

## Research Article

# Drawing as Significant Visual Language through the Ages: Primitive to Contemporary Period

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**How to cite this article:**

Kulshreshtha E. Drawing as Significant Visual Language through the Ages: Primitive to Contemporary Period. *J Adv Res Humani Social Sci* 2019; 6(1): 1-3.

Date of Submission: 2019-02-16

Date of Acceptance: 2019-04-11

## A B S T R A C T

Present paper is an attempt to provide the information about the gradual transformation of drawing from the early period to present day. Drawing is a basic tool for the visual depiction of various forms deals with articulating and developing one's extraordinary ideas. An essential feature of the development of art in India that can now be recognized is the persistence of rock paintings. Line is the basis of communication in Indian art. The wall paintings and miniatures of India too are rooted on the power of line. The invention of paper had also redefined the concept of drawing. In pre independence period focus on lyricism through delicacy of line in semi abstract or geometric form. After independence there are conceptual drawing evoke social milieu, fantasy in postmodern framework. Contemporary artists choose to highlight the idea rather and execution which shows eclecticism. These artists interweave the rhythm of life with meaningful forms through memory and experience and also widened Intellectual incisiveness and consciousness.

**Keywords:** Drawing, Visual language, Line, Cotemporary

## Introduction

Art is that human activity that transforms the objects in to new forms, which give new meaning and expression. Art has a very important function to perform. It communicates artist's feelings to the recipient and serves as a tonic to improve the moral health of the society. Art is the mirror of contemporary society. An artist cannot avoid the circumstances and situations surrounding him and thus social values are imbibed in his individual perception. Art heightens our awareness of the world, through a higher organisation of the perceptual and conceptual elements. Artistic creation is not entirely a different faculty of the human mind but a more intense form of gaining consciousness through coding in various medium.

## Meaning of Drawing

Drawing is the basic, on which all kind of art work is built. Drawing embodies a genuine and an independent way of

thinking. It can be seen all over space and is interlinked with our environment. Drawing is a spontaneous representation from inner desire and thought by touching of a surface with repetition of marks, dots and lines captivating the sensitivity of the mind. A drawing is an attempt to project the three dimensional world in two dimensions. The notion of drawing defines the thoughts and power of thinking. It is a unique method for manifestation in terms of visualization of shapes, forms and figures and deals with various concepts and thoughts of the artistic efforts and then gives them a structure, which may be impulsive, natural, and imaginative. Drawing may be objective or subjective. Objective drawing conveys information while subjective drawing explores artists feeling and emotion. There are various types of drawing like representational, automatic, gestural, contour, realistic, abstract, surrealist, isometric and conceptual drawing. Drawing symbolizes an independent way of thinking and it is undoubtedly considered as a basic element of art work.

Through the history of art, drawing has been immensely vital, not just as an art form but also an important cog in the process of documentation, from botanical sketches to inventions, from prehistoric era to modern day. It have been used to convey message thoughts and idea. Indian drawing is highly conceptual in character. About the origin of drawing there is a mention of an interesting myth in the Vishnudharmottara Purana in A.D. 35 of Chitrakuta. Portraiture was the earliest form of drawing in India.

Drawing is one of the oldest forms of communication, dating back even farther than verbal communication. The wanderer settled in his rock shelter, was India's first artist. There is grandeur of conception and a nobility of vision in the Ajanta cave drawing which give to it a unique position in the history of art. In Ellora drawings the colours are few but the drawing is entirely dominated by tranquil lines, with shallow curves. By the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. the expression of pictorial art took a different turn. There was a drastic change which came in the field of painting from wall paintings to miniature paintings. The enormous quantity of these small scale paintings done in ancient India was on palm-leaf, and later on paper.

A very important part of the art referred to as Mughal, or later as Rajasthani and Pahari, consists of drawings which include both finished pictures and artists preliminary studies. Drawings by Mughal artists explore huge variety in the medium. Mughal drawings are famous for their maturity in execution. They used *pouncing* technique in their execution. Stippling or shading forms an important factor in later Mughal painting. Paper was the most popular and also the most readily available medium. Major kinds of handmade paper were made available to the Mughal painters. The terms used in Mughal drawings are:

*Shading-Pardaz*, Final outlining-*kholai*, Finishing touch-*tayari ki kalam*.

Border lines-*khat* Stippling or shading with minute parallel lines-*khat Pardaz* and with dots-*dana Pardaz*.

The Rajput school is entirely independent of Persia, and even the Mughal style. The Rajasthani drawings is epic, much of the work is mythological, or lyrical with religious contents. Pahari artists deal with the brush with gracefulness and attractiveness. The flowing lines in Pahari drawings control the pleasing colours which seem to be translation from pen to brush. The artists in Rajasthan and Pahari use the term *Pardaz* for modelling. Artist Badri Lal of Bhilwara in Rajasthan defines this:

*Danadar*: Stippling with Dots, *Batka*, Parallel horizontal strokes, *Jal*: Woven lines, that is, criss-cross strokes, *Sakra-Para*: Cross-hatching

Company drawings were results of attempts by the Indian artists to adjust their style according to British needs and

paint subjects to their patrons appeal.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Bengal school, known as Renaissance of Indian art, revived the classical and religious tradition. Indian modernism can be said to have started with the works of Rabindra Nath Tagore, Jamini Roy and Amrita Sher Gil. Abanindra Nath Tagore, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Gaganendranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Jamini Roy, A.R. Chughtai and Sarada Charan Ukil are noteworthy name in this regard. In pre independence period there are focus on iconography, beautification of forms with realistic presentation of male and female. The natural rhythm and simple linear forms are visible in artists creation. In the precise year of Indian independence in 1947 a group of artists get together in Mumbai to form the Progressive Artist' Group. The Group consisted of F.N. Souza, M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza, K.H. Ara and H.A. Bakre. The Progressive Artist rejected outright what they considered as the revivalistic methods of the Bengal school. At the same time they opposed the academic styles taught at the schools of art set up by the British.

The post-independence artists explored drawing for its own sake sometimes to execute meaningful forms, fantasy, dream, erotica subjects and gave new dimensions to these subjects. They rejected the stereotype presentation of anything and explored unusual thing in order to show pain and grief. Reconciliation between ideas and concepts, content and form has been the significant occupations of post-independent Indian art.

In contemporary art there are Plethora of thoughts and ideology, cultural diversity, global influence, innovation with materials, conceptual analysis, cultural engagement and new media creation. Indian contemporary artists focused on prevailing situation of society, various social issues, international politics, many aspects of human life, urban chaos, ecological disaster, global issue, nuclear disaster, spirituality and reinterpretation of myth. Artists belonging to contemporary era, imbibe the intrinsic value of drawing through a language and amalgamating elements derived from various contexts. The elements become essential means, reflecting on certain nuances of the artist's psyche and practices.

## Contemporary Trends in Drawing

- Myth based Drawings. Myth is the aspect of every culture. Myths explore stories of belief of culture. They are a kind of symbolic narration and belong to particular religious traditions. Artists in contemporary Indian art reinterpret the myth through their articulation of work. They aim to prove that myth can be found everywhere in society.
- Ornamental Embellishment: Artists use various kinds of decorative style and motifs in their work. Decoration

and use of motifs and pattern establish the style of ornamental embellishment.

- **Abstract Drawing:** Artists developed abstraction through line, form, shape and with colour to create the visual drama. This style of art work allows the viewer to decide what the artwork is about and the important thing is to understand the artist's theme and reason behind this.
- **Social Issue based Drawing:** Indian contemporary art not only provides a space for aesthetic expression, but it also serves as a vehicle for social change. The social consciousness and awareness is seen in the artworks of Indian contemporary art. Artists are influenced by the happenings of the society. By using their drawing as a unique medium artists challenge the issues of society. The aim of the artists is to improve society, and they address the problems of communities by expressing their inner voice.
- **Fantasy:** It has been an essential part of art. It depicts the unreal, the impossible, unexpected imagination which makes the art wonderful and creative. It means imagination unrestricted by reality.
- **Grotesque:** Distorted and unnatural in shape or size; abnormal and hideous. Art characterized by an incongruous mixture of parts of humans and animals.
- **Erotic** – means giving sexual pleasure; sexually arousing. It is a quality that produces sexual feeling. This feature may be found in any art form. This type of art shows the naked people or sexual acts, and is intended to develop feelings of sexual pleasure.
- **Futuristic:** it is an artistic term related to technology and advanced form and concept. It involves modern technology and looks unusual. The futuristic ideas are more advanced. A vision of seeing something that other people cannot see. A future situation or society is what an artist imagines or hopes it would be like. Things will be very different from the way they are now.

### Contemplation of Drawing by Indian Contemporary Artists

In contemporary art world, artists are creating new art which integrates a wide range of new media in creative way to challenge the way of understanding and perceiving the world. Artist subject matter is thought provoking, expressed their aesthetic belief in artistic creativity. Compositions are silently realised and visually expressed in painterly manner of form and space with spontaneous handling of media. Many artists are exploring drawing for its own sake. Artists have gone through various phases of creativity. They have not disconnected themselves from their thematic configuration of conveying a concept; they use symbolical manifestation with expressionistic approach. The exuberance of linear mode and daring lyrical distortion of forms and magical composition influence the legacy of

Indian spatial arrangement. In these works line texture and concept plays a very important role. The diverse meaningful assimilation of simple, primitive, folk, decorative, grotesque, bizarre forms represents strong and mature contemporary expression. Artists from contemporary periods are Arpita Singh, A. Ramachandran, Satish Gujral, Jogen Chowdhury, Sudhir Patwardhan, Jatin Das, Nilima Shiekh, Laxma Goud, Satish Gujral, and Jai Jharotia. Many artists from young generation are Phaneendra Nath Chaturvedi, Manjunath Kamath, Sheila Makhijani, Ashim Purkayastha, Gargi Raina, Debnath Basu and others, who explored superb drawing as a complete art form. These artist uses drawing in infinite number of ways. Some might draw practice, to strengthen or develop technique, to keep private visual notes, as experimental and exploratory exercises; others make drawing as a finished art work in its own right. Artist interweave the rhythm of life with meaningful form through memory and experience and also widened Intellectual incisiveness and consciousness.

### Conclusion

Life in India today seems to provoke her artists to begin to think more pertinently of their aesthetic requirements and to evolve their own mind a clear image of what they are looking for in the art of their time. Drawing is as old as the human civilization, or even better than, as fresh as the human dreams and imaginations. Drawing is a maximum expression in minimum medium. These artists from abstract painters to figurative painters to sculptor tell us how the drawings act as a force of inspiration for them. It is powerful and effective as painting and as meaningful as sculpture.

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