Welcome –

all of you, -- to this session, where, today- we are going to understand various developmental phases of Indian Art. Let’s assume ourself as a visitor, to the exploration journey of Indian Art.

We all agree with the fact that –‘Moved by the charm of the nature around him, man has expressed his appreciation of it in works of art produced by him’. This goes back to a time when he was still a primitive. Art has had a softening influence on him. It is a great and true experience that Kalidasa expresses, when he feels that even the happiest man is elated when he sees beautiful things or hears melodious notes. Though music deeply stirs the heart, it is the impression of the beautiful form on the eye that has an even greater effect.

SLIDE 1 No section of the population of India can afford to neglect her ancient heritage. Let’s take a heritage walk across the treasure of Indian art in reference to the Indian Painting. Indian paintings historically revolved around the religious deities and kings. Indian art is a collective term for several different schools of art which existed in the Indian subcontinent. The paintings varied from large frescoes of Ellora to the intricate Mughal miniature paintings to the metal embellished works from the Tanjore school. The paintings from the Gandhar- Taxila are influenced by the Persian works in the west. The eastern style of painting was mostly developed around the Nalanda school of art. The works are mostly inspired by various scenes from Indian mythology.

SLIDE 2 When did India start its drawings and paintings? Bhimbetka has an answer. It is the site of pre-historic art, some 40 Kilometres south of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. You will see there a deeply forested area with some 50 to 60 hillocks, where lies answer to the above question. It was where hundreds of generations ago, pre-historic artists found expression to their mind.
The earliest Indian paintings were the rock paintings of prehistoric times, the petroglyphs as found in places like the Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka, and some of them are older than 5500 BC. Such works continued and after several millennia, in the 7th century, carved pillars of Ajanta, Maharashtra state present a fine example of Indian paintings, and the colors, mostly various shades of red and orange, were derived from minerals.

There is always a curiosity in our mind as of how did early people paint?

**SLIDE 3:** It may be observed, however, that Paleolithic Art is mainly a phenomenon, remote and isolated, and this specially applies to Indian painting. There is a hiatus of probably thousands of years between these apparently dateless specimens of the early culture of India and the first actual historic record of the art. What may be considered the most ancient concrete example of dateable painting is to be found on the walls of the Jogimara cave of the Ramgarh Hill in Sirguja, a small and remotely situated State in the Central provinces. These frescoes are presumed to have been executed about the first century before the Christian era. The forgoing description of these early brush forms, for they are little more, conveys the impression that their general character, except for the one special quality already referred to, is distinctly primitive, and that the art was at this period judging from these crude efforts, in a very undeveloped state. This is the natural deduction derived from an inspection of the only surviving specimen of painting known in India before the Christian era.

The earliest paintings in India have been found in primitive caves and rock shelters in Mirzapur and Banda in U.P., in the Mahadev hills of the Vindhayan range in Bundelkhand, in the Kaimur Hills in the area of Baghelkhand, in Singanpur in Raigarh district of Central India and Bellary in south. These paintings are mainly hunting scenes representing man in his encounter with wild animals. At Bhalduria in Mirzapur district, there is a scene of a stag hunt where harpoons and spears are depicted in action. The paintings, though, in a crude technique, represent vivid pictures of hunt. Red pigment has been freely used. Some of the figures have got washed off. In a well preserved scene, there is a hunt of a bison and a sambhar. The human
figures are conventionalized. The torso is sometimes drawn as almost a ladder composed of steps; with the head dominating the rest of the body, the hands and feet in all cases appearing as just straight or bent lines.

Early art in India has almost a similar form all over the land. The Sungas and Kushanas in the north, the Kalingas in the east and the Satavahanas in the deccan were the inheritors of common traditions from the Mauryas, and striking similarities in the Sunga, Satavahana, Kalinga and Kushana art cannot but strike the eye of the connoisseurs. Common motifs with striking resemblance in distant parts of the land do arrest attention. It is interesting to compare the earlier figures from Bharhut, Amravati and cave 10 of Ajanta. Turbans, necklaces, ear-rings, facial features and the position of the hands joined in adoration may be noted.

When we say Ajanta Cave paintings, Satavahanas are to be given the credit. Why? Let's understand it clearly.

**SLIDE 4: SATAVAHANAS:** The earliest historical paintings in India belong to the Satavahana period. The earliest caves at Ajanta are also of the Satavahana period. The paintings cover the walls, pillars and ceilings and illustrate scenes from the life of the Master and his previous lives, comprising the jatakas and avadanas. There are also floral and animal motifs dexterously created. The paintings may be assigned to the early phase of the Satavahana rule, probably the time of Satakarni, to whose time the Sanchi gateway carved by the ivory carvers of Vidisha, as recorded in an inscription thereon, may be assigned. These paintings thus form the predecessors of all the Gupta, Vakataka and medieval paintings all over India. Ajanta Caves in Maharashtra, India are rock-cut cave monuments dating back to the second century BCE and containing paintings and sculpture considered to be masterpieces of both Buddhist religious art and universal pictorial art.

The Kushans were the next in line contributing to Indian Art

**KUSHANAS:** The Kushanas were the most powerful rulers after the Sungas in North India. In fact, having moved on to India from Central Asia through the modern territory of Afghanistan and Pakistan to beyond Mathura in India. That is how there was a distinct school of indigenous traditions with its centre at Mathura and another in the North-Western Frontier, with a
commingling of India, Graeco-Roman and Iranian elements, which with Chinese influences made up a strange and interesting school of art, offering fascinating facets of culture for studies. It is amazing how various Indian motifs have found excellent expression and interpretation in Central Asian sculpture and paintings.

A painting of Buddha from Balawasta now in the National Museum collection of Central Asian Antiquities, is the most interesting of all representations of Buddha from anywhere in the world. This is the painting of the Kushana period with a clear ‘srivatsa’ mark on the Master’s chest. We know that as a mahapurusha Buddha has also this mark but always covered by the cloak. It has never been presented in any of the Indian representation of Buddha. The mountain Meru with the serpent vasuki wound around it in a pool is a symbol of the churning of the ocean by the gods and demons to bring out ambrosia.

The contribution of the Gupta Dynasty is far beyond comprehension.

**SLIDE 5: GUPTAS:** The Gupta emperors were great patrons of art and literature. This phase of art of the gupta period is amply illustrated in the caves, close to the village Bagh in the former Gwalior State, which are excavated on the slopes of the Vindhya mountain at a height of about 150 ft. above the river Bagh in the vicinity. The paintings in the Bagh caves are mostly lost. The heavy pillars that once supported the verandah are now lost and the roof has also collapsed, leaving the paintings exposed to weather. The subject illustrated is clearly a jataka or ‘avadana’ yet to be identified.

In a painting, a scene presents a mirthful ‘Halli salasya’, a folk dance with the dancers in a ring; keeping time with little wooden sticks. Two in the group of damsels play the hand drum or ‘huduka’ and the third plays the small sized cymbals. The colourful dress of these damsels and particularly of the two dancers wearing long sleeved shirts with flowers worked on them are most interesting for a study of the life and culture of the age. The scene beyond this shows a procession of people on horseback and elephants. The elephants are magnificent representations of their class and can rank with any of the very best at Ajanta. Composed of cavaliers and foot soldiers with bows
and arrows in their hands and with the umbrella held over at least two stately figures, with princes on tuskers and high ranking women on cow and elephants close to the royal gateway, probably in the vicinity of the palace, suggests an important event in the royal household and the procession associated with that.

There was a long period in the history of the Indian Art which is dominated by the Buddhist Paintings.

**SLIDE 6**

**THE BUDDHIST PERIOD:** With the dawn of the Christian era, we find ourselves on the threshold of the classical period in the history of the Indian painting. Buddhism was largely the religion of the country, and continued the creed of the majority of the people until Brahmanism again prevailed (circa A.D. 700). Tara Nath, the 17th century historian already quoted records the facts that ‘whatever Buddhism prevailed skilful religious artists were found’, and in India this undoubtedly applies to the art of painting. Time has destroyed much, but enough survives of the work of the artist-priest of the Buddhist period to indicate that this craftsman was the founder of a great school of painting. The origin and growth of this school was very natural one. Buddhism is essentially graphic- the early history of the cult lends to illustrations by the brush more than the pen- and the original traditions were largely pictorial. Pictorially illuminated scrolls would be a portable agency for conveying to the uninitiated the Gospel of Gautama, and these were probably largely used by the priests on their long journeys. The temple banners (tangka) of Nepal and Tibet are undoubtedly a survival of this ancient method of spreading the religion by means of painted pictures. As India was the birthplace of Buddhism, it is to be assumed that that it was also the birthplace of the Buddhist School of Painting. The gradual growth of the art may be partly followed in that fine series of frescoes at Ajanta, which illustrate an early stage of the painting as well as examples of it at a later period. The rock cut temples of Ajanta are set in a lonely ravine excavated in the face of an almost perpendicular scarp of rock, is a series of caves, twenty-nine in number. Out of twenty-nine excavations forming the complete series of caves at Ajanta,
only sixteen of these are recorded in 1879 as containing painting in a greater or lesser degree.

**SLIDE 7** In 1910, frescoes are found in six out of the sixteen caves thus embellished. These six are Nos. 1,2,9,10,16 and 17, and in all of them the whole of the walls and also the pillars and ceilings have been painted. Owing to various circumstances, the art of painting, as illustrated in Caves 9 and 10, temporarily declined after this period, but was subsequently revived by a school of artists who executed the later work. Except that one, or perhaps two, of the scenes have been identified as depicting contemporary historical episodes, the subjects throughout are exclusively Buddhist. They are all associated with the Jatakas, a collection of stories recording the previous incarnations of Buddha. The greater part of the frescoes at Ajanta, supplemented by the remains at Bagh, and the friezes at Siririya may be regarded as records of the consummation of Buddhist paintings in India. The establishment of this powerful empire, together with the settled conditions of the country due to a time of peace and prosperity, acted as a great incentive to all forms of literature and art. In such favourable circumstances these separate groups of fresco painting were produced. The historian Tara Nath, throws some useful light on the Buddhist art of painting in India which may be considered at this stage. He refers to three styles of early Buddhist art which may be described as the Deva, the Yaksha and the Naga styles. The Deva style was practiced in the country of Magadha for some centuries after the advent of the Buddha- from the sixth century B.C. to the third century B.C. He relates that in the former days human masters, who were endowed with miraculous power, produced astonishing works of art. It is expressly stated in the Vinaya-agama and other works that the wall paintings etc. Of these masters were such as to deceive by their likeness to the actual things depicted'.

**SLIDE 8** The Yaksha style flourished about the third century B.C., as Tara Nath associates it with King Ashoka. In spite of the efforts to locate a race of Yakshas, it is clear that the author treats these as a
community of supernatural being, people who were demi-gods and whose art was of a miraculous order. The Naga style was practiced in the time of Nagarjuna, a writer and philosopher who lived at the beginning of the third century A.D., ‘Naga artizens’. Traces of the Nagas, an early race, who lived under the protection of snakes, are to be found in India from Kashmir to Madras. The stupas of Amravati, erected about the second century A.D., on the Krishna river (Madras Presidency), shows many traces of the influence of the Nagas, who appeared to have been great architects and artists. Northeast of Mumbai (a.k.a. Bombay), near Aurangabad, are two astonishing series of temples carved out of living rock (rock formations still in progress) over the course of fourteen centuries. During the 4th century A. D. in a remote valley, work began on the Ajanta caves to create a complex of Buddhist monasteries and prayer halls. As centuries passed, numerous Buddhist monks and artisans dug out a set of twenty-nine caves, converting some to cells, and others to monasteries and Buddhist temples. All of these were carved from the rock cliff at Ajanta. These caves are adorned with elaborate sculptures and paintings which have withstood the ravages of time. The sculptures are finely wrought images of animals, guards and deities while the paintings tell ancient tales of courtly life and depict hundreds of Buddhist legends. Amid the beautiful images and paintings are sculptures of Buddha, calm and serene in contemplation.

With the decay of Buddhism in India, in the 7th century A.D., the art appears to have declined, and for the exceptionally long period of nearly a thousand years the actual examples of Indian paintings which have been handed down to us, are few and far between. These examples consists of several paintings on palm leaves of probably of Twelfth century from Bengal; some Jain book illustrations of the 15th century; remains of Brahanical frescoes at Ellora, which may be of the 12th century or earlier, and few other miscellaneous fragments of the art and this is THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD (A.D. 700-1600):

**SLIDE 9:** From the time that the last painter at Ajanta, threw down his brush in A.D. 650, until we come into contact with the art again it
was revived in the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, in the later half of the 16th Century, the story of painting in India resolves itself very largely into one of inferences. During the later portion of this period, India was also undergoing the throes of the Mohammadan invasions, great constitutional changes were taking place, and the country was too disturbed by this epoch making aggression to produce any noteworthy arts. In its religious aspect too, India was becoming transformed, on the one hand by the decline of Buddhism and the steady rise of Hinduism in its new and revived form, and on the other by the advent and growth of Mohammadism.

**SLIDE 10:** There were few specimen of painting with calligraphy, which was firstly introduced in India is called **SULTANATE PAINTING:** The term “Sultanate painting” should refer to manuscript illustrations or murals commissioned by Muslim patrons in the regions of India ruled by sultans before the founding of the imperial Mughal atelier in 1556. Though the so-called Sultanate period began in 1206, manuscript painting cannot be traced back much earlier than about 1450. Thus, most Sultanate painting dates between about 1450 and 1550, and the centers of production seem to be primarily Mandu in central India and Jaunpur in eastern India, with some work being done in the Delhi region and in Gujarat in western India. The succession of Muslim sultans ruling from Delhi in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were more concerned with public building projects, and many of them were opposed to figural painting for religious reasons. Several examples of the Quran with calligraphy and ornamentation distinctive to India have survived from this period, but they include no figural illumination. Several passages in literature refer to the existence of wall paintings during the time of the Delhi sultanates, but little survives.

**SLIDE 11:** In 1398 Timur, the Turkic warrior from Central Asia (known in the West as Tamerlane), sacked Delhi and defeated the ruling sultan, Firuz Shah Tughluq. The ensuing decentralization of political power led to changes in the history of Indian art. Provincial governors in outlying regions gained greater independence and became self-proclaimed sultans. Over the course of the fifteenth century, these provincial sultans strove to take on the trappings of kingship, following the Persian model.
**SLIDE 12:** The manuscripts made for Muslim patrons between 1450 and 1550 vary considerably in style, as there was no unifying force in the production of these works. Some of the early works were heavily reliant on Turkman prototypes, namely paintings made in Shiraz in eastern Iran, or in Herat in Central Asia. It appears that the painters themselves were typically Indian, trained in the stylized and highly conservative indigenous styles exemplified by illuminations of devotional manuscripts commissioned especially by Jains in western India, but also by Buddhists in eastern India, and by Hindus. These Indian artists were apparently charged with adopting the Turkman style, and different artists produced works with greater or lesser fidelity to their foreign sources. Most of the surviving examples of fifteenth-century Sultanate painting are significant more for historical than aesthetic reasons. Among the more visually engaging works is a Shah Naʾma of about 1450, now dispersed primarily among museum and private collections in Europe. The manuscript is arranged in a vertical format with horizontal illustrations and four columns of Persian text. The paintings are closely related to the indigenous western or central Indian styles of paintings in non-Muslim sacred texts of the time.

**SLIDE 13:** A remarkable manuscript called the Niʾmat Naʾma, painted in Mandu in central India around 1500, is a book of recipes, which shows the sultan surrounded by attendants preparing foods and medicines. The painters of the pictures were Indian, but they drew heavily from Shirazi models, with much use of thick green swards, pastel background colors, and provincial Persian figural types. Indian elements are especially noticeable in the renditions of the Indian ladies, who were part of his extensive, multicultural harem.

By the mid-sixteenth century a harmonious fusion of Persian and Indian styles was achieved, seen especially in the paintings illustrating the adventures of the lovers Chandaʾ and Laurak in the Chandaʾyana of about 1540. The text was composed by a Muslim poet in India, written in the northeastern dialect of Hindi known as Avadhi, in Persian script, and the paintings were painted by a Hindu artist. Artists working in this unique hybrid style, characterized by bright pastel colors, repeated ground patterns, delicate
line drawing, and exquisite arabesques, were particularly influential in the early decades of the imperial Mughal atelier.

**RAJPUT PAINTING:** Indian Miniature paintings and that too without mentioning the contribution of Rajputs, is incomplete. Rajput painting, a style of Indian painting, evolved and flourished, during the 18th century, in the royal courts of Rajputana, India. Each Rajput kingdom evolved a distinct style, but with certain common features.

**SLIDE 14:** Rajput paintings depict a number of themes, events of epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, Krishna’s life, beautiful landscapes, and humans. Miniatures were the preferred medium of Rajput painting, but several manuscripts also contain Rajput paintings, and paintings were even done on the walls of palaces, inner chambers of the forts, havelies, particularly, the havelis of Shekhawait.

**SLIDE 15:** The colors extracted from certain minerals, plant sources, conch shells, and were even derived by processing precious stones, gold and silver were used. The preparation of desired colors was a lengthy process, sometimes taking weeks. Brushes used were very fine.

The main themes around which Rajasthani Paintings of India revolved include the Great epics of Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the life of Lord Krishna, landscapes and humans. Rajput paintings of India were also done on the walls of palaces, inner chambers of the forts, havelis, etc.

**SLIDE 16:** **RAJASTHANI SCHOOL:** Rajasthan is the land of the Rajputs who were of a mixed race. Some of the Rajput clans were descendants of foreign tribes like Huns, Sakas, Kushans and Gurjars and others belonged to the old ksatriya tribes. Pride of race, sense of honour and self respect were the key ingredients which helped them to gain power in the whole of northern, western and central India. The rise of the Rajput Dynasties synchronized with the advent of Islam who extended their power towards India. The Rajputs
played a difficult role in protecting the Hindu faith, in patronizing Hindu culture and in preserving Hindu traditions and customs and in defending Hindustan against the repeated Muslim invasions. In the Rajasthan Painting is mirrored the life of Rajasthan as lived by the royalty and the common man, the beauty of their women and the feelings of their inspired and devoted heart.

**SLIDE 17:** The Rajasthan School of miniature painting gradually emerged out of the Western India traditions in the 16th Century. In the earlier period, it was a continuation of mural painting of the classical period and as prescribed in the Sastras. The works of this school are chiefly book illustrations. The Jain miniature paintings of illustrated manuscripts had exercised a wide and profound influence in the evolution of rajasthani Painting. In the beginning of the 16th Century, the “Kulhadar” group was introduced. Its important features are: “The faces are in profile, the setting is natural or architectural; the lines are vigorous and rhythmical; the figures appear to be ardent and energetic; and strong and contrasting colours are used with fine effect. Fine specimen of the early Rajasthani School are “Gita Govinda” series of Cir. 1600 A.D. in the N.C.Mehta Collection. In the Last quarter of the 16th century, the Mughal impact on the indigenous style brought about a marked change in the outlook of the miniature painters and the Rajasthani artists started adopting the technical excellence of the Mughal styles in their paintings. It, however, continued to make use of brilliant colour which is the particular hallmark of the Rajasthani painting.

**SLIDE 18:** The Rajasthani school flourished from the 16th century to the 19th century in a widespread area against the background of Vaishnava renaissance. Vaishnavism stirred the inner-most depths of the common consciousness and brought about psychological change in the moods of the people. The artist therefore, drew his inspiration from the old religious stories, myths, folk-lore and the bhakti mysticism as reflected in the works of poets like Jayadeva, Chandidas, Vidyapati, Surdas and Mira Bai. The Ragamala and Nayikas were favourite themes in the several sets of paintings which have come to light. According to Gangoli-“The schools of Rajput art embody a whole cycle of Hindu culture chiefly covered doctrine of love and
faith. Though rooted in the classical Sanskrit culture, it takes the form of a vernacular folk art, the pictorial analogue to the great body of Hindu literature, inspired by the renaissance of the puranic Hindu religion. The most absorbing themes for the paintings are furnished by the cult of Krishna, idealized in a series of religious mysteries, the gopis being the symbols of the soul’s Divine”. Whatever be the theme, in expression, Rajput Art is always lyrical and passionate”.

Dr. Coomarswamy points out----“Rajput art creates a magic world where all men are heroic, all women are beautiful and passionate and shy. This magic world is not unreal or fanciful, but a world of imagination and eternity, visible to all men who donot refuse to see with the transfiguring eye of love’. Rajasthani pictorial art shows all that is best and of universal appeal in the emotional life of the Indian people.------- The work of the Rajasrhani Painters deserves to be given an honourable place amongst the great arts of the world. Its inspiration is rooted in the people’s hearts. Keeping close to their poetry, music and drama. Its central theme is love. What Chinese art achieved for landscape is here accomplished for human love.----- ”

The paintings of Amber and Jaipur show strong Mughal influence. However, at the same time, the bold compositions and use of abstractions reflected regional characteristics. The 18th and early 19th century saw Rajput paintings illustrating episodes from the life of Krishna. The other popular themes of the 19th century were Ragamala and devotional subjects.

Lets analyse the contributions of various schools of art which belongs to the Rajasthan School of Art. Firstly-

**SLIDE 19: BIKANER:** Rajasthani paintings of Bikaner were also based on Mughal tradition. Apart from the Mughal style, the paintings of Bikaner also reflect marked influence of Deccan paintings. During the late 18th century, the city started showing conservative Rajput styles with smoothness and abstractions. However, they were devoid of any pomposity and flamboyance.
Secondly-

**SLIDE 20: BUNDI:** Rajput paintings started originating in Bundi around the late 16th century and reflected heavy Mughal influence. Wallpaintings, dating back to the reign of Rao Ratan Singh (1607-1631), are good examples of Bundi style of paintings. The time of Rao Chattar Sal (1631-1658) and Bhao Singh (1658-1681) saw great emphasis on court scenes as themes. Other themes include those based on the lives of nobles, lovers and ladies.

Then comes-

**KOTA:** Kota paintings look very natural in their appearance and are calligraphic in their execution. The reign of Jagat Singh (1658-1684) saw vivacious colors and bold lines being used in portraiture. With the arrival of Arjun Singh (1720-1723), the painting started depicting males with a long hooked nose. 18th century was also the time for hunting scenes, Ragamalas, and portraits as themes. Ram Singh II (1827-1866) ordered the depiction of worship, hunting, darbar and processions in paintings.

**Next in line—**

**SLIDE 21: KISHANGARH:** Kishangarh style of painting was basically a fusion of Mughal and regional style. The most common theme of this style consisted of the depiction of the love between Krishna and Radha. Other popular themes included the poetry of Sawant Singh, Shahnama and court scenes, etc. Kishangarh School is best known for its Bani Thani paintings. With the demise of Savant Singh and his leading painters, this school lost its glory and started breaking down.

**MALWA:** One of the most conservative Rajput Painting Schools of the 17th century, Malwa was highly influenced by ‘Chaur pancha sika’ style. The emphasis was laid on strong colors and bold lines. At times, one can also observe a remote Mughal influence on these paintings.

**SLIDE 22: MARWAR:** The earliest example of the Rajasthani paintings of Marwar is that of Ragamala, which was painted in Pali in 1623. In the
In the history of Indian Art, there were so many art forms which are lost or are on the verge of extinction. In this category, the Lepakshi paintings require attention which are not been preserved properly.

**SLIDE 23: LEPAKSHI PAINTING – THE VIJAYANAGAR ART:** The temples in Lepakshi town of Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh are home to some of the most beautiful paintings of Vijayanagar period available today.

**SLIDE 24:** The Papa-neshwar temple in Lepakshi was built in 1535 A.D. and others in the neighborhood must be of similar timeframe.

The contributing factors of the Mughal rule, in the cultural field, is a topic of detailed discussion, Lets try to analyse in brief:

**SLIDE 25: THE MUGHAL SCHOOL:** Babur, descendant of Timur, and the original founder of the Mughal dynasty in India, speaks of Bihzad in his Memoires as ‘the most eminent of all painters’, and it is evident from his writings that this monarch had studied his pictures most critically. It was with the descendants of such a school as Bihzad’s and under the personal patronage of the Emperor Akbar- Grandson of such a connoisseur as Babar-that the Mughal School of painting came into being.
From this, it will be understood that fundamentally the Mughal School of Painting was an exotic, just as the Mughals themselves were aliens in India; but in the same way as that race has gradually absorbed into the people of Hindustan, so Mughal Painting has come to be regarded as an integral part of the art of India. For side by side with these foreign artists, worked the indigenous painters of the country, the excellence of whose native skill was seedily utilized by the observant Emperor. Such Hindu names as Basawan, Daswanth and Kesudasa, famous painters at the court of Akbar, proved the liberal view that was taken at the art of this time.

SLIDE 26: During the time of Akbar, therefore the new school took its origin, and in the early examples of this period the two styles of work- an art of the court, secular and eclectic in its character, had no profound associations with the people or their country, it gave pleasure to princely connoisseurs but outside the palace it was originally little known. As time progressed it became more democratic and in its decadence it is true it pertains to lower strata but mainly in the form of popular portraiture. For one outstanding feature of the paintings of the Mughals is its devotion to the delineation of likenesses. Realism is its keynote and their subjects are largely drawn from incidents connected with the magnificent court life of the time. In scale the Mughal picture in small, never attaining the dignity and size of the Buddhist frescoes and under the popular name of miniature painting, its connection with Persian book illustrations may be observed.

A record of the some 40 artists known to have lived during the reign of Akbar, many of whom were retainers of the royal court, will serve to indicate the flourishing condition of the art.

SLIDE 27: But it was left to the Emperor Jahangir to develop Mughal Painting to its fullest extent. The notable artistic sense of his ancestors Babur was rekindled with additional force in Jahangir and one of this monarch's innocent pride lay in the skill and genius of his court painters. Europeans were beginning to reach the capital of the great Mughal in the first half of the 17th century, and more than one of these travelers relates the great interest that Jahangir took in the productions of his retained artists. Portraiture and hunting scenes were the favourite subjects of this time, but the more scientific fields of
Botany and natural History were objects of special study. Unusual flowers or rare animals were ordered to be copied by the Emperors and some of these pictures; most elaborate and faithful reproductions have survived to the present day. Western paintings were also arriving in the country during this period, and the copying of these was frequently indulged in. Portraits of Europeans obviously facsimiles of occidental paintings are occasionally forthcoming and pictures illustrating incidents in connection with Christianity, which was then making its appearance in India, are not rare. All these date from the time of Jahangir when the painting of the picture was given every encouragement and was fully appreciated by the ruling class.

Under the succeeding rule of Shahjahan, the Mughal School shows the first signs of deterioration; the robust character of the work executed in the previous reign is not so marked. There is an increased sense of richness and luxury in colouring and composition, and the artist handling is not so vigorous. Under Shahjahan, architecture reached its zenith, but painting began to decline. This fact may be another illustration of the one art preceding the other on account of the facility of manipulation. At the same time, Shahjahan, as personal predilection for monumental building accounted for this in some degree as the Taj Mahal eloquently testifies. The quantity of painting executed about this time was maintained, but the quality is slightly inferior. As the art centered around the court- and this was mainly held at Delhi during the reign of Shahjahan- the Delhi qualm originated and is a form of the art maintained in a somewhat debased manner to the present day. With the advent of Aurangzeb, the decadence of the Mughal School steadily continued, and it is doubtful whether it received much personal encouragement from this bigoted ruler.

**SLIDE 28:** A large proportion of the miniature paintings of the Mughals are portraits, but at the same time the subjects of an appreciable quantity of the work of this school are of a general order. These are mainly scenes from actual life, hunting and fighting, battles and sieges, historical episodes, durbars, mythological stories, zoology and Botany and very occasionally religious incidents. There is no mysticism and rarely pictures of domestic life. The Mughal Miniature is distinguished from any other style of
Indian painting by one feature which at once proclaims its foreign origin. This is the calligraphic character of its outlines.

The artistic creations of the Deccan India is quite fascinating:

**SLIDE 29: THE DECCANI SCHOOL:** A distinctive style of painting with local variations developed in the Sultanate courts in the Deccan. The early phase of the Deccani Schools is characterized by a sumptuous grandeur, a rich colour scheme, fine draughtsmanship, elongated forms and swirling draperies. The later phase is marked by the influence of the Mughal school which found its way to the Deccani courts due to political changes.

**SLIDE 30:** Bijapur and Golkonda were followers of Shia sect of Islam and had intimate political and cultural relations with the rulers of Persian, Turkish and indigenous styles of painting and developed a new style known as the Deccani style of painting. Certain special features are noticeable in Deccani painting: The principle figure is bigger than the subordinate figures and this was artistically balanced by the richness of the palette. The necklace with a plaque was considered as a favourite ornament in the deccan. Jehangir sent a jeweled plaque of this type to Ibrahim Adil Shah, Sultan of Bijapur, as a present.

Another centre of the Deccan School of miniature was Ahmednagar.

**SLIDE 31: AHMEDNAGAR:** The earliest known Deccani miniatures, illustrated at Ahmedabad, are found in the manuscript of the Tarif Hussain Shahi. Sultan Hussain Nizam Shah, the sultan of Ahmadnagar. After, his death, his queen, Khanzada Humayun, acted as regent for her young son, Murtaza I. It was during the period of her regency (1565-69) that the poem celebrating the victories and marriage of Hussain was composed and illustrated at Ahmadnagar. The paintings show mixture of the Persian and the Deccani pictorial elements. The colours used in the paintings being rich and brilliant are different from those in paintings of North India. The Persian influence can be seen in the landscape—the gold sky, the high white rimmed horizon and flowering shrubs. Burham II rebelled against his elder brother Murtaza I and fled to Akbar’s court in 1583 A.D.; where he was welcomed. It was through him that the Mughal
influence reached the Deccani Painting. A master piece of Ahmadnagar painting is the Hindola Raga of about 1590 A. D. In his a fusion of the Persian and Deccani elements are noticeable.

SLIDE 32: **BIJAPUR:** The artists of Bijapur were not slavish imitators of the Persian style and inspite of the Mughal influence, the school of Bijapur retained its individuality in warmth, colour tones, preference being given for monochrome background and bold draughtsmanship. The founder of the Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur; Yusuf Adil Shah (1490-1510) and his successor Ismail Adil Shah (1510-1534) patronized painting, Chand Sultana\ Chand Bibi was an adept musician, a calligraphist and painter. During the reign of Adi Adil Shah, a richly illustrated Nujum-ul-ulum (stars of then sciences) was produced. It is a 16th century encyclopaedia and has 876 paintings. Many of these illustrate weapons and utensils, and others the constellation illustrating the spiritual rulers. There is influence of the Lepakshi mural paintings on the female types. The rich colour scheme, the palm trees, animals and men and women all belong to the Deccani tradition. The profuse use of gold colour, some flowering plants and arabesque on the top of the throne are derived from the Persian tradition. The bright deep colours and liberal use of golden colour indicate their individuality.

Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1626A.D.) was himself an expert in Indian music and author of a book on this subject, the Nauras-Nama. Under his patronage, a number of paintings especially portraits were also among the imperial presents sent to the Deccani rulers by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir.

After 1672 A.D. it suffered a decline and it came to an end by the closing years of the 17th century, when it was annexed by Aurangzeb.

SLIDE 33: **GOLCONDA:** The earliest paintings identified as Golconda work are a group of five charming paintings of about 1590 A.D., executed in the of Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah (1580-1611 A.D.). One of the paintings depict a king in his court watching a dance performance. He wears a white muslin coat with embroidered vertical band - a typical costume associated with Golconda court.
Other outstanding examples are: “Lady with the Myne bird of about 1605 A.D., an illustrated manuscript of a Sufi poem. Muhammad Quli Qutub Shah was succeeded by his nephew Muhammad Qutb Shah. The largest paintings on cloth were prepared during the reign of Abdulah Qutb Shah (1626-1672)- “The procession of Abdullah Qutub Shah”. Abdullah Qutub Shah on the throne, “Chand Bibi and her maidens”.

Abdul Tana Shah (1662-87 A.D.), the last sultan of Golconda was a great lover of art. A large number of ragas and raginis, the royal harem and other romantic themes were painted.

**SLIDE 34. HYDERABAD:** Due to austerity and preoccupation of Aurangzeb with wars in the Deccan. Some painters in the Mughal court had migrated to Hyderabad where patronage was readily available and thay continued to produce paintings of fine quality. A majority of paintings executed between 1725-1750 A.D. are portraits of Asaf Jah, his sons, nobles, women in a garden or on a terrace, saints, Ragas- Raganis. These have fine colouring with gem like brilliance, sensitive drawings of figures or penetrating characterization of the personages. Their fine drawings, lyrical quality, careful finish, variety of clouds and trees, rich colouring and compact compositions place them in the list of good deccani miniatures.

Various forms of expression in Indian Art are somewhere related to their religious feelings and somewhere to please the nobility. In this category, next is Tanjore Paintings

**SLIDE 35: TANJORE PAINTING:** Tanjore painting is an important form of classical South Indian painting native to the town of Tanjore in Tamil Nadu. The art form dates back to the early 9th Century, a period dominated by the Chola rulers, who encouraged art and literature. These paintings are known for their elegance, rich colors, and attention to detail. The themes for most of these paintings are Hindu Gods and Goddesses and scenes from Hindu
mythology. In modern times, these paintings have become a much sought after souvenir during festive occasions in South India.

**SLIDE 36:** The process of making a Tanjore painting involves many stages. The first stage involves the making of the preliminary sketch of the image on the base. The base consists of a cloth pasted over a wooden base. Then chalk powder or zinc oxide is mixed with water-soluble adhesive and applied on the base. To make the base smoother, a mild abrasive is sometimes used. After the drawing is made, decoration of the jewellery and the apparels in the image is done with semi-precious stones. Laces or threads are also used to decorate the jewellery. On top of this, the gold foils are pasted. Finally, dyes are used to add colors to the figures in the paintings.

**SLIDE 37:** Tanjore (a.k.a. Tanjavur) traditional paintings are a very important form of classical Indian school of paintings, finding their origins in the prosperous Chola period of 9th century A.D. The characteristic of Tanjore paintings if the multi-layered process by the the artist creates the paintings, as also the distinctly South Indian accent attributed to the paintings. The theme of most Tanjore paintings are Hindu Gods and Goddesses. The following examples illustrate the elegance, rich color, and distinct Deccan flavor of fine arts.

Another peculiar form of expression is Madhubani Paintings. 

**SLIDE 38:** Madhubani painting is a style of Indian painting, practiced in the Mithila region of Bihar state, India. The origins of Madhubani painting are shrouded in antiquity, and a tradition states that this style of painting originated at the time of the Ramayana, when King Janak commissioned artists to do paintings at the time of marriage of his daughter, Sita, with Sri Rama who is considered to be an incarnation of the Hindu god lord Vishnu.

**THE MODERN SCHOOL:** The close of the Mughal Dynasty, in A.D.1760, found the art of painting in India in a state of decay. In Delhi and Lucknow a number of artists still carried on their profession. In the last decade of the century, a small but earnest group of Bengali painters, grasping the situation, have joined themselves together with the intention of endeavoring and rescuing it from the degradation.
Miniature painters employed at various medieval courts, discovered the potential of limitless self-expression in their depiction and today there are 130 known sets of such miniatures.

**SLIDE 39:** The paintings of Jamini Roy (1887-1972) are among the most recognizable of Indian paintings. Roy was a very important Indian artist of the 20th century. His works have since been declared as national treasures of India and are gaining international acclaim as well. One can see large influence of Bengali tradition in his works, even when the portrayal is of European saints. He was one of the famous painters of the late 19th century to mid 20th century, created his own language of painting which was marked by the traditional folk arts of Bengal, especially the pata-painting. His paintings were the symphony of bold lines, colourful palette and simple rhythmic life of rural Bengal. Jamini Roy was trained in his formative period in the Bengal school style of painting and his painting represented as much a revival of folk art as a rebellion against the delicate drawing and hazy colors of the Bengal stature of their own. They use materials and techniques from all over the world but express Indian realities and Indian experiences.

The Bengal School of Art was an influential style of art that flourished in India during the British Raj in the early 20th century. It was associated with Indian nationalism, but was also promoted and supported by many British arts administrators.

Following the widespread influence of Indian spiritual ideas in the West, the British art teacher Ernest Binfield Havel attempted to reform the teaching methods at the Calcutta School of Art by encouraging students to imitate Mughal miniatures. This caused immense controversy, leading to a strike by students and complaints from the local press, including from nationalists who considered it to be a retrogressive move. Havel was supported by the artist Abanindranath Tagore, a nephew of the poet Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore painted a number of works influenced by Mughal art, a style that he and Havel believed to be expressive of India’s distinct spiritual qualities, as opposed to the "materialism" of the West. Tagore’s best-known painting, Bharat Mata (Mother India), depicted a young woman, portrayed with four arms in the manner of Hindu deities, holding objects
symbolic of India's national aspirations. Tagore later attempted to develop links with Japanese artists as part of an aspiration to construct a pan-Asianist model of art.

**SLIDE 40:** The leader of this art movement was Abanindra Nath Tagore. The first step taken by these reformers has necessarily been a retrogressive one. It’s members, therefore, have sought out the old historic painting of the past and on the results acquired from a study of these and other masterpieces of Oriental art, the new movement has been founded. Scenes are taken from the writings of Kalidasa, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Gita and the Puranas and incidents of ancient Indian History.

**SLIDE 41:** The Bengal School arose as an avant garde and nationalist movement reacting against the academic art styles previously promoted in India. **SLIDE 42:** both by Indian artists such as Ravi Varma and in British art schools. It is said that to be an artist like Raja Ravi Verma, a person should be blessed by God to project human form in such an excellent pictorial form.

**SLIDE 43:** **RAJA RAVI VARMA:** (April 29, 1848 - October 2, 1906) was an Indian painter from the princely state of Travancore **SLIDE 44** who achieved recognition for his depiction of scenes from the epics of the Mahabharata and Ramayana **SLIDE 45.** His paintings are considered to be among the best examples of the fusion of Indian **SLIDE 46** traditions with the techniques of European academic art. **SLIDE 47**

**SLIDE 48** Raja Ravi Varma is most remembered for his paintings of beautiful sari-clad women, who were portrayed as shapely and graceful. **SLIDE 49** His exposure in the west came when he won the first prize in the Vienna Art Exhibition in 1873. **SLIDE 50** Raja Ravi Varma died in 1906 at the age of 58. He is considered among the greatest painters in the history of Indian art. **SLIDE 51**

Raja Ravi Varma is particularly noted for his paintings depicting **SLIDE 52** episodes from the story of Dushyanta and Shakuntala, and Nala and Damayanti, from the Mahabharata. **SLIDE 53** Ravi stunning paintings of Indian women, and his habit of getting into controversies, he is also a multi-faceted person, having made
movies, and served in India's Parliament. Varma's representation of mythological characters has become a part of the Indian imagination of the epics.

SLIDE 54  Maqbool Fida Hussain is perhaps India's most famous artist of modern times. He is described as 'Picasso of India' by Forbes Magazine. SLIDE 55  He formed the Progressive Artists’ Group in 1948 along with Havell, Francis Souza, Syed Raza and Amrita Shergill. SLIDE 56 He is one of the most famous artists of India, both at the National as well as the International level.

The respect for tradition and the ability to transcend it at the same time is clearly evident in Indian art of today. This is the essence of what has been described as the eclecticism of the Indian contemporary expression. To put it in the form of art is an eminent painter Jatin Das.

SLIDE 57  Jatin Das is the part of the Indian art for more than four decades with his paintings which depicts the new and dynamic ways of sketching human figures. He is the master of using colours in an exceptional way which seem to reveal the tinges of every emotional expression in his paintings. SLIDE 58  The linear arrangement and brisk brushwork further add a unique dimension to his art works and express the inner energy of the figures.

Indian paintings traditions go back to antiquity, as is evident from the murals of Ajanta, Ellora and other frescoes, the Buddhist palm leaf manuscripts, the Jain texts and the Deccan, Mughal and Kangra schools of miniature Indian painting.

Indian Painting is an old tradition, with ancient texts outlining theories of color and and anecdotal accounts suggesting that it was common for households to paint their doorways or indoor rooms where guests resided. Cave paintings from Ajanta, Bagh and Sittanvasal and temple paintings testify to a love of naturalism. Indian paintings provide an aesthetic continuum that extends from the early civilization to the present day. This form of art in India is vivid and lively, refined and sophisticated and bold and vigorous at the same time. From being essentially religious in purpose in the beginning, Indian paintings have evolved over the years to become a fusion of various traditions which influenced them. Now its our duty to preserve such a precious heritage in whichever way we can..., because Indian art is the only exception in the world which can proclaim- Yes, I have evolved over the
years with each political, social, economic and cultural transition and synthesized every good elements within itself. SLIDE 61

Thank you,

Preeti Awasthi

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