters of Ceylon' is a coffee table book displaying several old vintage posters about Ceylon.

The collection of posters featured date from the 1860s right until the 1970s. Most of the posters featured in the book are from Anura's very own collection while the other posters were sourced from various museums all over the world. Speaking to Hi!, Anura explained that the posters in the book are organized into seven different categories. The categories include tea, travel, cinema, World War II, government and politics, consumer goods and miscellaneous.

"Some of these posters are from early Ceylon and some of them are sourced from various parts of the world too. All the posters have some aspect about Ceylon, be it tea or cinema and it has been organized into seven such categories thus making it easier to differentiate them," explained Anura. Anura's collection of posters were also featured in the in flight magazine of Qatar Airways in January this year.

During the time when Ceylon did not possess graphic designers and computers, the only means of having a poster done would have to be by a talented artist. "Most of the posters in Sri Lanka, at least until the year 1950, were drawn by hand. Even the oldest posters by the Tourist Bureau were done by such local artists," said Anura.

Anura states that even though the first artists in early Ceylon were sourced from Britain, the work of local artists slowly started to get recognized and Ceylon became producers of fine poster art. He also states that despite being a very small island, Ceylon was indeed able to produce some great works of poster art. "These very artists should be applauded for their impeccable work in producing these collectible posters," added Anura.



He came across at least one vintage poster every week that he says, he never knew existed! In his book, Anura expresses that back then posters were not meant to be preserved as they were designed and drawn only for commercial purposes and temporary announcements. "In that sense, since they weren't really meant to be preserved, Ceylon has indeed lost a lot of creativity."

Around 50 of Anura's posters from his collection were exhibited at 03, Lighthouse Street, Galle Fort during the Galle Literary Festival held in late January this year. The launch of 'Vintage Posters of Ceylon' also took place on January 29 at the same location. 'Vintage Posters of Ceylon' features around 350 posters which range in various subjects.

TEXT: SARAH KELLAPATHA

The book is available at Barefoot, Vijitha Yapa, Lakehouse Bookshop, Gandhara, and Odel, and through the website www.vintagepostersofceylon.com

