

CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Himachal is also known as "Dev Bhoomi" Himachal art and craft is impressive especially in paintings, handloom products, woodworks and metal products. This is all because of artists which have given their lives for art born in Himachal Pradesh.

Himachal Pradesh is a state which is well known for its handicrafts in which some of them are carpet leatherwork, shawls, paintings, wood works etc. This research has focused upon the artist born in Himachal. It makes an effort to follow the accomplishments of Himachal Pradesh's top artists, who has creating stunning works of art in this tiny state. The promotion of art and the aesthetic standards of the people of Himachal has benefited greatly from the work of Om Prakash Taak, Sanat Kumar Chatterjee, Sobha Singh, and Surjeet Singh, Him Chaterjii, Vijay Sharma and Nand Lal Thakur. They have also made significant contributions to the improvement of the state's artistic climate. Style of artist varies according to interest and life experience.

Keywords - Handicrafts of Himachal Pradesh, paintings by Himachal Artists, handloom products, woodworks and metal products by Himachal born artist, aesthetic standards, and state's artistic climate in Himachal Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION:

In the western Himalayas sits the state of Himachal Pradesh. Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, and Ladakh are bordered by it. Himachal is frequently referred to as the "Dev Bhoomi" or "land of the gods." The art and craft of Himachal Pradesh is excellent, especially in the fields of paintings, handicrafts, woodworking, and metalwork. This is all a result of Himachal Pradesh-born artists who gave their lives for their work. The state of Himachal Pradesh is well recognized for its handicrafts, some of which include carpets, leatherwork, shawls, paintings, and woodwork. One of the well-known Himachal products that are in high demand all across INDIA is the Kullu shawl. The trademark of Himachal is the Himachali cap.

An embroidered handcraft known as a "Chamba rumal" or "Chamba handkerchief" was previously promoted by the former king of the Chamba kingdom. Rumals are now produced in rectangular and square shapes. Beginning about the middle of the 17th century, Pahari miniature painting was developed. It is incredibly vibrant, with its primordial expressiveness bursting with energy and emotional intensity. One of the most significant elements in many

Of the temples in Himachal Pradesh are the old metal statuettes. The representations of the gods and goddesses can also be found in "mohras" or on metal plaques. These early Pahari paintings are characterised by fish-shaped expanded eyes, oval faces, receding foreheads, round chins, and broad noses.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Chawla, Ashish (2020) - "Centre for Traditional Art and Craft, Manali Himachal Pradesh".

Himachal is well-known for its great art and handicrafts, including Chamba rumals, Kangra paintings, Kullu and Kinnauri shawls, and many more. We have many chances thanks to improved communication and connectivity, but in the context of Himachal Pradesh, there is a growing divide between traditional and modern markets. The thesis attempts to improve user involvement by raising awareness within the consumer community using the tourist industry as a platform and tools like the experiential economy. The final results will serve as the basis for designing areas in the traditional art and craft centre that will support the profession, culture, and elevation of Himachal Pradesh.

Pathak, Anamika (2010), -"Chamba rumal: Embroideries of the Himalayan region", 110. 22p.

He has discussed about chamba rumal in detail. India has a long history of beautiful embroidery, with variations in regional techniques on cotton, silk, and wool fabric. The Chamba state produces the most beautiful and artistic embroidery of any location in the nation. It is referred to as Chamba rumal (coverlet) and is embroidered with colourful silk threads and silver metal thread over white muslin or cotton cloth. The most significant ones include wall hangings, a range of outfits, fans, covers, etc., with lovely religious, secular, geometric, and floral design themes. The Chamba rumals display a unique needlework culture that represents the social and cultural lives of the locals. After carefully choosing a few rumals from the National Museum's collection in New Delhi, an effort has been made to demonstrate the variety of needlework styles and themes seen on these rumals

Sharma Shuchita (2020) – "An Aesthetic Analysis of Architecture and Wood Carvings: Mirkula Devi Temple, Himachal Pradesh, India", 265-269.

The Himalayas, often known as the "Abode of Snow," are not just a topographical characteristic of India; they are also the "Abode of the Gods," which has given India a certain cultural and aesthetic vibrancy. Here are ancient temples built of cedar wood that are still present in the valley of the river Spiti and display marvels of woodcarving in a classical, affluent form favoured by royalty, and on the other side, an indigenous style used by the locals. As a result, the aforementioned valley boasts a diverse collection of creative woodcarvings as well as a history of the distinctive traditional building method known as kath-khuni construction. This investigation focuses mostly on the Mirkula Devi wooden temple that still stands in the Spiti valley. The study offers a comprehensive aesthetic perspective on Kath-Kuni architecture, which is both traditional and indigenous, as well as woodcarvings.

RESEARCH GAP:

All the contemporary artists of Himachal Pradesh have their own style of their own. It makes an effort to follow the accomplishments of Himachal Pradesh's top artists, who are creating stunning works of art in this tiny state. Since 1966, artists include Surjeet Singh and H.C. Rai, MC Saxena Sujanpuri, etc. Aside from the artists mentioned above, there were other well-known artists who had connections to this state but were unable to settle and work here for an extended period of time. Ram Kumar and Amrita Sherrill were these artists who have worked outside the state.

The promotion of art and the aesthetic standards of the people of Himachal has benefited greatly from the work of Om Prakash Taak, Sanat Kumar Chatterjee, Sobha Singh, and Surjeet Singh. In addition, there are some additional artists that are also engaged in their various fields of work. They have also made significant contributions to the improvement of the state's artistic climate. . Style of artist varies according to interest and life experience

METHODOLOGY:

Some of primary and lots of Secondary data like books, magazine Articles, websites, etc. is going to be used for this research paper. For analysis of the artist's work Descriptive and Qualitative Methods is going to be used.

ARTIST OF HIMACHAL PRADESH:

The state of Himachal Pradesh has produced art with the assistance of all of its contemporary artists. Each contemporary artist in Himachal Pradesh has an own flair. It makes an effort to track the achievements of the best artists in Himachal Pradesh, who are producing magnificent works of art in this tiny state. Him Chatterjee and H.C. Rai are artists who have been active since 1966. Sanat Kumar, MC Saxena, etc. are other well-known artists. In addition to those already named, had ties to this state but were unable to live and work here for a prolonged period of time. These artists who have carried out work outside of the state include Ram Kumar and Amrita Sherrill. Here, I've listed some artists that are now in the working in Himachal. On the following page, I have discussed in greater depth on their method of working.

Artist – Vijay Sharma

When he was barely 15 years old, the father noticed his son's talent for sketching and sent him to Banaras to study painting. At the age of 18, Sharma began working as a painter for the Himachal Road Transport Corporation. Later, as a conservation assistant, he moved to the Department of Language and Culture, Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Vijay Sharma, a celebrated Pahari miniature artist, works at the Bhuri Singh Museum in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh. He has written several essays on the Pahari miniature paintings.

He uses a variety of Indian painting methods, but his principal ones are the Basohli and Kangra Schools of Pahari painting. He is the founder and president of Shilpa Parishad, a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting miniature painting in general and the Pahari School in particular. In addition to being an honorary advisor to the Delhi Crafts Council, an NGO seeking to revive Indian arts and crafts, he is a founding member of the Kangra Arts Promotion Society. Sharma, who practises the Basholi and Kangra schools of Pahari painting, is a well-known researcher and art historian. He reportedly learned ancient scripts and has written numerous books and articles about Himachal Pradesh arts and crafts. He has been awarded by Padma Shri also.

Contemporary miniature artist Vijay Sharma is headquartered in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh. His works, which are reminiscent of the kalam of artists like Devidas of Basohli or Nainsukh and Manaku of Guler, strive to revive the legacy of Pahari miniature painting. His creations exhibit a sense of elegance and poetry. His compositions are given emotion and dramatic evocation by the colours he employs. Sharma is proficient in all of the main Pahari painting styles, including Kangra, Guler, Chamba, and Mandi, but he is a Basohli style master above all others.

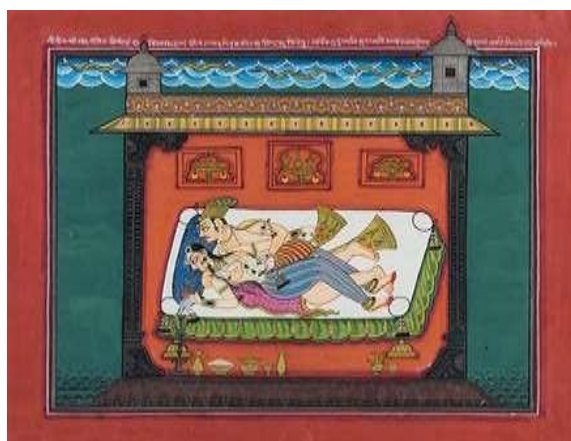


Fig. 1 - Vijay Sharma, “Folio from a Rasamanjari Signed in Devanagari and inscribed in Devanagari”, Gouache on paper, 9 x 6 Inches, Source of the Image www.saffronart.com

Description- in Rajasthan and Pahari miniatures, the expression of love in all of its manifestations was an important theme. Deep connections existed between romantic and devotional love. The Rasamanjari by Bhanudatta, a poem from the 16th century AD that has 163 stanzas and each of which describes the behavior of lovers, was one of the most popular works cited for the depiction of romance.

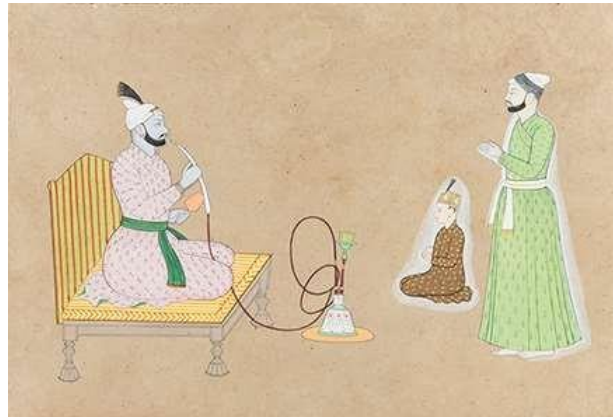


Fig. 2 - Vijay Sharma, “*Balwant Singh smoking Hookah*”, Gouache on paper, 8 x 11 inches, Source of the Image www.saffronart.com

Description- Khakas are essentially detailed line drawings that miniature artists use as a practice tool for illustration. The raja was frequently shown as a youthful prince smoking a hookah, perched on an elaborate carpet against a bolster, surveying a building site, or taking in a dance performance. Raja Balwant Singh is portrayed as writing a letter while unhurried in a well-known portrait of the monarch.

Artist – Him Chaterjii

He resides in Shimla and is the son of renowned artist S.K. Chatterjee. Under the skilful tutelage of his father-cum-guru S.K. Chatterjee, he acquired his painting skills. Beginning with realistic landscapes, the artist then transitioned to abstract versions of the same subjects. If we examine his pen drawings and structure drawings, which are particularly close to abstraction, we can clearly determine how patient this young artist was. His works, particularly his paintings, are quite close to abstraction. In addition to painting and pen sketching, he is a master at designing murals. He enjoys using steel and cement as a medium for his murals. His paintings, which have repeatedly praised the glory of trees and the beauty of woods in his home town Himachal.

His images regularly capture the majestic beauty of the snow-capped summits of the Himalayas. Additionally, Him Chatterjee has produced several beautiful Kinnaur region scenic series. We can notice the variety of hues in his artwork. It's fascinating to study the peaks' textures in his paintings. He has participated in countless art exhibitions all around the country.



Fig. 3 - Him Chatterjee '*Blue Gorge*' Acrylic on canvas, 72x 48 Inches, 2010, Source of the Image courtesy and image retrieved from website Him Chatterjee

Description- Here the artist has painted beautifully the Himalayan range. He has used beautiful used tones of blues, reds and yellows to depict the sun rise. by this we can see how much he is in love with the Himalayas. The sky has been treated very beautifully. Here, the bold strokes of the colors with painting knife are the hallmark of this painting.



Fig. 4 - Him Chartterjee '*University*' mural,
Source of the Image courtesy and image retrieved from website Him Chatterjee

Description- this work is displayed in the Himachal Pradesh University campus. In this mural, the artist has outlined the university's mission, which is represented by a question mark. Through the signage that goes with each department, each department has also been represented here. In the composition's center, a student is shown wearing a watch to symbolize the importance of time to students. A Swan, a representation of the goddess Sarasvati, has been painted on the student's head. Twelve human figures with question marks can be seen at the bottom of the mural, indicating that many visitors to the space are thinking about questions as they arrive. The artist has attempted to depict everything in a symbolic manner, such as by depicting a musical instrument. A musical instrument has represented the music department; a Sanskrit phrase has served as the illustration for the Sanskrit

Department; a scientific instrument has illustrated the science department and so on. Zodiac signs can also be found in the composition.

Artist-Nand Lal Thakur

Another well-known name among Himachal Pradesh's modern artists is Nandlal Thakur. Dr. Nandlal Thakur, General Council member from Himachal Pradesh, unanimously elected as the Vice Chairman of Lalit Kala Akademi. He was born in the tiny village of Makari, which is close to the towns of Dharmi, Tehsil, and Shimla. Nandlal had a sincere desire to become an artist from the start. The Rajiv Gandhi Government Degree College in Chaura Maidan, Shimla, is where he received his B.A., and Himachal Pradesh University, also in Shimla, is where he received his master's in oil. He has received the proper instruction from Him Chatterjee as he has learned oil. Nand Lal is one of Him Chatterjee's fashionable academics. He has attained a notable height in the Himachal Pradesh contemporary art scene at the young age of 35. He has participated in many art exhibitions. Seminars and art workshops are given in several corridors. He is extremely passionate about art. If the work of Nandlal is put on trial, he has made countless attempts to create various types of textures to offer his subject a fresh impression. Nandlal enjoys using a gentle colour scheme to play with mortal numbers. He uses minimal colours for all of his projects in his workshop. He used the color blue for several of his artworks. Regarding his subject matter, he has painted his non-age memories, village life, etc. in the majority of his oils. He has participated in vibrant art workshops organized in many regions of the country and has held two solo exhibitions of his oil paintings.



Fig.-5, Nand Lal Thakur "*Conversation*" Charcoal on paper, 14x11 inches, 2011, Source of image artist self-portfolio.

Description-Here the artist has shown a lady with an imaginative crow, with whom she is having a conversation. Most of the times artist uses his local dressing style in his sketches.



Fig. 6 - Nand Lal Thakur "*Shiva family*", and Acrylic on canvas, 36x48 inches, Source of image artist self-portfolio-Inside the obra

Description-Here the artist has shown the family of Shiva in contemporary world with the help of miniature figures. Here he has also shown different animals.

CONCLUSION:

Himachal Pradesh is renowned for both its natural beauty and a wide range of arts and crafts that highlight its lively culture. Both domestic and foreign tourists have expressed enthusiasm for the Pahari paintings. The Himachal Pradesh handloom industry's carpets, bed sheets, blankets, shawls, and other woollen apparel are heavily influenced by Tibetan design, which also has a big impact on India's tourism sector. The Chamba rumal is another fascinating aspect of Himachal Pradesh's craftsmanship (handkerchief). The handkerchiefs are used frequently at weddings and are delicately stitched with silk and cotton. The traditional thankar are yet another exciting thing in Himachal Pradesh (embroidered and painted silk canvases). The museums at Shimla, Chamba, and Dharamshala are the best sites to view the state's metalwork, which is highly deserving of praise. There are also some artists who have worked in their respective fields of work, which includes Him Chatterjee and H.C. Rai, MC Saxena Sanat Kumar Chatterjee, Om Sujanpuri, Om Prakash Taak, Sobha Singh, and Surjeet Singh etc. In addition to the artists mentioned above, there were other well-known artists who had connections to this state but were unable to stay and create here for an extended period of time. The following artists were chosen for the examination of their lives, careers, and works after comprehensive interviews with current artists in Himachal Pradesh: Him Chatterjee, Nand Lal Thakur, and Vijay Sharma.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

This Article is written by me (Research Scholar – Urvashi Kanwar) on true Facts and information available on contemporary art of Punjab, my research Guide Dr. Ganesh Gule Help to create this Article. This is no copy of other sources of information.

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