



THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

“Intaglios: the rich heritage of Sri Lanka’s movable cultural objects”

by

Luxshman Nadaraja

The Monthly Lecture Series No: 159 of the National Trust

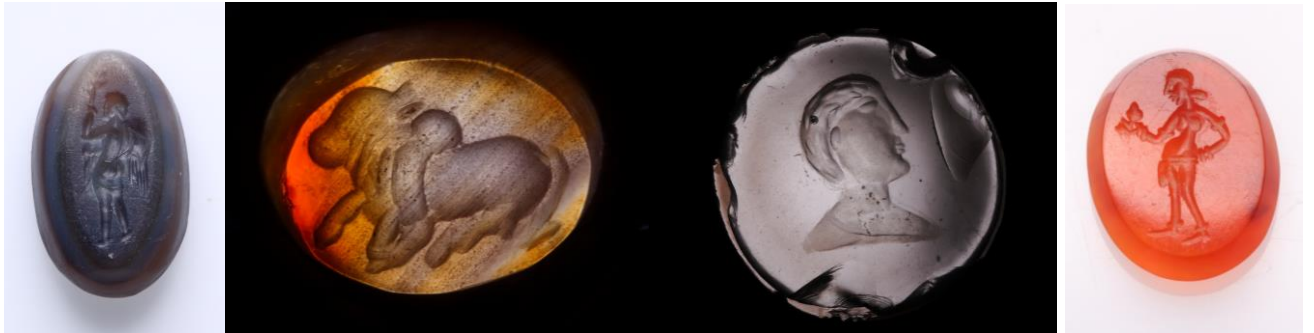
Thursday 28th March 2024 at 6.00 pm

at the Auditorium of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka,

No. 6, Independence Avenue, Colombo 7.

(For those who join online: <https://www.youtube.com/@ntsl9627>)

Intaglio is a term which may not be familiar to many in the Sri Lankan heritage context, yet it is an engraved or incised work where the carving is sunk into the hard surface of a small semi-precious gemstone (such as carnelian, garnet etc.) or moulded glass. Sri Lanka possess a rich heritage of intaglios dating from Sri Lanka’s historical period. Although, as per the archaeological record, the largest collection so far was unearthed from the archaeological excavations at Jetavana monastic complex at Anuradhapura, the total number of intaglios found from southern Sri Lanka, particularly from Akurugoda at Tissamaharama, could be the biggest. The graphical representations of the incised work are the primary attraction of these intaglios, with the subjects varying from human to animal figures. Judging by the artistic qualities of the engraved or incised work, archaeologists believe that some of these intaglios are of local origin while others are imported. They further suggest that the engraving and incising were practiced in ancient Sri Lanka, using semi-precious stone, mostly imported from abroad. The lecture will highlight the lesser-known heritage value of intaglios featuring numerous objects displayed at our museums and with private collections.



Luxshman Nadaraja is one of Sri Lanka’s foremost photographers, who has a keen interest in natural and cultural heritage, which he enjoys recording. He is the co-author to many publications with his photographs effectively and effortlessly communicating the subject matter of each publication. His publications include, *The World of Stanley Kirinda*, *Ridi Vihara*, *Nature of Sri Lanka*, *The Heritage of Water*, *Sri Pada* and *Gardens of Lanka*. He has also exhibited his works in Sri Lanka and abroad under the themes such as ‘Eloquence in Stone’, ‘Serendip to Sri Lanka’ and ‘The Nature of Sri Lanka’. He also serves as a Trustee of The National Trust Sri Lanka.

The National Trust – Sri Lanka conducts monthly lectures generally on the last working Thursday of each month. The lectures are open to the members and the general public.

Further information can be obtained from the Trust Office Tel.0112682730/ 0719566929