

अभिव्यक्ति

The Art of Manjusha

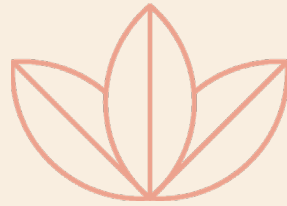




अभिव्यक्ति

The Art of Manjusha

**Craft Research Documentation
of Manjusha Art of Bhagalpur,
Bihar**



Certificate

This is to certify that the Craft Cluster Initiative titled “Abhivyakti: The Art of Manjusha” is a record of work done by the students of Department of Fashion and Lifestyle Accessory Design (Batch 2022-26). The research was done during the period of 2nd June 2024 to 11th June 2024 conducted towards the partial fulfilment of the program Bachelor of Design in Fashion and Lifestyle Accessory which represents as independent work and does not form the base for any previous work. However, any material taken from any other published source has been suitably referred and acknowledged at various places.

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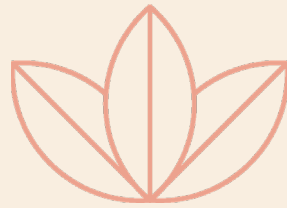
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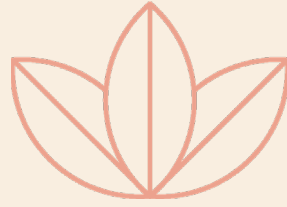
Preface

Human civilization places paramount importance on the preservation and transmission of knowledge. This document, focused on Manjusha folk art, seeks to capture the essence of this cultural heritage and stands as an enduring testimony to this rich tradition. With deep gratitude and a strong sense of responsibility, we present this compilation, which elucidates the vibrant tapestry of Bhagalpur's folk art and culture.

This document is more than just a repository; it is a bridge connecting the glorious past with the promising present and will serve as a guiding light for the future. It encompasses a wide range of subjects, from the historical narrative of the folklore to its contemporary advancements. Each entry within these pages is organized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the enriched culture of this folklore and art.

We invite you to immerse yourself in the wisdom and insights that this document offers. Whether you are a student seeking information, an explorer with a curious mind, or a researcher in pursuit of deeper understanding, this document is designed to inspire and share the best knowledge on the topic. It is a labor of love, reflecting the tireless efforts of researchers and enthusiasts in verifying, compiling, and completing this work.

In conclusion, this document is a celebration of creativity and culture. It serves as a reminder of the incredible achievements of those who came before us and inspires us to see folk art beyond boundaries, striving to draw the best from it. May this document be a source of enlightenment for all who seek knowledge about this art and cultural heritage. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each contributor who helped us successfully complete this document.

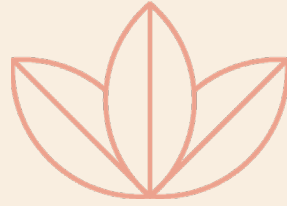


Abstract

This craft documentation gives us the glimpse on Manjusha Painting, which is a traditional art form of Ang region today's Bhagalpur of Bihar. Manjusha painting is known for its vibrant colors and the intricate motifs and border. The folk art holds the religious significance and cultural relevance. The painting depicts the story of Bihula-Bishari that was in the form of folklore the story celebrates the triumph of devotion and determination and the power of perseverance. Manjusha paintings are characterized by their distinct style, featuring bold lines and a limited yet vivid color palette (yellow, red and green), earlier it was done on the bamboo boxes called manjusha which was offered during the bishari puja which is celebrated in the month of July and August.

This documentation explores the thematic elements and all the material and technique of Manjusha painting and the uniqueness of the artform. The document delves into the traditional process of making colors and its significance. Every detail related to the art is reflected in this document. The narrative quality of Manjusha paintings, along with the unique aesthetic, offers a captivating glimpse into the rich traditions and artistic practices of Bihar.

The abstract highlights all the key points of the documentation like cultural and historical significance of the art form and sets the stage for the readers to expect all the details in the documentation.



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Glossary

1. *Puja*: Sanskrit word meaning worship
2. *Parvat*: Mountain
3. *Samudra Manthan*: It means churning of the ocean
4. *Manjusha*: the bamboo box offered to the snake goddess Mansa Devi during Bishari Puja
5. *Sindoor*: Vermillion powder
6. *Mandap*: Decorated canopy for weddings
7. *Kalash*: A symbolic container for rituals
8. *Kumbhkars*: Caste of artisans who practice Manjusha Painting
9. *Malakars*: Caste of artisans who practice Manjusha Painting
10. *Shravan*: Month in the Hindu Lunar calendar
11. *Katchi Mitti*: Raw Mud or Clay
12. *Amrit*: divine elixir that makes you immortal
13. *Sonamukhi*: Name given to the boat in which Chando Saudagar's family drowned
14. *Daivashilpi*: Divine craftsman or godly craftsman
15. *Suhagan* : married female
16. *Ghoonghat*: Veil of a married woman
17. *Aandhi*: Dust storm
18. *Sada Suhagan*: A woman who will never turn into a widow
19. *Amar*: Immortal
20. *Sanai*: Kind of wood that is flexible
21. *Kagaz*: Paper
22. *Soola*: representation of the trident of lord shiva

23. *Shaguniya rang*: Auspicious Colors
24. *Gond*: Natural glue
25. *Sendha namal*: Rock salt
26. *Bel patra*: Leaves of the Bel Tree
27. *Jatta*: strands of hair
28. *Amrit Manthan*: Churning of the ocean to get Elixir of Life
29. *Manjusha Kavya*: Poetry of Manjusha
30. *Lokgeet*: Folk Songs

परिचय

Introduction

Introduction

Art is a form of human expression that takes many forms, such as painting, music, literature, and more. It is used to communicate ideas, emotions, and experiences, often reflecting cultural values and history. Art can be understood as a pursuit of beauty, a medium for innovation, and a deeply subjective experience, varying in meaning from person to person. Moreover, art is intrinsically linked to culture and history, serving as both a reflection of and a commentary on the society from which it emerges. It captures the values, beliefs, and experiences of different times and places, preserving them for future generations to study and appreciate.

India is widely known for its rich diversity, deeply rooted in its long history and culture. It encompasses numerous traditions, languages, festivals, and art forms that reflect the multifaceted identity of the country. Bihar, one of India's oldest inhabited regions, boasts a rich and diverse cultural heritage, which is why it is often referred to as the cradle of ancient civilizations. In Bihar, diversity is seen through language, tradition, and many other aspects of lifestyle. Bihar also has a rich educational heritage, with every part of the state having its own unique identity, making it a place that is both colorful and charismatic.

Bihar has a rich artistic heritage, with well-known traditions like Madhubani painting and Manjusha art, both reflecting regional culture and mythology. Patna Kalam is another unique art form, blending Mughal and British influences. Bhagalpuri silk showcases Bihar's textile craftsmanship. The state also has vibrant performing arts, including Bidesia folk theatre and Chhau dance, along with a strong tradition of folk music tied to festivals and rituals like Chhath Puja, where not only is the rising sun worshipped, but *puja* is also offered to the setting sun. These diverse art forms contribute to Bihar's unique cultural identity.



Fig. 1.1: Manjusha motifs and borders around a window in the temple of Mansa Devi.



Bhagalpur, popularly known as 'the Silk City' of India, is situated on the southern bank of the Ganges and is steeped in history and culture. Believed to be one of the oldest cities, Bhagalpur boasts many historical sites that attract visitors. The city is not only known for its art and culture but was also a center of education, housing the prestigious Vikramshila University. Besides its renowned silk industry, Bhagalpur is home to other traditional arts, including the fascinating Manjusha art form that originates from this region. Nearby places also hold significant cultural value, such as Mandar *Parvat*, which is believed to be the site of the churning of the ocean (*Samudra Manthan*) in Hindu mythology. Bhagalpur's rich heritage spans art, culture, and education.

The city is renowned for its artistic traditions, particularly its silk-weaving industry. Bhagalpuri silk, also known as Tussar silk, is celebrated for its fine quality and unique texture, making it highly valued in the textile market. The region also has a tradition of Manjusha art, a folk art form featuring box-like structures linked to local legends and religious rituals, reflecting the skilled craftsmanship of Bhagalpur.

In this document, we have extensively explored the Silk City of India, Bhagalpur, with a focus on its vibrant folk art, particularly Manjusha painting. The name '*Manjusha*' comes from the Sanskrit word for the bamboo box offered to the snake goddess Mansa Devi during Bishari Puja, which takes place annually on August 17th. This document provides an in-depth look at Manjusha painting, which dates back to the 7th century and has been passed down through generations. Originally, this painting was used to adorn the temple box called Manjusha, offered to the snake goddess during festivals. Over time, the painting has gained recognition and is now practiced by many artisans dedicated to preserving this art form, which reflects the identity of the local people.

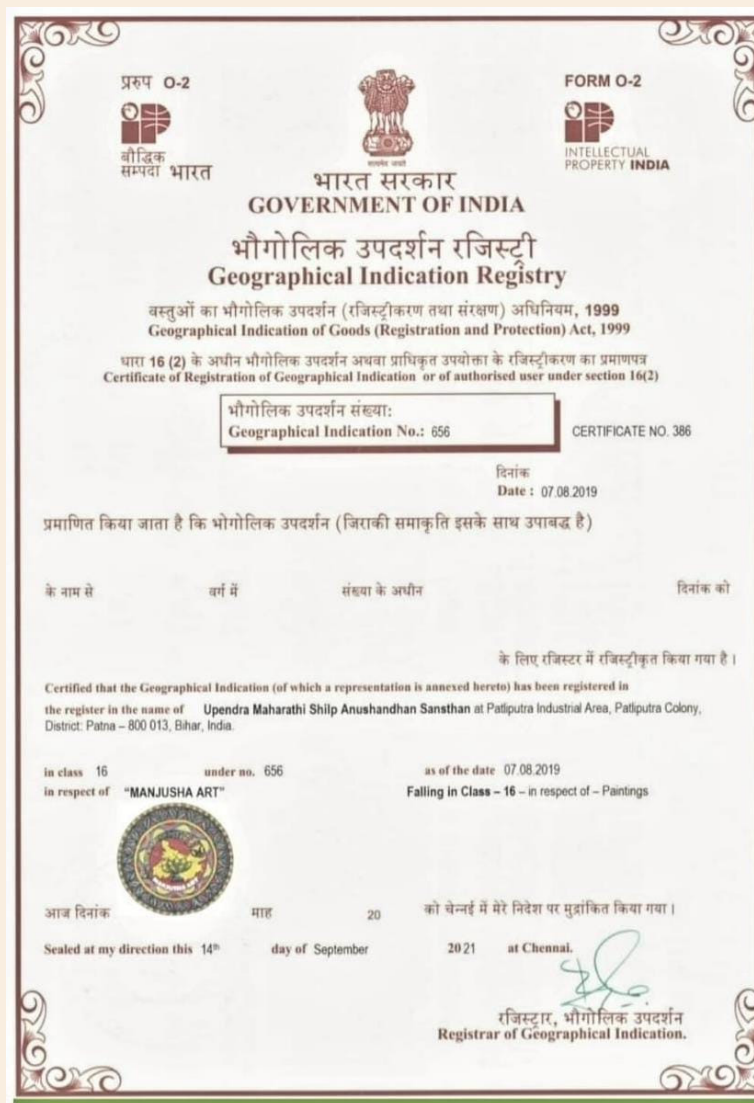


Fig 1.2: GI Tag for Manjusha Painting

Manjusha paintings revolve around folklore involving the legend of 'Bihula-Bishari'. These paintings were drawn on boxes which were used by devotees to store ritualistic items for 'Bishari Puja'. Another ritual that involves Manjusha paintings is one in which the groom is expected to apply vermilion powder or '*sindoor*' to all four Bisaharis and only then can he join his bride to the '*Mandap*'.

Manjusha painting is a type of scroll painting, often referred to as such because of its form, with the entire story depicted in a single line rather than being separated into sections. Unlike many other paintings, it focuses on one narrative—the story based on the folklore of the region, particularly the legends of Bihula and Bishari, using symbolic imagery and carrying the cultural and religious ethos of Bihar.

The locals introduced us to the story of Bihula and Bishari, a tale of love, devotion, faith, and determination. Bihula, the devoted wife and heroine of the story, embarks on a perilous journey to bring her husband back to life after he is bitten by a snake and succumbs to its venom. Our extensive research revealed different aspects of the painting, helping us understand why this art form is important to the people and why they show utmost respect for it. Every year, people eagerly await the festival, celebrating it with great enthusiasm and excitement.

Women worship Bihula for her dedication and determination in saving her husband's life, referring to her as 'Sati Bihula.' Apart from these cultural significances, the aesthetically appealing and beautifully intricate details give Manjusha painting its identity and individuality. Traditionally, Manjusha paintings were created using natural dyes and pigments, but in recent times, perhaps due to time constraints or increased demand, artisans have switched to synthetic brushes and colors.

Earlier, artisans used colors derived from plants, flowers, and minerals, ensuring that the paintings were eco-friendly and sustainable. There are three major colors used in the paintings: pink, green, and yellow, each carrying its significance and symbolism. Pink, often used as a base color, symbolizes love, compassion, and devotion. It reflects the emotional connection between the characters depicted and the stories being told, particularly in the context of the Bihula-Bishari legend, which is central to this art form.



Fig. 1.3 : Painting of Lord Shiva and the 5 sisters who were born from 5 Lotuses.

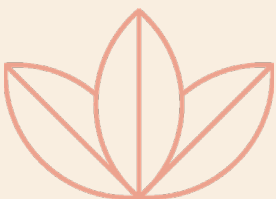
Yellow is associated with divinity, purity, and light, representing the divine or spiritual elements of the stories and highlighting the sacred aspects of the narratives and rituals depicted. Green represents nature, fertility, and life, depicting plants, trees, and other natural elements, symbolizing growth, renewal, and the connection between humans and the natural world.

Originally, the paintings were done only on the bamboo box and *Kalash* during Bishari Puja, but many artisans expanded the art form's scope and began working on canvas, using bamboo sticks as the base for scrolls. However, artisans later recognized the high cost of canvas, which made it unaffordable for many people, leading them to create Manjusha art on various objects like home decor, toys, and handmade paper or cloth.

The motifs in Manjusha paintings are distinct and easily recognizable. They include images of snakes, flowers, various deities, and other characters from the story, like Chando Saudagar and Bihula, all rendered in a characteristic style that emphasizes bold lines and vibrant colors. The snake, an essential element in these paintings, symbolizes fertility, protection, and the cyclical nature of life. The art form also incorporates elements of nature, such as the sun, moon, and stars, which hold significant cultural and religious connotations. Efforts to preserve and promote Manjusha painting have been gaining momentum.



Fig 1.4: Grocery store owner from Bhagalpur.



Artisans and cultural organizations are working together to keep this traditional art form alive. Workshops, exhibitions, and educational programs are organized to raise awareness about Manjusha painting and its historical significance. The government and various non-governmental organizations are providing support to artisans, ensuring they have access to the resources and markets needed to sustain their craft. In conclusion, Manjusha painting is a testament to Bihar's rich cultural heritage and artistic tradition. It encapsulates the region's history, mythology, and religious beliefs, making it an invaluable part of India's cultural mosaic. Through continued efforts in preservation and promotion, this ancient art form can thrive and inspire future generations, maintaining its place as a cherished cultural treasure.

The Ministry of Culture, Government of India, is responsive to the conservation and preservation of its ancient culture and heritage, both tangible and intangible. This ministry takes measures to protect art and culture that are on the verge of extinction and actively promotes them. In recent years, however, there has been greater public attention to these art forms and forgotten cultures, leading to the involvement of other ministries directly or indirectly. As a result, Madhubani painting has gained global recognition, and many other art forms have emerged with the strong support the government has shown towards the protection and promotion of art.

The Bihar government has been actively working to revive the traditional craft of Manjusha painting. Numerous skill upgradation trainings have been conducted in Bhagalpur and surrounding villages, raising awareness about this unique art form. One notable initiative is the mandate for all Zilla Parishad banks to display a Manjusha painting, which has created a market for the artisans. Additionally, the government recently formed an 11-member committee, including 4 artisans, to apply for a patent for Manjusha art, aiming to officially recognize it as a Bhagalpur folk art.

The motifs were used to popularise government schemes like Chief Minister's bicycle scheme, Beti Padhao Beti Bachao, Midday Meal Scheme, etc.



पृथ्वी

Background & Provenance

Background & Provenance

Manjusha painting is a traditional folk art from Ang Pradesh, now known as Bhagalpur region in Bihar, which is renowned for its rich culture, educational values, and various traditions. Originating in Bhagalpur, this painting is based on the folklore of Ang Pradesh and is unique in that it focuses on a single story throughout the entire artwork.

It is believed that Manjusha painting was initially practiced by two communities—the *Kumbhkars* and the *Malakars*. The *Kumbhkars* adorned pots, known as *kalash*, with Manjusha painting, while the *Malakars* created Manjusha boxes and illustrated paintings on them, which were also offered during pujas. Two notable artists of Manjusha painting were Nirmala Devi and Chakravarti Devi. Nirmala Devi, from the *Kumbhakar* caste, worked on decorating the *kalash*, whereas Chakravarti Devi, from the Malakar family, painted on the Manjusha boxes.

Although Manjusha painting has been practiced for centuries, it was initially known only within the community. The period from 1934 to 1942 is considered the peak era for the art, when Mr. W.C. Archer, an ICS officer who studied fine art at Oxford University and was stationed in the Bihar region during British rule, recognized the painting. He played a key role in bringing it to global attention by assisting the artisans.

However, for unspecified reasons, the art did not achieve widespread acceptance at that time. Despite this, through strong will and dedication, the art form has gained recognition in the present day.



The painting depicts the story of the folk legends Bihula and Bishari, highlighting the importance of determination and devotion in achieving one's desires. The story illustrates the power of perseverance and devotion and notably emphasizes themes of women's empowerment. Earlier, people used to sing the folklore during the festival, but in recent times, as folk songs have become less popular, they began to draw it to tell the story.

One of the most interesting aspects of the art is that all the figures appear in the shape of the alphabetical letter 'X,' adding to its uniqueness. Another notable feature is the use of only three colors to complete the entire painting. Additionally, the characters are depicted with hand gestures similar to those used to show respect.



Fig: 2.1: Manoj Pandit teaching his students



Fig. 2.2: Priest performing aarti for Mansa Devi.

The painting is associated with the Bishari Puja festival, which is celebrated on August 17th every year with great devotion and enthusiasm. However, people perform the aarti twice daily from mid-July to mid-August, praying to Bishari Devi to grant their wishes. After their wishes are fulfilled, they offer paper Manjusha along with sweets to show their respect to the deity. The people of Bhagalpur have deep-rooted faith in this puja and the painting and perform the rituals with devotion. They have taken significant steps to promote the art form, and artisans are doing excellent work in preserving the region's heritage by illustrating this art form.

Manjusha painting has evolved significantly over time. A well-known pioneer of this painting was Chakravarti Devi, who, along with Nirmala Devi, played a crucial role in preserving the culture. During the 1980s, another pioneer, Manoj Pandit, also known as Manjusha Guru, dedicated himself to preserving the art form. It was his sacrifice and hard work that helped Manjusha painting gain recognition in today's time. He worked tirelessly to secure the GI tag for the art form and inspired many young people to join his mission by highlighting the hidden opportunities within this art.

He believed that art could survive only when the artists are supported financially. By 1995, he began introducing the art form on various products like sarees, dupattas, and home decor items. He taught many young people and women the art form and helped expand the heritage.



Fig. 2.3: Bishari Temple in Barari Village

Manjusha painting was traditionally done during the auspicious occasion of Bishari Puja, celebrated by the local people with enthusiasm and deep-rooted faith and devotion. It is also prominent during Bihula Puja, where the folk legend Bihula, known for her strong will and determination, is honored. People sing folklore and perform puja in her honor. Besides these occasions, the painting is often done during other auspicious events by the local people, as it is considered a symbol of good luck that wards off evil and brings good fortune.

The painting has also become popular as a decorative art, and these small efforts have helped keep the art alive, making it a common sight in many homes. Across Bhagalpur, there are different clusters of artisans who sell their work across the nation and globally.



Importance

The story holds great significance as a folklore that encapsulates the essence of the cultural heritage and social life of the people. Manjusha painting is deeply intertwined with the identity of the people, introduced to them from a very early age. They worship Bishari and hold a strong belief in the story.

Just as every part of the globe has some unique feature, either in art forms or legendary stories, the relevance of this story is evident in many Hindu mythological texts, which are considered reliable references. In this story, the snake goddess Mansa Devi is introduced, who is believed to save lives and fulfill the wishes of those who seek her blessings. Various other places in India, and even within Bihar, show references to Bishari and Mansa Devi, albeit with slight variations in the story and characterization.

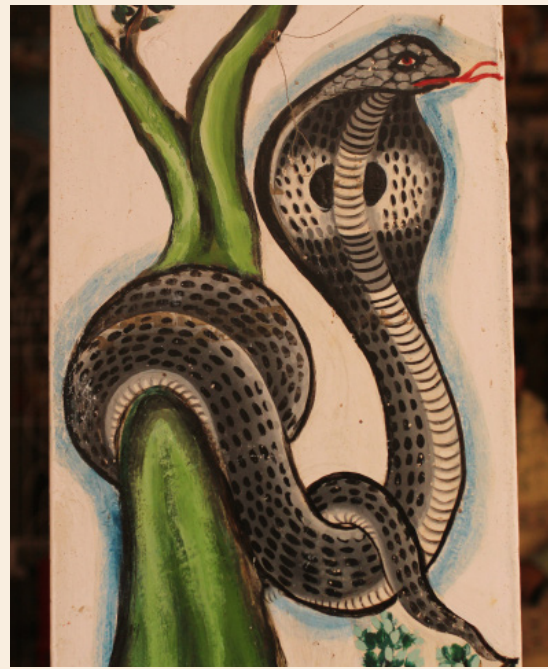


Fig 2.4 : Paintings related to Manjusha on the walls of a temple

The folklore, though mainly recited during the pujas, has been passed down through generations, with its essence preserved in the Manjusha paintings. These paintings serve as a way to preserve the art and culture of the place. The boat in which Bihula carried the dead body of her husband was crafted by Lord Vishwakarma at her request.

One stanza from the folklore (as quoted by Manoj Pandit) is:

“Likhiba likhiba re maliya manjusha hmar re are likahba likhaba re maliya saguniya rang manjusha he mayatab je likhaba re maliya chandosaudagar he tb je likhaba re maliya sonika sahun he maay tab je likhaba re maliya bihula abhagin re are yhi manjusha chadhiya re maliya jaibe kailashindra sange hey maaya”

This stanza means that Bihula requested the artist to paint the boat, which would depict good fortune, using vibrant colors and portraying her father-in-law, mother-in-law, and herself, whom she considered unfortunate for losing her husband on the day of her wedding.

Relevance in Other Places in Bihar

In Madhubani, there is a festival called Madhushravani, celebrated by married women in the month of “*Shravan*.” Newly married women create Bisharis, the five snake sisters, out of clay or raw earth (“*katchi mitti*”), color them, and offer puja for fifteen days. All the other women join in the festival and sing folk songs. In Maithili culture, the book “Madhushravani Vrat Katha” contains a short story about Bihula and Mansa Devi, featuring characters named Chando Saudagar and Bala Lakhendra, which is quite similar to the story of Bihula and Bishari.

In Haridwar, there is a temple called Mansa Devi Mandir, where people worship the snake goddess Mansa Devi, who is said to have been born from Lord Shiva’s mind and is also referred to as the sister of the serpent Vasuki. In short, Mansa Devi holds significant relevance across India, with each story slightly different but consistently portraying her as the snake goddess.



Fig 2.5: Students of Manjusha art in Bhagalpur



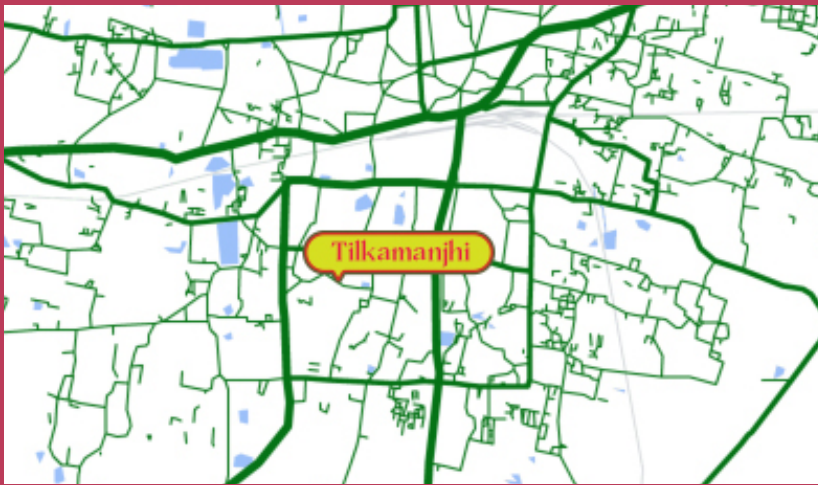


Fig: 2.6: Map of Tilkamanjhi

Tilka Manjhi is a prominent locality in Bhagalpur city, located in the state of Bihar, India. It falls under the jurisdiction of the Bhagalpur Division and the Taluk/Tehsil of Jagdishpur. The pin code for Tilka Manjhi is 812004, and the postal head office for this area is located in Champanagar. The locality has a population of approximately 9,958 residents and covers an area of about 4.14 square kilometers. The Tilka Manjhi Post Office, categorized as a sub office (S.O.), is located at Tilka Manjhi, Jagdishpur, Bhagalpur

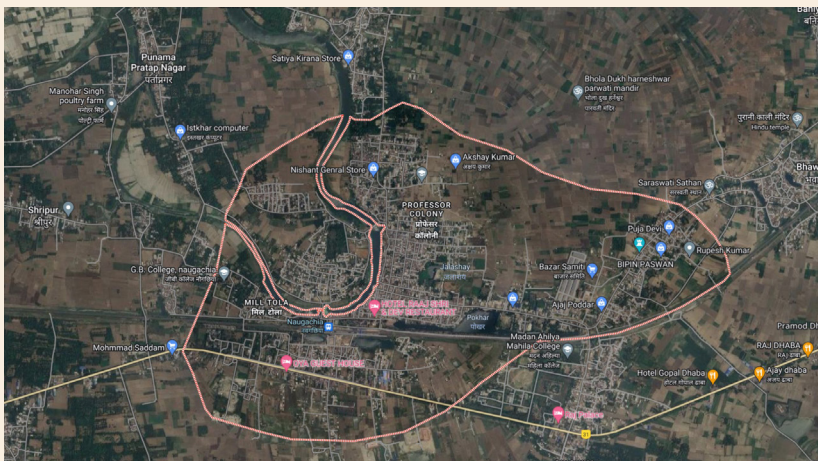


Fig: 2.7: Map of Naugachhia

Naugachhia is a Town and Subdivision in Bhagalpur District of Bihar. In India, a subdivision is a small part of a district that is responsible for the administration and revenue collection of a particular area within the district. It is an important part of the local governance structure, and plays a crucial role in the development and administration of its local community.

Total area of naugachhia subdivision is 113 km² including 101.44 km² rural area and 11.24 km² urban area. There are about 27,517 houses in the sub-district, including 8,547 urban houses and 18,970 rural houses.

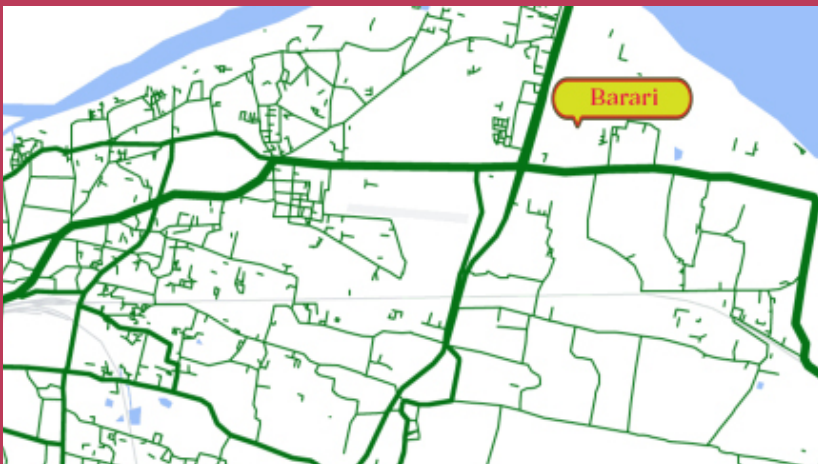


Fig: 2.8: Map of Barari Village

Barari village is located in Sabour subdivision of Bhagalpur district in Bihar, India. It is situated 5km away from sub-district headquarter Sabour (tehsildar office) and 10km away from district headquarter Bhagalpur. As per 2009 stats, Barari village is also a gram panchayat.

The total geographical area of village is 222 hectares. There are about 746 houses in barari village.

Bhagalpur is nearest town to barari for all major economic activities, which is approximately 10km away.

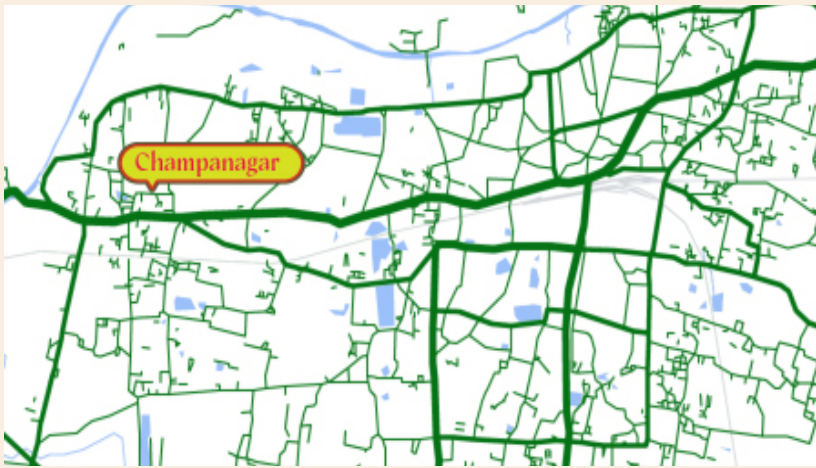


Fig: 2.9: Map of Champa Nagar

Champa Nagar village is located in Raghapur subdivision of Supaul district in Bihar, India. It is situated 20km away from sub-district headquarter Raghapur (tehsildar office) and 40km away from district headquarter Supaul. As per 2009 stats, Champa Nagar village is also a gram panchayat. The total geographical area of village is 127 hectares. There are about 534 houses in champa nagar village.

Supaul is nearest town to champa nagar for all major economic activities, which is approximately 40km away.

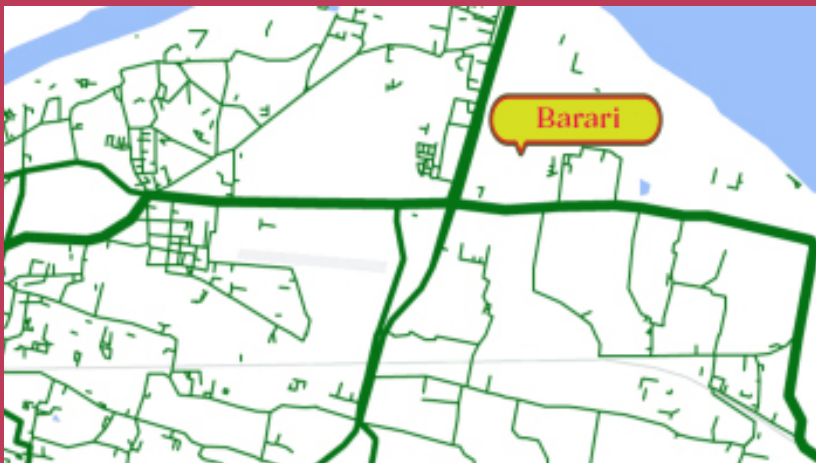


Fig: 2.10: Map of Mohaddinagar

Mohaddinagar falls under the jurisdiction of the Bhagalpur Municipal Corporation, which is responsible for the administration and civic infrastructure of the area. It is part of the Bhagalpur Sadar subdivision, one of the administrative subdivisions of Bhagalpur district. The pin code for Mohaddinagar is 812005. This locality is part of the Mirjanhat area, which can be considered part of the urban area of Bhagalpur.





कथा

Story

Story of Manjusha

Manjusha painting, a traditional art form from Bihar, India, vividly expresses the region's cultural and mythological heritage. Originating in Bhagalpur, it tells the ancient tale of Bihula-Bishari, depicting devotion, valor, and the struggle between good and evil. "Manjusha" refers to both the art and the decorative boxes for religious artifacts. These paintings, with their bright colors and intricate designs, preserve the region's rich traditions.



Fig 3.1: Manjusha Painting made on a temple wall.

The “Katha”

The story starts with Lord Shiva bathing in the Sonadah lake, where, while taking a bath, five hairs from his plait fell into the water. These five hairs became five lotuses. As Lord Shiva continued his bath, he noticed sounds coming from the lotuses. They were requesting him to accept them as his daughters. To this, Lord Shiva replied that unless he saw their true forms, he could not accept them as his daughters. All five lotuses then transformed into their true forms of five women, namely, Jaya Bishari (symbol: bow and arrow, Amrit Kalash), Dhothila Bhavani (symbol: one hand holding the rising sun and the other hand holding a snake), Padmavathi (symbol: one hand holding a lotus), Mynah Bishari (symbol: a Mynah bird in one hand) and Mansa Bishari (symbol: both hands holding snakes). Lord Shiva accepted them as his daughters, calling them ‘*Mansaputri*’, meaning human-form daughters. They are also known as ‘*Datta Putri*’, meaning adopted daughters, but they are most famously called and worshipped as Mansa Devi.

Lord Shiva takes the five daughters to Goddess Parvati, and the sisters ask her to accept them. However, she immediately refuses. Agitated by the rejection, the sisters become furious, transform into snakes, and hide in the flowers. When Goddess Parvati goes to pick the flowers, the snakes bite her, causing her to become unconscious.

As soon as Lord Shiva arrives and sees this, he requests the sisters to revive her, assuring them that she will accept them. Jaya Bishari feeds Goddess Parvati with the *Amrit* from her *Amrit Kalash*, and she revives from her unconsciousness. When Goddess Parvati becomes conscious, she grants them the boon that they will be able to rid others of poison and gives them the name ‘Bishari’.

Once, all five sisters were playing the game of ‘*Jhingri*’ in their snake form when Lord Vasuki Nath appeared. Seeing him, the sisters told him that they belonged to Lord Shiva’s family and should also be worshipped like everyone else in his family.



Fig. 3.2 : An elderly man reading and reciting a local folk tale.

Lord Vasuki Nath replied to their request, saying that in the Angpradesh kingdom in Champanagar, there is a Lord Shiva devotee named Chandradhar Saudagar, (also known as Chando Saudagar). He added that if Chando Saudagar agrees to worship them, then everyone on earth will follow his example. After learning this, the sisters seek Lord Shiva’s permission and go to Chando Saudagar, heading towards Champanagar. Chando Saudagar was a very successful businessman and a strong devotee of Lord Shiva. His business flourished all over the country and beyond. He was married to Sonka Sahund and had six sons. When the Bisharis approached him to worship them so that the world would follow his example, they promised him wealth and power in return. However, Chando Saudagar paid no attention to their offer and refused.

After being refused, Mynah Bishari became very angry and cursed him, declaring that they would ruin his family and business. Even upon hearing this, he refused to worship them, as he was known to be a very stubborn man.

The Bisharis became furious about his refusal and drowned the entire family of Chando Saudagar with the boat “*Sonamukhi*,” which was made of gold. However, they realized that if they killed Chando Saudagar, their wish to be worshipped would not be fulfilled. So, all five sisters prayed to Lord Hanuman, who appeared in front of them and helped them by pulling Chando Saudagar out from the sea. Despite all the atrocities, Chando Saudagar stood firm in his decision not to worship the Bisharis.

As time passed, Chando Saudagar and his wife had another son, Bala Lakhendra. Once Bala Lakhendra grew up, his father searched for a suitable bride for him. His marriage was arranged with a girl named Bihula from the nearby village of Ujjaini. After much deliberation, Chando Saudagar agreed to the proposal, as he was aware of the Bisharis’ curse and wanted to ensure that the girl whom his son married would be able to stand up against the Bisharis.



Fig. 3.3 : Idol of Lord Shiva



Fig. 3.4 : Remains of what used to be the Sonadah Lake.

On the other hand, Bihula herself was cursed by an old woman that she would become a widow on her wedding night. It is said that she was tested by Chando Saudagar for her intelligence and wisdom. After he was satisfied, he agreed, and the wedding took place with celebration and pomp. The curse of the Bisharis was remembered, so the house was constructed by none other than “*Daivashilpi*” Lord Vishwakarma. The Bisharis, on the other hand, ensured that they intercepted this plan and requested him to leave a small hole as fine as a hair in the wall of the room.

On the night of the marriage, the house was guarded by many people as well as mongooses, the enemies of snakes. However, the Bisharis managed to get “*Maniyar*,” the snake of Lord Shiva, to enter the house and kill Bala Lakhendra. Bihula became agitated at her husband’s death and started crying, which drew the rest of the family to the scene. Chando Saudagar could not bear the pain but still came to his senses and ordered his son’s body to be immersed in the river. Bihula stopped him and told him that she would take his body to “*Nethula Dhobin*” to revive him.

Bihula asked Lord Vishwakarma to construct a boat for her to take her husband's body and a *manjusha* to cover his body. She requested him to illustrate the story of her sacrifice on the manjusha, depicting the whole family along with the flora and fauna of Ang Pradesh. The three colors used—yellow, pink, and green—depicted sacrifice, determination, and happiness.

Bihula takes the body of her husband in the manjusha and travels to different ghats like Sonapur Ghat, Godha Ghat, and Jwari Ghat. Afterward, she takes it to Galantri Ghat, where the water is so acidic that Bala's flesh turns into skeletal remains. She puts the skeleton into a potali and continues her journey.

While moving ahead, she notices a woman with two men. The woman was Nethula Dhobin. Bihula saw her cut her husband into koota and her son into paat, then washed the clothes of gods and goddesses. After finishing her work, Nethula Dhobin chanted certain mantras, bringing her husband and son back to life, and they continued with their tasks. Witnessing this, Bihula realized that only Nethula Dhobin could help her revive her husband and approached her for help.



Fig 3.5 : Representation of Chando Saudagar worshipping Lord Shiva.

After many trials and difficulties, Bihula somehow managed to approach Lord Shiva in heaven. While there, she covered her face with a “ghoonghat.” She requested Lord Shiva to return all the wealth to her father-in-law that had been taken away from him. She also asked all the gods and goddesses to restore the happiness of Champanagar when she returned and for her six widowed sisters-in-law to become “*suhagan*” (married) again. Additionally, she asked for the blessing of having a child. After all the boons were granted, Bihula removed the *ghoonghat* and revealed herself.

When the Bisharis recognized her, they informed her that all the wishes would be granted only if her father-in-law, Chando Saudagar, agreed to worship them. Bihula agreed and assured them that they would be worshipped.

Bala was brought back to life by the Bisharis, and all the family members returned to Champanagar along with their wealth. Once they reached there, the entire family was overwhelmed and greeted each other, creating a moment of celebration. Bihula reminded them of the condition given by the Bisharis that all this would remain only if Chando Saudagar worshipped them. Upon hearing this, he once again refused to perform the *pooja*. The Bisharis then asked Bihula to use her power to create darkness or “*aandhi*.” Bihula did so, and once again, all the seven brothers fell into the lake.



Fig 3.6 : Elderly man from Bhagalpur, visiting one of the temples of Mansa Devi.

While they were drowning, they requested Chando Saudagar to perform the *pooja*, but he refused, saying that he would rather die than perform the *pooja*. The moment he took his sword out to kill himself, Lord Shiva appeared and told him not to kill himself, asking him to worship the Bisharis as they are his daughters. On hearing this, Chando Saudagar said that he would offer the *pooja* with his right hand only to Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva then suggested that he offer the *pooja* to the Bisharis with his left hand. Chando Saudagar agreed to this and performed the *pooja* with his left hand, after which everything returned to normal.





हस्तकला

About the Craft

What is Craft?

Craft refers to any activity that involves skillfully using hands to create objects. These objects may or may not be utilitarian but always have cultural aesthetics and are related to a community's livelihood. In other words, for a utilitarian object to be considered a craft, it must be aesthetically appealing, socio-economically valued by people, and represent a community's cultural heritage. Crafts typically use natural materials like wood, paper, etc. Many crafts are awarded Geographical Indication (GI) tags. A GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. The products that receive GI tags from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in India are regarded as invaluable treasures of the country.

Bihar is famous for its rich culture and heritage. It is a place where many folk arts and folklore hold a special place in the hearts of the locals. Many of these arts, like Madhubani painting, have gained widespread recognition around the globe. Bihar's craft tradition is a vibrant reflection of its cultural heritage. The state is renowned for Madhubani painting, known for its intricate patterns and mythological themes, and Manjusha painting, which narrates the Bihula-Bishari folklore.

Sikki grass craft produces beautifully woven baskets and decorative items, while Sujani embroidery features detailed stitchwork on quilts depicting daily life. Lacquerware from Bihar includes colorful bangles and jewelry, and the state's artisans are also skilled in stone and wood carving, creating intricate sculptures. Traditional pottery and terracotta items further showcase Bihar's rich artistic legacy. These crafts are integral to the region's identity and sustain the livelihoods of many local artisans.

As we discussed earlier, Bihar has much more to offer than just this, such as the silk produced in Bhagalpur, which is famous worldwide. Apart from this, the painting we covered in this document, Manjusha painting, holds a special place in the hearts of the people in the region. Many crafts of Bihar have been awarded the GI (Geographical Indication) tag by the government, including Madhubani painting and Manjusha painting.



Fig 4.1 : The centre where Manoj Pandit teaches Manjusha art to his students and followers.



This craft was traditionally practiced during the auspicious festival of Bishari Puja. It originally provided a livelihood to only two communities in the region: the Kumbhakars and the Malakars. The Kumbhakars were responsible for adorning the kalash with paintings, which the local women carried on their heads during the puja. The Malakars created the paintings on the manjusha, made of paper, which was also offered to the snake goddess.

As quoted by Shri Manoj Pandit, the art did not gain widespread fame due to social boundaries. It was believed that the art was practiced by a specific class of people, so others never took the initiative to learn and understand the painting. Although the craft has a deep cultural impact, it is widely believed that it can be expanded by illustrating it on a different range of products.

Previously, this craft was a source of livelihood for a certain class of people and only for specific occasions, as discussed earlier. However, the painting is now providing livelihoods to many people, including women from various local areas of Bhagalpur. Even young people have found opportunities in this art. Since Manjusha art was granted the GI (Geographical Indication) tag, people have recognized its importance and the need to preserve their identity by safeguarding the painting.

To quote Shri Manoj Pandit once again, “Art survives only when the artisans survive, and they can survive only when they are given a livelihood through art.”

The art holds the essence of Sati Bihula, who was granted the boon of “*Sada Suhagan*,” meaning she is never widowed, and “*Amar*,” as she is considered immortal. She blesses the women who seek her blessings. Bishari is celebrated and worshiped on “*Nag Panchami*” and is believed to take away all the pain of those who seek her blessings.



Fig 4.2: Manjusha paintings made on temple walls.

To make the manjusha, several materials are essential and are first gathered by the people, such as “*sanai*” a kind of wood that is flexible, *kagaz*, and *soola*. Using these materials, the base of the manjusha is created, with a triangular part on top.

It is quite a step forward to apply the craft to different range of products is vital for several reasons like by doing these things people are taking an initiative for preserving their heritage and expanding their customer to much broader customer base ensuring that these crafts remain relevant in a modern context. By doing an expansion on the range of products, artisans can get into various markets, which will help them increase their income and reach global consumers, thereby sustaining their livelihoods of the artisans who are giving so much time and effort for the preservation of the craft.

Moreover, this diversification fosters creativity and innovation among artisans, which encourages them to experiment new designs and applications, which can help them and encourage them to make more such unique and appealing products. Additionally, crafting on different products facilitates cultural exchange, allowing traditional art forms to resonate with diverse cultures and fostering cross-cultural appreciation, like many people outside of can can get the access to the products and as the products are affordable much appreciation will be given by the consumers, making traditional craftsmanship a part of everyday life.

Overall, applying traditional crafts to various products helps preserve these rich cultural traditions and heritage, also drives economic growth for artisans, and ensures that the beauty and significance of these crafts continue to thrive in the modern world.



Raw Materials

In art, raw materials are the fundamental, unprocessed substances that serve as the building blocks for artistic creation. These materials are the essential components that artists use to bring their visions to life, shaping and transforming them into finished works of art. The term encompasses a wide range of materials, each corresponding to different artistic mediums, and without raw materials, the making of art cannot happen. Any big or small thing used in the creation of art and craft falls under the criteria of raw materials. For instance, paints and pigments are derived from minerals, plants, or synthetic substances. Canvas and paper provide the surfaces for painting, drawing, and printmaking, while clay and stone are essential for ceramics and sculpture.

Raw materials are crucial because they are the starting point for any artwork, influencing the artist's technique, style, and the final appearance of the piece. The choice of materials can also reflect cultural practices, historical contexts, and regional resources, adding layers of meaning to the art. Thus, raw materials are not just the physical substances artists work with; they are integral to the creative process, shaping the very essence and identity of the artwork.

Several raw materials are used in the making of Manjusha paintings and in their finishing. In earlier times, Manjusha paintings were done on Manjusha (boxes) and Kalash (sacred pots), and the raw materials were limited to what was needed. Some of these raw materials are as follows:

Color is a fundamental aspect of art, essential for its emotional impact, visual harmony, and symbolic meaning. It evokes specific feelings and moods, such as warmth with reds and tranquility with blues. It also carries cultural and symbolic significance, reinforcing themes and narratives. In Manjusha painting, the significance of three colors—pink, green, and yellow—represents happiness, good fortune, and growth. Collectively, these colors are known as *Shaguniya Rang*. Overall, it is rightly said that color is a powerful tool in art.

Traditionally, the colors used in Manjusha painting were made naturally by artisans using various materials from nature. As mentioned, the painting is primarily created using the vibrant colors of pink, green, and yellow. Here, we will discuss how these colors were originally made from natural objects.

In addition to the pigments, other materials such as *gond* were added. In the absence of glue, people used rock salt or *sendha namak* along with goat milk. These details were shared by none other than Manjusha Guru Shri Manoj Pandit Ji.

However, as the demand for Manjusha painting increased, and due to the shortage of time and easy availability of alternatives, people switched to acrylic paints and fabric paints.

Other raw materials used include brushes, which were traditionally handmade using bamboo sticks. These sticks, often sharpened to a point, allowed for precise lines and intricate details characteristic of Manjusha paintings.

But again, due to the shortage of time and easy availability, artisans have switched to synthetic brushes. Additionally, readymade products are now used as a base for Manjusha paintings intended for sale.

Artisans typically keep raw materials in abundance to ensure they don't run out in the middle of their work. However, with the shift to materials readily available in any nearby market, artisans no longer see the collection of raw materials as an obstacle.

The use of newer materials like fabric, acrylic colors, and synthetic brushes doesn't seem to have significantly impacted the quality of the paintings. In fact, these changes have reduced the challenges artisans once faced when making the materials themselves. The authenticity of the craft is still maintained, which is why artisans have embraced these changes, allowing them to produce more products in a shorter amount of time.



Fig. 4.3 : Different colours and paintbrushes that are used today to do Manjusha painting.



Production Process

Preparation of Materials and Surface

Selecting the Surface: Choose between handmade paper or fabric, or now a days as we know many more surfaces are used as the expansion of product development has increased. The surface is often prepared by smoothing and sometimes coating it with a base layer to ensure better adherence of paint.

Preparing Dyes and Pigments: Natural dyes and pigments are prepared from sources like plants, minerals, or earth. These colors are mixed to achieve the desired shades, but as said before now there are synthetic colors which are being used.

Design and Outlining

Sketching: The artist begins by sketching the basic outline of the design directly onto the surface. This sketch serves as a guide for the detailed work to follow.

Applying Color

Coloring: After the outline is complete and dry, natural dyes or the synthetic colors like acrylic paint or fabric paints are applied within the outlined areas. Artists use bamboo sticks as brushes to apply the paint, ensuring accuracy and detail in the color application, but using bamboo stick was the earlier method of applying the colour now they have switched to the use of brushes of different points.

Layering: Colors may be layered to enhance vibrancy and depth. Artists often use different techniques to create variations in hue and texture.



Fig. 4.4 : An artisan Sketching out the pattern to be made on a final painting.



Fig. 4.5 : Incomplete Painting with the borders half painted.

Detailing and Final Touches

Adding Details: Once the primary colors are applied, the artist adds finer details and embellishments to enhance the design. This may involve adding smaller patterns or highlights, on the characters or to avoid the negative space in the painting.

Drying: The painting is left to dry completely. This step is crucial to ensure that the colors set properly and to take care that the colors don't smudge and that the artwork retains its vibrancy.

Finishing

Reviewing: The artist reviews the painting for any final adjustments or touch-ups. This may involve refining details or correcting any inconsistencies.

Framing or Mounting: Depending on its intended use, the finished painting may be framed or mounted. For traditional uses, it might be displayed as wall art or used in ceremonial contexts. If other products are being painted there finishing is done accordingly.

Preservation and Display

Protection: To preserve the painting, it may be treated with protective coatings or stored in conditions that prevent damage from light, moisture, or dust.

Exhibition: The final artwork is prepared for exhibition or sale, ensuring that it reaches its audience in optimal condition.

This production process ensures that each Manjusha painting is crafted with attention to detail, resulting in a unique and culturally significant piece of art.



Fig. 4.6 : Unfinished Manjusha Painting with only the borders and outlines painted.



Quality Control

Consistency: Synchronization ensures that each stage of the production process is completed correctly and on time, leading to consistent quality across multiple artworks, and by following a well-coordinated process, errors and inconsistencies can be minimized, resulting in a more polished and professional final product. To ensure that quality of the product the artisans have been using the certain way of the product making.

Efficiency

A synchronized production process helps streamline workflows, reducing the time spent on each stage. This can increase productivity and allow for the timely completion of projects, also if they keep Coordinating different stages then they successfully ensures that resources, including materials and tools, are used efficiently, reducing waste and unnecessary expenses. Every artisans follow the synchronized way to get the product in a limited time without creating any chaos.

Creative Integrity

Synchronization helps maintain the artist's original vision by ensuring that each step of the process supports the overall aesthetic and thematic goals of the artwork, also as it is well known that the effective synchronization allows for smooth transitions between stages, preserving the intended style and detail of the artwork.

Training & Skill Development

Knowing and applying a synchronized process provides a framework for training new artisans, ensuring that traditional techniques and standards are upheld. Artisans can refine their skills and techniques more effectively when they understand how each stage of the process impacts the final outcome, to get the product of best quality by enhancing the strategy to get it.

Economic Impact

Cost Management: A well-coordinated production process helps manage costs by reducing inefficiencies and optimizing the use of materials and labor.

Market Responsiveness: Efficient production allows for quicker turnaround times, enabling artisans to respond to market demands and opportunities more effectively.

Cultural Preservation

Synchronizing the production process helps preserve traditional methods and practices, ensuring that cultural heritage is accurately represented and passed down through generations. Maintaining high standards through a synchronized process supports the reputation and authenticity of traditional crafts, which is vital for cultural preservation. It is followed for the cultural consistency and quality in the production.

Customer Satisfaction

Customers benefit from consistent quality and timely delivery of artworks. A synchronized production process helps meet customer expectations and build trust in the craftsmanship. The reliability of the consumers on the artisans depends on the way they follow to get the final product.

Understanding and implementing a synchronized production process in art ensures quality, efficiency, and consistency, while also supporting creative integrity, economic viability, and cultural preservation. It is crucial for both maintaining the traditional aspects of the craft and adapting to modern demands. Artisans spend hours repeating the same synchronized order; due to this consistency, they have achieved a level of perfection. The craft of art, such as Manjusha painting, is deeply intertwined with its production process, which is pivotal for several reasons.

The art of Manjusha is known for its intricate designs and perfection. Understanding this process reveals many hidden opportunities, such as the preservation of artistic quality, enhanced efficiency, and the maintenance of the artist's vision. It supports the development of skills and optimizes resource use, contributing to economic viability. Furthermore, a well-managed production process upholds cultural and traditional practices, preserving the heritage and authenticity of the craft.

Ultimately, a comprehensive grasp of the production process is essential for delivering high-quality art that satisfies customers and continues to honor and celebrate the rich traditions of the craft. All the artisans are devoted to providing the best quality product in a shorter amount of time; therefore, these production processes are heavily used by the artisans.



Fig 4.7: Completed Manjusha Painting



डिजिटल

Design

Design

Motifs in cultural art play a crucial role in expressing and preserving cultural values, beliefs, and historical narratives. They often represent symbols, natural elements, or historical themes that convey deep meanings and reflect cultural identity. These motifs enhance the aesthetic appeal of art and serve as a medium for storytelling and cultural expression. They help maintain traditional practices and adapt to modern contexts, ensuring the continuity and relevance of cultural heritage.

Motifs are actually one of the important things which identifies the individuality of the art every part of India has its art and craft and the motifs in those crafts are the identity of it. Many cultural motifs are derived from historical events, legends, or mythological figures. These motifs provide insights into a culture's past and its storytelling traditions, like in manjusha art.

In Manjusha painting, motifs play a central role in conveying the cultural and narrative essence of this traditional art form. As we know this is the folklore depicted story every motive has its own significance and importance the limited motifs are used mostly repetetively.



Motifs

Bihula-Bishari Legend

Central to Manjusha painting is the depiction of the Bihula-Bishari legend, which includes motifs related to the story, such as the serpent king, the goddess Bishari, and the heroic Bihula, but apart from this there are many more characters are portrayed in this painting like Chandradhar Saudagar, Bala Lakhendra, Nethula Dhobin, Lord Shiva and even supporting characters are shown because this art form is known as scroll painting where the story is narrated in the form of painting therefore all the characters seem to be illustrated in this art.

Lotus Flowers

Often used to symbolize purity and spiritual significance, lotus flowers appear in the designs, adding a layer of religious and cultural meaning, also previously we got to know that the five sisters have appeared in the form of lotus therefore the use of lotus is also included.

Traditional Motifs

Common cultural symbols and motifs are used to reflect regional traditions and beliefs, anchoring the paintings in their cultural context.

Intricate Designs

The paintings feature complex geometric patterns and borders that create a structured and harmonious composition. These patterns enhance the visual appeal and are essential to the traditional style. But still all the geometric shapes do have a meaningful address in the painting like mokha represents the chaukhat or the door step of the gate and the tribhuj which depicts stability and balance.

Mythological Figures

Besides the Bihula-Bishari story, other mythological figures and elements may be incorporated to add depth and context to the artwork, and many other elements such as animals and plants are depicted in stylized forms, reflecting the natural environment and contributing to the overall theme.

Motifs in Manjusha painting include narrative elements from the Bihula-Bishari legend, symbolic representations of serpents and lotus flowers, intricate geometric patterns, and various mythological and natural elements. These motifs are integral to the art form, adding cultural depth and visual richness.

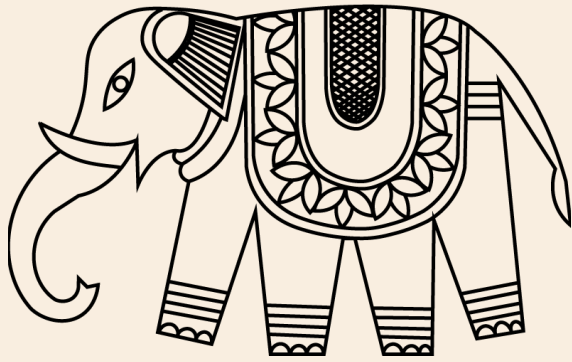


Fig 5.1 : Elephant Motif

The elephant motif in Manjusha art carries deep cultural and religious significance. Elephants symbolize strength, wisdom, and royalty in Indian culture. They are revered in Hindu mythology, particularly in the form of Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god of wisdom and remover of obstacles. Featuring elephants in Manjusha art invokes these qualities and honors the divine, reflecting the rich heritage and spiritual beliefs of the region.

The sun and moon motifs symbolize the passage of time and the cyclical nature of existence. They are often used to frame narratives or highlight significant events within the artwork.

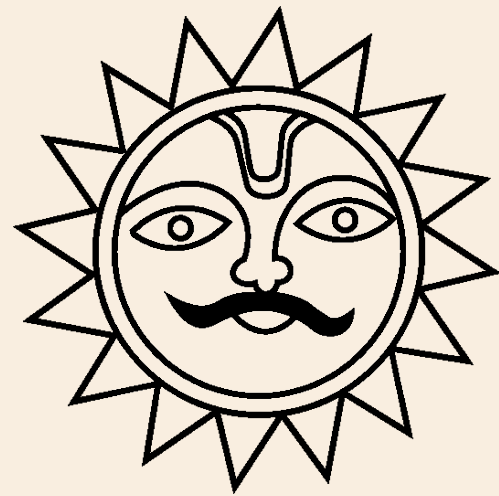


Fig 5.2 : Sun Motif

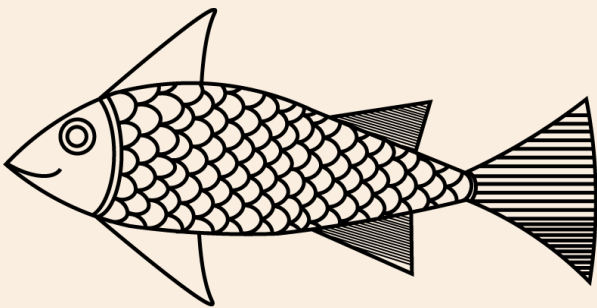


Fig 5.3 : Fish Motif

Fish symbolize prosperity, fertility, and life. Associated with Vishnu's *Matsya avatar*, they signify preservation and cosmic order. These motifs are intricately detailed and often part of larger scenes, enhancing the narrative and aesthetic richness. Fish motifs also reflect the ecological importance of the Ganges River, highlighting the region's deep connection to its natural environment. Through these motifs, Manjusha art celebrates Bihar's cultural heritage and timeless values.



Fig 5.4 : Snake Motif

The snake is one of the most significant motifs in Manjusha art, closely tied to the worship of the snake goddess Bishari and the legend of Bihula. The serpentine imagery symbolizes protection, fertility, and renewal. This motif often appears in various forms, winding through the paintings, and is a constant reminder of the divine connection and cultural reverence for snakes in the region.

The *Amrit Kalash* is a motif associated with immortality and divine blessings. It is often depicted in scenes involving the gods and goddesses, symbolizing purity, abundance, and spiritual significance.

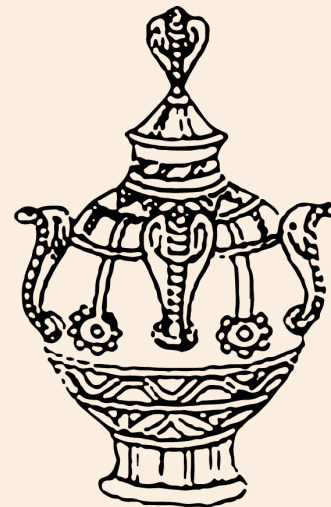


Fig 5.5 : Kalash Motif



Fig 5.6 : Warrior on horse Motif

One of the most prominent motifs in Manjusha art is that of warriors or heroes sitting on horses. This motif symbolizes valor, bravery, and the martial traditions of the region. The depiction of warriors on horses often illustrates epic tales, historical battles, or the heroic deeds of legendary figures, emphasizing the importance of courage and strength in the cultural narrative.

Borders

In Manjusha painting, borders are integral to the artwork's structure and significance, which includes Structural Framework by organising Borders delineate different sections of the painting, providing a clear framework that organizes the central narrative and other elements. They help to segment the artwork into distinct visual areas, making the story easier to follow, also the visual attraction is created by framing the main motifs and scenes, borders ensure that the central themes are prominently featured, guiding the viewer's attention to the key aspects of the painting the borders often incorporate symbolic motifs such as serpents (Sarp Ki Ladi), lotus flowers, and geometric patterns. These symbols carry deep cultural meanings, reflecting themes of protection, purity, fertility, and spiritual significance.

The use of specific motifs in the borders reinforces the central narrative of the painting, such as the Bihula-Bishari legend. This symbolic integration adds depth and context to the story depicted. Borders add decorative value to the painting, contributing to its visual appeal. Intricate designs, patterns, and traditional symbols in the borders enhance the overall aesthetic and make the artwork more engaging. The borders help to create visual harmony by framing the central elements, which adds a sense of balance and completeness to the artwork. This is how aesthetic enhancement is maintained in the art. The motifs and designs used in the borders reflect traditional artistic practices and cultural symbols.

They play a crucial role in preserving and transmitting cultural heritage through art. Borders contribute to the distinctive style of Manjusha painting, defining its unique artistic identity and maintaining continuity with historical art forms. By segmenting the painting into different thematic or narrative sections, borders make it easier to interpret and understand the various components of the artwork. Borders frame the central motifs, guiding the viewer's focus and ensuring that the main elements are highlighted and visually prominent.

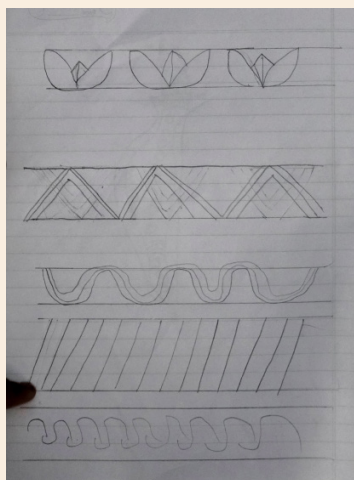


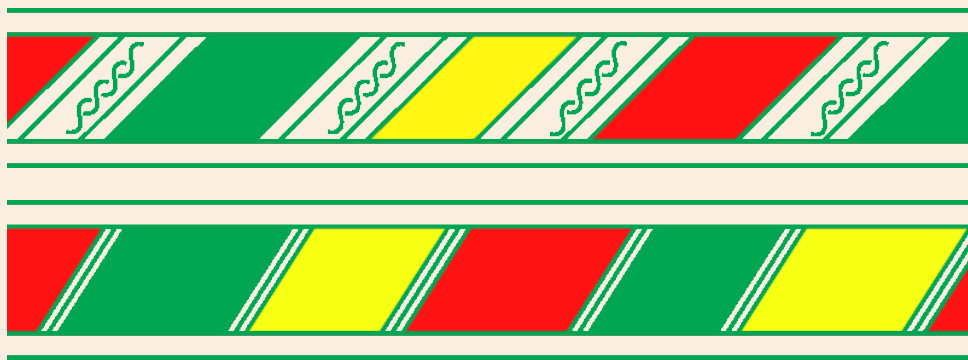
Fig 5.7: Borders Sketches on a notebook



Borders in Manjusha painting are essential for organizing the artwork, enhancing its symbolic and aesthetic qualities, preserving cultural traditions, and providing functional and visual coherence. They contribute significantly to the overall impact and meaning of the painting. Every border has its own significance in the painting.

In Manjusha painting, several specific motifs are used in the borders and design elements. Here's a breakdown of the meanings of these motifs:

Mokha: The Mokha border showcases the intricate designs and decorations traditionally used by the people of the Ang region in their houses. These patterns reflect the rich cultural heritage and artistic sensibilities of the Ang community. The Mokha border captures the essence of their architectural aesthetics, incorporating elements that are both ornamental and symbolic. By including the Mokha border in their paintings, Manjusha artists pay tribute to the region's artistic traditions and the beauty of their domestic decor, further embedding the cultural identity of the Ang people into the artwork.



Lehariya: The Lehariya border symbolizes the waves of a river. The undulating pattern of waves represents the ups and downs of life, capturing the essence of the human experience. By incorporating the Lehariya border, artists highlight the dynamic nature of life and the perpetual motion that characterizes our journey. It serves as a visual metaphor for life's hardships and experiences, reminding viewers of the importance of perseverance while navigating through various phases of existence.

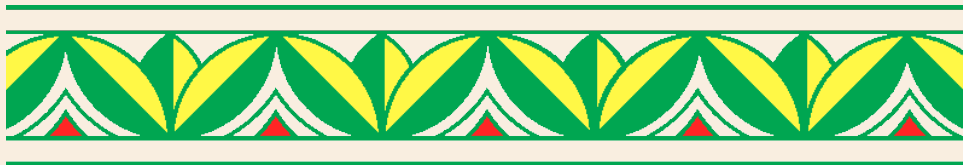


Tribhuj: The Tribhuj border features a triangle, which is a powerful symbol in Hinduism associated with Lord Shiva. The triangle holds dual meanings based on its orientation. An upright triangle represents spirituality, symbolizing the ascent towards higher consciousness and divine connection. On the other hand, a downward triangle signifies physical presence, grounding the spiritual energy into the material world.

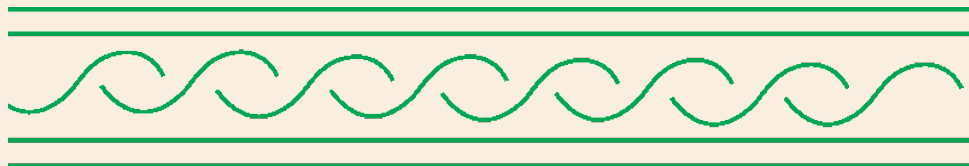


Belpatra: The Belpatra motif, featuring stylized representations of bival tree leaves, is associated with fertility, prosperity, and auspiciousness. It often appears in borders to signify blessings and positive energies, enhancing the painting's connection to good fortune and divine favor, lord shiva's one the most favourite and important offering is of belpatra without which the pooja of lord shiva is considered incomplete this is qouted from the mythology.

In Hinduism, *bel patra* is considered a divine tree and is often offered to Lord Shiva. The leaves are said to be a favorite of Lord Shiva and symbolize his three eyes, apart from this it has many scientific importance like it acts as an antioxidant properties are found in *Bel Patra*, which protects the heart from diseases. Eating *Bel Patra* makes the heart strong.



Sarp ki Ladi: This border is characterized by a repeating snake pattern. It symbolizes unity and interconnectedness. The continuous snake motif represents the idea of wholeness and the unbroken cycle of life, emphasizing the importance of solidarity and cohesion. In Hindu mythology, snakes often symbolize protection and eternity, further enriching the meaning of this border. By incorporating the Sarp ki Ladi border, Manjusha artists convey a sense of unity and the enduring bonds that connect all beings, adding a layer of cultural and spiritual depth to the artwork.



The motifs in Manjusha painting, including Mokha, Sarp Ki Ladi, Tribhuj, Belpatra, and Lehariya, each carry specific symbolic meanings. They contribute to the cultural and narrative depth of the artwork, representing divine qualities, protection, fertility, balance, prosperity, and continuity, without the border the manjusha is incomplete it adds the aesthetic to the painting and enhances the look of the art.

The design elements in Manjusha painting have deep roots in the cultural, religious, and social traditions of Bihar, India, particularly in the Bhagalpur region where this art form originated. The designs are closely tied to the Bihula-Bishari legend, a local mythological story that has been passed down through generations, the celebration is bishari pooja is celebrated by the locals with full enthusiasm and devotion. Every year on 17th of July they celebrate this festival and always there is a wait among the people to welcome the deity.

Bihula-Bishari Legend, The central designs in Manjusha paintings are inspired by the legend of Bihula, a devoted wife who embarked on a perilous journey to bring her husband back to life.

The story involves goddess Bishari, the serpent goddess, and the designs reflect various elements of this legend, such as serpents, lotus flowers, and other symbolic motifs, and unlike other paintings it is based on one story in the form of scroll and the depiction is done in sections, best example was depicted in Ulupi jha's home wall where she did a painting of the story on one section of her house wall.



Evolution

The evolution of art is essential for its continued relevance and vitality. As society changes, art evolves to reflect new cultural values, beliefs, and norms, serving as a dynamic historical record. This evolution fosters innovation by pushing creative boundaries, allowing artists to explore new ideas, techniques, and mediums. Technological advancements also play a key role, introducing new tools and platforms for artistic expression, expanding art's reach, and enabling global cultural exchange. Art's evolution is crucial for engaging with contemporary issues, offering a powerful medium for social commentary and advocacy.

By adapting, art remains a potent force for raising awareness and inspiring change. Additionally, the evolution of art helps preserve and revitalize traditional forms, ensuring that cultural heritage is not lost but transformed to resonate with modern audiences. This continuous evolution enhances the human experience by fostering emotional connections, introducing diverse perspectives, and contributing to economic and educational growth. Without evolution, art would become stagnant, losing its ability to inspire, connect, and meaningfully engage with people across different times and cultures.

There can be seen the evolution also in the traditional form of art like there are few boundaries which the artisans have crossed to make the appealing and amusing the evolution is art is considered to be the necessity with the time, it is brilliantly quoted that change is constant that means each and everything should change a little but the originality and individuality should stay forever.

Mythological Origins

Manjusha art began as a ritualistic practice deeply rooted in the Bihula-Bishari legend, which tells the story of Bihula and the serpent goddess Bishari. Traditionally, Manjusha paintings were created to decorate ceremonial boxes (Manjushas) used in the Bishahari Puja, a festival dedicated to the goddess, but now it is made on canvas and many other products like home decor and wall arts the expansion of product range is increasing day by day.

Natural Materials

Early Manjusha paintings were made using natural materials like bamboo, jute, and natural dyes derived from plants. The art was simple, with basic geometric patterns and motifs related to the legend, but now the artisans are using synthetic brushes the acrylic or fabric paints which is much easily available to them in abundance



Artistic Tradition

For many years, Manjusha art remained a local tradition, practiced by artisans in the Bhagalpur region. The designs were passed down through generations, preserving the cultural heritage and religious significance of the art form, but if we talk about today there are many people who joined organizations which works for the development of the art.

Shift to Paper and Canvas

Over time, Manjusha art expanded beyond its ritualistic origins. Artists began creating paintings on paper and canvas, allowing the art form to be more accessible and widely appreciated. This shift marked the beginning of Manjusha as an independent art form, separate from its original ritual context.

Diversification of Subjects

While traditional Manjusha art focused on the Bihula-Bishari legend, modern artists have introduced new themes and subjects. These include depictions of daily life, nature, and contemporary issues, broadening the scope and relevance of the art.

Market Expansion

The evolution of Manjusha art has also led to its commercialization. Artisans now create Manjusha-inspired products such as textiles, home décor, and fashion accessories, expanding the market and providing economic opportunities for local communities.

Experimentation with Styles

Contemporary Manjusha artists have also experimented with different styles and techniques. While they continue to use traditional motifs like serpents, lotus flowers, and geometric patterns, they incorporate modern elements and vibrant colors, creating a fusion of old and new.

Cultural Revival

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in reviving and promoting Manjusha art as a valuable cultural heritage. Efforts by government and cultural organizations have helped bring Manjusha art into the mainstream, recognizing it as one of Bihar's key folk arts.

International Recognition

As Manjusha art gained recognition, it attracted interest from global audiences. This has led to further evolution, with artists adapting the traditional motifs and styles to appeal to international tastes while preserving the essence of the art form.



Cultural Exchange

The global influence has also facilitated cultural exchange, where Manjusha artists draw inspiration from other art forms, incorporating new ideas while maintaining their unique cultural identity.

Art Education

The evolution of Manjusha art has also seen its incorporation into educational programs, both in India and abroad. Workshops, exhibitions, and academic studies have helped document the history and techniques of Manjusha art, ensuring its transmission to future generations.

Digital Platforms

With the advent of digital media, Manjusha art has found new platforms for expression and promotion. Artists use social media and online marketplaces to showcase and sell their work, further expanding the reach of this traditional art form.



Fig. 5.8 : Manjusha Painting used to spread awareness

The evolution of Manjusha art reflects its journey from a ritualistic practice to a recognized and celebrated art form. Through adaptation to new materials, themes, and markets, Manjusha art has preserved its cultural roots while embracing innovation, ensuring its relevance and continuity in the modern world as the importance of change is explained already the evolution in this art form is much appreciated in today's time.

The most important evolution happened is in the colour formation it was one of the process included in making art but now the new change is seen in the preparation of the art that is the inclusion of the fabric and acrylic colors which are ready made and all you need to do is open the can and start using the paint, even though the paint changed there is no change in the authentication of the art so the artisans included these paints in their art guilt free.



Colours

Yellow

Yellow is a symbol for learning, happiness, and knowledge in Manjusha art. It represents optimism, enlightenment, and divine energy and is frequently connected to the sun and all that it sustains.

Yellow was developed using many things one of those were turmeric powder which is commonly called haldi powder and apart from these yellow flowers were used one of the things that is important to add is the use of the flower pariyaat the stem of the flower is used to get the yellow color.

Green

In Manjusha art, green is a color linked to growth, nature, and prosperity. It is often a reflection of the vibrant, rich aspects of the natural world and the importance of agriculture to the local way of life, serving as a symbol of fertility and life.

Green color used to be made from the leaf of sem vegetable (hyacinth bean).

Pink

The color pink represents relationships, caring, and success in Manjusha artwork. It frequently symbolizes the tender and caring qualities, emphasizing themes of love and compassion in the artwork.

Many flowers petals were used to get the pink color one of them were hibiscus or arhool flower.

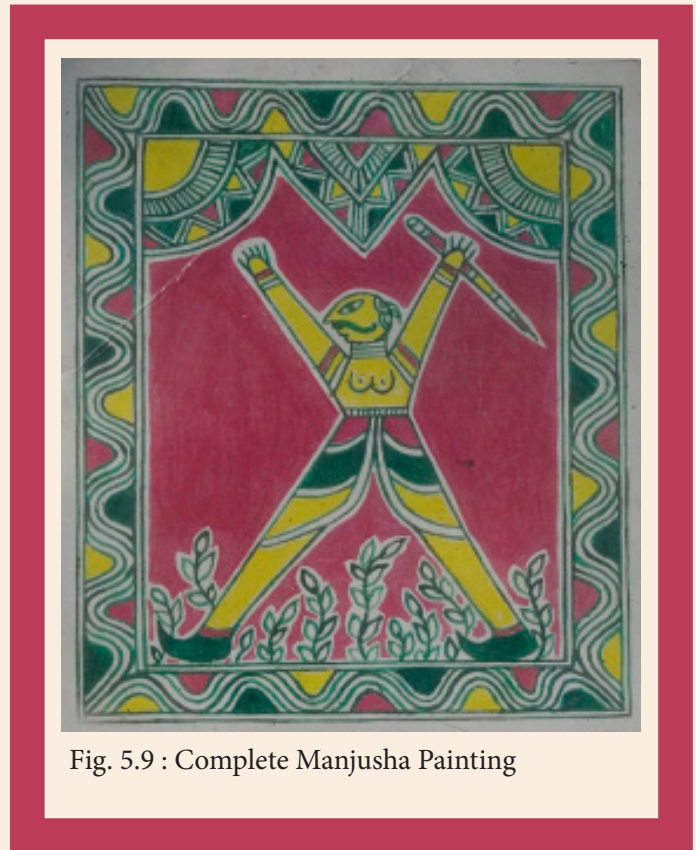


Fig. 5.9 : Complete Manjusha Painting



Fig 5.10 : Acrylic paints used by artisans to make Manjusha Paintings

Characters

Manjusha art relies on distinct techniques and traditions to represent its characters, making it a unique and culturally rich art form. In this style, men and women are often depicted using 'X' shapes, a distinctive motif that serves as a foundational element in Manjusha paintings. These motifs not only reflect the native style but also guide the narrative flow within each artwork, making the stories and themes easily recognizable to viewers.

The art form features a wide array of subjects, including animals and birds, which are intricately woven into the compositions. Deities like Lord Viswakarma and Goddess Mansa, as well as characters like Bala Lakhendar and Chandradhar Saudagar, play prominent roles in the narratives. The art also prominently includes Bishari, Nethula Dhobin, and Bihula, adding depth and variety to the stories depicted.

Nature elements such as flowers, lotus flowers, and geometric patterns are skillfully incorporated to enhance the visual appeal. The presence of temples, boats, and the ever-important snakes and fish further enrich the paintings. Lord Shiva is a recurring figure, symbolizing the divine connection within the art. Each element, whether it be a natural motif or a revered deity, contributes to the overall tapestry of Manjusha paintings, making them a vibrant expression of cultural heritage and artistic tradition.



Fig 5.11 : Painting made by Aman Sagar

Bihula : referred to as Sati Bihula , she is considered to be the women who is fearless accepts what comes to her as a challenge, the devoted wife did every possible thing to bring back the life of her husband. She went to every god every deity with her problem to find a solution. Bihula shows the wit and wisdom at the time of the complication and with the determination fights every obstacle that comes her way.



Fig 5.12 : Bihula

Bishari : the daughters to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati the five sisters named Jaya, Mynah, Maya, Dhotila and Padmavati, these sisters were the adopted daughters of Lord Shiva as they were born from the *jattas* of the deity, they wished to be worshipped like other members of their family, for which they went to every extent which even included the misfortune of Chandradhar Saudagar.



Fig 5.13 : Mansa Bishari



Fig 5.14 : Dhotila Bhavani



Fig 5.15 : Mynah Bishari



Fig 5.16 : Padhmavati



Fig 5.17 : Jaya Bishari

Lord Shiva: The ultimate supreme God of all in the Indian mythology, here in this story is the father of the five snake sisters.



Fig 5.18 : Lord Shiva

Symbolic key elements of the story :

Boat: the boat holds a strong reference in the story its the manjusha in which sati bihula carried the dead body of her husband and travelled to the heaven where she went to seek help from the deities to bring back her husband's life.

Lotus: while Lord Shiva was bathing in sonadah lake the five *jattas* that fell into water transformed into lotus, which was further given the human incarnation by Lord Shiva himself.

Snake: in the indian mythology snakes are believed to hold strong like during the *amrit manthan* Lord Vasuki was there to help the god in it also it is believed that Lord Vasuki holds the earth on his head according to the Indian mythology.

Goddess Parvati : Wife of Lord Shiva and the mother of the five snake sisters first she refused to accept them but later she accepts them and grant them the boon to give life to those who seek help from them.

Chandradhar Saudagar : Also called Chando Saudagar he was a very successful businessman and a devotee of Lord Shiva he believed that if he worships Lord Shiva with his right hand he cannot worship anyone else using that hand , he was a person of strong will and thought even though he was given atrocities by the Bisharis he refused to worship them and stood with his idea of not worshipping the Bisharis.

Bala Lakhendra : Son of Chandradhar Saudagar and husband to Bihula, he has been saved by his wife who performed her duties with all the determination and respect and at last he was brought back to life by his wife.

Nethula Dhobin : she was a washer who washed the clothes of all the gods and goddesses she had a unique power she would remove the head of her son and husband and would wash the clothes on their back while returning back home she would bring them back to life and this was something she did on daily basis.

Lord Vasuki : the king of snakes and very dear to Lord Shiva as it is around the neck of the deity.

Lord Vishwakarma : the god has reference in hindu mythology as the one who creates buildings and other things he was the one made house with iron gates on the demand of Chandradhar Saudagar, even manjusha the boat in which Bihula took the dead body of her husband was made by Lord Vishwakarma.



महत्त्व

Significance

Significance

Manjusha paintings hold significant cultural value as they were originally created as part of religious rituals, particularly during the Bishari Puja, a festival dedicated to the worship of the serpent goddess. The designs were used to depict scenes from the legend and to invoke the blessings of the goddess. The art form originated in Ang Pradesh, and for many years, it was practiced only by two classes of people: Kumbhakars and Malakars. It took some time for a larger number of artisans to emerge, as there was a strong belief that only these two classes should perform the art. This social restriction subdued the art for many years.

Manjusha painting began as a cultural affair but, over time, gained popularity among the masses as an art form. Originally, opportunities to engage with the art were limited, but later, many pioneers like Chakravarti Devi, Nirmala Devi, and the renowned Manjusha Guru Manoj Pandit Ji devoted their lives to preserving the art and spreading awareness among the masses. Ulupi Jha, who left her teaching career to pursue her passion for making Manjusha a renowned art form, started her own organization, similar to Manoj Pandit's. She helps artisans learn the skill and earn a livelihood from it.

The designs also reflect the craftsmanship of local artisans, who used natural materials like bamboo sticks, leaves, and natural dyes to create these intricate artworks. The patterns and motifs were developed over time, influenced by the artisans' environment and cultural practices.

Whenever we talk about a craft integral to a place, we must define its significance so that it reaches people and conveys why one should invest in that art, both financially and emotionally. The practical reasons for the acceptance of art depend on the significance it holds. Significance is nothing but the quality of being important or meaningful. If we have confined this document to the art of Manjusha, we should inform the masses about why Manjusha is important, why they should understand the art, learn it, and invest in it. In this segment, we will shed light on the meaningful aspects that make the acceptance of this art worthwhile.



Cultural Significance

Manjusha art, originating from the region of Bihar in India, holds significant cultural importance for several reasons :

Historical Heritage: Manjusha art is deeply rooted in the folklore and mythology of Bihar, particularly in the ancient story of the “*Manjusha*” or “*Manjusha Kavya*,” which is available in many books of mythology. It reflects the rich historical and cultural heritage of the region.

Religious Narratives: This art form often depicts scenes from Hindu epics and local legends, illustrating religious themes and spiritual narratives. The vibrant illustrations of deities, mythological stories, and rituals serve as a means of preserving and transmitting religious beliefs and practices, and people hold a deep respect for this painting.

Cultural Identity: For the people of Bihar, Manjusha art is a source of cultural pride and identity. It is celebrated in local festivals and fairs, and its preservation is crucial for maintaining the region’s artistic legacy and cultural distinctiveness, which the people have kept as their heritage and identity.



Fig. 6.1 : Students working on Manjusha Paintings.

Educational Value : The art form serves as an educational tool, teaching younger generations about traditional stories, cultural values, and historical events. It also provides insight into the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the past.

Traditional Craftsmanship : Manjusha art is known for its distinctive style, characterized by intricate patterns, vivid colors, and detailed depictions of folklore. It represents a traditional craft passed down through generations, showcasing the artistic skills and creativity of local artisans. Over time, many young people have joined hands to take this art to the next level.

Social Significance

Manjusha art holds considerable social significance, particularly in the context of the communities that practice and preserve it :

Cultural Preservation : Manjusha art plays a crucial role in preserving the cultural heritage of Bihar. By maintaining traditional artistic practices, it helps keep local customs, stories, and rituals alive, ensuring they are passed down through generations.

Community Bonding : The creation and display of Manjusha art often involve community participation. Festivals, fairs, and exhibitions featuring this art form foster a sense of unity and pride among local residents, strengthening social bonds.

Economic Impact : For many artisans, Manjusha art provides a livelihood. The sale and promotion of these artworks create economic opportunities for local craftsmen and contribute to the region's economy. Craft fairs and exhibitions can also attract tourism, further boosting economic activity.

Educational Role : Manjusha art serves as an educational resource, especially for younger generations. It teaches local legends, historical events, and traditional values in a visually engaging manner. Educational programs and workshops centered around Manjusha art can help raise awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage.

Social Commentary : Through its depictions, Manjusha art can reflect social issues and changes within the community. It offers a platform for artists to express their perspectives on societal conditions, values, and transitions, contributing to social dialogue and reflection.

Identity and Pride: For the communities in Bihar, Manjusha art is a source of regional identity and pride. It symbolizes the distinctiveness of their cultural and artistic heritage, reinforcing their sense of belonging and cultural significance.

In essence, Manjusha art is not just a visual representation of folklore but a significant social asset that contributes to cultural continuity, community cohesion, and economic well-being.



Fig 6.2 : Mansa Devi's Deity inside the main temple



Ritual Significance

Manjusha art holds ritual significance in various ways, particularly in the cultural and religious practices of Bihar:

Religious Depictions : Many Manjusha artworks illustrate religious themes, deities, and mythological stories from Hindu scriptures. These depictions are often used in rituals and ceremonies, serving as visual aids to enhance spiritual practices and devotional activities.

Festivals and Celebrations : Manjusha art is prominently featured during local festivals and religious celebrations. For example, during Chhath Puja and other regional festivals, these artworks are displayed to honor deities and create a spiritually uplifting atmosphere.

Ceremonial Use : In some communities, Manjusha paintings are used in ritual settings as offerings or decorations. The vibrant images and intricate designs are believed to invoke divine blessings and protection, and they are often incorporated into altars and ritual spaces.

Symbolic Meanings : The motifs and symbols used in Manjusha art often carry specific ritualistic meanings. For instance, certain patterns or figures may be associated with auspiciousness, prosperity, or the warding off of evil and are used in rituals to fulfill these symbolic purposes.

Artistic Storytelling : The art form often narrates mythological and ritualistic stories through its imagery. By portraying these stories, Manjusha art helps in the oral transmission of religious and cultural narratives, making them an integral part of ritualistic storytelling and practice.

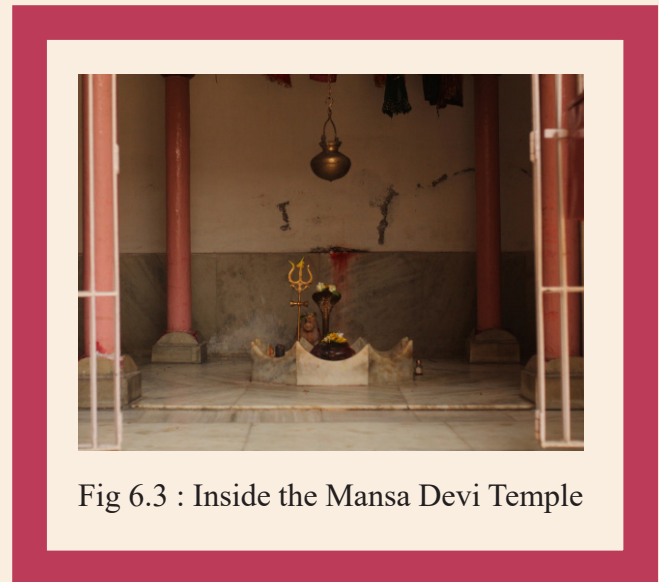


Fig 6.3 : Inside the Mansa Devi Temple

Community Rituals : Artisans and community members often come together to create and display Manjusha art during communal rituals and ceremonies. This collective involvement in the artistic process reinforces social bonds and ensures that the rituals are celebrated in a culturally meaningful way.

In summary, Manjusha art plays a significant role in religious and cultural rituals, enhancing spiritual practices, community celebrations, and ceremonial functions through its rich symbolism and vibrant depictions.

Socio-Economic Significance

Manjusha art has notable socio-economic significance, impacting various aspects of life in the communities that practice and promote it :

Economic Livelihood : For many artisans, creating Manjusha art provides a vital source of income. The sale of paintings and related artworks at local markets, exhibitions, and festivals supports their livelihoods and helps sustain their traditional craft.

Tourism and Cultural Promotion : Manjusha art attracts interest from tourists and art enthusiasts, contributing to the local economy. Festivals, fairs, and exhibitions showcasing this art form can boost tourism, generating revenue and increasing awareness of the region's cultural heritage.

Employment Opportunities : The art form creates employment opportunities not just for artists but also for those involved in related activities such as organizing exhibitions, managing galleries, and conducting workshops. This stimulates local economies and provides diverse job opportunities.

Community Development : Initiatives promoting Manjusha art often lead to community development projects. Training programs for young artisans, art education workshops, and preservation efforts enhance skills and knowledge, contributing to overall socio-economic growth.

Preservation of Traditional Crafts : By maintaining the practice of Manjusha art, communities preserve a traditional craft that might otherwise be lost. This preservation helps maintain cultural identity and heritage, which can be a source of pride and economic value for the community.

Market Expansion : Increasing interest in traditional and folk art can open new markets for Manjusha art, including international buyers. This market expansion can lead to higher earnings for artisans and greater recognition of their work.

Social Integration: The art form helps integrate different social groups by fostering community participation in art-related activities. Events and workshops that involve diverse groups can promote social cohesion and collective engagement.



Fig 6.4 : Baby Devi talking to students about the craft.



In summary, Manjusha art significantly influences the socio-economic landscape by providing economic opportunities, fostering community development, supporting tourism, and preserving cultural heritage. Its impact extends beyond the artistic realm, contributing to the overall well-being and growth of the communities involved.

Learning about Manjusha art enriches cultural awareness, enhances appreciation for traditional artistry, provides historical context, and supports the preservation of heritage. It offers educational value, fosters connections with local communities, inspires creativity, and enhances tourism and cultural exchange. In summary, it's a gateway to understanding and valuing a unique and significant aspect of cultural heritage. In essence, learning about Manjusha art not only deepens understanding and appreciation of a unique cultural tradition but also supports its preservation, inspires creativity, and fosters meaningful connections with local communities and broader cultural contexts.

Earlier the masses have confined the art to religious representation but now it is much more than that it is recognized as the aesthetical art the identity of the place the demand has increased the people have started to give it the due recognition, when we talk about the development in art we can never forget the dedication of the artisans who worked hours to make this art famous among the masses.

"लोककलाएँ किसी भी देश की सांस्कृतिक विरासत होती हैं। समाज से इनका गहरा रिश्ता है इसलिए इनका समाजशास्त्रीय महत्व भी है। यह कहना कठिन है कि इनका प्रणेता कौन था? लोककलाओं की परम्परा तो टूटी जा सकती है परन्तु इनका इतिहास निर्धारण करना कठिन है। दृश्य कलाओं में सबसे प्राचीन लोकचित्र परम्परा है। समाजिक विकास में इनका महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है।"

(Sinha, 2012, 61)

Folk arts are an integral part of any country's cultural heritage and have a deep connection with society, which gives them sociological significance as well. It is difficult to determine who the originator of these folk arts was, as they have evolved collectively over time. While the tradition of folk arts may fade or break, it is challenging to establish their precise history. Among the visual arts, the tradition of folk painting is considered the oldest and has made a significant contribution to social development.





उत्पाद

Product

Product

As mentioned earlier, Manjusha art was originally created on the *Kalash* and Manjusha boxes, which were offered to the snake deity during the puja. However, as Manoj Pandit quoted, the artisans wanted the local painting to reach a wider audience through products and paintings.

"In recent years, the Upendra Maharathi Shilp Anusandhan Sansthan (Patna) has played a significant role in expanding the reach of Manjusha art. What was once confined to Manjusha boxes and Kalash is now being portrayed on items like cardboard, dupattas, shawls, sarees, files, bags, and canvases. Bhagalpur and Banka in Bihar are the primary centers for the creation of this art." (<http://umsas.org> , pg. 07)

Across Bhagalpur and Bihar, many artisans have joined various NGOs and organizations that focus on producing these products. The change was slow and subtle, as the artisans observed the market and the responses of the people. Ulupi Jha, another famous artisan who has her own organization dedicated to product creation, noted that there was a time when the artisans expanded their scope and started painting on canvas.

However, this turned out to be an expensive way of selling art, making it unaffordable for many. Consequently, they explored other options for applying the paintings.

"Product Range Developed by the Artisans: Table top accessories, File/document covers, Home decor, Hnadlooms etc." (Sinha, 2018)



Fig 7.1 : Table Top Accessory made by the artisan.



Table top accessories : the artisans have started making the range of table top accessories like coaster the intricate designs are applied and illustrated on the products the beauty of the painting lies in the intricate designs. The live size of the product from the big ones to the little ones is made using different materials like papier Mache and clays and on many other such materials.

File/document covers : artisans are now making the bags or the file covers on which they do the manjusha painting the bags are made of appropriate size, and Handcrafted bags, clutches, and purses often feature Manjusha designs.

Home decor : Cushions, lampshades, and table runners are adorned with Manjusha art. traditional and contemporary Manjusha paintings are framed as decorative wall art. These products were kept in the residence of one of the best artisans Mrs. Ulupi Jha and she was much proud to tell us that this was done by the artisans from her organizations, undoubtedly these products were most beautifully designed and adorned the little details and those fine finish was enough to show the dedication of the people who spent hours to complete those masterpieces.

Handlooms : Manjusha motifs are beautifully hand-painted or printed on various textiles. Sarees, dupattas, and scarves are particularly popular, with intricate patterns and vivid colors that bring a unique artistic flair to traditional attire. Few of these examples we saw was on the kurtas and sarees worn by the artisans like Manoj Pandit and Baby Devi. How beautifully and aesthetically they used the borders of the painting on their fabrics it gives the best blend of the culture and heritage which they show with their dressing, it was quite impressive to see how those artisans have done every possible thing to make their art most attractive.

Applying the craft to a different range of products is a significant step forward for several reasons. By doing so, people are taking an initiative to preserve their heritage while expanding their customer base, ensuring that these crafts remain relevant in a modern context. This expansion into a broader range of products allows artisans to enter various markets, helping them increase their income and reach global consumers, thereby sustaining the livelihoods of those who dedicate so much time and effort to preserving the craft.

Moreover, this diversification fosters creativity and innovation among artisans, encouraging them to experiment with new designs and applications. This can help them create more unique and appealing products. Additionally, crafting on different products facilitates cultural exchange, allowing traditional art forms to resonate with diverse cultures and fostering cross-cultural appreciation. As these products become more affordable, they will likely receive greater appreciation from consumers, making traditional craftsmanship a part of everyday life.

Overall, applying traditional crafts to various products not only helps preserve these rich cultural traditions and heritage but also drives economic growth for artisans, ensuring that the beauty and significance of these crafts continue to thrive in the modern world.

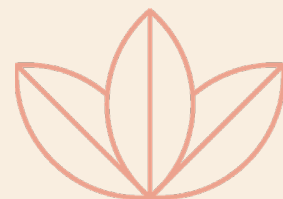
"मंजूषा कला की समानता को जानने के लिए बारीकियों से निहारें तो रेखीय चित्र रचना के स्वभाव वाली समानता, प्राकृतिक रंग, कागज़ों, कपड़ों या दीवारों पर उभरती कला के साथ आस्था भाव से मेल खाती है। वारली चित्र दीवारों और कागज़ पर, तो मंजूषा कला दीवारों और उस पर चिपके कागज़ों पर ही उभरती है। किंतु समृद्ध ऐतिहासिकता और धार्मिक पहलू में मंजूषा कला की पृष्ठभूमि मज़बूत है। यह अवश्य है की दोनों कलाएँ पीढ़ियों की परंपरा का संरक्षण करती हैं। रंग, रेखा, भाव, परंपरा और संस्कृति इन दोनों को अवश्य साम्य बनाते हैं। ”

(Bacchan, 2013)

To understand the similarities between Manjusha art and another traditional art form, one must closely examine the fine details. Both arts share a linear style of drawing, use natural colors, and are created on paper, cloth, or walls, often infused with a deep sense of faith. Warli art, for example, is primarily found on walls and paper, while Manjusha art is traditionally painted on the walls and paper that adorn the Manjusha (a type of box or temple). However, Manjusha art boasts a richer historical and religious background. Both art forms undoubtedly preserve generational traditions, and elements like color, lines, emotion, tradition, and culture create a strong connection between them.



Fig. 7.2 : Intricate Manjusha Painting done on a tray.





निर्माता

About the Makers

About the Makers

Makers are vital to the field of craft, serving as the core of both traditional preservation and modern innovation. Their importance stems from their ability to uphold and transmit traditional techniques, ensuring that cultural heritage is not lost over time. This role as custodians of tradition is balanced with their capacity for creativity, as they continually push the boundaries of the craft by experimenting with new materials, methods, and designs. The expertise of makers, often developed over years of dedicated practice, is central to producing high-quality, handmade goods. This skill and attention to detail differentiate crafted items from mass-produced products, highlighting the unique value of artisanal work.

Moreover, makers are key figures in cultural expression, as their creations often tell stories and convey the values, beliefs, and experiences of their communities. Through their work, they help preserve and promote cultural identities. Economically, makers contribute significantly by supporting local economies and sustaining small businesses. The production and sale of their goods generate income, create jobs, and foster economic resilience, particularly in rural or underserved areas. Additionally, makers often prioritize sustainable practices, using eco-friendly materials and methods that reduce environmental impact, a crucial consideration in today's context of climate change.

Beyond their individual contributions, makers are community builders. They form networks through local guilds, workshops, and online platforms, where they share knowledge, collaborate, and mentor the next generation of artisans. These communities help sustain the craft, ensuring its continued relevance and evolution. Makers are indispensable to the field of craft. They preserve traditions, innovate within the craft, contribute to the economy, promote sustainability, and build communities, all while creating work that expresses and enhances cultural identity. Their role is central to the vitality and future of the craft world.

It is perfectly quoted that artisans are the ones who can help in the survival of the art. If the craftsmen are given the due importance and recognition, they will dedicate their entire lives to the art. However, it is evident that many artisans have encouraged their children to pursue something other than art because they don't find enough relevant reasons to contribute to the craft. Middlemen who sell the products often profit more than the artisans, who dedicate every minute to creating a piece of art that is not sold at a price worthy of its value. But it is important to address that the situation has changed, and many artisans have been recognized for their hard work in the field of art. Some of the artisans we spoke to include Manoj Pandit, Nirmala Devi, Pawan Kumar, Ulupi Jha, and Baby Devi. However, one late artist who deserves due recognition is Chakravarti Devi, who is regarded as the pioneer of this art form.

Chakravarti Devi

She was a key figure in the development and recognition of Manjusha art. While Lehsan Mali is noted as one of the earliest artists of this art form, Chakravarti Devi's contributions truly brought Manjusha to the forefront. Born in West Bengal, she was married at a young age into the Mali family of Champanagar, Bihar. It was here that she was introduced to Manjusha painting, a tradition closely tied to the Bishari Puja, where her family created Manjusha artworks as offerings. Chakravarti Devi's exceptional talent and dedication played a vital role in making Manjusha art widely recognized. Her efforts preserved the tradition while also bringing it to a level of prominence that ensured its place in cultural history.

Because of her influence, any discussion about Manjusha art is considered incomplete without mentioning Chakravarti Devi. Her artistic excellence not only made the art form relevant but also inspired others to see its value. Through her work, she helped Manjusha gain the attention it deserved, ensuring that the tradition would be passed down through generations. Her legacy is one of innovation within tradition, bridging the past with the future of Manjusha. Though Chakravarti Devi has passed away, her name remains deeply rooted in the history of Manjusha art. She is remembered as a pioneer whose contributions were instrumental in the survival and growth of this unique art form. Her impact is such that her name will forever be associated with Manjusha, inspiring artists and preserving the art for years to come."

(Bacchan, 2013)



Fig 8.1 : Chakravarti Devi

Nirmala Devi

Nirmala Devi is a significant figure in the world of Manjusha art, known for her pioneering contributions. She comes from a family of Kumbhakars, traditional artisans who made and adorned Kalash (sacred pots). From a young age, she immersed herself in the practice of Manjusha art, dedicating her life to mastering and promoting this traditional craft. Her passion for the art form inspired her children, including her son, Manjusha guru Manoj Pandit, to follow in her footsteps and continue the legacy.

Despite the challenges of balancing family life and her artistic pursuits, Nirmala Devi's commitment to Manjusha art never wavered. She moved to Chandigarh with her husband due to his work, but her connection to her roots remained strong. Eventually, she returned to her homeland, where she expanded her expertise in Manjusha art. Her dedication and skill earned her recognition, and she was awarded for her outstanding contributions to the art form.

Now in her 80s, Nirmala Devi still holds a deep passion for Manjusha art. Her eyes light up with enthusiasm whenever the topic arises, reflecting the enduring spark that has driven her throughout her life. She remains a source of inspiration not only to her family but also to the broader community of artists who admire her work. Nirmala Devi's legacy is one of resilience, passion, and a deep commitment to preserving and promoting Manjusha art. Her contributions have left an indelible mark on the tradition, ensuring that it continues to thrive for future generations. Her story is a testament to the power of dedication and the lasting impact of a true pioneer.



Fig 8.2 : Nirmala Devi

Manoj Pandit

Manoj Pandit, often referred to as the Manjusha Guru, is a highly respected figure in the world of Manjusha art. Born into a family deeply rooted in this traditional craft, he was profoundly influenced by his mother, Nirmala Devi, a pioneer of Manjusha art. From a young age, Manoj Pandit was surrounded by the art form, watching his mother skillfully create intricate designs and learning the techniques that would later define his own work. His upbringing in such an environment fostered a deep appreciation and passion for Manjusha, which he has carried throughout his life.

As an artist, Manoj Pandit has made significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of Manjusha art. His work is characterized by a deep respect for the traditional elements of the craft, combined with a willingness to innovate and adapt to contemporary contexts. He has dedicated his life to mastering the art, and his expertise is recognized both within India and internationally. Through his art, Manoj Pandit has played a crucial role in keeping the tradition of Manjusha alive, ensuring that it remains relevant in the modern world.

In addition to his artistic achievements, Manoj Pandit is also a dedicated teacher and mentor. He has trained countless students, passing on the techniques and knowledge he inherited from his mother. His efforts have helped nurture a new generation of Manjusha artists, ensuring that the craft continues to thrive. He is often sought after for workshops and exhibitions, where he shares his expertise and passion for the art form with a wider audience.

Manoj Pandit's contributions have been recognized with numerous awards and accolades. His work stands as a testament to his dedication to Manjusha art, and his influence is felt across the art community. Through his tireless efforts, he has secured his place as a true custodian of this ancient tradition, preserving it for future generations while also pushing its boundaries.



Fig 8.3 : Manoj Kumar Pandit

Pawan Sagar

Pawan Sagar, the younger son of Nirmala Devi, has followed in his family's footsteps to become a dedicated artisan in the Manjusha art tradition. Growing up in a household deeply immersed in the art, Pawan was naturally drawn to the craft from a young age. His mother, Nirmala Devi, a respected pioneer in Manjusha art, played a significant role in shaping his artistic journey. Under her guidance, Pawan developed a strong foundation in the traditional techniques and motifs that define Manjusha art.

In addition to his mother's influence, Pawan also received training from his elder brother, Manoj Pandit, who is widely recognized as a Manjusha Guru. This combination of mentorship from both his mother and brother provided Pawan with a comprehensive understanding of the art form, allowing him to hone his skills and develop his own unique style within the Manjusha tradition.

Like every member of his family, Pawan Sagar is deeply committed to preserving and promoting Manjusha art. His dedication to the craft is evident in the intricate and carefully crafted pieces he creates, each one reflecting the rich cultural heritage of his family and community. Pawan's work is a testament to his passion for the art form and his desire to keep the tradition alive for future generations.

As an artist, Pawan continues to contribute to his family's legacy, ensuring that the tradition of Manjusha art remains vibrant and relevant. His dedication and skill make him an important figure in the ongoing story of Manjusha, carrying forward the work of his ancestors while also adding his own voice to the evolving narrative of this ancient art form.



Fig 8.4 : Pawan Kumar Sagar

Ullupi Jha

Ullupi Jha is a prominent figure in the contemporary Manjusha art scene, known for her efforts to preserve and promote this traditional art form. Hailing from Bihar, India, she has played a significant role in bringing Manjusha art to national and international attention. Ullupi's journey into Manjusha art began with a deep interest in her cultural heritage and a desire to revive and popularize an art form that had been on the brink of fading away.

Ullupi's work is characterized by a blend of traditional motifs and modern themes, making Manjusha art accessible and relevant to today's audiences. She has a unique ability to infuse new life into the age-old patterns of Manjusha while maintaining the integrity of the tradition. Her creativity and innovation have helped to expand the boundaries of the art form, attracting a younger generation of artists and art enthusiasts.

In addition to her work as an artist, Ullupi Jha is a dedicated educator and advocate for Manjusha art. She has organized numerous workshops, exhibitions, and awareness campaigns to teach others about this unique art form and its cultural significance.

Through these initiatives, she has inspired many to take up Manjusha painting, ensuring that the tradition continues to thrive. Her efforts have not only preserved the art form but have also contributed to its evolution, making it a dynamic and living tradition.

Ullupi Jha's contributions to Manjusha art have been widely recognized, earning her various awards and accolades. She is celebrated for her role in reviving this traditional art and for her ongoing work to keep it alive and vibrant. Her dedication to Manjusha art is evident in every endeavor, and she remains a key figure in its continued development and preservation. Through her work, Ullupi Jha has cemented her place as a leading voice in the world of Manjusha, ensuring that this beautiful art form continues to flourish for future generations.



Fig 8.5 : Ullupi Jha

Baby Devi

We met Baby Devi in Champanagar, where she learned Manjusha art under the guidance of Manoj Pandit. Although she was involved in her family's handloom business, Baby Devi has a deep devotion to Manjusha art and diligently follows the path laid out by her guru. What is particularly noteworthy about Baby Devi is her commitment to engaging and educating young children in this art form. As part of her charitable efforts, she established a space within a local temple where she teaches Manjusha art to children, fostering a new generation of artists.

In addition to her educational work, Baby Devi has developed a range of her own products, including sarees and dupattas, showcasing her innovative approach to integrating Manjusha art into contemporary textiles. Her dedication to both preserving and evolving the art form highlights her passion and creativity, making a significant impact on her community and the future of Manjusha art.



Fig 8.6 : Baby Devi

उत्पाद की गुणवत्ता

Product Quality

Product Quality

A successful business depends on its product quality, as it affects customer satisfaction, brand reputation, and market competitiveness, thereby influencing the overall state of the company. In reference to a product, quality indicates how closely it satisfies or surpasses customer expectations. This encompasses traits such as design, performance, reliability, and durability. A high-quality product provides value to the customer, is free from defects, and consistently fulfills its intended use. This fosters consumer loyalty and satisfaction. Customers who are pleased with a product's quality are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the product to others, thereby increasing sales and market share.

Moreover, in a highly competitive market, excellent product quality is a significant differentiator. Quality can set one brand apart from another when many brands offer similar products, guiding consumers toward their preferred choice. This competitive edge is crucial for building and safeguarding a strong brand reputation. Sustained success relies on a brand earning the trust of its consumers, which is achieved when it is known for producing premium products. Confidence in a brand not only motivates consumers to make repeat purchases but also allows the company to charge more, thereby increasing profitability.

Investing in product quality can also lead to cost savings. Well-designed, defect-free products require fewer repairs and replacements, reducing the number of warranty claims and post-sale service expenses. This efficiency in manufacturing and service delivery contributes to greater overall profitability and operational efficiency. Additionally, ensuring high quality helps companies comply with industry standards and regulations, avoiding legal issues and ensuring continued market access.

Furthermore, a company's dedication to quality drives continuous innovation and improvement. Organizations that prioritize quality are encouraged to consistently enhance their products, processes, and offerings to better meet the needs and expectations of their target customers. This commitment not only increases consumer satisfaction but also helps the company stay ahead of its competitors, promoting long-term growth and overall success.

Art expresses the inexpressible and connects people across time and space, making it unique and transformative. Whether through painting, sculpture, music, dance, or literature, art is a universal language that transcends language, territory, and time. Its ability to evoke emotions, stimulate cognition, and inspire action makes it crucial for personal expression, cultural identity, and social critique.

Art is remarkable for capturing the complexity of human experience. It explores themes of love, loss, beauty, conflict, and spirituality, providing insights into the human condition that words alone cannot convey. Art fosters empathy and compassion by presenting viewers or listeners with diverse perspectives on the world.

Art also helps preserve and reflect culture. Folk music, indigenous crafts, and classical dance reflect community values, beliefs, and histories. Art forms help people connect with their roots and maintain a sense of continuity with their past. Contemporary art addresses issues such as inequality, environmental degradation, and political instability by challenging social norms and encouraging critical reflection.

Creative process itself is valuable, bringing artists self-discovery and personal fulfillment. Creating art can help people process emotions, overcome obstacles, and express their true selves.

Art's unique ability to inspire, convey, and connect is its expertise. Finding new ways to understand ourselves, people, and the world enriches our lives.

Talking about the historical folk art form from Bhagalpur “manjusha” Manjusha art, steeped in local culture and history, is linked to the Bishahari festival, which commemorates the snake deity Manasa. Women have used this 7th-century art style for storytelling and religious expression for decades.

Its bold lines, bright colors, and recurring motifs make it unique and uncomplicated. Spiritual rites involve boxes (called “manjusha”) constructed of jute, bamboo, or paper, which are painted. The limited color palette—usually pink, green, and yellow—and black outlines of Manjusha art are its most noticeable features. Snakes, flowers, the sun, and humans are seen in linear, cartoon-like themes. In the Manasa mythology, Bihula is a key person, and these elements are symbolic as well as decorative.

Manjusha art frequently depicts Bihula's journey to restore her snake-bitten spouse. Panels depicting distinct tale scenes are arranged sequentially, mimicking a scroll.

Local artists and cultural institutions revived manjusha art, which was near extinction. Today, it symbolizes Bihar's rich cultural legacy and evolves in contemporary art and design while keeping its roots. There is a wide range in Manjusha art quality; both excellent and poor examples may be seen in the practice. The use of vivid, natural colors, meticulous attention to detail, and devotion to traditional techniques are characteristics of good quality Manjusha art. Genuine Manjusha paintings have strong, flowing lines and a linear style that is consistently executed and perfectly portrays the spirit of the folk art form.

Both the narrative components and the motifs such as flowers, snakes, and human figures are shown with accuracy and clarity. Superior Manjusha artwork also conveys the cultural importance of the genre, frequently narrating the Bihula story with imagination and reverence. Whether made of paper, bamboo, or jute, the materials are carefully selected to guarantee authenticity and durability, raising the artwork's overall worth and attractiveness.

On the other hand, low quality Manjusha art usually lacks attention to detail and craftsmanship. The piece's visual appeal may be diminished by lines that are crooked, unstable, or badly done. Traditional Manjusha art is known for its brilliant, dynamic character, which can be undermined by the use of synthetic or inferior colors, which can leave a look that is drab or faded. The narrative may be fragmented or insufficiently conveyed, losing the cultural depth that gives Manjusha art its significance. Poorly drawn motifs may also lack the clarity and symbolic resonance that are fundamental to the art form.

Furthermore, if the artwork is made of average materials, it may not be durable and may eventually deteriorate swiftly. All of these elements come together to create a work of art that falls short of capturing the essence and allure of real Manjusha art, which deters collectors and fans. Poor Manjusha art runs the risk of losing its cultural and aesthetic significance, whereas excellent work upholds and strengthens the tradition.

विपणन

Market & Marketing Analysis

Market & Marketing Analysis

The government of Bihar as well as government of India has taken many measures to preserve the art form in every way possible like awareness workshops and many more measures like these. Other than this there is a site called “EthenicAlive” (a site which supports the selling of the ethnic products.), supports the initiative constantly by providing them the platform for selling their products. The artisans have made several attempts for selling of the products on many other platforms like Shopclues, Paytm and Snapdeal which is fulfilled by “Ethenicalive”.

There are more than three thousand artisans who are trained under several artisans and NGO’s, to make several hand made products including decorative items, cloth and fabric work, paintings and contemporary manjusha art. Many wall paintings on streets and on temple walls are made which depicts the story of bihula and bishari many of which are the initiative taken by the locals as well.

There are a lot of demands of the fusion products in the recent market that is also called contemporary manjusha art. There is a change in the scenario where people are much more interested in the folk arts and ethnic forms but with modern touch.

For marketing Manjusha paintings, the following channels can be considered :

Online Marketplaces :

Etsy: Ideal for handcrafted and traditional art.
Amazon: For broader reach and potential visibility.
eBay: To tap into a global audience.
Art and Craft Websites:
Artfinder and Saatchi Art: Platforms that specialize in art sales and can reach art enthusiasts and collectors.

Social Media :

Instagram: Use visually appealing posts and stories to showcase manjusha art.
Facebook: Create a page or group for promoting the artwork, and use targeted ads.
Pinterest: Share images of the paintings to attract interest and drive traffic to sales channels.

Local Art Galleries and Exhibitions :

Partner with galleries that focus on traditional or folk art to exhibit and sell manjusha paintings. Participate in local art fairs and cultural festivals to reach potential buyers.

Craft and Antique Shops :

Collaborate with stores that specialize in traditional crafts and antiques to display and sell manjusha paintings and several Cultural and Heritage Organizations are there which Works with institutions dedicated to preserving and promoting traditional arts to increase visibility and credibility.

Tourist Shops :

Place manjusha paintings in shops catering to tourists, especially in regions known for their traditional crafts.

Art and Craft Blogs :

Write or get featured in blogs that focus on traditional art forms, craft trends, and cultural heritage.

Collaborations with Interior Designers :

Partner with interior designers who are interested in incorporating unique, culturally significant art into their projects.

Educational Workshops and Demos :

Host or participate in workshops and demonstrations to educate people about manjusha painting and attract potential buyers. By leveraging these channels, you can effectively reach a diverse audience and promote manjusha paintings to art lovers and collectors.



Fig 10.1 : Cotton threads ready to be woven into fabric for Manjusha Painting.

Artisans sell their products in markets through a variety of strategies and channels which is recorded in this segment some of the measures by artisans are as follows:

Local Craft Fairs and Markets :

Artisan Fairs: Participating in local and regional craft fairs where artisans can showcase and sell their products directly to consumers.

Farmers' Markets: Some artisans sell their crafts alongside food and other local products.

Specialty Stores:

Local Shops: Partnering with local boutiques and specialty stores that focus on handmade or unique items.

Consignment: Leaving products on consignment with stores, where they are sold and the artisan receives a percentage of the sale.

Online Platforms :

E-commerce Websites: Listing products on platforms like Etsy, Amazon Handmade, or their own e-commerce sites.

Social Media: Utilizing platforms like Instagram and Facebook to promote products and drive traffic to their online stores.

Direct Sales:

Workshops and Studios: Selling products directly from their own workshops or studios, sometimes through open house events or by appointment.

Home Parties: Hosting events where friends, family, and customers can view and purchase products.

Collaborations and Partnerships :

Retail Collaborations: Partnering with larger retailers or chains to feature their products.

Collaborative Projects: Working with other artisans or brands to create joint products or special collections.

Exhibitions and Trade Shows :

Art Exhibitions: Participating in exhibitions focused on crafts and art to reach buyers and collectors.

Trade Shows: Attending trade shows to network with wholesalers, retailers, and other industry professionals.

Community Events:

Festivals and Cultural Events: Setting up stalls at local festivals, cultural events, or fairs that attract a broad audience.

Online Marketplaces :

Dedicated Platforms: Using platforms like Artfinder or Saatchi Art that cater specifically to handmade and artisan products.

Wholesale:

Bulk Sales: Selling products in bulk to retailers or other businesses that will then resell them.

Direct Outreach:

Networking: Reaching out to potential buyers, interior designers, or collectors directly to offer products.

Galleries and Museums: Displaying and selling products in galleries or museum gift shops.

These methods help artisans reach various customer segments, from local buyers to international markets, and build a brand presence both online and offline. Expanding the market for manjusha paintings is crucial for multiple reasons that impact both the art form and its practitioners.

Firstly, a broader market reach significantly enhances the visibility of manjusha paintings, allowing them to be appreciated by a diverse and global audience. Increased exposure helps establish the art form in both domestic and international art scenes, attracting attention from art enthusiasts, collectors, and cultural institutions. This heightened visibility can lead to greater recognition and appreciation of manjusha paintings.

Economically, a larger market offers substantial benefits for artisans. It translates to increased sales and revenue, which supports the financial stability of artists. With higher earnings, artisans can invest in better materials, refine their techniques, and improve their craftsmanship. This economic uplift not only supports the individual artisans but also contributes to the growth and sustainability of the art form.

Cultural preservation is another significant benefit. Expanding the market helps maintain and promote the traditional art of manjusha, ensuring its relevance and appreciation in contemporary times. By gaining recognition on a global scale, the art form is preserved and celebrated, contributing to the cultural heritage of the region.

The expansion also facilitates cultural exchange. As manjusha paintings reach new markets, they introduce diverse audiences to the unique artistic traditions of Bihar. This cross-cultural interaction fosters a greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures, enriching the global art landscape.

For artisans, expanding the market means increased empowerment. They gain more opportunities to showcase their work, achieve fair compensation, and gain recognition for their craft.

This empowerment supports their professional growth and helps sustain their artistic practices.

Moreover, a broader market encourages innovation. With increased demand and market opportunities, artisans are motivated to explore new styles, techniques, and themes. This innovation keeps the art form dynamic and evolving, ensuring its continued relevance.

Locally, expanding the market can stimulate economic growth and boost tourism. Regions known for manjusha paintings benefit from increased visitor interest, which positively impacts local businesses and the community. Additionally, educational and outreach opportunities arise from a larger market, with workshops, exhibitions, and cultural programs that educate people about manjusha art and engage them in its preservation.



Fig 10.2 : Manjusha Design submitted to Weavers' Service Centre, Bhagalpur.

Finally, diversification of revenue is a key advantage. A wider market reduces reliance on a single customer base, providing a safeguard against economic fluctuations and market uncertainties.

In conclusion, expanding the market for manjusha paintings enhances visibility, drives economic benefits, supports cultural preservation, fosters innovation, and stimulates local economies. It empowers artisans, facilitates cultural exchange, and provides valuable educational opportunities, ensuring the continued appreciation and relevance of this traditional art form. It is satisfying to see how the art has grown and expanded, becoming a livelihood for many people and inspiring many young individuals to learn this art form and pursue careers in it. This reflects the expansion of scope and acceptance by the masses.



Fig 10.3 : Manjusha Designs submitted to Weavers' Service Centre, Bhagalpur

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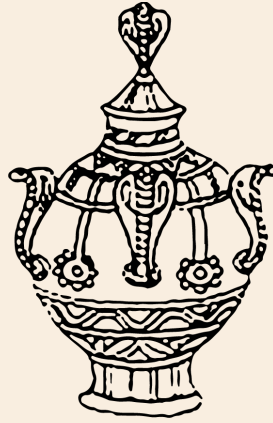
SWOT Analysis

SWOC Analysis

SWOT analysis is a fundamental tool for organizations to gain insights into their internal capabilities and external environment. It supports strategic planning, decision-making, and competitive positioning, while also facilitating resource allocation and continuous improvement. Every craft needs to be pass through this analysis so that one can define the enhancement or the room of improvement for the art. This detailed SWOT analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to Manjusha art, highlighting the factors that impact its preservation, promotion, and sustainability.



Fig 11.1 : Final Manjusha Painting



Strengths

Cultural Preservation :

Manjusha art is a remarkable example of cultural preservation. This traditional scroll painting art form has been passed down through generations, serving as a crucial vehicle for preserving cultural heritage. The intricate designs and vivid colors used in Manjusha paintings reflect deep-rooted cultural narratives and historical significance. By maintaining this art form, artisans not only honor their ancestral traditions but also ensure that future generations can connect with their cultural past. The preservation of such art forms helps in keeping the cultural identity and traditions alive, making them an essential part of the community's historical legacy.

Unique Style of Presentation :

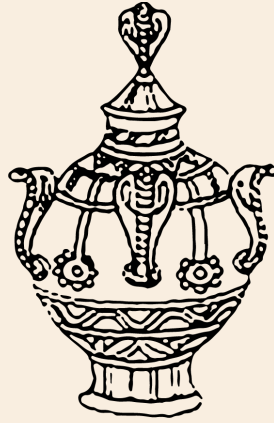
One of the defining features of Manjusha art is its unique style and presentation. This art form is renowned for its intricate and elaborate designs, which are predominantly executed using a limited palette of three vivid colors: red, yellow, and green. These colors are carefully chosen for their symbolic significance and visual impact. The use of these specific colors, along with the unique artistic techniques, sets Manjusha art apart from other traditional Indian art forms. The meticulous craftsmanship involved in creating these paintings reflects a high level of skill and artistry, which adds to the art form's distinctive appeal.

Storytelling Through Art :

Manjusha art is not merely decorative; it serves a narrative purpose. This art form is primarily known for its storytelling aspect, where the entire painting or a series of paintings on a scroll depict a folk story. Each piece of art captures a segment of the story, with the entire scroll providing a comprehensive visual narrative. This storytelling method makes Manjusha art an engaging and educational experience, allowing viewers to understand and appreciate traditional folk tales through visual representation. This unique approach to storytelling enhances the art's value and appeal, providing a rich, immersive experience for those who encounter it.

Handcrafted Craftsmanship :

Another significant strength of Manjusha art is its emphasis on handcrafted craftsmanship. Each piece of Manjusha art is meticulously crafted by local artisans, showcasing their skill and dedication. The handcrafted nature of the art ensures that every painting is unique and reflects the personal touch of the artist. This attention to detail and the use of traditional techniques contribute to the authenticity and quality of Manjusha art. The artisans' craftsmanship not only highlights their artistic expertise but also supports the preservation of traditional art forms and techniques.



Weaknesses

Lack of Awareness :

Despite its cultural significance, Manjusha art suffers from a lack of awareness and recognition compared to other traditional art forms like Madhubani painting. This limited awareness affects the art's popularity and visibility among the masses. The lack of widespread knowledge about Manjusha art means that it does not receive the attention and appreciation it deserves, which can hinder its growth and development. Increased efforts are needed to raise awareness about this unique art form and its historical and cultural value to garner broader recognition.

Economic Challenges :

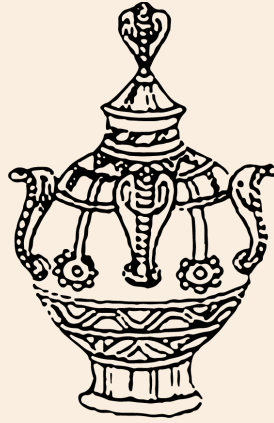
The economic stability of local artisans involved in Manjusha art is a major concern. Many artisans face financial instability due to the lack of a steady income and a reliable market for their work. The economic challenges faced by these artisans can impact their ability to continue practicing their craft and pass it on to future generations. Addressing these economic issues is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of Manjusha art and supporting the livelihoods of the artisans who create it.

Traditional Dependency :

Manjusha art is heavily dependent on traditional practices and techniques, which can limit its recognition and acceptance in the modern world. This reliance on traditional methods can create barriers to innovation and adaptation, making it challenging for the art form to appeal to contemporary audiences. The art's traditional nature may also restrict its integration into modern contexts and markets, affecting its growth and relevance in a rapidly evolving cultural landscape.

Lack of Advertisement :

The promotion and documentation of Manjusha art are currently inadequate, leading to limited recognition and exposure. The absence of effective advertising and marketing strategies restricts the art form's ability to reach a wider audience and attract potential patrons. Without proper documentation and promotional efforts, Manjusha art remains underrepresented and struggles to gain the visibility it needs to thrive.



Opportunities

Promotion and Awareness :

There is significant potential for promoting Manjusha art through various channels. Conducting workshops, curating exhibitions, and participating in fairs can help showcase the art form to a broader audience. These promotional activities provide opportunities for people to engage with Manjusha art, learn about its cultural significance, and appreciate its unique qualities. Increased visibility through such initiatives can enhance the art form's recognition and support its preservation.

Digital Platforms :

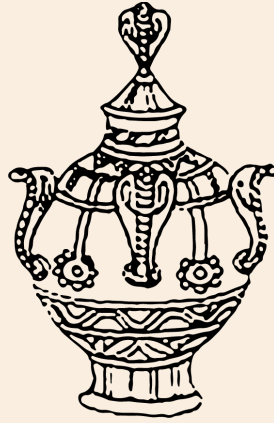
Leveraging digital platforms offers a valuable opportunity to increase the visibility and reach of Manjusha art. Online shopping portals, social media, and digital marketing can help connect artisans with a global audience, expanding their market and attracting potential buyers. By utilizing these digital tools, Manjusha art can reach new audiences, generate interest, and boost its presence in the contemporary art market.

Educational Initiatives :

Introducing educational initiatives can play a crucial role in preserving and propagating Manjusha art. Collaborating with government bodies, schools, and educational institutions to integrate Manjusha art into curricula and cultural programs can help raise awareness among younger generations. These initiatives can foster an appreciation for traditional art forms and ensure their continued relevance and practice.

Collaborations and Fusion Products :

Exploring collaborations with brands and designers can create new opportunities for Manjusha art. By incorporating Manjusha art into fusion products, such as fashion items, home décor, and other commercial goods, the art form can enter new markets and attract diverse audiences. Collaborations with contemporary brands can also help modernize the art's appeal and increase its visibility in mainstream markets.



Challenges

Modernization :

The rise of modern and digital art forms poses a significant threat to traditional art forms like Manjusha. As contemporary art and digital media gain prominence, traditional art forms may be overshadowed and face challenges in maintaining their relevance. The rapid evolution of artistic practices and preferences can impact the survival and appreciation of traditional art forms, including Manjusha.

Cultural Erosion :

The erosion of traditional values and cultural practices can threaten the preservation of Manjusha art. As society becomes increasingly influenced by global trends and modern lifestyles, there is a risk of losing connection with traditional art forms and cultural heritage. This cultural erosion can affect the transmission and appreciation of Manjusha art, making it crucial to address these challenges and safeguard the art form's legacy.

Competition :

Manjusha art faces competition from other well-established and popular art forms in India. The presence of more widely recognized and influential art forms can overshadow Manjusha art, making it challenging for it to gain prominence and attract attention. The competitive landscape requires strategic efforts to highlight the unique aspects of Manjusha art and differentiate it from other art forms.

Artisan Migration :

The migration of younger generations to urban areas for better economic opportunities poses a threat to the continuity of Manjusha art. As younger artisans leave their traditional communities in search of improved livelihoods, the number of practitioners decreases, potentially leading to a decline in the art form's practice and transmission. Addressing this issue requires initiatives to support and sustain local artisans, ensuring the continued practice and preservation of Manjusha art.

कारिगर जानकरी

Artisan Data

Artisan Data

Name: Nirmala Devi
Age: 80 years
Experience: 60 years
Award: Sita Devi Barista (2013)
Bihar Kala urushkar
Address: Mohaddinagar
Contact no: N/A



Name: Pawan kumar
Age: 40 years
Experience: 25 years
Address: Mohaddinagar
Contact no: 9709314151



Name: Dilip Kumar
Age: 38 years
Experience: 15 years
Address: Mohaddinagar
Contact no.:



Name - Manoj Kumar pandit
Age - 49 years
Experience - 32 years
Address - Barari
Contact no. - 9263792023



Name -Neetu Kumari
Age -36 years
Experience - 5 years
Address- Nagrah , Naugachia
Contact no. - 7257830604



Name: DR. Ulupi Jha
Age: 60 years
Experience: 15 years
Address: Tilkamanjhi, Bhagalpur
Contact no: 7352782478



Name: Ashwini Anand
Age: 25 years
Experience: 8 years
Address: Naugacchia
Contact no:



Database of NGO's

MANJUSHA ART RESEARCH GROUP

Founder: Ulupi Jha (Established in 2005)

Address: 3C, Suvarnrekha Tower, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Lane, Tilkamanjhi, Bhagalpur, Bihar, India-812001

Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 10 am-4 pm

Saturday: 11 am-6pm

Sunday: 11 am-6pm

Contact Information: Phone: 7352782478, 9939888070

Email ulupijha@gmail.com

Mission Statement: The institute organizes classes specifically for housewives, providing quality instruction, industry exposure, hands-on training, and certification.

Courses Offered:-

Beginner Course:

Schedule: Monday Thursday @11:45 am

Duration: 4 weeks

Curriculum: Introduction to Manjusha Art, history, government programs, and color usage.

Fee: Rs. 1000

Certificate Course:

Duration: 8 weeks.

Schedule: Every Friday & Saturday 11:45 am

Curriculum: Manjusha characters, their significance, and various designs

Fee: Rs. 3000

Master Course

Schedule: Every Sunday 11:45 am

Duration: 24 Sundays

Curriculum: Craft business guidance, linking to government programs and merchants, focus on packaging and quality control

Fee: Rs. 5000

NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Established: 1982 by an Act of Parliament, owned by the Government of India

Address: NABARD Plot No. C-24, Block, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai-400051

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Closed on Public Holidays)

Contact Information: Phone: (91) 022-26539895/96/99

Email: helpdesknabskill@nabard.org

Mission Statement: NABARD is committed to promoting arts and crafts across India. It supports Geographical Indications (Gi) registration to preserve and market traditional crafts, helping artisans gain recognition and higher value for their work.

Key Initiatives:

Marketing Opportunities: NABARD facilitates sales through Rural Haats, Rural Marts, exhibitions, and fairs, fostering direct engagement between artisans and buyers.

Off-Farm Producer Organisations IOFPOSI: Encourages the formation of OFPOs to enable collective growth. Skill Development Programs: Provides training to empower rural artisans, weavers, and craftspeople.

Sustainability and Income Enhancement: Aims to enhance income, provide modern marketing infrastructure, and ensure the sustainability of rural artisans.

DISHA GRAHMIN VIKAS MANCH

Under the Department Of Industries, Government of Bihar 1956

Address: 6XQM+25H, Rekha Niwas, Shivpuri Colony, Ishaq Chack, Bhagalpur, Bihar 812002

Contact No.: 094306 12262

Email: dishagym@yahoo.co.in

Disha Gramin Vikas Manch is a voluntary organization currently working in both the Farm and Non-farm sectors in the Bhagalpur and Banka districts of Bihar.



परिशिष्ट

Appendix

Appendix

Historical Significance

Bhagalpur, one of Bihar's oldest cities, is situated on the southern banks of the Ganges River. The city has a rich historical background, with evidence of human settlement dating back to ancient times. It was an important center during the Mauryan and Gupta periods. Near Bhagalpur is Mandar Parvat, which is significant in Indian mythology as the site of the Amrit Manthan, a major event in mythological lore.

Apart from this, Bhagalpur has many other notable aspects. Jainism, an important religion in the region, is also prevalent here. For instance, during a trek to Mandar Parvat, we noticed that near the Shiv Mandir, there is also a Jain temple. These are just a few of the many features that highlight Bhagalpur's rich cultural and historical heritage.

Economic and Cultural Significance

Known as the "Silk City" of India, Bhagalpur owes this title to its prominent silk weaving industry. The types of silk produced here, including Bhagalpuri Tussar silk, are renowned for their quality and craftsmanship. The silk industry significantly contributes to the local economy by providing livelihoods for many artisans and weavers. Bhagalpur is also celebrated for its traditional arts and crafts, which reflect the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Major Landmarks and Attractions

Vikramshila University: An ancient university founded by Dharmapala of the Pala dynasty, it was a major center of learning.

Sultanganj: Known for its archaeological significance and the large statue of Lord Buddha found here.

Ganga River: Provides a scenic backdrop and is central to the city's spiritual and cultural life.

Modern Bhagalpur

Bhagalpur has seen significant urban and infrastructural development in recent years. The city is home to several educational institutions, contributing to the region's development and intellectual growth. Despite this progress, economic disparities and infrastructure challenges remain. Balancing modern growth with the preservation of cultural heritage continues to be a challenge.

Historical Context

"The district of Bhagalpur, divided by the Ganga, has fertile fields as well as good forest cover. It was a flourishing port city until the British Raj. The region was well known for the manufacture of Tussar silk, dyeing, salt, indigo, glassware, and the cotton handloom industry. European traders visited for its cloth, which fetched a high price in Europe. Tussar silk yarns, handloom weaving, and cloth trade formed the basis of the region's economy. Unique cotton and silk blends are a specialty—19th-century British publications name a few: Bhagalpuri, bafta, duriyas, namunahs, chaharkhanahs, and khariasari. Even today, Bhagalpuri yardage remains central to its economy. Tribal communities have been rearing Tussar silkworms in the forests on the leaves of asan, arjun, or sal trees. Bhagalpur has become a center for Tussar silk weaving, supplying both urban and international markets. Sericulture, silk reeling, and weaving have evolved as cottage industries here." Jaitley (2012)

Bhagalpur stands as a vibrant tapestry of history, culture, and tradition. Its legacy as a center of silk production and its rich artistic heritage, including the unique Manjusha art, make it a significant cultural landmark in India. The city's ongoing efforts to preserve its historical identity while embracing modernity reflect its dynamic and evolving nature.

Manjusha Art

As we have already received an insight into this art form, there is not much additional information to add. Traditional folk art originating from Bhagalpur, Manjusha art is characterized by its vibrant colors and intricate designs. It often depicts mythological and religious themes. The art form is believed to have originated during the Mahabharata period, associated with the worship of Vishahari Devi and the depiction of King Bali's stories. Manjusha art is an integral part of Bhagalpur's cultural identity, representing the region's traditional beliefs and artistic expressions.

Efforts to revive and promote Manjusha art have been made by local artists and cultural organizations, leading to renewed interest and appreciation. However, it is important to note that Manjusha art holds different kinds of significance. It is a folklore passed down through generations, and people often perceive it through their own understanding. This art form carries a deep-rooted cultural significance, taught by forefathers and followed instinctively by those who revere Vishahari Devi. People generally accept these cultural practices without questioning them, as they have been handed down by elders and are passed on to younger generations.

One key aspect of folklore is that it is not usually documented but is instead passed down through oral traditions, including songs and storytelling. If there are questions about parts of the stories that seem unlikely or untrue, it is important to remember that folklore can change over time. Since these stories are not always written down, there may be challenges regarding their originality and authenticity. As folklore traverses from person to person, some elements of the story may change. Folktales are considered a part of cultural heritage and religious practice, and it was only after some time that people began documenting them. Since then, these stories have been preserved and remain a significant part of cultural history.

Going down the lane of culture and heritage, we considered the much-celebrated festival from Madhubani called Madhushravani, which is celebrated by married women. In this auspicious festival, they make small idols of Bishara from clay. Madhushravani is a traditional festival primarily celebrated in the Mithila region of Bihar and Jharkhand, India. This festival is particularly significant for newly married women and is observed for fifteen days, beginning in the Krishna Paksha (waning phase) of the Hindu month of Shravan.

Recitation of Stories: During the festival, newly married women are narrated various mythological stories, especially those related to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Women observe fasts and perform rituals dedicated to Shiva and Parvati. The worship is usually conducted in the courtyard or a designated sacred space within the home. The festival also includes the worship of the earth, plants, and snakes, symbolizing respect and reverence for nature.

Communal Participation: The festival encourages communal participation, where women come together to perform the rituals and listen to the stories, fostering strong social bonds. On the fifteenth day, special rituals are performed where women worship together and apply vermillion (sindoor) on each other's foreheads as a blessing.

Symbolism: Madhushravani is a symbolic celebration marking the beginning of a new chapter in a woman's life, emphasizing awareness and dedication to her new responsibilities. In Madhubani, there is a belief that Bishara were the five snake sisters who were the daughters of Shiva. The local legend differs slightly from other versions, as here they were not found as lotuses but as baby snakes on the Mynah Patta by Lord Shiva. The sisters asked him to accept them as his daughters, to which Lord Shiva replied that he would accept them once his wife Parvati also agreed. Until then, he instructed them to hide in the leaf of the Mynah tree. This leaf plays a very important role in the Madhushravani puja.

The festival is celebrated in the month of Shravan, and newly married women fast for fifteen days for the well-being of their husbands. They worship Goddess Bishara, and each day, a different story about Bishara is narrated to the newly married women. One of these stories talks about Bihula and Mansa Devi, where Chando Saudagar, Bala Lakhendra, and a boat are significant symbols. It is fascinating to see how the traditions of two different places are linked, with slight variations. (Mishra, 2012)

Part of songs from majusha *lokgeet*:

वषिहरी बड़ दुलारी
कहाँ सोधे बाजूबंद, कहाँ टकुली;
कहाँ सोभे माय के लाली घंघरी।
वषिहरी बड़ दुलारी
टूटी गैले वाजूबंद, गरिल टकुली,
फाटी गैले वषिहरी माय के लाली घंघरी।
वषिहरी बड़ दुलारी
जोड़ी दैवे बाजूबंद, साहब टकुली;
सर्बि दैवे वषिहरी माय के लाली घंघरी।
वषिहरी बड़ दुलारी
पूजी दैवे वषिहरी माय दुलारी

(Bacchan, 2013, p.25)

Meaning:

Bishari Devi is very beloved and respected.
Where does Bishari Devi's armband, tikuli (forehead
bindi), and ghaghra (traditional attire) look
beautiful?

Bishari Bad Dulari: Vishahari Devi is very beloved.
Bishari Devi's armband has broken, her tikuli has
fallen, and her red ghaghra has torn.

Bishari Devi is very beloved.

We will mend Bishari Devi's armband, fix her tikuli,
and sew her red ghaghra.

Bishari Devi is very beloved.

We will worship the beloved Bishari Devi.

This stanza vividly defines about Bishari devi and
all her characteristics. This translation captures the
reverence and affection expressed in the original
song.

पाँचों बहनि कुमारी हे वषिहरी।
खेले चार चौमास हे वषिहरी।।
वहाँ से चली भेली हे वषिहरी।
कनुआ के बेटा उत्पाती हे वषिहरी।।
लावा छटी पकड़ैलको हे वषिहरी।
वहाँ से चली भेली हे वषिहरी।

(Bacchan, 2013, p.27)

Meaning:

All five sisters of Bishahari Devi are unmarried.
These sisters have been playing for four months
(Chaumasa).

From there, Bishahari Devi and her sisters set off.
A boy, the son of someone named Kanua, is very
mischievous.

That mischievous boy threw grains (lava) and
caught them.

Bishahari Devi and her sisters set off from there.

This stanza also talks about Bishari Devi and these
stanza reflects her responses of the snake goddess.

मलयाि घर आवास हे वषिहरी।
मलयाि के बेटा उत्पाती हे वषिहरी।
फूल छटी पकडैलको हे वषिहरी।।
वहाँ से चली गेली हे वषिहरी।
गऊगन संग आवास हे वषिहरी।।
ग्वलन के बेटा उत्पाती हे वषिहरी।
दुधयाि बहाय पकडैलको हे वषिहरी।।

(Bacchan, 2013, p.44)

Meaning:

Malaiya's house is the abode of Bishari
Goddess Bishari has arrived at Malaiya's house.
Malaiya's son is mischievous, O Bishari
Malaiya's son is very mischievous
He threw flowers and tried to catch them, O Bishari
He threw flowers and attempted to catch them
Then Goddess Bishari left from there
After that, Goddess Bishari departed from there
She came with the group of cows, O Bishari
Goddess Bishari arrived with the group of cows.
The cowherd's son is mischievous, O Bishari
The cowherd's Son is very mischievous.
He spilled the milk and tried to catch it, O Bishari
He spilled the milk and made an attempt to catch it

This song is associated with the worship of Vishahari Devi, and it describes her journey and the mischief of some children, which causes the goddess to leave the place. The song reflects devotion to the goddess and the respect accorded to her.



संदर्भ

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Identical	274
Minor Changes	41
Paraphrased	48
Omitted	0



Declaration

We, the student of fashion and lifestyle accessories department at National Institute of Fashion Technology, Patna, hereby declare that the document titled Abhivaykti is our original work, completed under the supervision of Mr. Vinayak Yashraj.

The content and findings presented in this document are the result of my own research and understanding of Manjusha art, including its history, techniques, and cultural relevance. All sources and references used in the preparation of this document have been appropriately cited.

I confirm that this work has not been previously submitted to any other institution or for any other course, either in whole or in part. We acknowledge that any instance of plagiarism or misuse of others' work is a violation of academic integrity, and we accept full responsibility as per the institution's policies.

