

USTA ART AS ONE OF THE BASIC GROUND OF TOURISM IN BIKANER

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ABSTRACT

Bikaner Usta art was a dynamic art school during 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th century. Now-a-days because of influence of modern lifestyle our cultural heritage it's at the brink of extinct. Usta art and miniature painting plays an indispensable role in terms of inclination of tourism in Bikaner. These Bikaner Usta artisans excelled not only in miniature drawings and water color paintings, but were also master craftsmen in Naqqashi, Manoti and interior designs including "Raga" and Ragini" the seasonal paintings painted by celebrated Usta artisans like Rukn-ud-din, Rahimji, Issa and Ghulamji. Even Different techniques are followed to identify the period of paintings through designs and unique features.

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Usta art is a generic term Usta for the typical Bikaner star painting practical by Usta artisans. The uniqueness of this art which entices the tourist towards Bikaner is that in all of the art history this is the only family that has utterly dominated a school of art for such a lengthy period of time (at least 300 years).

ORIGIN OF BIKANER ART SCHOOL

There were four main Usta clans found in Bikaner and founder was Sher Sing Bhati, only two of these clans produced master artisans the "Lalanis" descended from Lal Muhammod and "Umrans" descended from Umar-ud-dinji. The "Fattanis" the "Handanis" and "Salmani" Usta clan also lived in Bikaner

ARTISTIC MEDIA OF BIKANER

COLORS

The vibrant colors used in Bikaner miniature painting come from a variety of interesting

sources. Vegetable and mineral colors commonly used in these Bikaner paintings included mahawar (marinade itrifolia) and goondi (gum plant) that produces deep red, Indigo (south Indian vegetable) which produces a bright blue when mixed with gold, Lazward (ground lapis lazuli) for deep blue. Sindur (red arsenic) produce orangish-red and many more are there.

RAGA AND RAGINI PAINTING

It played a pivotal role in Rajput art school from mid 17th century onwards. These paintings can be compared to a painted poetic love or story book of lovers, religious devotion and bravery. The "Ragini" paintings being feminine, are softer and more lyrical than "Raga" paintings. The times the various "Ragini" are pre perform can differ from main "Raga" to which they belong. There are 6 Raga painted according to season, day/night and particular time. Each raga consist 5 ragini wives.

1. **RAGA MALKAUS:** Performed between 12:00 PM and 4:00 PM during winters.
2. **SHRI RAGA:** Performed between 4:00 PM-8:00 PM in months of Nov. and Dec. In the

front of throne are 3 female singers

3. **RAGA HINDOLA:** Performed between 8:00 PM-12:00 m during spring in months of March & April.
4. **RAGA MEGH MALHAR:** Performed between 12:00 AM-4:00 AM during rainy season in month of July and August with fountain
5. **RAGA BHAIRAVA:** Performed between 4:00 AM to 8:00 AM during autumn in months of September and October.
6. **RAGA DEEPAK:** Performed between 8:00 AM to 12:00 AM during summer in the months of May and June. His complexion is color of fire.

NAQQASHI-MANOTI

The basic process of all "Naqqashi" and "Manoti" is the floral design pattern preparation taken from many forms of nature. These painting, utilizing age old processes, methods and techniques. Both are types of lacquer work using real gold, handmade paint and executed with fine line "Siyahi" technique. These particular media of gold lacquer work was done only by Usta artisans in Bikaner. Several part of Junagarh fort is decorated with various designs executed in "Naqqashi" work by Usta artisans.

MASTER ARTISANS OF BIKANER USTA SCHOOL

However there are many famous artists in Genealogy of Usta clan but four celebrated artisans who made their unique style and remain masters for years.

1. RUKN-UD-DIN (1666-1697 AD)

He was master in "Siyah Kalam" freehand without mistakes or corrections he preferred to point

various "Raga" and "Ragini" and poetic paintings of Gods.

2. RAHIM JI

Head of Royal workshop early 1740's to early 1750's AD

3. ISA (ISSJI) (1765-1781 A.D.)

Head of royal workshop 1770's-1781 A.D.

4. GHULAM (CHOTU) (1860-1870 A.D.)

FEATURES OF RECOGNIZING ART OF THE BIKANER

Many factors identify a painting from the Bikaner school even if a "Siyah Kalam" or colored painting has no legend attached i.e in 17th to mid 18th century Deccan stylization influenced Bikaner art. By the beginning of the 18th century, the use of particular shades of color and styles for clouds and sky can be found on Bikaner paintings.

From the mid-to-last 19th century Bikaner school declined and few artists followed the Bikaner school style, many Jaipur artists immigrated to Bikaner and the local style found in Bikaner fused. With the imported Jaipur style they lack real talent. Odd, offensive, bright and muddy color were used. Lack of control and symmetry in their execution.

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