



Dictionary
of
Indian Art & Artists

including
TECHNICAL ART TERMS



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Abstract Art: Vasudeo Santu Gaitonde, "Untitled", Oils, 1997. (See notes on page 23)

AAJ=today. AAJ Society of Visual and Performing Arts was founded in 1979 in Udaipur, to evolve an indigenous *idiom* for contemporary Indian Art. Apart from an individualistic pursuit of art by its members, AAJ has organized camps, seminars and workshops. AAJ has acquired a Haveli (mansion or villa) in Udaipur, a theatre, a graphic workshop and folk and tribal art documentation centre in Mewar, RAJ. Members of the society include P.N. Choyal, Shail Choyal, Prabha Shah.

ABC Art Gallery (ABC) (Varanasi). ABC was established in 1991 by Anand Agarwal to promote young artists. An average number of 25 shows are held each year. There is also a permanent museum that includes works of Madhavi Parekh, Badri Narayan, Suhas Roy, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Latika Katt, Deepak Shinde.

Abhaya=fearless. Refer MUDRAS.

Abhisarika One of the eight specific types of NAYIKAS mentioned by ancient Indian writers and poets. The Abhisarika is usually depicted as a young woman braving the terrors of the night in order to meet her lover. There are two types of these NAYIKAS. The KRISHNA-Abhisarika, who meets her lover on a dark, new moon night. She wears dark coloured garments in order to blend with the surrounding forest. The Shukla-Abhisarika, who meets her lover on a full moon night, is dressed in white and is usually depicted at the door of her palace or midway through the jungle replete with snakes and other perils. Refer ASHTANAYIKA.

Abhushana=ornaments. Elaborate jewellery worn by men and women, seen today in Indian sculpture and miniature paintings, varies from region to region and from period to period. Some of the more common ornaments are the MUKUTA, the HARA (necklaces in different patterns), the KEYURA (armlet worn above the elbow), KANKANA (bangle or bracelet in several patterns), the Channavira (a flat disc-shaped ornament worn on the MUKUTA, or suspended around the neck to lie against the chest), the Yajnopavitam (a jewelled sacred thread worn over one shoulder and resting on the opposite hip), the KAMARPATTA or Katibandha (a waist belt sometimes holding the unstitched lower garment in place), the KUNDALA (ear ornaments in various shapes—loops, discs, pendants), and the Nupura (anklets, worn above or below the ankles).

Certain ornaments are associated only with specific deities, e.g., the BHUJANGA-VALAYA (a snake-shaped KEYURA) worn by SHIVA; the Srivatsa of VISHNU, also seen on BUDDHA. In sculpture this is represented by a four-petalled flower or a simple triangle and is placed towards the right side of the chest; Vajrayanti worn by VISHNU, each group of five gems supposedly composed of the five elements and is therefore called the elemental necklace (the five gems being the pearl, ruby, emerald, sapphire and diamond, signifying water, fire, air, earth and ether, respectively). PRABHAVALI (a Halo) or ring of light that surrounds the entire figure of a God. It is represented as an ornamental oval or circular ring with a number of Jwalas (lights, flame, illumination).

Abstract That which is non-factual and frequently abstruse in terms of being unrelated to the real world. In the Indian context, spirituality (symbolized by YANTRA, CHAKRA, SWASTIKA, etc.) is at the core of dematerializing the form from the viewing impression, Rabindranath Tagore's sketches in ink e.g. of 1928, Ramkinkar Baij's cement forms in sculpture at Santiniketan—are but a few examples of early abstraction. Refer Abstract Art, Abstract Expressionism, Abstract Impressionism, Abstract Landscape, Abstract Movement, Abstract Painting, Abstract Symbolism, Abstraction Figurative, Abstraction Geometric, Abstraction Lyrical, Abstraction Organic, All-Over.

Abstract Art Art which is completely non-representational and non-figurative. The forms and colours used by the artist are not readily identifiable as belonging to the existing world. Instead the forms are conceptual and are mostly seen as relationships between patterns, symbolically reduced to ciphers. Though Indian artists here are exposed to Western Art, abstract art in India is generally rooted in Indian culture and tradition. The symbolic figures and geometric forms used in Indian religion YANTRA, CHAKRA, SWASTIKA, etc., form the base from which intuitive ideas emerge, and the traditional art influences abstract art in India. Refer Figurative Art, Abstraction Geometric, Ambadas, Biren De, Vasudeo Santu Gaitonde, Ghulam Rasool Santosh, Rabindranath Tagore, Balbir Singh Katt, Mahendra Pandya, Sayed Haider Raza. (See illustration on page 22).

Abstract Expressionism Though this term was first used in 1919 to describe V. Kandinsky's work, it is now popularly used to describe the abstract works produced in the United States after World War II. Though the influence of Europe is undeniable, through the teachings of H. Hoffman and the exposure to the works of P. Picasso, P. Mondrian and the Surrealists, Abstract Expressionism is an American phenomenon. Though the styles were as diverse as the frantic gestural movements of J. Pollock and M. Rothko's vast, calm fields of glowing colour, the large scale is typically American. American sculptors like D. Smith, too incorporated large, abstract shapes in the three-dimensional medium. In India the term can be applied to the drawings of Rabindranath Tagore, and paintings of Ambadas, Sayed Haider Raza, the colour prints of Krishna N. Reddy and others.

Abstract Impressionism A term used specifically to describe the last great works by the French Impressionist, C. Monet. The brushstrokes in the works, "The Water Lilies" series are interwoven to form a luminous abstract mesh of paint. Viewing such paintings from a distance often enhances their effect.

Amrita Sher-Gil and the PAG Mumbai, were among the first artists to use this style in India. Using translucent colours, tempera, and short brushstrokes, they created shimmering landscapes and portrait studies. Also refer K.M. Adimoolam, P.T. Reddy, Shiavax Chavda.

Abstract Landscape An abstract painting in which the elements suggest vignettes from nature or landscapes. Some artists term it as semi-abstract; Artists like Akbar Padamsee, Ram Kumar and Laxman Shreshtha have cap-

tured abstractions of nature by their technique of colour application; While Setlur Gopal Vasudev's abstractions, owe their landscape-like look to the rippling brushstrokes that he uses. Refer Harkrishan Lall, Bimal DasGupta, Abstract, Abstract Art, Abstract Painting.



Abstract Landscape: Akbar Padamsee, "River", Oil on Canvas, 1994, 108x161 cm.

Abstract Movement The trend towards abstraction which began during the last decades of the 19th century in the West, culminating in what is widely regarded as the first "abstract" or "non-objective" painting around 1910 by the Russian V. Kandinsky. Various forms of abstraction quickly appeared throughout Europe, along with justifications in the form of manifestos. Suprematism, neo-Plasticism, Rayonism and Orphism were a few of these relatively short-lived movements. Abstraction in general continues to this day, making its appearance in India relatively late in the post-Independence era. Most of these artists began by taking direct inspiration from the West. In recent years, Indian artists have increasingly displayed an originality of vision and conception in their abstract works. Refer Bengal School, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramkinkar Baij, Setlur Gopal Vasudev, Illustration—Ambadas.

Abstract Painting Non-representational art's original source, e.g., landscape or still life becomes simplified or geometrical on the two-dimensional surface of the canvas or paper with oil paint, ink, watercolour, gouache, collage and many other mediums. Refer Vasudeo Santu Gaitonde, Homi Patel, Natvar Bhavsar.

Abstract Sculpture Non-representational art in three-dimension. The form conveys the inner relationship of the artist with his or her work. Artists express themselves in simplified or geometrical forms in various media. These could be mixed media, cement concrete, clay, bronze, wood, metal, hemp, weaving or any other. The size may vary from the very small to large building-sized sculptures.

Arriving in India in the 20s, it influenced the works of artists such as Debi Prasad RoyChowdhury, S. Pansare, Vinayak Pandurang Karmarkar, Ramkinkar Baij, Vivan Sundaram and Shankar Nandgopal. Refer Abstract, Abstract Art, Abstract Expressionism, Abstract Impressionism, Abstract Symbolism, Abstraction Organic.

Abstract Symbolism When abstract forms stand for certain symbols with specific meaning as in the neo-Tantric works of Biren De and Ghulam Rasool Santosh. Tantricism is however an ancient way of life in India, exploited by painters mainly in the latter half of the 20th century. Refer Neo-Tantricism, Symbolic Art, Symbolism, Tantric Composition; Illustration—Madhukar B. Bhat, Prafulla Mohanti.

Abstraction Figurative A term used to describe works in which the figure, entirely or in fragmented form, still appears, e.g., H. Moore, P. Picasso. The first artist in India to adopt this style was Ramkinkar Baij, others are Maqbool Fida Husain, K.K. Hebbar, Rabin Mondal; Refer Illustrations—Aku, Manjit Bawa, Dhanraj Bhagat, Arpana Caur, Francis Newton Souza.

Abstraction Geometric It is when the forms in the work of art have a geometric character as opposed to the soft flow of Organic Abstraction. Gaganendranath Tagore was the first Indian artist to adopt geometric construction of forms and cubist style in the works of art. Sayed Haider Raza's works, after the 70s especially are demonstrative of this style. Refer Art, Tantric, Gaganendranath Tagore, Dipak Banerjee, Shobha Broota, V. Viswanadhan.



Abstraction Geometric: Gaganendranath Tagore, "Magician", Watercolours, 27x34 cm.

Abstraction Lyrical The European version of Abstract Expressionism, associated particularly with the delicate calligraphic paintings of H. Michaux. The modern works of the Kolkata painter

Abstraction Lyrical: Sudhangsu Bandhopadhyay, "Colour Shadows", Oil on Canvas, 102x76 cm.



Sudhangsu Bandhopadhyay using strokes of black against a white background can be termed as lyrical abstraction.

Abstraction Organic The forms in such works, though still non-representational, evoke associations with organic forms, forms of nature. V. Kandinsky's works of 1910–15, e.g., when a splash of blue could variously mean the flow of water, or the spread of the sky over the horizon. In India, this form can be seen in the works of Ambadas and Setlur Gopal Vasudev, both of them exploiting this genre to create meandering forms, that could also be seen as landscapes. Refer Abstract Expressionism.

Abu-Dilwara Temples The Vimala Vasahi and the Luna Vasahi are the main Jain temples erected at Mount Abu, RAJ. In the Solanki era the former was dedicated to the first Tirthankara, Adinath, and built by Vimala Shah, the minister of King Bhimadeva in 1032. The Luna Vasahi was built later in 1231, by Vastupala and Tejapala in memory of their brother Lunige.

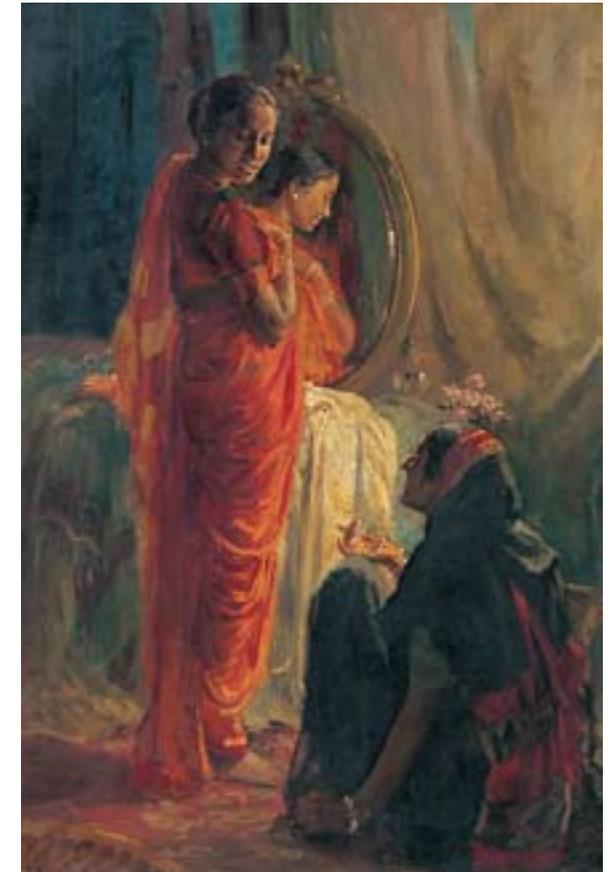
The delicate marble carvings and sculptures in both these shrines illustrate the general Solanki tendency towards a high level of ornamentation. The shrine was dedicated to the 22nd Tirthankara, Neminatha. The outward aspect of these temples contrasts sharply with the profusely decorated interiors, the carvings having delicate filigree work. The domes, though plain on the outside, are decorated with concentric rings and suspended pendants on the inside and are filled with repeated patterns of elephants, lotus flowers and dancers. Bracket figures of goddesses further embellish these domes. The Luna Vasahi also has an elephant stable with ten marble elephants carrying attendants on their backs. The cells around the periphery of the temples also show elaborate carvings. The sculptures are gently stylized, with sharp features and flattened limbs, pointing to the use of the file rather than the chisel in carving.



Abu-Dilwara Temples: Dilwara temple style, Mount Abu, RAJ.

Academic Art This originally meant the traditional or conventional style of art taught at official Academies of Art from the 16th century onwards. Academic Art flourished in India with Raja Ravi Varma (1846–1906). Today it is a pejorative term meaning art which is non-innovative, unoriginal. In the 70s when abstraction became popular, figurative art

was called academic; today any conventional painting or sculpture including realistic landscape and portrait is termed academic. Refer John Fernandes, Suhas Bahulkar, Vinayak Pandurang Karmarkar, Gajanan Narayan Jadhav.



Academic Art: Muralidhar R. Achrekar, "Toilet", Oils, 1929, 105x73 cm.

Academy An institution, organization or association dealing with the promotion or teaching of the arts. The word can be traced to classical Greek (the Athenian grove where Plato discoursed with his students) Plato's Academy. In 15th- and 16th-century Italy, the term referred to groups of humanists meeting for discussion. These gradually became formalized and the first Academy of Fine Arts was founded by Gallery Vasari in Florence in 1563. Academies were subsequently founded in Paris, the French Academy in 1648 and the RAA in London in 1768. Today the term is widely used to denote a teaching institution in the field of the arts, including music, drama, etc. In India this term, sometimes spelled Akademi, includes schools such as AFA Kolkata, JISA (Bombay School), GCAC & Madras School of Art Chennai, KB in Santiniketan, AFA, RBU & RB Kolkata and associations like LKA & its branches.

Academy of Fine Arts (AFA) (Kolkata). AFA was founded in 1933 by Lady Ranu Mukherjee for the promotion of art and culture in India. It is an educational institution offer-