



Award winners pose for a group photograph

# 35th Lux Sarasaviya Awards fete local cinema greats after massive comeback

Sarasvati Abhinandana - Opening performance by the Chamma Upali Performing Arts Foundation.



ANCL Chairman Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam and Mrs. Indika Kariyawasam, Veteran Actress Malini Fonseka, Minister of Highways and Mass Media Dr. Bandula Gunawardena and Mrs. Tamara Gunawardena.



2019 Best Costume Design - Dhanushka Gunathilaka receives the award from Director General of Information Dinith Chinthaka Karunarathne on behalf of Narada Thotagamuwa for 'Frozen Fire' ('Ginen Upan Seethala').



2019 Best Cinematography - the Frozen Fire ('Ginen Upan Seethala'), Dhanushka Gunathilaka receiving the award from Secretary Ministry of Mass Media Anusha Palpita.



2019 Best Film Editing - Malitha Hagoda receives the award on behalf of 'Dakala Purudu Kenek' from ANCL Chairman Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam.



The Ranapala Bodinagoda Memorial Literary Award was presented to Siri Kahawala by Minister of Ports, Shipping and Aviation Nimal Siripala de Silva.



2019 Best Actor - Bimal Jayakodi 'Dakala Purudu Kenek' receiving his award from veteran actor Sanath Gunathilake



2020 Ranapala Bodinagoda Memorial Literary Award presented to veteran journalist Thilakarathne Kuruwita Bandara by Minister of Justice Dr. Wijeyadasa Rajapakse.



2019 Best Music Director Award received by music director Samudu Guruge on behalf of 'Sansare Dadayakaraya' from ANCL Director Finance Dr. Sunil Jayantha Navaratne.



Prof. Lester James Peries Memorial Ranathisara Award presented to Sathischandra Edirisinghe by Foreign Minister Ali Sabry, PC.



2020 Best Music Director Award presented to music director Chinthaka Lakmal Jayakodi by ANCL Director Operations Attorney-at-Law Manjula Makumbura for 'Panshu'.



2019 Best Director award received by Malitha Hagoda on behalf of 'Dakala Purudu Kenek' from Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena



Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena receives 2020 Best Film Award from Veteran Actress Malani Fonseka for 'The Newspaper'.



2019 Best Actress - Samadi Laksiri (Dakala Purudu Kenek)



2019 Best Songwriter - Lalith Rathnayake ('Wishama Bhaga') receiving the award from Public Trustee Gihan Pilapitiya



2019 Best Actress - Nita Fernando 'Panshu' receiving her award from Unilever Director Marketing Shamara Silva



Merit Award - Isuru Lokuhettiarachchi 'Husma'.



2020 Best Film Editing award received by Sithum Samaraweera on behalf of 'Panshu' from ANCL Director Legal and Administration Attorney-at-Law Janaka Ranatunga.



2019 Best Cinematic Film Award received by Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne and H.D. Premasiri for 'Wijeyaba Kollaya'.



ANCL Director Finance Dr. Sunil Jayantha Navaratne presents 2020 Best Supporting Actress Award to Prof. Sunil Ariyaratne (The Newspaper).



2019 Best Supporting Actress award received by Chulakshi Ranatunga from ANCL Director Editorial Sisira Paranantrie for 'Wijeyaba Kollaya'.



Director Somaratne Dissanayake and Producer Renuka Balasuriya receive the 2020 Most Popular Film Award from Veteran Actress Sabitha Perera for 'Tsunami'.

The 35th Lux Sarasaviya Awards were held under the patronage of Veteran Actress Malani Fonseka at the BMICH, Colombo on March 28, with Transport, Highways and Mass Media Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena as Guest of Honour.

This year's Lux Sarasaviya Awards feted films screened in 2019 and 2020; its return after five years was a ray of hope for fans of local cinema. The event could not be held for five years due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis. The organisers decided to honour the films screened in 2019 and 2020 as they would otherwise not get due recognition.

ANCL Chairman Prof. Harendra Kariyawasam, Director Legal and Administration Attorney-at-Law Manjula Makumbura, Director Operations Attorney-at-Law Janaka Ranatunga, Director Finance Dr. Sunil Jayantha Navaratne, Editorial Director veteran journalist Sisira Paranantrie, ANCL administration, Sarasaviya editor-in-chief Dr. Nuwan Nayanajit Kumara and Unilever's (the event's main sponsor) Marketing Director Shamara Silva worked to make the star-studded event a resounding success.

It is important to note that all films screened in the four years beginning from 1960 to 1963 were feted in the very first Sarasaviya Awards held in 1964. Incidentally, some of the songs from the films that won awards at that inaugural Sarasaviya Awards were featured at this year's awards ceremony, taking the audience down memory lane.

Back then, the awards consisted of two phases and in the first phase the five best films selected by readers' votes were re-screened. Before each film was screened, all the artists, producer, director, actors cameramen and so on were honoured on stage amidst cheers from the audience.

At the time eager movie fans lined up outside the theatre to see the actors and actresses as they arrived and if they were lucky a word or two, or even an autograph with their idols. Cinema historians say that in some cases fans even

got their clothes and bodies autographed. The second phase of the Sarasaviya awards was held in a grand manner, and although the awards show was completed within a few days, film historians say that the big night took three months to organise.

The Sarasaviya Awards statuette which is aesthetically done in a manner paying homage to the patron deity of creativity (Saraswathi) was the brainchild of the world-renowned sculptor Tissa Ranasinghe.

The final judgment is given by an independent and impartial panel. The panel of judges watches each film while preserving the confidentiality of the final judgments and conclusions.

The Sarasaviya Awards commenced with the grandeur of traditional drums and dances accompanied by the dignitaries. It goes without saying that Sri Chandraratne Amarasingha's devotional lyrics and Pandit Manaradeva's melodious music for the Saraswathi Pooja awakened the memory of their greatness.

Fifty-six awards were presented at the BMICH on Thursday; Samadhi Laksiri won Best Actress of 2019 for her performance in 'Dakala Purudu Kenek', Neeta Fernando won Best Actress of 2020 for 'Panshu', and Bimal Jayakodi won Best Actor of 2019 for 'Dakala Purudu Kenek'. Kumara Thirumadura won Best Actor of 2020 for 'The Newspaper', Producer Mohamed Adamli won Best Film - 2019 for the movie 'Dakala Purudu Kenek' and Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena won 2020's Best Film award for producing 'The Newspaper'.

Late Veteran Actor Jackson Anthony was honoured at Thursday's ceremony. Here Mrs. Kumari Munasinghe getting the award from Minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena



2019 Most Popular Actor and Actress Uddika Premaratne and Senali Fonseka.



2020 Most Popular Actress - Dinakshi Priyasad.



2020 Best Singer - Harshana Dissanayake 'Tsunami' receiving the award from MP Rear Admiral (rttd.) Dr. Sarath Weerasekera



2020 Best Actor - Kumara Thirumadura (The Newspaper).



Veteran Actress Dilhani Ekanayake presents the 2020 Most Popular Actor Award to Kalana Gunasekara.



Unilever Marketing Director Shamara Silva presents Lux Popular Actress Award to Shanudri Priyasad.

### Photographers who covered the 35th Lux Sarasaviya Awards:

- Wimal Karunathilaka
- Thilak Perera
- Nissanka Wijerathne
- Wasitha Patabandige
- Shan Rupassara
- Sudath Nishantha
- Dushmantha Mayadunna
- Marlon Karunarathne
- Chinthaka Kumarasinghe
- Rukmal Gamage



Dinakshi Priyasad and Saranga Disasekara perform 'Galana Gangaki Jeevithey'.