

EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY ART OF RAJASTHAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY: REVIVING TRADITION

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Abstract: *The act of current Rajasthani Indian art is the fundamental subject of this exposition. It embraces the fundamental position that, in India, the reasonable response to present-day art (painting and visual art) must be perceived for its ability to rouse new translations, as opposed to just for what it could eventually try to imply. The paper additionally features that it is so essential to grasp these new articulations as far as Peirce's concept of the "Interpretant" regardless of the way that it is now realized that their expectation and objective are in a general sense not the same as those of traditional artistic exercises. The significant changes, continuations, and discontinuities in Indian art since "innovation" act as the establishment for this contention. The conventional techniques that delivered an accomplished 'object' of progress and ananda (happiness) were broadly talked about in traditional Indian thoughts, which included exceptionally evolved compositions. The objective is to support Indian artists who have "ontologically progressed past the underlying allure of Innovation and the specialist want to utilize recognized Western maxims" to utilize the logical systems that semiotic hypothesis might give to their works. The paper underscores the need to comprehend these clever definitions corresponding to Peirce's idea of the "Interpretant" considering the assumption that they are innately unmistakable from traditional artistic practices regarding their motivation and rationale.*

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1. Introduction

An art form known as traditional art has been passed down through the centuries. It is often described as having a classical shape and style. Architecture, sculpture, and painting are examples of traditional art. The State of Art in the 21st Century The arts have come under the criticism and experimentation of works by artists, aestheticians, theorists, and philosophers who have quite different conceptual frameworks. All of them have to do with cultures, interpersonal relationships, and the political symbolism of art within all of this. This is a consequence of the humanities' progress away from art hypothesis and toward semiotics, social hypothesis, and basic hypothesis starting in the last part of the 1970s. These progressions enlivened some conversation of the arts.

All imaginative undertakings over the past century have zeroed in on growing the idea of art with regards to logical headway, which has prompted a broader meaning of art and reached out into the space of magnificence that is for the most part made sense of by innovation. Through innovation, art is being rethought today, which characterizes us. While the facts confirm that computerized and electronic art is a field that is turning out to be increasingly critical, the

possibility that new innovation ought to supplant more traditional strategies must be reexamined. When artists use new technology, they make a contribution and provide commentary on how such mediums affect the person. Electronic media are assisting in the evolution of cultural identities in the twenty-first century. Words, sounds, and pictures have been repurposed in multimedia to create new expressions of uniqueness.

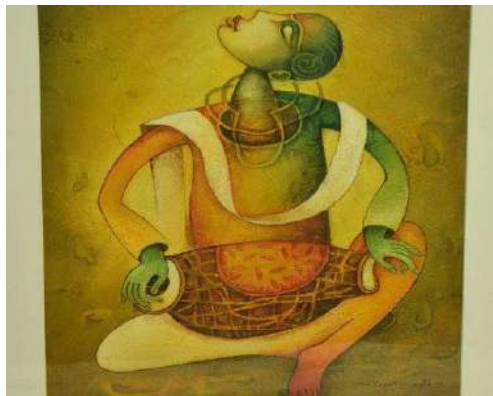


Figure 1: Indian contemporary art

Thus, the postmodern milieu has fostered forms of identity that are fundamentally distinct from the logical and centred modern person. The vanguard job of the artist as a revolutionary against a prevailing culture similarly reaches a conclusion as of now.

2. Literature Review

Sharma's (2018) study focuses on the revival of traditional art forms in contemporary Rajasthan. The author examines the efforts made by artists and cultural institutions to revive and sustain traditional art forms. The study highlights the significance of traditional art forms as cultural heritage and explores the ways in which contemporary artists are reviving these art forms through their innovative approaches.

Chauhan and Joshi (2020) Look at how tradition and modernity interact in Rajasthan's current art scene. The writers look at how artists balance using contemporary creative methods and styles with respecting classic art traditions. The research investigates how artists strike a balance between tradition and innovation in particular pieces of art, helping to advance modern art in Rajasthan.

Singh and Verma (2019) See how traditional Rajasthani art has been reinterpreted in the modern art world. The research explores how modern artists connect with classic art techniques like block printing and miniature painting and adapt them for a contemporary audience. The writers examine the strategies and ideas used by artists to revive classic forms of art and incorporate them into modern art discourse.

Mehta and Mathur (2017) examine how modern art displays are assisting the resurgence of traditional Rajasthani art forms. The writers investigate how art shows support and maintains conventional artistic techniques. In order to promote a conversation between the past and the present and to aid in the revival of ancient art forms in Rajasthan, the research explores the curatorial decisions and exhibition tactics used to display traditional art alongside modern pieces.

Jain and Sharma (2021) concentrate on how Rajasthani modern artists balance tradition and innovation. The research looks on the methods and tactics used by modern artists to embrace current artistic forms while yet remaining connected to their cultural origins. The writers examine how particular artists reconcile conventional art forms with cutting-

edge methods, materials, and topics in their analyses of their works.

3. The History of Traditional Art

Traditional Indian art is often connected to a certain culture or geographical area. Usually, it is made by artists who have received training in the unique methods and aesthetics of their particular culture. It comes in a broad range of mediums, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, pottery, and textile arts.

The Kumaon area of Uttarakhand is home to a style of traditional painting known as aipan, which is a ceremonial folk art. Numerous organic pigments and dyes are used to create the country of India. The art form is being practiced today by some of the nation's indigenous people and is said to have originated in the 12th century.

Another classic Indian painting style that uses vivid colors and elaborate patterns is called gond art. Gond art, however, is not exclusive to any one place or tribe, unlike aipan. Instead, individuals from all across India engage in it.

3.1. Traditional Art in the Modern World

The history of traditional art is extensive, and it has long been a component of human civilization. It's often seen of as being more expressive and intimate than computer art. Traditional painters sometimes invest a great deal of time and energy into their work, and their creations may be quite elaborate and detailed.

Compared to traditional art, digital art is often more accessible and may be produced considerably more quickly. Additionally, sharing and disseminating it are made simpler. Digital art, on the other hand, is seen by

some as lacking the spirit and individuality of traditional Indian art.

The benefits of traditional art versus computerized art have been a subject of warmed conversation for quite a while. While some battle that advanced art is more versatile and available, others fight that traditional art is more significant and genuine. It is eventually dependent upon the individual to pick the sort of art they esteem. Both traditional and advanced art have advantages and downsides, and it depends on the artist to pick the one that best meets their necessities.

4. Rajasthani Folk Arts - The Essence of Rajasthani Culture

India is a country rich in traditions, literature, art, and customs. Different states in the nation each have their unique tales shown in art. Rajasthan is the state that has drawn the most visitors. This area, which is renowned for its stunning forts constructed in the 14th century, has seen many famous wars. But Rajasthani traditional arts and culture are what set this state apart. A testament to the talent of its architects is the fascinating architecture of palaces and forts. In the state, several art forms are practised. The collection of folk arts that capture the best of each state is provided below.

➤ Thapa

This is a simple kind of handcrafted artwork that depicts many gods, goddesses, and religious rituals from India. The artist used Kumkum, sindoor, ghee, Heena, and cow dung to create this lovely artwork. Kumkum is the major component of this vibrant art, which is mostly created by women. To make it more

appealing, additional primary colors like red, yellow, green, blue, black, and yellow are employed.

➤ **Mandana**

Mandan, which meaning adornment or decoration, accurately describes the focus of this artistic endeavor. The walls and floor of the home are first coated with a combination of cow dung and clay. Madhya Pradesh is also a prominent location for this kind of art. On significant events like religious holidays, fasts, lucky ceremonies, or weddings, Mandana is drowned.

➤ **Gond Painting**

The ancestral local area participates in the movement of gond painting, a sort of ancestral composition. Apart from Rajasthan, this style of art is likewise rehearsed in the Indian provinces of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Orissa. These paintings are often seen on the walls of houses and windows and are used to adorn dwellings for important occasions. The main colors of this picture are red, yellow, blue, black, and white. Gond art depicts beautiful pictures derived from the verbal language of the Gond, such as cockfights, scenes related to the forest and environment, agriculture, marriage, and other rites.

➤ **Rajput paintings**

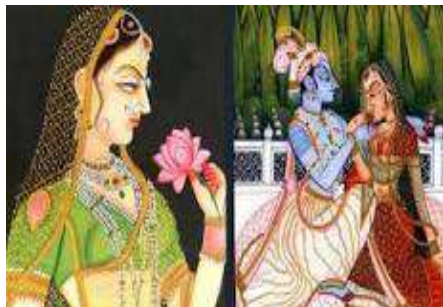


Figure 2: Rajput painting

The early 17th century Rajputana royal courts are where this picture first began to take shape. One of the most favored kind of art in Rajasthan are rajput images. The lovely old stories of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the existence of Master Krishna, scenes, and individuals are completely displayed in this work of art, which adds to its tastefulness. Another factor that qualifies this artwork as royal is that it was created using materials like minerals, plants, conch shells, valuable stones, gold, silver, etc.

➤ **Gudna Motif**

With the use of a needle, the Gudna Motif is one kind of tattoo that is applied to the body. One of the most well-known traditional arts of Rajasthan, this one uses a variety of substances to provide color. Gunda Motif is created by the artist using Kumkum, harsingar flower juice, aak milk, and bilva plant leaves. This unusual artwork has pictures of deities, swastika, the sun, moon, flowers, birds, and animals. These patterns have symbolic and ritualistic significance.

➤ **Shekhawati**

Only floral and abstract compositions were used in these paintings, which were all done directly on the walls. After the collapse of Mughal power during the 19th century, this kind of painting had a surge. Traditional Indian topics, such as certain mythological scenes, Lord Krishna, regional stories, vegetation, animals, everyday life in cities, and towns, were widely favored by the painters.

➤ **Bandhani**

One of Rajasthan's most well-known practitioners of cloth art is Bandhani. This kind of work needs really talented artists. Using this method, you may create a variety of designs including Bavan Baug,

Chandrakala, and Shikari by dying a cloth that has been firmly bound with thread at different spots. The fascinating aspect of Bandhani art is that it was discovered for the first time in the 6th century, during the Indus Valley civilisation. Additionally, paintings representing the life of Buddha discovered on the wall of the Ajanta Caves in Maharashtra display this Rajasthani folk art.

➤ **Phad Paintings**

This one-of-a-kind work of art is created on a Phad, a lengthy canvas measuring fifteen to thirty feet. This painting's main goal was to illustrate a story utilizing comic-book-style imagery. Pabuji, a folk god of the Rabari people, is the primary figure in this picture. This shape was first created to illustrate the Pabuji mythology. Even if the symbols formed on these Phads are organized methodically, it is nevertheless exceedingly challenging to understand them rationally, which distinguishes this painting as an exceptional work of art.

➤ **Sanjhi Art**

It derives from terms that signify ornamentation, such as “Sajja,” “Shringar,” and “Sajavat.” Ancient Brahmin priests engaged in the highly polished art style known as “Sanjhi art.” This popular Rajasthani traditional art has spiritual overtones, which contribute to its fame. When Sanjhi Motifs (decorative pictures) were used to adorn the walls and floors of temples in the 16th and 17th centuries, the popularity of Sanjhi art expanded quickly. This type of art is primarily intended to provide as an avenue for artists to demonstrate their devotion to Lord Krishna.

➤ **Blue Pottery**

This work of art has Turko-Persian origins and is a Rajasthani traditional craft. The pottery is known as “blue pottery” because of the striking blue dye used to tint it. The craft of manufacturing this glazing pottery was brought from Kashmir to Rajasthan. This artwork effectively illustrates how indigenous people throughout the globe share their knowledge and abilities.

5. Rajasthani Paintings and Sculptures

Rajasthan's dynamic canvases and delightful figures are instances of individuals' adoration for variety and satisfaction. The state has made huge commitments to the variety of Indian art.



Figure 3: Rajasthani Painting

The Rajasthani people like decorating their houses with paintings and sculptures that they have personally created. This decorative style goes back to the time when royal families reigned over Rajasthan. The former Maharajas supported various creative forms, which led to the flourishing of many outstanding painters throughout that time. Rajasthan is known around the globe for its beautiful and unusual paintings and sculptures.

The compositions of Rajasthan have two particular shades to their style: the Rajasthan-explicit people style and the past school of smaller than expected artistic creations, whose improvement was advanced quickly in courts across north India and the Deccan. Different work of art schools, including the Mewar school, the Bundi-Kota Kalam, the Jaipur, Bikaner, Kishengarh, and the Marwar schools, rose to unmistakable quality during the famous sixteenth century. Mughal or Rajasthani styles are utilized to make small canvases.

There are two categories within the folk painting style. Phads are large canvases that have a scroll-like design painted on them. They include stories of the black mare and Pabuji Ramdeo of the Rabari clan. Bright orange, crimson, and black are employed as the colors. Pichwais are ornamental curtain fabrics that are used as backgrounds for idols or pictures of the gods in places of worship. Brocaded, block printed, weaved, or brilliant string work are a portion of the many styles.

5.1. Phad Paintings of Rajasthan – A Tale of Tradition, Storytelling and Revival in the Modern Day

India's numerous people art structures, saturated with tradition and history, have told stories through striking visual portrayal for centuries. Also, albeit every one of them have social importance, Phad painting from Rajasthan hangs out in particular for its unmistakable history, beginning, and the endeavors made to restore it.

❖ The Origin of Phad - A Blend of Performance and Visual Art

Phad is a 700-year-old tradition that has been given over through one family's ages and has its underlying

foundations in Shahpura, near Bhilwara, Rajasthan. A particular sort of parchment painting known as phad educates inside and out strict stories regarding provincial divinities and divine beings. The Bhopas and Bhopis, minister vocalists of the Rabari clan, who might sing and perform stories of their provincial divinities, Devnarayanji (a rebirth of Vishnu), and Pabuji (a nearby legend), conveyed these traditional works of art as voyaging or versatile sanctuaries. After dusk, the Phad artwork would be unrolled or unfurled, and an exhibition would then occur before the residents that would run far into the evening. Maybe hence the canvases are alluded to as “Phad,” which in the neighborhood language signifies “overlay.”

The female cleric (Bhopi) would sing and move in backup while the male minister (Bhopa) sang and portrayed the story displayed in the Phad painting. She would likewise utilize a light to focus a light on the important region of the canvas. In the presentation, a two-string instrument known as the “ravanhatta” would be used.

❖ Technique, Colours and Characteristics

Phad painters should be incredibly capable and use precursor instructed strategies. An artwork might be done in half a month to a couple of months, contingent upon its complexity.

Close by woven, coarse cotton texture that has been doused for the time being to solidify the strings, phad works of art are delivered. In the wake of being extended, dried in the sun, and given a sparkle with a moonstone, it is fortified with starch from rice or wheat flour. A completely regular strategy is utilized to make a Phad painting, including the utilization of normal filaments and regular tones got from rocks,

blossoms, plants, and spices. The painters make their own paints, which are joined with water and gum prior to being applied to texture.

Yellow, orange, green, brown, red, blue, and dark are normal tints in Phad canvases. Each variety serves a particular capability: yellow is utilized to make the underlying layout, orange is utilized for the appendages and the middle, green is utilized for trees and vegetation, brown is utilized for structures, red is utilized for illustrious clothing and banners as well as a thick line, and blue is utilized to address water or shades. At the end, dark is utilized to draw frames.

❖ Traditions of the Past

Ceremonies and customs pervade each step of the production of a Phad artwork. Previously, the artist would isolate the material into a few regions as per the various scenes that sounds painted. The underlying brushstroke would be created by a virgin young lady from the artist's loved ones. Just the people who might remain in the Joshi family were shown the Phad painting strategies, not the people who might depart. The method was in this way not educated to girls, but rather it was to little girls in-regulation who joined the family.

❖ Revival, Survival and Change in Modern Times

Since the Phad art heritage was so enviously saved, it was just normal for the artform to be at risk for ceasing to exist. Shree Lal Ji Joshi, a notable Phad painter and beneficiary of the Padma Shri grant, chose to establish Joshi Kala Kunj in 1960 in Bhilwara, Rajasthan, a school where artists from outside the Joshi family were shown the art of Phad. With a craving to protect and resuscitate the artform. This restoration endeavor

developed when the school was renamed Chitrashala in 1990, fully supported by his children Gopal and Kalyan Joshi. At Chitrashala, in excess of 3,000 artists have gotten preparing over time. Others in the enormous Joshi family put forth such attempts also. These endeavors to resuscitate the art structure included monitoring it as well as meticulously making normal shades and utilizing revered strategies.

Since account stayed at the heart of Phad compositions, Kalyanji Joshi started remembering different characters for his Phad artworks other than Devnarayanji and Pabuji. A more extensive crowd was attracted to the compositions when stories and figures from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Hanuman Chalisa, and, surprisingly, the Panchatantra were consolidated. Chitrashala artists started adjusting the custom in their own extraordinary manner and were urged to do as such. The size of Phad canvases was radically diminished to match the prerequisites and limitations of room in contemporary houses, and they are presently made as minuscule as 2, 4, or 6 feet. Kalyan Joshi fostered painting only one of the scaled down stories in more modest Phad canvases since the first works of art were comprised of different separate stories or episodes that made up the total story. Also, he included composed content to the show-stoppers, which was not before seen in Phad works of art.

Various Joshi family members and other well-known Phad artists, like Pradeep Mukherjee, have made efforts to preserve and restore this amazing art form, increasing its marketability and providing Phad artists with work. However, despite these efforts, there are now fewer than twenty professional Phad painters.

The promotion of such rich creative traditions from the past is necessary in the present society. Along with reflecting India's illustrious culture, Phad art forms maintain folklore and tales that have been passed down through the ages.

5.2. Sculptures

The Rajasthanis have long dominated the expertise of making brilliant figures out of earth. One of the state's most astounding arts is it. In the middle age time, it rose to high levels. The spellbinding art might be found in Rajasthan's castles, strongholds, sanctuaries, havelis, and step wells. They make models utilizing fundamental instruments like an etch, sledge, and drill that are some of the time more gorgeous than we might at any point envision. They utilize the Shilpashastra and Manasara texts as their manuals for projecting dirt sorcery. The best places to notice Jaipur's marble artwork are the Dilwara sanctuaries. Sandstone has been skillfully cut to make havelis. Painstakingly cut subtleties incorporate segments, jharokhas (windows), overhang, sections, vaults, domes, and curves. Different items, including stone sculptures, drinking fountains, jars, grower, tables, and other elaborate things, are instances of independent works of figure.

6. Conclusion

Evaluating contemporary Indian art against progressions and discontinuities with traditions, as well as with regards to variety and majority, is essential. The conceptualizations of the masterpieces should go past those that characterize its narrativity, improvement, and figure. It ought to give an epistemology to contemporary Indian art practices and develop systems of examination that would offer basic

clues about art as “semiosis.” Science fixes meaning; however, art grows meaning, accordingly art in the twenty-first century requests artistic knowledge as opposed to logical insight. In the absence of an “object” for these semiotic signs, it is important to understand the “interpretants” as opposed to simply drawing similitudes and congruities with past artistic strategies.

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