Maria Abeyesekere

Contemporary Realist and Hyperrealist Painter

Maria Abeyesekere (b. 1970, Sri Lanka) is a contemporary realist and hyperrealist painter whose work explores the complexities of human presence, identity, memory, and emotion. Entirely self-taught, she has been a full-time professional artist since 2003, developing a distinctive artistic language grounded in technical precision, sensitive observation, and a profound understanding of light, form, and expression. Working primarily in oil and graphite, Abeyesekere creates meticulously rendered portraits and figurative paintings that move beyond physical likeness to reveal the psychological depth and quiet intensity of her subjects.

Her practice is distinguished by exceptional attention to detail and a contemplative approach to realism. Through carefully constructed layers, subtle tonal transitions, and nuanced expressions, she seeks to capture the intangible qualities that make each individual unique. Her paintings invite sustained engagement with the relationship between outward appearance and inner experience. In her ongoing series *What Silence Carries*, portraiture becomes a meditation on unspoken emotions, memory, and the moments of introspection that shape human experience.

Alongside her figurative practice, Abeyesekere creates scientifically accurate botanical paintings inspired by the extraordinary biodiversity of Sri Lanka, where she lives and works in the central highlands. This connection to her natural surroundings informs a complementary body of work celebrating the intricate structures, delicate forms, and enduring significance of the natural world.

Abeyesekere's work has received international recognition through jury selection for *Art Expo New York 2025* and *Las Laguna Faces and Figures 2025* in California. In 2025, she was also invited to represent Sri Lanka at *Botanical Art Worldwide ’25* in India. In 2026, she received invitations to participate in the *6th Barcelona Art Biennial* at the European Museum of Modern Art (MEAM), Spain, and *Monaco Art Fair*. Although she was unable to proceed with the latter engagements, these invitations form part of her international exhibition history.

Her works are held in the **Ian & Roslin Goonetileke Painting Collection**, the **University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka**, and international private collections. Through her commitment to craftsmanship and the expressive possibilities of realism, Abeyesekere continues to create paintings that unite meticulous observation with emotional resonance, affirming portraiture and figurative art as enduring forms of contemporary artistic expression.