



Contemporary Practices in 21st century Indian Creative ceramics sculpture

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Abstract: Traditionally, one of the oldest medium of art is ceramics. The Indian artistic landscape was irrevocably altered by the amazing introduction of studio pottery that started in the middle of the 20th century. Handmade ceramics have great artistic value, and this renaissance has been driven by an increasing understanding of this fact. Pioneering artists became beacons of light, laying the groundwork for this new movement, in their pursuit of artistic excellence and creativity. Since the 21st Century, the importance of ceramic art among Indian art seniors attracted the interest of artists and art experts. The artists have made significant contributions in this medium. I will focus over the key components of the few artists like Sardar Gurcharan Singh, P R Daroz, Ray Meeker, Bramhdeo Ram Pandit, Dipalee Daroz, and Falguni Bhatt to express their creative contribution in ceramics. My aim is to examine the elements that are established artistically by these artists in changing time. Additionally, I will demonstrate the significance of these artists' ceramic creations in the post-Modern sociocultural context. This study will demonstrate the fundamentals of ceramics as a medium of 21st-century art form.

Key words: Art, Ceramics, contemporary, post Modern, studio potters

INTRODUCTION

Ceramic pottery has been an important product in Indian culture from ancient times. One of the oldest urban civilizations in history, the Indus Valley Civilization flourished around 2500 BCE and left behind exquisite examples of pottery craftsmanship. The artefacts found in pottery from this period exhibit an advanced knowledge of creativity and working in ceramic technique.

Indian culture is deeply rooted in ancient pottery techniques that have been passed down through the years. The wheel-throwing method is a well-known technique among these. Using a combination of hand gestures and rotational force, potters expertly mould clay on a wheel to create a wide range of shapes and sizes of vessels. Clay from the surrounding area is used by traditional potters to create their works. The regional decorative motif ornaments the ceramic pottery.

In the various parts of India established unique pottery varieties over the country's huge extent; these styles can be identified by their unique aesthetic qualities and socio-cultural roots. The different pottery tradition of India is enriched by the establishing set of forms, glazes, and motifs exhibited in these regional variations.

The beautiful blue pottery of Jaipur is another noteworthy Indian pottery innovation. A special kind of clay, glass, and quartz are combined in this technique that was first used in the fourteenth century by Persia's master craftspeople. This gives the pottery a unique appearance and covers it in a bright blue glaze. The city's rich artistic legacy has come to be associated with Jaipur's blue pottery, which features intricate floral and geometric patterns.

For generations, Indian culture has placed great importance on terracotta (Fired clay) sculptures that is considered one of the medium/material in the group of ceramics, which is also called as earthenware, both in religious and architectural art. Clay was used to create these sculptures called terracotta, which were used to decorate ancient temples and served as exquisite representations of devotion and artistic brilliance. They offer insights into the artistic and cultural traditions of the era through their elaborate detailing and spiritual symbolism.

Nizamabad, in India, is renowned for its black pottery. Indian ceramic art has a distinct character known as black pottery. This type of pottery has earned its name because of the extremely dark character achieved after traditional way of firing. Pottery items are decorated with etched designs and high-gloss polishing to enhance the visual beauty.

A technique that includes applying a layer of glass-like substance to the pottery before it is fired. This improves durability and gives the pottery a glossy finish. In many regions of India, including Khurja in Uttar Pradesh and Jaipur in Rajasthan, glazed pottery is widely used.

Initially, it is important to realize that ceramics is a medium rather than a form. Since we haven't used it directly, it originated in nature and was processed by stapes to make ceramics. A ceramic is any of a variety of hard, brittle, heat-resistant, and corrosion-resistant materials that are created by shaping and then firing an inorganic, non-metallic substance—such as clay—at a high temperature. Typical examples include stoneware, porcelain, and earthenware. Ceramics are created by shaping a body of clay into the desired shape and then heating it to high temperatures (between 600 and 1600 C) in a kiln, pit, or bonfire. This process causes reactions that result in long-lasting changes to the object, such as an increase in strength and ride. The two primary components of the ceramic clay body are silica and aluminium.

CONTEMPORARY CERAMICS AND TRADITIONAL AND MODERN POTTERS IN INDIA:

Since it has progressed significantly in India than it has in the west, the growth of contemporary art in India is closely related to the evolution of modern art movements in Europe. Before the 20th century, the primary purpose of the visual arts was to spread religious literary messages, or narratives that were extraneous to the art form itself. However, in the twenty-first century, the definition of the arts has come from their unique aesthetic object. Beginning in 1940, the evolution of contemporary art in India can be roughly divided into ten years. There is overlap in the developmental stage. Indian artists' works have been influenced by impressionism, expressionism, cubism, abstractionism, and surrealism since the 1920s. Rabindranath was influenced by expressionism and cubism to some extent, while Gaganendranath also dabbled in futurist and cubist styles.

Fine and creative crafts are becoming more and more popular worldwide as a way to highlight the growing awareness that creative craft activities of all kinds are part of life. With artists no longer fighting to be called craftsmen, the gap between them is rapidly closing.

The difference between art and craft—which has been functional and non-functional since the Renaissance—was essentially non-existent until around 1930. The division that developed after the Industrial Revolution and significant movements in support of the resurgence of crafts across Europe, such as the Morris movement led by William Morris in the latter part of the 1800s in England, became more noticeable and the Das Bauhaus movement also emerged in Germany. The concept of this movement has had a significant influence on the current interest in craft around the globe, especially in America.

Various craft techniques, materials, and their application as instruments of artistic expression have also become more popular in India. The popularity of craft media has grown, and artists and craftsmen have shown their works in wood, metal, enamel on copper, casting, and ceramics as well as weaving, applique, and textile embroidery in both solo and group exhibitions. These have all been accepted with enthusiasm. Ceramics has long been favoured by artists and craftspeople.

I will concentrate on the essential elements of a select few artists, such as Sardar Gurcharan Singh, P R Daroz, Ray Meeker, Bramhdeo Ram Pandit, Dipalee Daroz, and Falguni Bhatt, to convey their creative contributions in ceramics. These artists are well-known for their studio ceramics works.

SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH:

While supporting his father's friend Ram Singh Kabuli in his brick-making business at Delhi Potteries in 1918, Sardar Gurcharan Singh was attracted by pottery and watched the Pathan potters who had immigrated to India at work. Abdullah even taught him the basics of exports. Kabuli sent him to study commercial ceramics in Tokyo in 1919. Bernard Leach, Kenkichi Tomimoto, Shoji Hamada, and Kanjiro Kawai were among the people he met during his two years at the Higher Technical School in Tokyo. The art of ceramics has been attributed to the influence of Sardar Gurcharan Singh, one of the greatest ceramicists of all time. To great praise, he held his first solo studio pottery exhibition in Tokyo completing that, he returned to Delhi, where, in 1952, he established Delhi Blue Art Pottery with Abdullah. His unique style was essentially a classical form with influences from Korean and Japanese styles. He worked with high-temperature glazes and a stoneware clay body that was fired in coal kilns at 1300 degrees Celsius. His means of subsistence came from creating ceramic tiles and glazed *jaalis* along with art pottery that Delhi's architects purchased. The *jaali* work of Mughal architecture served as an inspiration to Gurcharan Singh. In the sixteenth century, the Mughals introduced these components. The Jaalis intimidated him a great deal. He became known as the Father of Studio Pottery in India as a result of his dedication and involvement in pottery.

In addition, he imparted pottery instruction to young learners in an attempt to increase its popularity in India. He makes a pathway to establish the contemporary ceramics in India and world for young generation.







• P R DAROZ

With a nearly half-century-long practice in the arts, Pandurang Daroz, also known as P R Daroz, has established himself to become one of the leading figures in the ceramics world. The art that he produces extends the lines between architecture and sculpture. Speaking about his artwork, Daroz states that ceramics is an exciting medium. Because it requires physical labour, deft brushwork, creativity, and material mastery, it taxes the artist. Hyderabad is the place of Daroz's birth. Under Jyotsna Bhatt, he pursued a ceramics specialisation at the MS University, Baroda, Faculty of Fine Arts. He attended the College of Fine Arts and Architecture in Hyderabad.

P R Daroz, who was influenced by his environment, the surrounding environment, and the rock formations. He was also highly influenced by the sea's underwater corals and stones. He enjoys recreating these figures and forms in ceramics. For the past ten years or so, he has worked primarily with ceramics, and he has really enjoyed the process. Through the medium of ceramics, he always attempts to transform that beauty and preserve it in his works.







• RAY MEEKER

In 1971, Ray Meeker and his partner Deborah Smith established Golden Bridge Pottery in Pondicherry. Meeker's contributions to the introduction of glazed studio stoneware, his studies on fired housing, and his monumental sculptures are what made him a pioneer in the Indian ceramics art scene. Ray is skilled in his material and kept improving his language.

American-born Ray Meeker, one of India's most well-known ceramic artists, was born in California in 1944. Meeker completed his BFA in ceramics and architecture at the University of South California. Ray Meeker's installations are characterised by earthy hues and rustic finishes, with a hint of pan-Asian influences, particularly Indian and Japanese. These elements are inspired by his concerns regarding the gradual erosion and eventual destruction of natural resources and landscapes, as well as their impact on ecosystems worldwide.

The only Anagama kiln in India will be fired by Golden Bridge Pottery in Pondicherry. The term 'Anagama' refers to a wood-fired cave kiln in Japanese. It is distinguished primarily by the absence of a physical partition dividing the stoking and pottery areas.





•BRAHMDEO RAM PANDIT:

Bramhdeo Pandit, a third-generation potter, began working at Sokodevra Ashram when he was nineteen years old. Since he stuck to his principles and helped thousands of students learn the art and craft of pottery, Shri Brahmddeo Ram Pandit has not only helped to preserve the craft but also helped others have successful careers in pottery. Having learned the art and craft of pottery from his father, Ram Pandit, who was Prajapati's ancestor, Shri Bramhdeo Ram Pandit became a true master potter and craftsman from a traditional potters community. In 1981, Pandit Art Ceramic was established by Shri Brahmddeo Ram Pandit, who also laid the groundwork for the handmade pottery craft. This is the location where he produced one of the most highly prized pieces of clay art among art enthusiasts. One of the few potters who have successfully transitioned from traditional to contemporary pottery is him. He is the first craftsman to use glazing in this medium and was able to bring modern designs into his pottery even though coming from a traditional family.

Shri Brahmddeo Pandit, a third-generation potter, has achieved an extremely impressive makeover from a traditional potter to a studio potter, producing work that is distinctly marked by his unique methods of surface decoration, throwing, and firing. His fascinating glazes on his tall vases, salad bowls, and platters are in high demand worldwide. The subtle variations in colours and patterns that he is able to produce demonstrate his mastery of the medium.

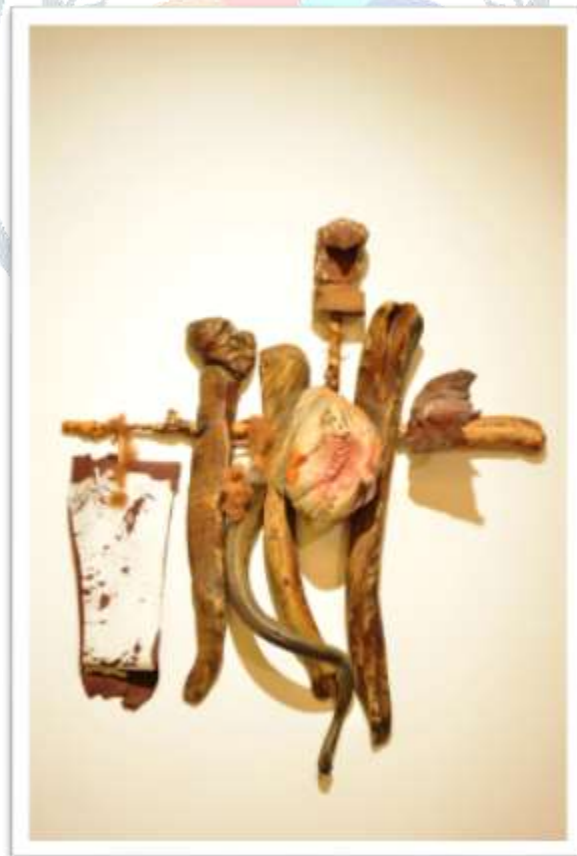
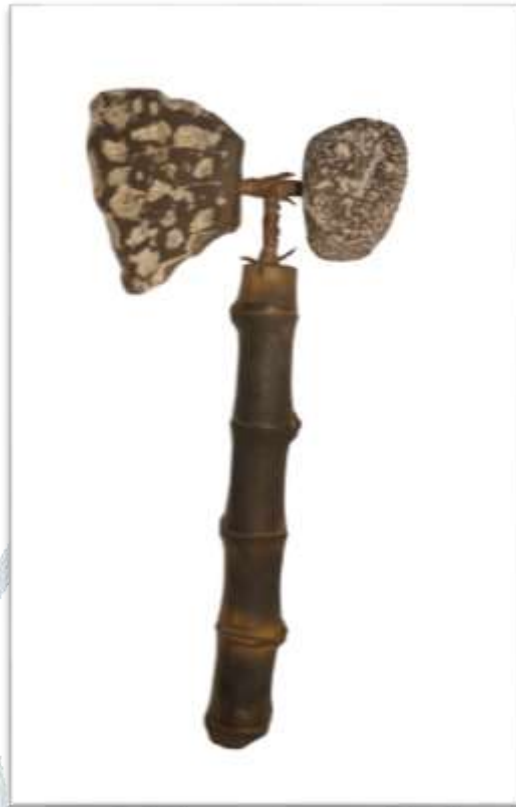




•DIPALEE DAROZ

The work of Dipalee Daroz is unique in that it is found at the relationship between stability and freedom. Her sculptures look simply at first sight, but a deeper look indicates an extraordinary grasp of the medium and technique. Her analysis of the natural world, objects made by humans, the urban environment, and mysterious feelings are the source of her concepts. Her practice starts out as a scientific curiosity as she looks for materials that intrigue her. She is constantly driven by the journey that allows her to create ambiguous images and artefacts in natural and matte finish glazes to create installations and sculptures.

With regard to her stoneware sculptures, Dipalee remarks “My objects are reminiscent of the historic past”. Their unpredictability and rawness in harmony with the mindless violence and brutal survival that permeate the current environment. Connotative psychological ascent is as important and ubiquitous as primordial ascents, according to Dipalee. Her illustration is the hunter-gatherers of the Ice Age who cooked fish in ceramic pots. She draws a parallel between the self-discovery processes.





• FALGUNI BHATT

Falguni Bhatt currently works as a ceramicist in Kolkata, where she has a studio. Falguni was fortunate enough to work closely with Jyotsna Bhatt, whose work spirit and dedication influenced her and helped in the establishment of her style. Baroda, Gujarat is the birthplace of Falguni Bhatt, a sculptor, ceramist, and installation artist. She obtained her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Fine Arts with a concentration in Ceramic Sculpture from Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, with her heart set on a creative path. Her art focuses on dismantling preconceived notions about concept and practice, revealing a keen and sensitive relationship between the artist and her environment at any given moment.

Falguni's early work was figurative and object-based, but instead of replicating the objects, she attempts to break the stereotype of gazing at any object by breaking the form. She is dismantling the myth that her actions and ideas demonstrate a close-knit and extremely sensitive relationship with both her environment and her mental state. She appears to be addressing architectural spaces, geological allusions, and socio-political shifts in society in her later works. Her art attempts to delicately balance the old and new, comfort and discomfort, modern and traditional. She applied hand-building methods and wheel-thrown forms in accordance with the composition's requirements.



JETIR





CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, India has a millennium-long rich tradition of ceramic pottery, with styles and techniques changing over time to reflect the nation's rich cultural diversity. India's ceramics have always evolved and developed, from the beautiful craftsmanship of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization to the present creations of artists such as Sardar Gurcharan Singh, P R Daroz, Ray Meeker, Bramhdeo Ram Pandit, Dipalee Daroz, and Falguni Bhatt.

The regional differences in pottery styles found throughout India draw attention to the distinctive aesthetic attributes and socio-cultural influences found in various regions of the nation. Indian artists' creativity and expertise are exhibited through techniques including wheel-throwing, glazing, and black pottery, while the versatility of the medium is demonstrated by contemporary studio ceramics and classic terracotta statues.

Moreover, Indian artists have been influenced by impressionism, expressionism, cubism, surrealism, and other international art styles, which have had a significant impact on the development of contemporary ceramics in India. The line separating craft from art is becoming increasingly hazy, with ceramics being acknowledged as a valid medium for artistic expression.

In general, India's ceramics journey—from age-old pottery traditions to modern studio techniques—reflects the nation's diverse cultural fabric and the artists' unwavering inventiveness. Indian ceramicists are pushing the limits of the medium with their creative vision and inventive techniques, producing timeless pieces that are steeped in heritage.

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