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Glossary

Term	Definition
Abhaya	It is the Sanskrit term which is used to denote fearlessness and protection
Abhinaya	It is the expressive techniques used in Indian dance and drama to convey a specific mood or theme which includes certain bodily gestures
Adbhuta	It is one of the rasas which depicts the feeling of wonder, amazement, and astonishment
Alaukika	It is the term which relates to the feeling of sublime which affects one deeply
Ananda	It is the term which denotes the state of extreme bliss and happiness
Bhava	It is the emotion or mood which is conveyed to the spectators by a performer on stage
Bhayanaka	It is one of the rasas which stands for the feeling of fearfulness and horror
Bibhatsa	It is one of the rasas which stands for the feeling of disgust and unpleasantness
Bindu	It is the term used to denote a dot or a point
Bodhisattva	It is the term which relates to one who is on the path of awakening to reach nirvana
Cittasuddhi	It is the purification of consciousness which is equivalent to Aristotle's notion of Catharsis
Dhvani	It is the evocative presentation of certain ideas or actions which evokes a rasa in the spectator
Gopi	It is the term used for the female lovers who dance with Lord Krishna
Haasya	It is one of the rasa which stands for laughter and comedy
Karuna	It is one of the rasas which stands for compassion or sympathy

Maya	It is the Sanskrit term for illusion
Maha Bindu	In tantric ideology it refers to the highest consciousness, representative of Shiva and Shakti
Nataraja	'Nata' refers to dance and 'Raja' refers to Lord and translated to 'Lord of Dance'
Natyasastra	It is the texts left behind by sage Bharata Munni which describes the inner essence of performing arts
Patuas	The term refers to folk artists which paints on scrolls
Rajas	It is one of the three gunas which stands for action and passion
Rasa	It is termed used to refer to the aesthetic impression a work of art arouses from a spectator
Raudra	It is one of the rasa which stands for anger and furiousness
Rigveda	It is a collection of ancient texts which contains ritualistic hymns
Sadhanamala	It is collection of ancient texts of Sadhana that contains instructions for various rituals
Samavedha	It is a collection of texts which is contains the Veda of melodies and chants
Satya	It is the term which refers to the essence of truth and righteousness
Sattva	It is one of the three gunas which refers to purity, harmony and knowledge
Shakti	In tantric philosophy, it refers to the divine feminine energy
Shiva	In tantric philosophy, it is refers to the male energy of creation
Silpasatra	It is a term for the collection of various Hindu texts that describe the principles of art, design and craft
Sringara	It is one of the rasas which stands for love
Sundara	The term refers to the essence of the beautiful
Tamas	It is one of the three gunas which refers to laziness and impurity

- *Veera* It is one of the rasas which stands for courage and heroism
- *Yajurveda* It is a collection of texts which contains the Veda of mantras for worship rituals
- Yantra It is a tantric diagram used as an aid to meditation

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List of Publications

- Singh, Laishram Samson., and Deka, Mousumi. Ram Kumar's Abstract Landscapes: An Aesthetical Reanalysis Through Tolstoy and Croce's Theory of Expression. Rabindra Bharati Journal of Philosophy, XXIII (7), 96-100 (2022).
- Singh, Laishram Samson., and Deka, Mousumi. "K.C.S. Paniker's Words and Symbols: A Formalist Approach. ECS Transactions, 107, 8923-8938 (2022)
- Singh, Laishram Samson. Imitation and Expression: An Exposition of Abstraction in Modern Art. International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, 8(2), 975-984 (2021).

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RAM KUMAR'S ABSTRACT LANDSCAPES: AN AESTHETICAL REANALYSIS THROUGH TOLSTOY AND CROCE'S THEORY OF EXPRESSION

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Abstract

The idea of abstraction, distortion and simplification has always been present in Indian art from ancient times as it can be observed from various folk and tribal art along with ancient sculptures. However, the idea of abstraction in the modern sense came to India comparatively late and we find various Indian artists with unique modes of abstraction. Different artists had various influences from Western artists along with a fusion of Indian themes and indigenous sources such as tribal art, folk art and Tantra art. Among the modern abstract painters of India, Ram Kumar was an exceptionally talented and unique artist. He started out with simplified and distorted figures but after his visit to Benaras in the 1960's he never went back to figurative again. His abstract landscapes are full of expressionistic colours and patterns which is evocative of strong personal emotions representing psychological and cultural ideology. This paper aims at reanalyzing the deeper aesthetic values involved in Ram Kumar's abstract landscapes through the theories of expression expounded by Tolstoy and Croce. The dynamics of Modern Indian art has opened up multiple perspectives of reanalysis and revaluation. Various theories such as Imitation, Representation and Expression works in a combined structure to determine the deeper aesthetical value of Ram Kumar's abstract landscapes. The various Western and Indian influences also become a major factor in understanding the nature of abstraction in his works.

Key Words: Expression, Communication, Emotion, Abstraction, Representation.

Introduction

Abstraction has a wide variety of approach in accordance with the artists' desire whether it be psychological, emotional as well as cultural aspects. The definition of 'Abstraction' or 'Abstract Art' has been discussed in various art encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals and articles. Some of the most common definitions stated by various publications are Abstraction is a term assigned to the visual representation which derive their physical appearance from objects in nature but are distorted and simplified or broken down into simple forms which are rearranged in a way that the artist fancies thereby expressing himself in the process. Abstraction is a progression with changes starting from almost naturalistic representation to semi-abstraction and then pure abstraction where all the forms are completely unrecognizable at this stage. It does not associate the viewer to any kind of natural objects previously experienced. It is entirely imaginative and not a description from anything visually perceived by the artist. The components of the picture plane and the structure are organized and treated entirely in a personalized manner without sticking to the laws of physical objects (Ockvirk et al., 1994).

According to Painting and Understanding Abstract Art by John Lowry, abstraction is the opposite of copying. It is the use of imagination to present an image. Also, it is not the opposite of figurative or representative painting, since the source of the subject of the painting can often be recognized without it being truly realistic. Abstraction is a mental process involving either depicting what is seen by the artist but in his own interpretation, or realizing images directly in front of us. It is often easiest to begin with something realistic and then to take it on a process of simplification or exaggeration, and it is up to the artist to stop when the source is still recognizable or it can exaggerated further into complete abstraction where the source object is no longer recognizable (Lowry, 2010).

The definition can be simply summed up as the simplification or breaking down of representational elements into unrecognizable or highly distorted forms which may be exaggerated by unnatural colours, shapes, patterns, etc. The 20th century Western Modern art brought these 96

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K. C.S. Paniker's "Words and Symbols": A Formalist Approach

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Abstract

Formalism developed from the 19th century aesthetic of "Art for Art's sake". The Formalist exponents believed in the evaluation of an artwork solely based on its form, rather than its content. They reacted to an artwork on its formal and aesthetic qualities. Understanding the depth of Formalism is crucial in appreciating modern abstract art both of the West as well Indian. K.C.S. Paniker, being one of the most important figures in the abstractions of post-independence India, had many influences from western artists, although he always maintained his Indian identity in his works. His series of 'Words and Symbols' is one of his most important contribution to modern Indian art in which he was interested in the formal structure of the ancient Indian texts and symbols. Therefore, this paper aims at understanding the more complex nature of Formalism and how that can be used to reassess Paniker's works.

A Background Study on the Various Developments in Western Modern Art and Aesthetics

Two of the most important components of a work of art are its form and the content. The form is the sensuous manifestation of the artwork which is built around the content. The artist may use any kind of medium such as paint and canvas, stone, wood or clay and the artist, by visualizing his feelings, ideas and emotions create the form. When these subjective elements are objectified, they become the content of the artwork. The significance of content in art varies from one culture to the other. For example, in the West, the influence of ancient Greek art has made the western artists too conscious of the formal qualities of the work, which cannot be compromised for the sake of the content whatsoever. However, in ancient Indian art, on the contrary, the sculptural activities had been mostly influenced by the desire to represent spiritual and abstract elements and it is not necessary for the Indian artists to conform to the natural forms strictly and realistically as seen in ancient Greek and Renaissance art. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to conclude that the Indian artists had no sense of value for the formal qualities (1).

Various kinds of art maintain a balance between form and content according to their functional and aesthetic aspects. Visual arts such as architecture mostly give precedence to form over content, meaning that an architectural piece such as a building are admired for its physical beauty, symmetry, use of space and functional aspects and one do not seek or try to find meanings, contemplative thoughts behind an architectural work. They

8923

203

IMITATION AND EXPRESSION: AN EXPOSITION OF ABSTRACTION IN MODERN ART

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Abstract- Modern art has a varied range of Avant-garde movements which have various unique approaches to the multi-faceted nature of art. Abstraction also happens to be one of the most popular and significant approach to many of the art styles and movements in modern art and each artist also made use of its flexibility in their own unique way. Some took inspiration from their surroundings and distorted the images resulting in a semi-abstract whereas some used it as a way of expressing the super-sensual elements such as emotions, passions and mood. Analysing these multi-faceted nature of abstraction in art would require a perspective from not just one but a combination of the multitude of various aesthetic theories. Therefore, this paper aims at the discussion and exposition of the nature of abstraction in Modern art through the Greek theory of 'Imitation' or 'Mimesis' which include thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle along with comparisons and contrasts with the modern theories of 'Expression' which includes thinkers such as Tolstoy and Croce. *Key words- Mimesis, Imitation, Representation, Sensuous, Super-sensuous, Expression, Abstraction.*

I. Introduction

Throughout history art has been one of the most dynamic subjects because of its ever changing traditions and facades. Art is influenced by various outside factors such as social, economic and religious factors. All of these factors and the way the society have evolved leads to development of new languages and traditions in art as well. Perhaps, one of the biggest changes in art was with the arrival of the Modern art movement which introduced new radical approaches to art. These new changes also brought about new ways of looking at art, its appreciation and interpretation. Before the dawn of Modern art, right from ancient Greek art and again from the Renaissance to French Realism, art adhered to its representational values by depicting its subject in naturalistic forms and colours, attention to minute details and proper use of perspective and anatomy. But with the coming of new movements such as Impressionism, artists began experimenting with colours and effects of light instead of focusing on the accurate depiction of the subject. Loose and broken brushstrokes became the constituents of the paintings resulting in a rather distorted and sketchy image of the actual objects. Such distortions could be seen in the artworks of artists such as Monet in his works such as the 'Water lily pond' (Figure 1). The painting appears to be a sketchy rendering of the actual landscape with plenty of distortions and thick patches of paint yet viewers could still make out the representation of the foliages and the water lilies. Later developments such as in the works of Post-Impressionist artists like Van Gogh, Cezanne and Gauguin introduced even more distortions in the paintings. The artworks and the application of paints became more expressive rather than careful and precise imitation such as in the works of Van Gogh's 'Starry night' where he used unnatural swirling and vibrant brushstrokes which he painted when he was admitted in a mental asylum (Figure 2). During this phase in modern art, artists started relying heavily on abstraction which resulted in Avant-garde movements such as Cubism, Expressionism, Fauvism, etc. However, even in the works of these movements, though highly abstracted, viewers could still make out recognizable forms and references to the external world. Pure abstraction without any recognizable forms began to emerge with artists such as Kandinsky, a member of Der Blaue Reider group of German Expressionism. Other significant pioneering artists of pure abstraction included artists such as Malevich and Mondrian.

Mimesis or Imitation theory is one of the first aesthetic theories introduced to analyse and study the nature of art. Fine art is known to possess its own autonomous values in as much as its product arouses an experience that no product of nature can, unless of course it is looked upon as a work of art. The Imitation theory arose with the fact that artist of that time took objects from nature to imitate it and thereby making it into a work of art. Greek artists, for example used the well-proportioned men and women in their society as their models to represent their Gods. However, according to Socrates, imitation in art does not comprise of pure and simple replication of the exterior of a physical object in nature. The success of imitative art does not lie in the creation of illusion. Socrates was the first to discern the symbolic component in the work of art of

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