

RECREATING THE TRADITIONAL TANJAVUR ARTS AND CRAFTS IN INTERIORS

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Abstract: Tanjore painting, addition known as, Thanjavur Oviyam could be the main kind of classical South Indian painting from the city of Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu, India. The paintings of Thanjavur have travelled an extended way, from the fresco paintings of the Chola Dynasty to the wall hangings of today. The paintings are quite different from other art forms because of the dense composition, surface richness, and vibrant colors are employed in these Indian Thanjavur paintings. Because the particular art craftsmen should follow the techniques. Most of these paintings revolve around the theme of Hindu gods and goddesses at the side of saints. Coming to Tanjore crafts, they are legendary for its ancient toy referred to as "Thanjavur Thalayiatti Bommai" in the Tamil language, which is known as "Tanjore Head-Shaking Doll". This craft refers to a combination of a king and a queen symbolic of the assorted dynasties that homed Thanjavur. This doll is bottom significant and gently bounces back and forth once disturbed. This ancient Indian bobble-headed or roly-poly toys unit of measurement manufactured from terracotta or paper & clay. These toys are handcrafted and painted the crafts with bright colors. This art dwelled in Thanjavur at intervals the primary nineteenth century throughout King Saraboji's reign. Now which we focused on understanding the history, materials, and therefore the technique employed in the painting, this status of the craft, and finalizing what innovative product can be made out of it. The goal of this project is to perform a comprehensive study of Thanjavur Paintings art and craft designs that are involving within the interiors. This could be the simplest way to add history to the future. The research, thus, is inclined towards developing unique interior elements out of those arts and crafts through design exploration.

Index Terms - Handicrafts, craftsmen, techniques, materials.

I. INTRODUCTION

Art - Art is an expression that is created with imagination skills that give proper feelings and emotion to that particular art. These kinds of works are done by artists i.e., paintings, sculptures, etc. they give life to that particular art form to create a beautiful expression to it.

Craft - It is an activity in which things are traditionally made by hand. The activities that are involved in the crafting process such as carving, weaving, pottery, and some different kind of crafts that vary from place to place. It gives a live example of that particular product.

Painting is a work of art that can be drawn on a base surface. To make a painting we can apply painting shades, hues to make a visually satisfying item in a 2-dimensional form. The painting instruments which create the strokes are knives, brushes, sponges are used to complete the proper painting with various techniques. Paintings are often done with support surfaces like paper, wood, glass, canvas, walls which incorporate with different kinds of materials like sand, gold leaf, paper, and furthermore items that make compositions intriguing [1]. It is an innovative expression so that we can create a number of design forms with it.

Coming to interiors, murals are also paintings which can be done on walls i.e., "wall murals". It is considered as a part of interior decoration to give a classic look to that particular wall. In South India and particularly some areas in Thanjavur, it is coming like a long tradition to that art. These kinds of Thanjavur murals are done with the "FRESCO painting technique". The word FRESCO derives from the Italian word "ALFRESCO" that comes from the Latin word for Fresh. These kinds of paintings are done in walls or ceilings in which the materials are used to complete the painting are lime mortar or plaster. It is used with a mix of painting pigments and applies to it. Thanjavur's paintings see the distinctive visual components, techniques Associate in Nursing strategies that characterize the movement that a creative person is related to it. This could stem from an actual cluster that the creative person was consciously involved, or it is a category during which art historians have placed the painter. This painting is outlined in the method.

II. ANCIENT HISTORY OF TANJAVUR

Thanjavur additionally called Tanjore in English, is a town in the South Indian province of Tamil Nadu. A legendary asura in Hindu mythology "Tanjana", was taken into consideration by the scholars, and the town was named as Thanjavur. During the rule of Cholas, Thanjavur served as the capital of the empire. Even after the defeat of Cholas, the town has been ruled by various dynasties such as Pandya's, Vijayanagar Empire, Madurai Nayaks, Thanjavur Nayaks, Thanjavur Marathas, and British Empire. Since 1947, it's been a part of India.

Thanjavur holds a prominent position as a religious place in the southern part of India and it is one of the cultural zones in Tamil Nadu. In this place music, architecture, a great center of dance and arts like sculpture, metal caste, mural painting, woodcraft, etc., are particularly has been dominating for centuries. The vast majority of the Great Living Chola Temples, which are UNESCO World Heritage Monuments, are situated in and around Thanjavur. Among all of these the most prominent Brihadeswara Temple

is situated as a focal point in the center of the town [2]. Though, the world bowed to its unique talents and brilliant miniature paintings from the past two to three decades. Around the 18th century, Maratha rulers brought to it some level of stability and economic prosperity for creating genius miniature paintings [2]. Thanjavur is also known as the “Rice bowl of Tamil Nadu” where the important agricultural land is located at the core of the district.

III. THE GREAT THANJAVUR PAINTINGS

3.1 History about Thanjavur paintings

Thanjavur paintings create a 3D effect on every single painting work. In these artworks, they used different kinds of gems, which are globally acclaimed to give the unique nature of that art. During the 16th century, South India is ruled by Chola kings, who propagated the Thanjavur paintings and furtherly patronized by the Maratha princes, Nayakas of the Vijayanagar Empire, Rajus of Tanjore and Tiruchirappalli, and the Naidus of Madurai. Coming to the architecture, the southern part of Tamil Nadu has a lot of arts and sculptures which were admired by the Cholas and they represent the colossal temples that exemplify the Dravidian architectural style.

3.2 Characteristics features of Thanjavur Paintings

Thanjavur paintings are traditionally known as “Palagai Padam”, in which Palagai can be referred to as wooden plank and Padam as a picture. Generally, these paintings are done on solid wooden planks. These ancient Thanjavur paintings imitate the figures of god and goddesses with ornaments present on them and filled the art with vibrant colors [3]. At the early stage of these paintings, they used expensive and precious gems like diamonds and rubies to give more attractive to that artwork. For the same procedure of those paintings, now-a-days they are using semi-precious gems. These portraits are covered with 22-karat gold foils and the remaining space is coated with vibrant colors. One of the most unique features of the Tanjore paintings is facial expressions.

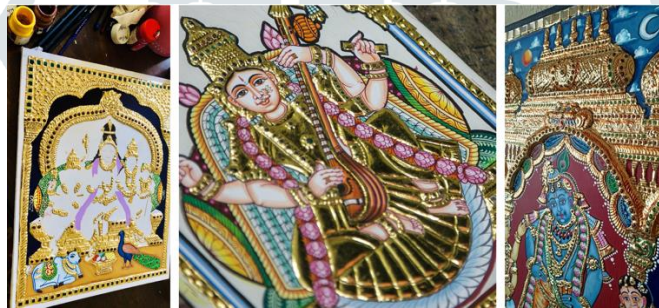


Figure 1: Features of Thanjavur artwork

To create those amazing paintings, the artists use their imagination and skill to portray the art form in an extraordinary way. The artists have to know a deep cultural aspect of Thanjavur place to create prominent portraits. These paintings were mostly revolved around the Hindu mythology. The portraits depict that Lord Krishna as a baby in various mischievous acts can be found in a huge collection of range. It also is shown that the images Radha and Lord Krishna, the marriage of Meenakshi, Shri Rama, Vinayaka and so on. To create a unique 3D effect to that particular portrait the artists have to take intensive care to give life to that art. These paintings are used as an interior element in corporate offices and residential houses. Usage of vibrant colors, expensive gems, gold foils gives it glowing effect in a dark room.

3.3 Religious aspects of making a Thanjavur Paintings

Earlier these paintings were started only for pooja room, later they are seen in living rooms also. The painters have to follow some specific norms to complete the artwork. The artist's work with barefoot while they work on these paintings. The artist completes every part of the painting except for the eyes of the god or goddesses, the ‘opening of eyes’ are painted at an auspicious hour. The paintings are done by male artists only. Females are not allowed to do those kinds of paintings, because during their menstrual cycle women are considered impure and not allowed to do any kind of religious work and they are not entered into pooja rooms.

3.4 Making of Thanjavur masterpiece

The specialty of these paintings is that the main figure is always painted at the center of the painting. Since Tanjore paintings are mainly done on solid wood planks (now-a-days they are using plywood). To make Tanjore paintings traditionally they have used rubies, real diamonds, and other precious stones.

Tanjore painting is available in three finishes:

Classic – For Classic paintings, they used bright and striking colors and also high-glitter gold foil.

Antique – For Antique paintings, they used subtle colors and less bright glitter of gold than the classic form.

Embossed – For Embossed paintings it is very similar to the classical style but the depth of that detail is more.

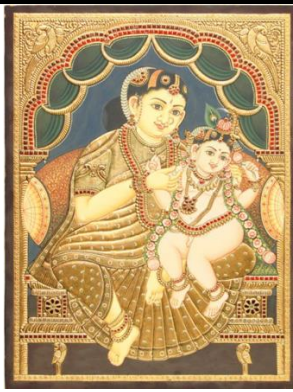


Figure 2: Classic painting



Figure 3: Antique painting

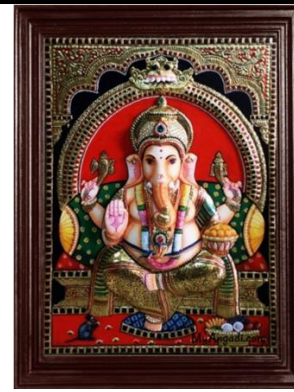


Figure 4: Embossed painting

It is not simple that the artist must follow many steps to create one authentic painting. Each painting will take so many days to complete and give a flawless final product. To give such kind of presentation it takes a lot of care to finish that end product.

3.4.1 Materials required to complete the artwork

Above 4mm thickness of plywood, sandpaper, white cotton cloth, Arabic gum, red carbon paper, pencil, ruler, Jaipur's loured stones, cutter, multi-colored transparent ink, poster colors, chalk powder, adhesives, round brushes of 6 different sizes, above 3" width of the flattened brush, colored stones of, 22k glittered gold foil, referenceable design to trace.

3.4.2 Procedure

To make a painting, first, prepare a canvas. Using the white cotton cloth which is pasted to the plywood with help of water and adhesive. Make sure that there are no bubbles or foldings are present on the front side of the board. Then let it dry for some time. Then make a mixture with the help of chalk powder, water, and adhesive. That mixture is applied to the cloth in one direction and make it dry for some time. Again, coat with the same mixture in the opposite direction and leave it to dry for some more time. To make a smooth texture on the canvas use sandpaper by rubbing the surface.

After that, the artist will trace the required design with red carbon paper on the board and make sure that the carbon paper does not move.

At the first stage to get the embossed look, a mixture is applied in the decorative areas which are called "Muk". It is a mixture of Arabic gum and chalk powder in the ratio of 1:2. After applying the mixture, let the canvas dry for one day. Repeat the process if a more embossed look is required. Use the mixture of adhesive and water to fix the stones on the surface. After drying the canvas for an hour, with a white cotton cloth dipped in water (remove excess water by squeezing the cloth) and gently wipe over the stones.

Use an empty ball pen refill, to make designs on the embossed area. After that process, wherever the gold foil is required, paste it carefully. Cut the gold foil, to expose the stones [4].



Figure 5: Making process and artwork

With the help of poster colors, paint the background and figures. Then fix a plain wooden frame on either side of the painting or use the Chettinadu type of frame to give an additional ornamental design to that painting. It is a pure handcraft item done by an artist.

3.4.3 Thanjavur art in modern era

Thanjavur paintings were recognized by the government of India in 2007-08 as a geographical sign. To date, the art style is continued and is practiced by the artists who are interested in that great traditional artwork. The artists create mixed media arts to develop the modern styles of arts which are carrying from more years. Present scenario, these art forms are also used on glasses, canvases, and mirrors. But the idea of using a gold foil of traditional Thanjavur art is unique. So that the same style is followed for years which is recreated on some other mediums these days. Training camps, workshops, exhibitions are held by many foundations including state government, organize these Thanjavur paintings from time to time. So that this tradition was preserved and protected throughout the decade.

IV. THANJAVUR CRAFTS

Particularly Thanjavur District is famous for any kind of Handicrafts which gives an international level of unique characteristic aspect. In the districts like Thanjavur, Swamimalai, and Natchiarkoil few families are confined to do these crafts and the skill is inherited from their ancestors. The handicrafts include Tanjore art plates, musical instruments, bronze icons, bell metal lamps and one of the famous craft is "Tanjore head-shaking doll".

The ancient toy "Thanjavur Thalayiatti Bommai" in the Tamil language, is known as "Tanjore Head-Shaking Doll". This craft refers to a combination of a king and a queen symbolic of the assorted dynasties that homed Thanjavur. This doll is bottom significant and gently bounces back and forth once disturbed. This ancient Indian bobble-headed or roly-poly toys unit of measurement manufactured from terracotta or paper & clay. These toys are handcrafted and painted the crafts with bright colors. This art dwelled in Thanjavur at intervals the primary nineteenth century throughout King Saraboji's reign.



Figure 6: Tanjore Dolls making process

Plaster of Paris, wood pulp, sago, and papier Mache are the materials used to create the handmade dolls. The tilting doll and bobble-headed doll are two main types of Thanjavur dolls. To make a tilting doll, the specific mixture is filled in the moulds. After the drying time, remove the moulds and take out the part of the doll. After that, join the two pieces of the doll and dry it for some time. Next to give a solid form in which the bottom is connected to the terracotta bowl with the help of starch powdered gum which is extracted from the roots. At finally applying the colors with oil paints. When the light pressure applied to the doll, the whole body is moved from side to side [5].

Another type of doll is the bobble-head doll, the head gives the response once it is tapped on the head. This response is due to the link between the head of the doll and its stable base which is connected with the metal string. The dancing bobble-head doll consists of three moving parts namely head, its arms and chest (torso), and its hips draped in a skirt. It has firm feet and its three moving parts are interlinked in such a way that the doll transforms into a dancing doll when the hips are tapped gently. Another type of dancing bobble headed doll is the seated position of an old couple. When they are gently tapped on the heads, the motion is formed.

V. HOW ARTS AND CRAFTS ARE INCORPORATED WITH INTERIORS

The space we are going to design is a residential area. The Thanjavur Arti crafts will give an eye-pleasing royal nature to it. Each and every craft has its own specific feature that shown in interiors.

In a living room, one wall has to be painted with dark colors and the room is highlighted with that particular wall. To that wall, using the technique of Tanjore paintings gives an embossed look some kind of artworks (for example, we can place the Thanjavur paintings which resemble the image of Thanjavur Thalayiatti Bommai) are done to that particular area. For Tanjore paintings they use gold foil, which is very unique, instead of a gold foil in interiors we are using gold color to give that appearance to that specific artform in the place where wall elevations give a 3d texture feel and gives a royal look to that space. Using a wide range of dark colors and giving the furniture with light colors, the room itself shows the balancing element.

One of the famous bell hanging lamps is used in the archways, which gives the focal point to that entry. Coming to the ceiling, using wooden elements and art plate designs gives a traditional motive to that space. We can use those kinds of elements in the living area, pooja room, and the archways to the kitchen which gives a traditional look to those interiors.

Besides these paintings, dolls also can play a major role in interiors. These dolls can be used as interior decor where the places like on the tv unit, dining table, or a center table in the living room. Using as a reference for paintings and craft dolls, shapes can be carved on the wooden doors or any kind of wooden hangings.



Figure 7: Examples of handicrafts in interiors

Finally, we aim is to depict more traditional values in one place.

VI. CONCLUSION

Summarizing, I have gone through the history of Thanjavur arts and crafts to the details incorporated in interiors. During my research, I have gone through various techniques about the handicrafts of Thanjavur. Finally, in this article, I have learned the usage of materials, the making process, the importance of crafts, inheritance, different kinds of arts and crafts involving in interiors.

VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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