



SACHI

Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India

www.sachi.org

*Please join SACHI friends for a special evening exploring
Sri Lanka's internationally connected culture:*



Sri Lanka: A Land of Multicultural Exchanges

An Illustrated Presentation by
Osmund Boparachchi

Numata Visiting Professor of Buddhist Studies, UC Berkeley

Ornamental Stone Stairway in Yapahuwa, N. West Province, Sri Lanka, 13th cen. It once led to the Temple of the Tooth Relic of Buddha enshrined at Yapahuwa, Sri Lanka's 13th cen. capital.

Wednesday, April 15, 6:00 p.m.

Light refreshments, 5.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Home of Vinati Mishra

2190 Broadway, Apt. 9W, San Francisco

Limited Seating

RSVP: info@sachi.org | Tel. 650-918-6335

Recommended parking 2100 Webster (between Sacramento & Clay)

Sri Lanka played a vital role in long distance maritime trade with its central position in the Indian Ocean. It linked the shores of the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Southwest Asia with Southeast Asia and the Far East. Its natural geography with numerous bays, harbours, estuaries and navigable rivers facilitated sea-borne trade in locally produced export items like precious stones, pearls, ivory, tortoise shell, elephants, woods, textiles and, especially, spices.

Alongside a flourishing of trade and commerce, philosophies, iconographies and cultures traveled to Sri Lanka not only from nearby India, but also from distant lands like Bactria (Afghanistan), Persia and Rome. With each shifting focus of inspiration, ancient Sri Lankan art underwent drastic changes, merging local traditions with foreign identities. It inspired new forms of art and belief.

Employing a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of artistic cross-fertilization, this talk will discuss the "international" character of ancient Sri Lankan art by focusing on Indian inspirations; in particular, influences of the Mauryas (321 BCE–185 BCE), who established India's first empire, the Guptas (320 CE to 550 CE) of India's Golden Age, and of the southern Indian kingdoms represented by the Satavahanas, the first Deccanese dynasty, the Pandyas, an ancient Tamil dynasty that lasted through medieval times, the Pallavas, (early 4th - 9th cen. CE) and the Cholas, a Tamil power whose influence peaked during the 9th-13th cen. CE medieval period.



Osmund Bopearachchi, Numata Visiting Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, is Emeritus Director of Research at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS-ENS, Paris).

For the last twenty years, he served as the director of the Sri Lanka-French Archaeological Mission. Bopearachchi recently launched a joint project focusing on Sri Lanka's role in ancient maritime trade in the Indian Ocean. In collaboration with the Department of Archaeology (Sri Lanka), the Institute of Nautical Archaeology (Texas A & M University), the University of California at Berkeley, and the National Center for Scientific Research in Paris (CNRS), he is currently excavating the most ancient shipwreck in the Indian Ocean dating back to the 2nd century B.C.E.

Prof. Bopearachchi is working on the publication of select Gandharan Buddhist masterpieces in museums and private collections in Japan, Europe, Canada, and the U.S.

Osmund Bopearachchi holds a B.A. from the University of Kelaniya (Sri Lanka), and B.A. honors, M.Phil., Ph.D. from the Paris I-Sorbonne University, and a Higher Doctorate from the Paris IV-Sorbonne University.

The Stupa Ruwanvali Dāgoba in Anuradhapura, mid-2nd cen. BCE

