

ANALYZING SPECIFIC PRAXES OF VISUAL ART UP TO POST MODERN SOCIETY

Dr. Shekhar Chandra Joshi

Professor, HOD Drawing and Painting
Campus Dean, Faculty of Visual Art
Kumaun University, SSJ Campus Almora
Uttarakhand, India

Abstract

Present paper will be helpful in responding to, interpreting meaning, and making critical judgments about specific praxes of visual art up to Post Modern Society. In the major categories these comprises with the fine art, decorative art including all types of designs and crafts. What the viewers and critics perceive and how they interpret, judge and focus on work of visual arts from the prehistoric is the theme line for this article. The specific praxes of visual arts will be discussed step by step on how it shaped after reviews of art exhibitions and their after effects among the artists in the context of East and West including India in general. Primary and secondary data including web sources will be taken to analyze the facts to find the result in describing with examples influenced the praxes of visual arts.

Keywords: Praxes, Visual Art, Fine Arts, Painting, Sculpture, Crafts, Applied Arts

Materials and Methods: This article is based on humanities and concerned with the painting, sculpture and architecture. Different types of art material are and were used for their creation by artist individually or in a group applying to fulfill the need of medium and method and according to their invention. How did they use it for their work will be revealed through primary and secondary data including web sources to analyze the facts and finding the result for describing with examples of those works/artists influenced the praxes of visual arts.

Art reminds that it has had been coming in all shapes and sizes in the society from the prehistoric period till today. Rock and cave paintings of prehistoric period remind us about our deep roots of visual arts. Each Century has a specific kind of art in different forms, shapes, colors, themes and medium across the world in the East and West. Pictorial space was the important for everyone. A combination of freedom and fear both along with the use of natural colors are seen in the Prehistoric visual art.

In the West and Europe the ancient art of Egypt, Greek, and Roman; art of medieval like Early Christian, Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic; and the renaissance art of Italy, Flemish (Dutch)/ Netherlands/ Belgium, Germany, Dutch, Spain, United Kingdom, and France have remarkable paintings, statues and architecture while America has played a significant role in the architecture.

In the art of medieval period, perspective and foreshortening can be seen. Raphael's School of Athens is the best example of this category. When criticizing an oil painting, critics might refer to its subject matter, composition, line & shape, color, texture and brushwork. When analyzing a statue, they might refer to its representational or emotional content, its harmony/balance, remoteness, view ability (whether it could be appreciated from more than one angle), texture, and decorative contribution. When judging a building, critics might examine how well it fits into its immediate surroundings; they would also evaluate the visual effect of its exterior (height, proportions, width, and so on), before moving inside to consider the light, space, atmosphere and proportions of the interior. (<http://www.visual->, 2017)

In India, the art of Harappa civilization; architecture of Buddhist and Jain structural and rock – cut architecture; Temple architecture of North and South, Indo-Islamic architecture are unique. Sculptures of Mauryas, Sungas, Satavahana or Andhras, Kushan (and also with Gandhara/Mathura phase), Guptas, Gurjara Pratihara, Pala and Senas, Chandellas, Solankies or Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Hoysalas, Pallavas, Cholas and Pandyas have their specific quality. Paintings-Murals of Ajanta, Bagh, Badami, Ellora; Miniatures and manuscripts of Pala, Senas, Gujrat, Mandu, Miniatures school of Mughal, Rajput or Rajasthani and Pahari and their sub schools including Deccani Islamic Paintings are remarkable and noteworthy work known globally.

Ragamala Paintings based on music are painted in the medieval period majorly under the Mughal and Rajput school of paintings reflects the interrelation of art and music. "*Fantasy of Raga*" by Shekhar Chandra Joshi painted and exhibited in UP State Lalit Kala Akademi, Lucknow at the end of 20th century was an innovative approach of an artist who is the writer of this article. He draws on paper without pen pencil and also with paint on those embossed forms and figures created by his finger nails pressures on paper or creatively embossed paper pasting on canvas. Artist Raja Ravi Verma, famous for his oleograph, mythological and epic work, and many others known for his/her work like M F Husain/ Amrita Sher Gil which gave vivid dimension by working and exhibiting their creations to Indian art during the 19th- 21th century. Painters of Bengal School, Chennai, Mumbai, and Baroda, Delhi Shilp Chakra, PAG and also many others added strength to Indian visual arts.

The Bengal School observed two major techniques. The first, a personal invention of Abanindranath, is usually called the wash, an alternative process of applying water color and dipping in a basin of water till the desired shade comes out. This produces a hazy or misty atmosphere. Finishing touches are added by heightened details, highlights or even gold. Tempera, however, was more popular with the second. (Tomory, 2006, p.282) As a medium the tempera, used for painting when a whole egg or yolk is used.

In Europe, Jan Van Eyck was famous for his virtuoso oil painting technique to achieve his characteristic luminous finish; Mantegna and Tiepolo for their foreshortening; Leonardo for his sfumato; (<http://www.visual>, 2017) (In fine art, the term "sfumato" (derived from the Italian word fumo, meaning "smoke") refers to the technique of oil painting which colors or tones are blended in such a subtle manner that they melt into one another without perceptible transitions, lines or edges. Leonardo da Vinci himself described sfumato as a blending of colors "without lines or borders, in

the manner of smoke." It is as if a veil of smoke has been placed between the painting and the viewer, toning down the bright areas and lightening the dark ones, so as to produce a soft, imperceptible transition between the differing tones. Typically involving the use of a number of translucent glazes to create a gradual tonal spectrum from dark to light, Sfumato is classified as one of four painting modes of Renaissance art, the others being *Unione*, *Cangiante*, and *Chiaroscuro*. (<http://www.visual-2017>)

Michelangelo for his fresco painting technique, anatomical skill and male nudes; Titian, Veronese, Matisse and Jawlensky for their colorism; Caravaggio for his Tenebrism; Rembrandt for his chiaroscuro; Masaccio, Raphael and Canaletto for their linear perspective; Degas for his pastel drawings; Georges Seurat and Paul Signac for their Pointillism; Frank Auerbach for his impasto. These techniques, and many more besides, are all important elements which can be employed to increase the complexity and depth of a picture. So in order to appreciate a painting, one needs to analyze the presence of these elements and their effects. (<http://www.visual>, 2017)

The painting "*Guernica*" painted by Picasso and his cubist style, the exhibition held in Munich in 1937 and *avant-gardistes* brought a new creative freedom and thought after the world war. Dada and surrealism became and seem much influenced by political left. Further, Wassily Kandinsky, Constantin Brancusi, Piet Mondrian and Jackson Pollock experimented with their new techniques of painting. According to Robin Blake, "the vital constant here is the opposite of *Guernica*'s public howl. It is an intensely private and inner art, a dialogue with the soul. Pollock, one of its most intense practitioners, called all painting self-discovery. 'Every artist paints what he is,' he said, though he also insisted that what was created went on to live 'a life of its own' The strong implication here is that the artist, as creator of 'living' works, bears a solemn responsibility that is unique among human activities." (Blake, 2001, p.11)

In the New York City at mid 1950s, young artists like Donald Judd, Robert Morris, and Dan Flavin were painting in the dominant Abstract Expressionist vein but were drifting from it toward new directions inspired by a freshened knowledge of recent European art. Works by members of the Dutch De Stijl group, the Russian Constructivists, and the German Bauhaus were shown in New York City museums and galleries. All three groups had pioneered new definitions of the visual arts by going far beyond traditional painting and sculpture. (<http://www.theartstory>, 2017)

The Comprehensive Exhibition of Indian Art, held in London from November, 1947, for three months under the auspices of the Royal Academy of Art, where many unknown masters pieces and significant specimens of Indian Art were displayed and the most resounding response came out as – there is certainly something in its extraordinary blending of an uninhibited sensuousness with the extremes of spirituality and abstraction to explain why it was so long before it won serious attention in the West, said O. C. Ganguly. (Jahan, 2008, p.8)

The Two contemporary Indian Art exhibitions in Tate Gallery of Britain and Oxford showed the work of almost all the prominent artist during 1982. In connection the two Triennale 1962 and 1986 began the world art at home, and the Easy- West visual arts encounter organized by NCPA during 1985 aimed to reflect Modern Art trends especially in contest of the antagonism between individual creativity experimentation versus communication in art, which appeared as a major problem for the whole world artists who preferred individual expressionism. (Jahan, 2008, p.21)

The 90s ushered in concepts of global vision. Full tribal and popular culture merged with high art creating an exciting language as seen in the works of young artists namely Jayashree Charavarty, Paresh Maity, Valsan Kolleri, N.N. Rimzon, Arpana Caur, and Sudarshan Shetty and

many others. An exhibition was held from 24 October 1997- 7 January 1998 in the Singapore Art Museum entitled “Tryst with Destiny - Art from Modern India (1947 - 1997)” portrays the exciting experimentation that has evolved during the last five decades (those in 90s) and illustrates emergent trends of Indian Contemporary art against the backdrop of the art historical perspective of post-Independent India. The exhibition is co-organized by the Singapore Art Museum and the Centre of International Modern Art, Calcutta, in association with the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. The Curators in-charge of the exhibition then is Ms Karen Lim (Assistant Curator, Singapore Art Museum); Mrs Rakhi Sarkar (Director, Centre of International Modern Art); Mr Siva Kumar (Reader, Department of Art History, Kala Bhavan Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan Senior Art Historian). (<http://ias.asia>, 2017)

In 1960, Conceptual art, that takes the form of mental images, provoked by various stimuli-visual, tactile, and aural-and which the concepts and ideas are more important than tangible, concrete works of art. (Gowing, 2002, p749)

Post painterly abstraction coined by the American critic Clement Greenburg for a group of Abstract artists working in the 1960s. It includes a number of specific styles and movements, such as Color-field Painting and Minimal Art. (Gowing, 2002, p.761)

Minimal art is a modern art that rejects texture, subject, atmosphere, etc and reduces forms and colors to the simplest. (Gowing, 2002, p757) Color field painting that usually on a large scale, in which solid areas of color are taken right up to the edge of the canvas, suggesting that they extend to infinity. (Gowing, 2002, p749)

In the modern up to post modern era artist's work gradually remains near the based on mathematics like cubism, color theory, source material, around the natural science, philosophical aspect and also around the Freudian and Jungian psychology adding artist's new concept with the use of technology. The Art Museum.net founded in 1999 by Intel Corporation, and the effort of Harsh Goenka, Chairman, RPG Enterprise, promoted this innovative, technology based art project was available at the disposal of the artist and proved to be fruitful for further exploration. (Jahan, 2008, p.23)

The technological hardware stimulated in works of the visual arts. According to Blake “Much video-installation art, for example, looks like the kind of thing Dada would have been doing had they been lucky enough to possess DVD. On the other hand, because the material from which art can be made has become so radically different, there have been immense change in what can be produced: stainless steel, plastics, fiberglass, polyester resin, neon, acrylic paints and NASA adhesives have all had their effects, as have airbrushes, aerosol sprays, Polaroid cameras, photocopiers and fax machines. Some of these would have delighted advanced practitioners like Malevich or Boccioni, but they would also have utterly changed their art, just as cheap computers and color printers in the early 1960s would have transformed pop and op art ” (Blake, 2001, p.12) About the opinion of Twentieth-century art Blake said “Twentieth-century art is a broad church, complex and fraught with contradictions. Here is an art that dealt in serene unities and hectic disjunctions, in the private meditation of Rothko and Mondrian and the public interventionism of Picasso's Guernica...It sanctioned the excesses of Dali and yet adored the monk-like dedication of Albers. It shouted against consumerism while lauding Warhol. And if very often an art of movement, it was always one of movements, a forest tangled with an undergrowth of -ism.” (Blake, 2001, p.13)

Nevertheless, applied art has played an important role. The designing and decorating of functional objects or materials to give them aesthetic appeal, e.g. printing type, ceramics, glass, furniture, metal work, and textiles. The term applied art is frequently used to differentiate this type of work from the fine arts (painting, drawing, sculpture) whose value is primarily aesthetic. Arts and crafts movement gave new approach to applied art after Arts and Crafts Movement in the Mid Nineteenth century in England, inspired by John Ruskin and William Morris; it attempted to raise the standards of design and craftsmanship in the applied arts, and to respect the crafts-man's individuality in the face of increasing mechanization. (Gowing, 2002, p.745)

Findings:

Studying and describing with annalistic approach of major facts about praxes of visual arts which happen time to time in painting, sculpture and architecture were inspiring and also influenced to artists' generations. They adopted the inventions of science and technology whatever useful for them as a better source of material that have had not been used before. The role of art critics and historian became more powerful to record all these fine art practices of any form with the application of art and craft towards applied art for the maximum use of society.

At the stage of present global era the Visual art's artifacts have had been reflecting across up to post modern society which were and are showcasing and exhibiting in the galleries, museums even in the open area. These are seen after the thought, creativity and imagination composed by artists with a malty use of materials and mediums in the space. Besides Paintings and sculptures the photography, installations, conceptual art, video and computer art was being adopted by the major artists up to Post Modern Society.

These all are like uncountable seen/unseen stars and most of them remain showcasing for ever remembering the greatness of artists while some works of artists either dumped or vanished with time. Visual artists are always eager to learn all these to create a new art piece full of joy and aesthetic again and again. It is true that wide ranges of works along with a set of aesthetic values of artists have been created.

Reference:

1. Edith Tomory, A History of Fine Arts in India and the West, Orient Longman, 1982-Reprinted 2006
2. Robin Blake, Essential Modern Art, Parragon, 2001
3. Badar Jahan, Abstraction in Indian Painting Post Independent Era, Kaveri Books, New Delhi, 2008
4. Sir Lawrence Gowing, A Biographical Dictionary of Artists, Andromeda, Reprinted 2002

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/art-critics.htm> April 13, 2017

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/painting/sfumato.htm> April 13, 2017

<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-minimalism.htm> April 13, 2017

<http://ias.asia/iasn/13/Arts/13daxj01.html> April 25, 2017