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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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A DETAIL STUDY ON PATTACHITRA PAINTING: THE HERITAGE ARTWORK OF RAGHURAJPUR, ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

The history defines the culture and traditions associated with the artwork which continues to bring encouragement to develop the artwork and take it to a new and undefined height. "Pattachitra" is one of the glorious traditional hands-painted art forms in India which has been unceasingly in existence for almost 300 years. The majestic traditional art "pattachitra" is mostly practiced by artist community of Heritage village Raghurajpur in Puri is the sacred place or one of the chaturdham in India. It is manifested by a very rich colourful application of various mythological, narratives and folktale themes. It has always been exquisitely religious and sometimes illustrates the social traditions of Odisha that are closely connected with religion. It creates aesthetic appeal by the fine brush strokes of intricate and ornamented figure of Hindu mythology by using pigment colours which are extracted and processed from nature sources; viz; plant and mineral. The village is highly associated with humble and passionate artisans who focus on promoting and are determined to take forward the artwork to the next generation. Both men and women of the painter community of Raghurajpur do the most tedious Odisha scroll painting. The prime objective of this study is to document the magnificent colourful, hand-painted art-forms in detail and record all the elements of design, tools, equipment, and manufacturing process by experimenting with design development through the design process and based on observation through field research. Through this study, the young generation will be associated with artworks to redefined, renovated, and evolved and they can use these skills and techniques to develop various products apart from specific products.

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INTRODUCTION

The history describes the culture and traditions associated with the artwork which continues to bring encouragement to develop the artwork and take it to a new and undefined height. "Pattachitra" is one of the glorious traditional hand-painted art forms in India that have existed unceasingly for almost 300 years. The majestic traditional art "pattachitra" is mostly practiced by the artist community of Heritage village Raghurajpur in Puri. Other centres in Odisha where Pattachitra is practiced; are Paralakhi Mundi, Chikiti, Dana Sahi, and Sonepur. The pigment-painted cloths "Pattachitra" (Scroll Painting) are markedly associated with the deities of Jagannath temple at Puri. It is a living art that originated from the Sanskrit word "Patta" which means cloth and 'Chitra' which means paintings. This painting is preferably classified into three categories as per medium used i.e; canvas (Patta - Chitra), wall (Bhitti - Chitra), and palm-leave (pothi - Chitra) in earlier but nowadays it is done on various mediums as per the requirement of the end user. An artist prepares five main colors; viz; white, black, red, yellow, and blue colors are used in "Pattachitra" of Odisha; more than 120 different shades are obtained

by mixing these colors. The painting depicts scenes from mythological stories, particularly about lord Jagannath who is an incarnation of Lord Sri Krishna, and other themes from the popular Indian epics; Mahabharat and Ramayana, temple activities, Gajapa playing cards, Navgunjara and another popular mythological story is Das Avtar is painted with Shree Krishna Leela. etc. The painting stays incomplete without its floral borders. The border of this painting is very manifesting. The undeniably unique colorful pattachitra are translated into a range of beautiful products as souvenirs for the pilgrims of the Jagannath temple, Puri. The themes for these paintings are basically from the epic tales of Ramayana and Mahabharat. The development process of pattachitra comprises various extensive techniques. The artist and his family perform these steps which are the preparation of the patta, preparation of pigments, motif selection, and layout, and finally painting. So critical supervision is required every step is very crucial for the proper end product any mistake in any of these steps can lead to a faulty painting. This being the tradition of these craftsmen they follow it very religiously. There are two types of pattachitra, one is the Jodano Chitra (wrapped picture); which consists of a long vertical or horizontal scroll with different

squares depicting kind of a story or mythological incident, another one is 'Chouko chitra' (Square picture); in this variety, there is one isolated painting depicting a mythological incident.

METHODOLOGY

The prime objective of this study is to document the virtuoso colorful hand-painted art forms in detail and record all the elements of design, tools, equipment, and manufacturing process by experimenting with the design development through the design process and based on observation through field research. Raghurajpur village was selected for the study. A field study with descriptive design research was conducted to get complete and authentic data and data was collected through design experiments under the guidance of a national awardee pattachitra artist; Mr Karunakar Sahu. Through this study, the young generation will be associated with artworks to redefined, renovated, and evolved and they can use these skills and techniques to develop various products apart from specific products.

THE DOER- artisan making-practicing the craft

Main artists and its profile

Artist name - Karunakar Sahu

Age- 57 years,

Date of birth - 24th November 1982,

Education - 10th class

Experienced-30-35 years

No. of family members - 6

Monthly income- 50000/-

Awards received- National Award in pattachitra painting



The art work: Pattachitra is generally performed by the chitrakars 'painters along with their family members. It is seen that the female members of the family prepare the glue for making the canvas and also apply the colors that are the fill-in work. The male members generally draw the initial sketch and give finishing touch to the final painting. The painting is inspired from mythological inscriptions like Ramayana and Mahabharat; so the motifs are purely based on those folktales. The motifs of varied gods and goddess are being combined with each other to describe a narrative story. The painting is incomplete without its floral borders in it. The borders of this painting are very manifesting.



In spite of the many similarities the pattachitra has many distinctive features of its own. The base material canvas is prepared by hand with used cotton cloth, tamarind seeds gum and chalk powder. The indigenous colors are used in pattachitra which are prepared by the artisans themselves.

Techniques

Canvas preparation: The initial step of patta chitra painting is the preparation of the canvas. It is the base material, preferably cotton and silk fabric. Mostly old and used cotton fabrics are used. However unused fabrics are also used in case of special requirement and silk fabric is used as it is very soft and lustrous. After selection of fabric, that selected fabric treated with tamarind and chalk solution paste. Fabric is dipped with tamarind solution and soaked for several days and dry the fabric. Then applied the solution paste (tamarind + Chalk powder) on to that dried fabric and after application of the paste and leaving it to dry. Finally; this processed fabric is rubbed with the stones to smoothen and make the fabric more lustrous. Then cut the fabric as per required size of the painting by help of scissors.

Colour and Pigment Preparation: In the pattachitra natural colours are used. Basically, chitrakar prepare five colours; these are white, black, yellow, red and blue colours. These colours are also known as panchatatwa. By mixing of these colors more than 120 colours can be obtained;

White: extracted from crushed sea shells powder

Black: burnt coconut shell powder and also extracted from the naturally processed smoke

Yellow: extracted from Haritala stone and turmeric

Red: extracted from Hingula stone

Blue: extracted from Khanda neela stone

Green: extracted from green stone and leaves

These colours are mixed with wood apple or stone apple gum to get adequate colour. These natural colours are blended with coconut bowl called sadei.



Pattachitra colours are also signifies the Rasa or action of each character in a story. For laughter and Hasya character white colour is used and raudra and Furious is used red colour; adbhuta and astonished is used with yellow colour. In this same way, Lord Krishna in blue colour and Lord rama in green colour.

Process of making Pattachitra: Firstly the tussar silk is soaked in water and then the wet tussar silk is placed on the hard board. Paste of

chalk powder and cornstarch is applied on that with hand. The coating is done very carefully so that no air bubbles appear between the board and cloth. The coated tussar silk is left overnight for drying. Secondly, two varieties of Stones are used; one is Khadar Stone (Whitish-pink in color) and another is Chikana Stone (Yellowish brown in color). Used for shining the canvas. These stones are used over the canvas once the canvas is dried properly. Thirdly, Paints: Traditionally naturally obtained paints were used but nowadays different mediums of paints are used for making the art work. Finally use of Brushes: Used for smoothening the canvas. Pattachitra generally has detailed works in it which should only be done by brushes of No. 000, 00 sizes and as per requirement.



Materials used:

Canvas or the base: prepared in two different ways:

- The Cotton Canvas:
 - Old cotton clothes
 - Chalk powder
 - Gum- traditionally obtained from tamarind seed (nowadays, for glue preparation, a paste of cornstarch and water is used.)

A coating of chalk powder and gum is applied on the cotton cloth and is left for drying.

II- The Tussar Silk:

- Tussar silk
- Hard board
- Gum (chalk powder + Cornstarch paste)

Themes: The painting depicts scene from mythological stories, particularly about lord Jagannath who is an incarnation of Lord Sri krishana and other themes from the popular Indian epics; Mahabharat and Ramayana, temple activities, Gajapa playing cards, Navgunjara and another popular mythological story is Das Avtar is painted with shree Krishna Leela. Etc. The painting stays incomplete without its floral borders. The border of this painting is very manifesting.

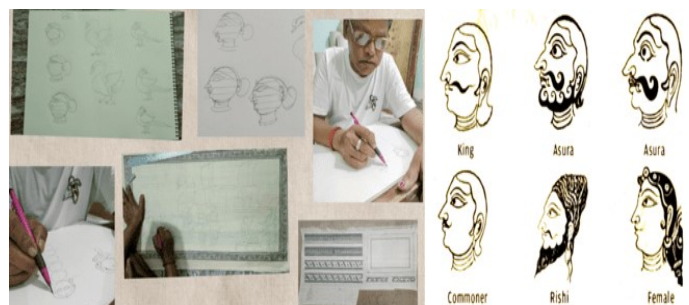
Finishing & Other post production treatment

Finishing Methods: Pattachitra painting is finish with decorative border design. This painting is very expensive and valuable though natural colour and workmanship processes are being involved. They follow a preserving method to protect the paintings from damage and destruction, ensuring that the artworks last for many years and future generation can enjoy them. The prime goal to keep the painting as close to its original condition, they apply thin coat of wax to create the substrate water proof means it's not damaged by contact of water. In post product finishing, pattachitra will be finished with decorative border design and styles.

Product development: The products cater the significance of sustainability and application of patta-chitra painting on the clothing. Focused clients are young girls and it focuses on awareness to understand the riskiness of our environment and the consequence of its protection. In the design this form of development is achieved by various techniques like organic natural bio degradable fabric, traditional painting or community craftsmanship techniques, nontoxic dyes, recycled clothing. The tactile development in the design is done by using black and bold outlines with pattachitra motifs that reflects the phenomenon of clothing dynamism. Materials are used;

- Cotton denim
- Cotton Poplin
- Natural Colour pigment

The design is developed by studying market segment, different market models, field visit and Basic trend analysis.



This is succeeded by selection of required market segment to work on, which is then followed by depth research in terms of primary and secondary research. On the selected market and trend analysis;

followed by theme selection, research on theme, visual research analysis, mind mapping and brain-storming, exploration for the design development. Through this design process various products were developed in the form of smart casual wear for girl.

Market Survey: Pattachitra holds immense cultural significance in Odisha; in the context of the mythological folktales and other eye-catching themes of pattachitra. Market survey is done to know the demand and placement of the product in the market. This also helps to know the status of the customer profile; means to know which customers are eligible to purchase the particular product. The customer's classes are divided into four segments: lower, middle, upper-middle and higher classes. More over the upper-middle class and higher class customer will pay more interest in buying these products. The foreigners now like these traditional paintings, the product will get higher position in the international market.

Products: The product is an entire outfit with hand-painted products consisting jeans, a t-shirt and a jacket reflecting a balance between today's outfits and traditional 'Pattachitra' painting. Main motive of this product is to connect today's world to our culture and tradition. We found this set an ideal example for our product as today's youth are in hunt of something new every day.



CONCLUSION

Traditionally, pattachitra paintings were applied on canvas to offer the Lord Jagannath but now-a-days different kinds of products are developed using pattachitra techniques viz; sarees, dress material, dupatta (stoles) and home decors and furnishings. Generally tassar silk and cotton fabrics were used for developing these kinds of products and paintings are now commercially available in the market. Though old cotton clothes are used for preparing the canvas for patta-paintings and natural colour ingredients which leads to develop the sustainable product. Previously only five colours were used in the pattachitra but now numbers of colours have been increased to satisfy the customer requirements and product prospective. Process of pattachitra painting has not been changed. In recent times, pattachitra has gained recognition beyond its traditional roots and has been introduced to encourage the young generation in the form of contemporary painting, home decor collection and handicrafts. Both artisan and designer are now using pattachitra to create innovative and modern designs while still preserving the traditional techniques and motifs. The art form has become a means of livelihood for many artisans, helping to sustain their families and painter communities.

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