



75 years of art, architecture and ecology

## PRESS RELEASE

# Record breaking visitor numbers at Lunuganga: July 21–23, 2023

Launching the To Lunuganga programme in Bentota last weekend, the Geoffrey Bawa and Lunuganga Trusts reported a record-breaking number of visitors, amounting to over 5400 people over the weekend of July 21–23. The programme, which celebrates the 75th anniversary of Bawa's garden Lunuganga, opened with a range of talks, tours, exhibitions, and installations that reflected on the intertwining of ecology, art, and architecture.

Shayari de Silva, Chief Curator of the Geoffrey Bawa Trust, says "We could not think of a better way to celebrate Bawa's 104th birthday, which falls on July 23rd. Spaces like Lunuganga hold a precious and inspiring space for creative thinking and empathy and we are delighted to be able to share it so widely with our community."

Programme highlights included the 20th annual memorial lecture delivered by Isabela Ono, founder and executive director of the Instituto Burle Marx, Brazil, an installation titled Fluid Geographies by Mumbai-based artist Reena Kallat, a panel discussion with artists Reena Kallat (India), Firi Rahmam (Sri Lanka) and architect Sumayya Vally (South Africa) moderated by trustee and executive director of M+ (Hong Kong) Suhanya Raffel and Geoffrey Bawa Trust Chief Curator Shayari de Silva. The Astronomical Research Institute guided visitors through a Star Party and Vimukthi Fernando from the University of Jayewardanapura took visitors through Honduwa Estuarine Island at Lunuganga, where endangered Hog Deer reside. The Geoffrey Bawa Trust is in partnership with the University of Jayawardanapura, for a hog deer research project, and the University of Peradeniya for a project on floral diversity. The Trust is also partnering with the Royal College of Art in London to carry out a 3D-scanning research project to archive the garden using virtual reality. The project is led by architect and filmmaker Clara Kraft Isono, whose film Bawa's Garden kicked off the event on Thursday in Colombo.

Tours by Trust Chairperson Channa Daswatte, architect Amila de Mel and Prof. Sarath Kotagama (University of Colombo) were also widely popular as visitors engaged with the garden and its buildings through architectural and ecological lenses. Concluding the launch weekend on Sunday, a series of gardens and greenspaces including Brief, Boutique 87, and Heritance Ayurvedha were made accessible to visitors through Open House Colombo, curated by Geoffrey Bawa Trust Programme Manager Shanika Perera.

With participants joining from India (Reena Kallat), Hong Kong (Suhanya Raffel), the UK (Clara Kraft Isono), South Africa (Sumayya Vally), Brazil (Isabela Ono), and many other countries, as well as several

To Lunuganga  
ලුනුගාංග භාණ්ඩාගාරයේ  
ලැංකුණු  
විවෘත භාණ්ඩාගාරය

