

The function of Abstraction in Modern Visual Art

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Abstract

In post- independence modern Indian art, abstraction become major trend in it and gives more colourful expression to it. From 50's onwards abstract art goes through diverse development phases. It gives significant contribution in the upliftment of modern art. Artists of 1950's and 60's plays a vital role in the field of art for appreciation of abstraction as important tendency in visual art. Among all few of artists work in this, whose work shows sense of sensibility and craftsmanship. Not only modern Indian art society in progress but also number of Indian artists changing their perspective for art but keeping themselves bind with their roots. In research paper our aim is to explore the true essence of Indian art in abstraction art. There are number of new mediums and forms of art but who are the artists who still exploring their art with a traditional approach is what our paper will be highlighting scene. In this paper, author will use contemporary Indian artists art work as an example of modern blend world art with its traditions alive. And to find the approach, completely abstract or still home bound is a question we will be aiming to answer through this paper.

Keywords: Tantric, Abstract, Concept, Trends, Contemporary Art.

1. Introduction:

The term abstraction art in India art is very difficult to understand, due to no single or combined movement discovered here; no group show any deep presence with common characteristics or ideas. In Indian art it is a story of single growth, all working and developing their own language in art. Abstraction is very clear-cut form of art, which travel through different creative visuals of art. In twentieth century, abstraction is one of the most influential styles of art, that affect the world art production and reach its peak in the first two decades of twentieth century as an accepted form of art.

Abstraction main aim is to make art works free from representational subject matters. It generally means art that does not depict objects as it is in the world but showing in non-representational way that is use of different shapes, texture or colours. Artists are freed themselves from the boundaries of criteria and other restrictions. As art is based on the concept that there is much power and value in the elements of art (colour, shape and texture). And the creative use of these elements has the power to generate feeling, emotion and a response. They are trying to show their own chosen material with their own inner impression which deals with making depiction not from the real world, but which is lived, felt and expressed.

Abstract art is not about formless work because when one makes any point or stroke on a canvas it automatically generates some form and that form is important in the context of analysis. Abstraction art can't be formless. And based on form abstraction is considered into three types that is Organic, Geometric and Autonomous Abstractions.

Types of Abstraction

1. Organic abstraction is non-representational imagery from nature or has been obtained from some aspect of the representational world where they no longer follow conventional reality. In this nature play outstanding role as artist starts with natural object and ends with simplified up to such stage that it has no relation to the visible reality. Moreover, it is not from any school or movement. It is a noticeable feature of the work of many important artists.
2. Geometric forms always known as pure form in art and artists who work with these forms to make an art work, regardless weather they are symbolic or non-objective is geometric abstraction. In India number of artist work with geometric forms to build their own style in abstract art. Some of them are S.H Raza, G.R Santosh, Om Parkash.
3. In third type, artist draw attention on the creation of an art object from non-representational autonomous form. Form is completely non-objective in autonomous abstraction. The elements of art (line, point, form, colour, texture) become subject matter in work and only artist's inner expression is concerned beyond its elements.

Abstraction is complex issue due to involvement of different methods, techniques and expression of a person. And another important feature of abstract art is, its process from which one gets abstract image. Based on its process, it is further divided into two parts that is suggestive and accidently in nature.

2. Origin And Sources:

Abstraction can be seen from earlier cave drawings of Bhimbetka dating to 30,000 BC²⁰. Caves contain many engravings of animals, motifs as well as abstract designs. It includes geometric forms such as dots, circle, loop, wavy line, triangle is non- representational in character. But geometry begins in the third millennium BCE in Indus valley civilization. It shows deep understanding of sophisticated geometric principles as one can see developed skills in their pottery and painting.



Figure2. a.: Pre-Historic paintings, Bhimbetka Caves, Bhopal, 30000 BC

Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=Pre-Historic+paintings,+Bhimbetka+Caves,+Bhopal>.

3. Abstract Relation:

A. Religion:From long ago Indian religious art are related with certain symbols. Symbols are important of Indian tradition and religious system which had meaning associated with their iconography and structure of form. Religious and ritual diagrams are made of very simplified forms and these shows that abstraction has important role in tradition from past time. Some of significant symbols are Chakra- the wheel of time represent movement, Swastika represent the fourfold aspects of creation and motion, Padma-lotus represent creation, Linga and Yoni represent male and female symbol of fertility.

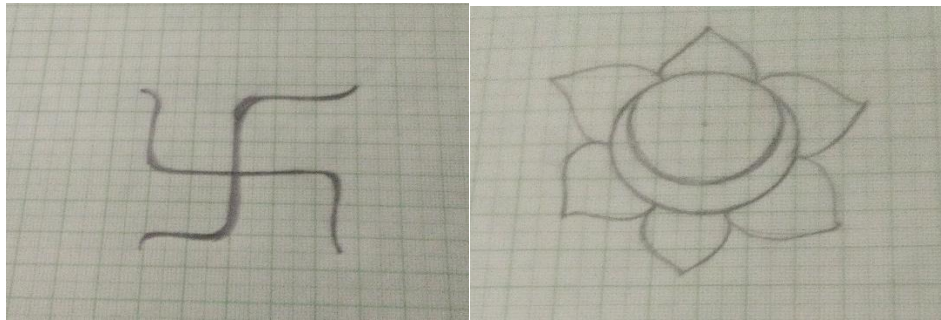


Figure 3.a.a: Swastik sign

Source: By Researcher

Figure 3.a.b: Padama & Chakra sign

Source: By Researcher

B. Architecture: Even architecture is also related with geometrical forms. One of the examples is vastu-purusha mandala which is a cosmic square diagram. It is fundamental form in which all other shapes are derived from it. Here square represent all four directions that are East, West, North and South, which makes space comprehensible and it is appropriate symbol of the extended world.

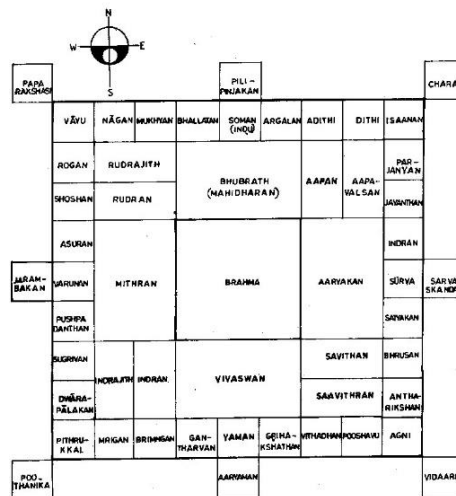


Figure 3.b.a: Vastu-purusha mandala

Source: <https://www.google.com/search?safe=active&biw=1492&bih=628&>

C. Tantra Art: Tantra is an olden tradition which is difficult to explain. It is deeply interrelated with geometric signs and symbols. The philosophy and iconography of tantra is abstract in character. Earlier tantrics used these yantras and mandalas for ritual and magical purpose. The forms and symbols used in these yantra and mandalas are associate to their symbolic meaning. Such as Bindu, Oval, Square, Triangle, Trident,

Piercing eyes, Om and various other organic, geometric, floral, vegetable, animistic, gods and goddess are drawn in it.

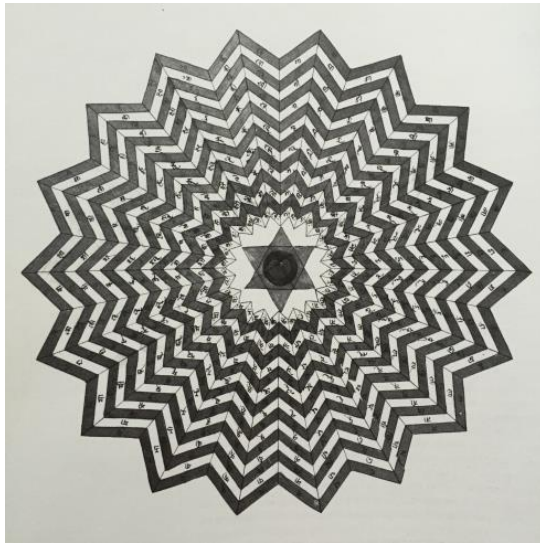


Figure 3.c. a: Yantra

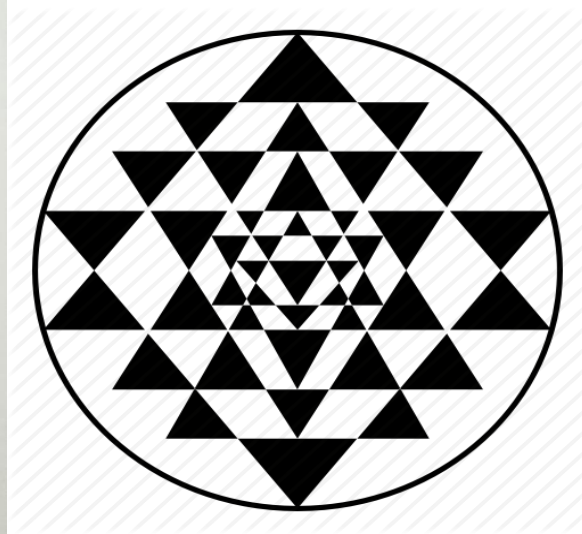


Figure 3. c. b: Sri Yantra

Source: https://www.123rf.com/photo_83411141_stock-vector-sri-yantra-sacred-symbol-vector-illustration-for-your-design.html

D. Folk Art: Folk art is that form of art which keep on passing from one generation to another. And in India folk art is not about beautiful but also have rituals and beliefs in it. Folk art is not completely abstract in nature as it folk so related to some narrative stories, rituals, beliefs in it. But geometric or abstract forms are internal part of folk art. And any folk art whose character shows near abstract or acknowledgeably abstract that art is Rangoli. These follow by large range of geometric patterns which includes circle, triangle, zig-zag lines, rectangle, swastika, sun, etc. Rangoli is perform in every state with different motive and names.

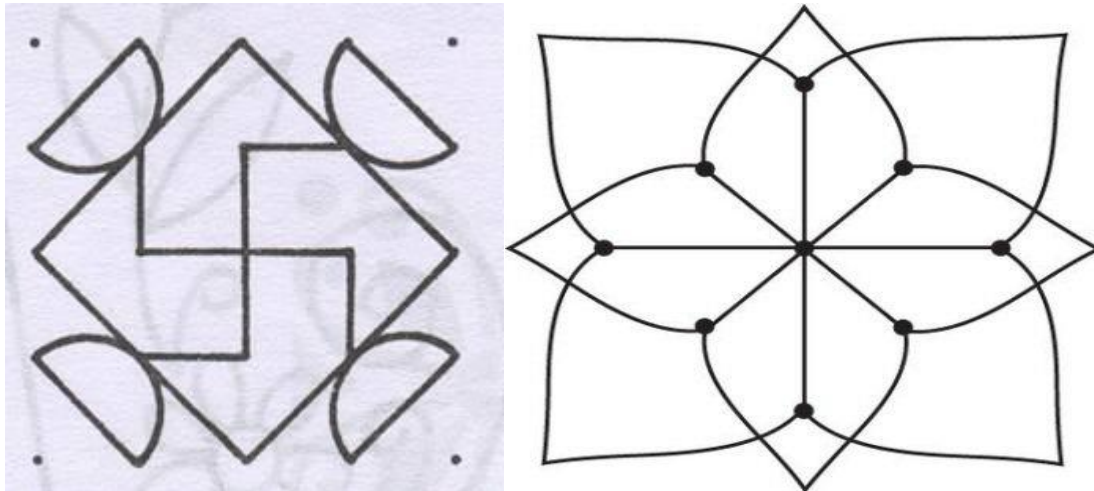


Figure 3.d.a: Rangoli basic structure

Figure 3.d.b: Rangoli Basic structure

Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=Rangoli+basic+structure&safe>

4. Contemporary Artists:

Syed Haider Raza was born in 1922 in Babria, in the district of Narsimhapur in Madhya Pradesh. He was one of the founder member of Progressive Artists Group (PAG) in 1947. Group had a great impact on the development of modern art in India. Syed Haider Raza began his artistic career with expressionistic landscape. His aim was to create more simplified structure of forms by using geometrical forms in the painting. Early 1950's Raza move to Paris. In 1960's French art scene was dominated by non-objective or non-representational painting. And currently Raza shift towards the gestural abstraction. In later year, his artistic vocabulary attaches with earth, fire, water and air themes. His research with art for almost 15 years, return his palette to Indian sensibility and establishes an immediate distance from other forms of gestural expressionism. During this period Raza started visit to Indian regularly to visit the caves of Ajanta- Ellora, Banaras, Gujarat and Rajasthan which realise his root. He reflected on his childhood memories. A lesson by his teacher Shri Nand Lalji Jharia on point became motivational to work further. In the late 1970's Raza moved to pure geometrical forms. He moved toward the circle or Bindu, which became main part of his art work. According to him Bindu stands for the seed, bearing the potential of all life. He further adds symbol of Tribhuj (triangle) which reflect the concept of space as well as male and female energy. During long experience in painting, he has evolved into deep abstract painter.



Figure 4.a: Bindu

Year: 1992

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 39.25 X 39.5 in.

Source:

<https://www.google.com/search?safe=active&biw=1492&bih=628&tbm=isch&sa>

Figure 4.b: From a limited edition of one hundred

Year: 2006

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 80.5 X 80.5 in.

Shobha Broota belongs to rich artistic traditional family. Born in 1943, studied at college of Art, Delhi. And one of India's most well-established contemporary artists. One can find her work in the collection of National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, in international museums and institutions. She undergone a lot of changes thematically as well as in her style of work. Her career starts with painting on various themes and subjects such as portraits of men and women, abstracted human forms, forms of birds, animals. And in the end, she fixed with nature elements that is earth, water, air, fire. Her works are geometric, usually in one shape in one work. Her colour scheme limited to monochromatic in painting. Her minimal art works are self- meditative and so calm they sum up an age-old artistic career. Her art work grows with her to a level of spirituality and serenity.

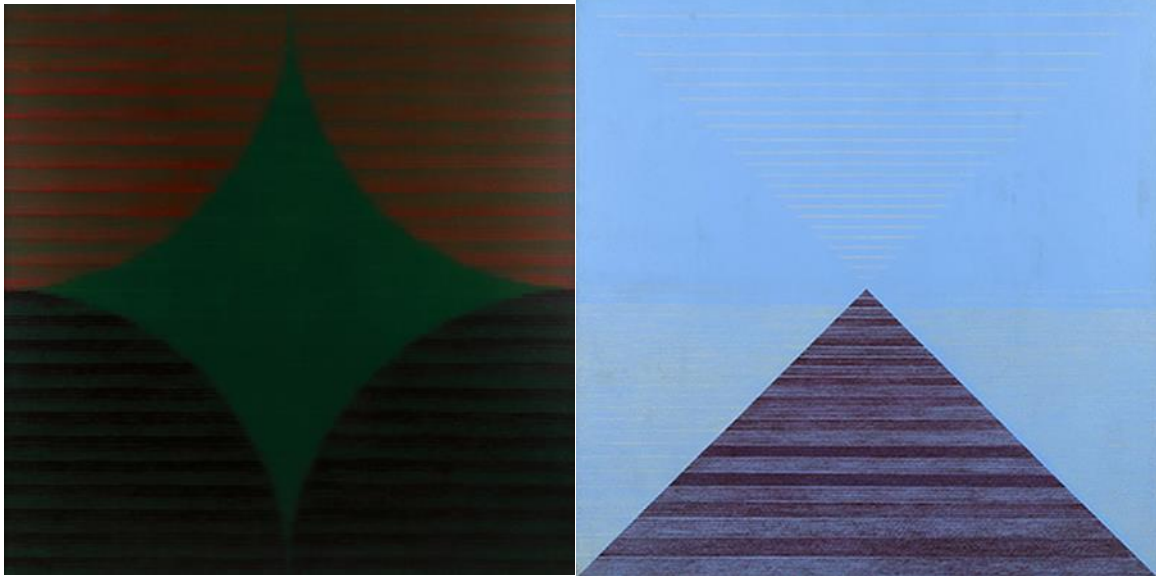


Figure 4. c: Untitled, 2008

Source: Online

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 60 X 60 in.

Figure 4. d: Untitled, 2009

Source: Online

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 47.5 X 47.5 in.

5. Conclusion:

In this research paper we have covered two artists, whose work reflect on Indian abstraction. They belong to different times contributed to art of our country. They are aware of all the westernization but they all trying to use their own cultural themes in their art works. Till independence, Indian contemporary art has no development in it. Moreover, artists were not recognized until the year 1950 in the contemporary world. These artists and many more connected with contemporary art but bounded with own cultural themes as pure Indian artists with complete understanding of Indian abstract art.

6. References:

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