

Inspirational Paintings By Josephine Balakrishnan

'Memories, Maps and Dreams' by Josephine Balakrishnan is on at the Barefoot Gallery from August 13-31.



By Pelham Juriansz

A collection of 19 to 20 paintings put together by Josephine, who though resident in California is no stranger to Sri Lanka having a Ceylonese mother in Jeanne Mansoor, a celebrated writer herself who is a Graetien award winner with books like *Murder in the Pettah* etc. "Artistic talent runs in the family for generations," according to Josephine who has had numerous exhibitions at the Barefoot gallery. She herself has been painting from the age of 14, and has had many exhibitions here and abroad from the age of 25.

Born in England to Jeanne and her American father she was a student at St. Bridget's Convent in Colombo. Her husband David is a professional violinist and gave an expert performance at the opening at Barefoot on Saturday, August 13.

One of the paintings is an inspiration for the show. "This is a true story", she begins. On Janu-

ary 1, 2011, a terrible plague attacked the land and many birds died. "1,000 birds dropped out of the sky down in Kansas and no one knows why," she explained. This is represented by a picture of birds, which she describes as 'the plague'. She then moves on to the picture of *Minks in Canada*. "I've always been a humorous person" she said describing herself. Having used real maps of the moon (the dark side of the moon), she continued to be 'inspired' by real events. The picture of the *Dark side of the Moon* is literally out of this world! There is one picture, which gives you the impression that you are looking at your past and your childhood etc. Then there is one of vegetables, carrots basically. She then goes on to the drawings that represent the various seasons, spring, winter etc, then on to the picture which she describes as the *Awakening*. It took about a year to put together this exhibition, and it is worth stepping into Barefoot to view this unique set of paintings.