



THE COLOUR OF MUSIC

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The common element which all species of creative arts share is bhava or feeling. They evoke a particular feeling in the heart of the audience. Every form of art has its own techniques which it applies to create that feeling. Their ultimate aim being same, they borrow from one another some elements of content or form or both. Thus to know the different common elements which the different art- forms share with one another, a holistic approach should be made of them.

Our ancient forefathers realized this quite well.

Vishnu dharmotar puran “ Grand -unity- dialogue between king Varjya and rishi Makarnadeya sufficiently proves that our ancient forefathers had a perfectly holistic view of art. King Varjya requested the sage to accept him as his disciple and teach the art of icon making, so that he may worship the deities in their proper forms. The sage replies that one cannot understand the principles of image making without knowledge of painting. The king wishes for instruction in this art and is told that, unless he is accomplished as a dancer , he cannot grasp even the rudiments of painting. The king requested that he be taught dancing , whereupon the sage replies that, without a keen sense of rhythm of knowledge of instrumental music, proficiency in dance is impossible. Once again the king requested that he be taught these subjects; to which the sage replies that a mastery of vocal music is necessary before one can be proficient in instrumental music, and so finally the sage takes the king through all these stages before he is taught the art of iconography”. Thus the sage says that 1- the performing arts should be treated as a unified whole and 2- the fusion of visual arts with performing arts is also indispensable.

Let us take the example of music and painting. Both share some common terminology like ‘rhythm’, ‘tone’, ‘colour’, ‘curvature’ , ect. Both of them are governed by some common aesthetic principles, such as Dhvani (implied meaning), Riti (stylization), Bakragati(Meandering path), Rasa (the essence of the created feeling), Auchitya (appropriateness).

A good piece of art does not express any direct literal meaning. It gives an implied meaning, which is expressed through symbols and imageries. This metaphoric meaning is known in our Alankar Sastra as Byangyarth. Dhvani school of rhetoricians put stress on this implied metaphoric meaning of the content.

The ultimate consummation of an art piece is in creating the expected “rasa” through his creation.

For generating rasa the artist adopts various techniques. The origin of rasa theory can be found in Artharva veda’s late Vedic time (200 BC to 100 BC). However, Bharata Muni is recognized as the originator of Indian rasa theory since he made important claims in his work Natyasastra, an Indian treatise on performing arts that includes music, dance and theatre. He mentions 8 rasas and later 9th rasa was added to make Naubrasa. Each rasa evokes a mood. In Indian arts, it refers to a notion regarding the aesthetics flavor of any written, visual or musical work that stirs up an emotion or feeling in the audience or reader yet cannot be put into words.

Rasa is the essence of music, dance, painting and theatre in addition to poetry and drama. Although the idea of rasa is vital to any forms of Indian art including dance, music, theatre, painting, sculpture and literature, some styles and schools have varied interpretation and applications of a given rasa. According to Natyasastra, each rasa has a presiding deity and a particular colour. Rasa can best be understood as aesthetic pleasure.

Elements of Rasa

According to Bharat’s Natyasastra, there are eight basic emotions and mental states known as sthaibhavas that people might feel.

Types of Rasa	Mood evokes	Deity	Colour
Shringar	Love	Vishnu	Light green
Hasya	Humor	Shiva	White
Karuna	Pathos	Yama	Grey
Raudra	Anger	Shiva	Red
Bhayanak	Horror	Yama	Black
Veer	Brevity	Indra	Saffron
Adbhuta	Wonder	Brahma	Yellow
Bibhatsya	Disgust	Shiva	Blue
Shanta	Peace	Vishnu	White

He takes to stylization by using ornaments or through distortion. Using various kinds of tan, allap, bandish different gharanas create different styles in music . Likewise various school of painting are marked by various styles of combining colour, lines, and motifs.

Ragamala painting is the best example of amalgamation of art(colour), poetry and classical music.

Ragamala Paintings are a form of Indian miniature painting, a set of illustrative paintings of the Ragamala or Garland of raga, depicting variations of the Indian ragas. (miniature paintings are executed on a very small scale for books or albums on perishable materials such as paper and cloth.) ragamala painting were started in 16th and 17th centuries. It originated in Rajasthan. In these painting each raga is personified by a colour, mood , a verse based on a specific story.it also describe the season and time of day and night in which a particular raga is to be sung and the most important fact is the most paintings are attached and denoted the specific Hindu deities attached with the raga, like bhairav or Bhairavi raga is denoted to lord shiva and Devi. This ragamala painting depicted the whole raga ragini systems of Hindustani music. The six main ragas depicted in ragamal painting are Bhirava, Deepak, sri, malkaunsh, megha and Hindol. These six ragas are sung during the six seasons of the year. In the same time , we are eyewitness that in ninth century of sourthen odisha shri Raghunath Prusti an artist wrote and illustrated palm leaf manuscripts on ragachitra(painting depicted about ragas)

As in music a musician divides time in various ways to create different effects, a painter also adopts various methods of diving space to create his desire effect. As a painter uses various kinds of lines, such as straight lines, wavy lines or rounded lines, various strokes (many types of brush strokes can be used for art painting including crosshatching, hatching, dry brush, flat wash, stumbling, stippling etc) so also the musicians used meend (a glide from one note to another. It is a essential technique of practice in Hindustani music), gamak (a grace ful turn, curve to a single note or a goup of notes. Gamak can be understood as any movement done on a note or in between two notes. The unique character of each raga is given by its gamaks), murki (it is when one sing a group of notes in a fast beat), Khatka(while singing a note when one quickly touch a higher or lower note before landing on your note).

Whatever may be the art form it must not transgress the auchitya bodha or appropriateness. A creative artist tries his or her maximum to stick to the rules of the grammar and at the same time tries his or her maximum to break the rules of that grammar. This is the paradox of creativity.

Thus we can conclude that a great musician is able to see the colours in music and a great painter can listen to the rhythm of music while painting. Many ancient painters of Raghunath Prusti are famous in odisha. Likewise now a days many painters and musicians join hands to give shape to a particular

feeling simultaneously through their respective art forms. The modern trend in performing arts is to make an inter- disciplinary approach by developing the creative insight to visualize through inner eyes the interfaces between music and painting.

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