



Visual Art as Aesthetic Discourse: Indian and Western Perspectives

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Abstract

The comparative study of Indian and Western aesthetics reveals distinct yet interrelated philosophies shaping the evolution of visual art across cultures. Indian aesthetics, rooted in concepts such as *Rasa*, *Bhava*, and *Dhvani*, emphasizes spiritual transcendence, emotional resonance, and the union of the aesthetic experience with metaphysical truth. In contrast, Western aesthetic thought—emerging from classical Greek ideals of *mimesis* to Enlightenment notions of beauty, form, and the autonomous art object—prioritizes representation, rational interpretation, and sensory pleasure. Through visual art, these aesthetic systems find material embodiment: Indian art transforms the visual field into a meditative and symbolic space, while Western art often foregrounds realism, proportion, and individual expression. By juxtaposing these traditions, the study explores how differing philosophical foundations—idealism versus empiricism, transcendence versus perception—manifest in artistic practice, composition, and audience reception. This comparative inquiry not only bridges intercultural understandings of beauty and meaning but also repositions contemporary visual art as a global dialogue between intuition and intellect, symbolism and materiality, and tradition and innovation.

This study compares Indian and Western ideas of aesthetics through the lens of visual art. Indian aesthetics is based on concepts like *Rasa* (essence of emotion), *Bhava* (feeling), and *Dhvani* (suggestion), which focus on inner experience, spirituality, and emotional depth. Western aesthetics, on the other hand, has developed from the Greek idea of *Mimesis* (imitation) to later theories that emphasize beauty, proportion, and realistic representation. While Indian visual art often seeks to express the spiritual and symbolic, Western art has been more concerned with realistic form, individual expression, and sensory experience. By comparing these two traditions, the study highlights how cultural philosophies shape artistic creation and the way art is experienced. It also shows that modern visual art brings these worlds together, blending emotion and intellect, tradition and innovation, to form a global language of aesthetics.

Keywords: Indian aesthetics, Western aesthetics, *Rasa* theory, Comparative aesthetics, *Mimesis*

Aims of the Study:

1. To analyze the key philosophical concepts that define Indian and Western aesthetic traditions and their influence on visual art.

2. To examine how cultural, spiritual, and intellectual contexts shape artistic expression and viewer experience in both traditions.
3. To explore how contemporary artists integrate elements from Indian and Western aesthetics to create new modes of global visual dialogue.

Introduction

Aesthetics forms the philosophical backbone of visual art, defining how cultures perceive beauty, meaning, and experience. Indian aesthetics prioritizes emotional immersion and spiritual transcendence through concepts like *Rasa*, rooted in Bharata Muni's *Natyashastra*, where art evokes universalized emotions in the spectator, known as the *Sahrdaya* or empathetic viewer. In contrast, Western aesthetics begins with Plato's suspicion of art as mere imitation but evolves through Aristotle's *Mimesis* into a celebration of form, proportion, and catharsis. This comparative analysis examines these traditions through visual art forms such as painting, sculpture, and installations, revealing divergences in purpose—spiritual union versus sensory representation—and convergences in contemporary hybrid practices. (Ijraset)¹

The paper addresses a gap in art historical discourse by focusing on visual manifestations rather than solely literary or performative arts. Indian visual art, from Ajanta caves to temple sculptures, embodies *Rasa* and *Dhvani* (suggestion), inviting meditative participation. Western examples, like Renaissance frescoes or modernist abstractions, emphasize optical realism and intellectual engagement. Globalization has spurred fusions, as seen in artists like Raja Ravi Varma, who merged oil realism with mythological themes. This study fulfills its aims by dissecting foundational theories, analyzing cultural impacts, and highlighting modern syntheses, contributing to intercultural art understanding. (Kkm)²

Indian Aesthetic Foundations

Indian aesthetics originates in the *Natyashastra* (circa 200 BCE–200 CE) by Bharata Muni, the foundational text on dramaturgy that extends to visual arts through principles of proportion, color, and stance (*bhang*). (Thamarana)³

Central is *Rasa*, defined as the "essence" or "juice" of emotion, arising from the combination of *Vibhava* (determinants), *Anubhava* (consequents), and *Vyabhichari Bhava* (transitory states), transforming personal *Sthayibhava* (stable emotions) into universal relish. (Aishwaryamitra)⁴

Bharata asserts, "No meaningful idea is conveyed if the Rasa is not evoked," positioning *Rasa* as art's soul. Abhinavagupta's commentary, *Abhinavabharati*, elevates this to a spiritual bliss (*ananda*), where art removes egoistic veils, revealing the self's divine nature. (*The Rasa Theory of Bharata – Indian Aesthetics and Fine Arts*)⁵

Dhvani, theorized by Anandavardhana in *Dhvanyaloka* (9th century), complements *Rasa* by emphasizing suggestion over literal meaning, aligning with Vedantic views of the world as *Maya* (illusion). (Narayanan et al.)⁶ In visual art, these manifest dynamically: Ajanta murals (2nd–6th century CE) employ fluid lines, vibrant palettes, and symbolic motifs to evoke *Shringara Rasa* (erotic) or *Karuna* (pathetic), drawing viewers into cosmic narratives. Temple sculptures at Khajuraho or Konark use erotic carvings to suggest *Shringara*, transcending sensuality toward *Rasa* realization. The viewer's *Darshana* (sacred gaze) activates this, making art participatory and transformative, unlike passive observation. (Kumar)⁷

This holistic approach integrates art with *Dharma* and *Bhakti*, influencing miniature paintings like Ragamala series, where stylized figures and asymmetry convey layered emotions. Five classical schools—*Rasa*, *Alamkara*, *Dhvani*, *Riti*, and *Auchitya*—further refine this, with *Dhvani* dominating visual subtlety. (*Client Challenge*)⁸

Western Aesthetic Traditions

Western aesthetics commences with Plato's *Republic*, decrying art as thrice-removed imitation (mimesis) of ideal forms, yet Aristotle's *Poetics* redeems it as cathartic representation fostering moral insight through order, symmetry, and magnitude. *Mimesis* evolves as re-presentation: art imitates nature not slavishly but ideally, as in Polykleitos' *Canon* for proportional sculptures. Renaissance humanists like Leon Battista Alberti formalized perspective and *contrapposto* in treatises, evident in Michelangelo's *David* (1504), embodying heroic idealization. (Ijraset)¹

Renaissance Alberti's *On Painting* (1435) introduces linear perspective, as in Masaccio's *Holy Trinity* (1427). Kant's *Critique of Judgment* defines beauty as "form's purposiveness without purpose," subjective yet universal. Hegel views art as Idea sensuously embodied; Schopenhauer as will's objectification. (Martindale)⁹

Modernism's Greenberg stresses opticality; Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) warps *Mimesis* for pathos. Michelangelo's *David* (1504) idealizes anatomy via *contrapposto*. Halliwell's *Aesthetics of Mimesis* traces continuity. (UPSC MAGAZINE and UPSC MAGAZINE)¹⁰

Comparative Analysis

Aspect	Indian Aesthetics	Western Aesthetics
Core Concept	<i>Rasa-Bhava-Dhvani</i>	<i>Mimesis-form</i>
Purpose	Transcendence	Catharsis/pleasure
Viewer	Immersive <i>Sahridaya</i>	Disinterested
Form	Symbolic asymmetry	Symmetric realism
Ontology	<i>Idealist Advaita</i>	Empiricist

Indian *Dhvani* layers imply infinity; Western *Mimesis* reveals via technique. Indian art views reality as illusory, using *Dhvani* for infinite layers; Western art reveals reality via technique. Indian asymmetry evokes flux (*Anicca*), Western symmetry order. Both achieve universality—*Rasa* depersonalizes emotion, *Mimesis* generalizes nature—but Indian prioritizes *Bhava* transformation, Western form mastery. (Limited)¹¹

Case Studies in Visual Art

Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) exemplifies early fusion: trained in Kerala traditions, he adopted oil realism post-European exposure, rendering myths like *Hamsa Damayanti* with photographic detail and *Shringara Rasa*, making divine relatable. His oleographs democratized *Rasa*, blending *Mimesis* depth with Indian narrative. (Admin)¹²

Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906) fused *Rasa* myths with oil *Mimesis*, as in *Shakuntala* (1898), using chiaroscuro for emotional depth. Amrita Sher-Gil (1913-1941) blended Post-Impressionism with *Bhava* in *Village Scene* (1938), evoking pathos. (KAMBLE and CHOUHAN)¹³

Amrita Sher-Gil (1913-1941) fused Post-Impressionism with Indian themes in *Bride's Toilet* (1937), using bold colors and Cubist intimacy to evoke emotional depth akin to *Bhava*, portraying women with modernist strength. Subodh Gupta's stainless-steel installations mimic utensils for cultural *Dhvani*, echoing Western minimalism. ("Amrita Sher-Gil : Bridging East and West Through Art")¹⁴ Thukral & Tagra's pop-infused paintings merge Indian motifs with digital vibrancy, suggesting hybrid identities. ("10 Contemporary Indian Artists Making Waves Internationally")¹⁵

Subodh Gupta's utensils installations suggest cultural *Dhvani* minimally. Dayanita Singh's photo-archives merge narrative *Rasa* serially. He exemplifies material *Dhvani* through stainless-steel sculptures of utensils like *Very Hungry God* (2003), mimicking Western minimalism (e.g., Judd's boxes) yet evoking Indian domestic rituals and consumer excess, suggesting *Karuna Rasa* amid urbanization. His work layers connotation—utensils as *Samskara* (memory traces)—beyond denotation, aligning Anandavardhana's suggestiveness with perceptual play. Similarly, Anish Kapoor's void-filled mirrors (*Cloud Gate*, 2006) fuse *Shunyata* (emptiness) from Indian philosophy with Western opticality, distorting viewers into infinite reflexivity, a *Mimesis* of self-surveillance. (SINGH)¹⁶

Contemporary Implications

Postcolonial artists synthesize traditions amid globalization. Dayanita Singh's photographic archives infuse *Rasa*-like narrative with serial Western form. Digital media amplifies this: AI-generated art blends *Dhvani* subtlety with algorithmic *Mimesis*. Challenges include appropriation, but opportunities foster dialogue on identity and environment. This hybridity repositions visual art as transcultural, fulfilling global aesthetic needs. ("Amrita Sher-Gil : Bridging East and West Through Art")¹⁴

Postcolonial theory frames these as "hybridity," per Homi Bhabha, where mimicry subverts colonial *Mimesis*. Jitish Kallat's *Public Notice 3* (2010) projects Gandhi's speech in neon gas, blending Indian oratory *Rasa* with Western light sculpture, addressing climate urgency through luminous ephemerality. Rana Begum's geometric meshes (*No. 542 Mesh Wall*, 2015) draw from Mughal jaali screens for *Dhvani*-like light filtration, infused with Minimalist phenomenology, transforming perception into meditative immersion. (Rafi)¹⁷

Digital and AI art amplifies this: Refik Anadol's data sculptures visualize neural *Rasas* via machine learning, echoing *Mimesis* algorithms with Indian affective computing. Indian NFT artists like XCOPY fuse glitch aesthetics with *Bhava*-driven narratives, democratizing *Rasa* globally. Challenges persist: Parul Dave-Mukherji warns of "exoticization" in Western-curated biennales, where *Rasa* risks commodification. Yet, Venice Biennales (e.g., 2022's Indigenous focus) platform fusions, as in Shilpa Gupta's *Listening Air* (2019), sonic barriers evoking *Bibhatsa Rasa* (disgust) at borders via interactive *Mimesis*. (Mitra)¹⁸

Environmental themes converge: Atul Dodiya's painted assemblages (*Broken Branches*, 2013) layer Gandhi icons with gun motifs, suggesting *Karuna* amid ecological pathos, akin to Western eco-art like Christo. Raqs Media Collective's *Corpeso Politico* (2003) dissects bodies symbolically, blending *Dhvani* allegory with forensic realism. These address Anthropocene crises, universalizing *Rasa* through global materiality. (UPSC MAGAZINE and UPSC MAGAZINE)¹⁰

In education and curation, institutions like Tate Modern host *Rasa*-inspired shows (*Mimesis to Rasa*, hypothetical per trends), training *Sahridayas* in hybrid viewing. Digital platforms (Instagram, Rhizome) enable

Dhvani dissemination, countering Kantian "disinterest" with participatory scrolls. Future trajectories include VR temples simulating Ajanta *Darshana* with perspectival *Mimesis*, or blockchain *Rasa* economies. (Limited, *Comparative Aesthetics: East and West / Exotic India Art*)¹¹

This synthesis fulfills intercultural potential: Indian inwardness tempers Western exteriority, yielding resilient aesthetics for pluralism. Empirical studies, like IJRASET's surveys, confirm viewer resonance in hybrids. As Raghuram notes in *Contemporary Indian Art*, such dialogues redefine "universal" beauty. (Limited, *Comparative Aesthetics: East and West / Exotic India Art*)¹¹

Similarities

1. Active Empathetic Viewer Engagement: Despite surface differences, both traditions demand an attuned spectator. Indian *Sahridaya* (one whose "heart is ready") actively relishes *Rasa* through empathetic immersion, akin to Kant's aesthetic judgment where imagination and understanding engage in "free play," fostering universal communicability. In visual art, Ajanta's expressive figures elicit this as do Rothko's color fields, transforming passive looking into profound resonance. (Kumar, "Exploring the Core Concerns of Indian Aestheticians: A Journey Through Bhava, Rasa, and Dhvani & Bull;")⁷

2. Harmonic Proportion as Divine Microcosm: Proportion serves as a sacred geometry bridging human and cosmic. Bharata's *Natyashastra* details 108 *bhangas* (postures) for ideal form, mirroring Polykleitos' mathematical *Canon* (golden ratio) and Alberti's perspectival harmony, both positing body as microcosm of universe—evident in Konark sculptures and Leonardo's *Vitruvian Man*. This shared idealization elevates art beyond mere depiction. (Kkm)²

These convergences—universalization, transformation, empathy, and proportion—facilitate contemporary fusions, as *Rasa*'s emotional depth complements *Mimesis*' technical precision. Indian *Dhvani*'s layers parallel Western symbolism (e.g., Romantic sublime), enabling hybridity without contradiction. (Limited, *Comparative Aesthetics: East and West / Exotic India Art*)¹¹

Philosophical Bases: A Comparative Point

Indian and Western aesthetics rest on divergent yet complementary philosophical foundations, shaping their approaches to visual art as pathways to truth, beauty, and human fulfillment. Indian aesthetics draws from Vedantic non-dualism (*Advaita Vedanta*), where ultimate reality (*Brahman*) transcends sensory illusion (*Maya*), positioning art as a symbolic bridge to spiritual realization. Bharata Muni's *Natyashastra* embeds *Rasa* within this ontology: emotions (*Bhava*) are stabilized (*Sthayibhava*) and universalized through suggestion (*Dhvani*), evoking *ananda* (blissful awareness) that dissolves egoistic barriers, aligning the viewer (*Sahridaya*) with cosmic unity. Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* reinforces this idealist hierarchy—literal meaning (*Abhidha*) yields to implied resonance (*Vyanjana*), mirroring *Advaita*'s veiled reality where art's asymmetry and multiplicity reflect flux (*Anicca*) and infinite layers, as in Ajanta murals' meditative narratives. Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabharati* elevates *Rasa* to *camatkara* (aesthetic wonder), a foretaste of liberation (*moksha*), integrating *Dharma* (ethical order) with *Bhakti* (devotion). Thus, Indian philosophy views art teleologically: not an end but a transformative rite, participatory and holistic, rooted in monistic idealism where form serves spirit. (*The Rasa Theory of Bharata – Indian Aesthetics and Fine Arts*)⁵

Western aesthetics, conversely, evolves from dualistic empiricism and rationalism, privileging sensory perception and intellectual mastery over phenomena. Plato's *Republic* critiques *Mimesis* as degraded imitation

of eternal Forms (*eidos*), thrice-removed from truth, yet Aristotle's *Poetics* pragmatically reclaims it as ordered representation fostering catharsis and ethical insight through *symmetria* (proportion). This empiricist turn—knowledge via observation—culminates in Renaissance humanism: Alberti's perspectival science reveals divine geometry, as in Leonardo's *Vitruvian Man*, linking microcosm (body) to macrocosm (universe) via measurable harmony. Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790) synthesizes this in transcendental idealism: aesthetic judgment arises from "disinterested pleasure" in form's purposiveness, bridging subjective faculties (imagination, understanding) to objective universality without conceptual mediation. Hegel historicizes art as Spirit's sensuous manifestation, progressing dialectically; Schopenhauer sees it as will's temporary quiescence. Modernism (Greenberg) reduces to medium autonomy, emphasizing optical empiricism. Western art thus prioritizes epistemology—revelation through technique, symmetry, and focal realism—viewing the object as autonomous, the viewer analytical. (Singh and Department of English Literature, English and Foreign Languages University, Regional Campus Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India)¹⁹

Synthesis of Bases: Despite polarity—Indian monism dissolves subject-object; Western dualism maintains them—similarities emerge in revelatory intent: both posit art as mediator (*Maya* to *Brahman*; senses to Ideas), pursuing timeless universality via proportion (*bhangā* as *Canon*) and moral elevation (*Dharma*-catharsis). Indian inward transcendence tempers Western outward empiricism, enabling hybrids like Varma's oils, where *Rasa* infuses perspectival depth. This philosophical convergence affirms art's cross-cultural vocation: elevating perception toward the eternal. (Singh and Department of English Literature, English and Foreign Languages University, Regional Campus Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India)¹⁹

Timeless Beauty Ideal: Indian and Western Aesthetics

The timeless beauty ideal—eternal aesthetic essence beyond decay—unites Indian and Western traditions, framing visual art as a portal to the imperishable amid flux. Both cultures pursue beauty (*Saundarya*/To *kalon*) as an unchanging archetype, defying impermanence through perfected form and transcendent resonance. (*Books on Indian Aesthetics / Classical Indian Aesthetics Texts*)²⁰

Indian Aesthetics: *Saundarya* as Eternal *Rasa*

Indian philosophy enshrines timelessness in *Saundarya-shastra*, where beauty reveals *Nitya Rasa* (eternal relish), piercing *Maya* to *Brahman*'s infinity. *Natyashastra*'s universalization (*Samanya*) stylizes figures for perennial *camatkara* (wonder), as Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabharati* describes beauty's *ananda* dissolving time. (*Rasa in Aesthetics: An Application of Rasa Theory to Modern Western Literature (Hardcover)*)²¹

Example: Konark Sun Temple Carvings (13th CE). Wheels symbolize solar cycles—eternal time—framed by *Mithuna* (erotic) figures in *Shringara Rasa*. Weathered sandstone endures, proportions (*bhangā*) harmonizing human-divine, evoking *Darshana* as ceaseless *Shanta* (peace). Vatsyayan's analyses highlight their "perennial vitality" against erosion. (Jha and CEC-UGE-NME-ICT PROJECT 2017)²²

Western Aesthetics: *To Kalon* as Eternal Archetype

Plato's *Symposium* ladders beauty from body to Form (*eidos*), immutable perfection; Aristotle's *Poetics* adds harmonious magnitude. Kant universalizes it as timeless "free beauty," from defying utility and entropy. (Martindale)⁹

Example: Laocoön and His Sons (Hellenistic, c. 40-30 BCE). Marble writhes in agony yet achieves Polykleitos-inspired *symmetria*: torsioned bodies balance tension-eternity, faces convey noble pathos. Patina enhances ageless struggle, embodying *kalokagathia* (noble beauty). Lessing's *Laocoön* praises its "eternal moment" transcending narrative.

Shared Pursuit and Synthesis

Convergences: Indian modular *tala* mirrors Greek *Canon*; both idealize form against *Anicca*/time—Konark's wheels parallel Laocoön's coils as cosmic eternity. Emotional universality binds: *Rasa*'s *nitya* relish echoes Platonic ascent.(English journal)²⁴. Contemporary echo: Rana Begum's *No. 542 Mesh Wall* (2015) filters light through jaali-like grids, fusing Konark *Dhvani* eternity with Hellenistic phenomenology. This ideal affirms art's vocation: capturing infinite in finite, for *Sahridaya* and universal beholders. (KAMBLE and CHOUPHAN)¹³

Symbolism & Layers: Indian and Western Aesthetics

Symbolism and multi-layered meaning represent a core convergence between Indian and Western aesthetics, where visual art transcends literal depiction to unveil infinite depths of truth, inviting layered interpretation beyond surface form. Both traditions employ symbols as vehicles for metaphysical resonance—Indian *Dhvani* suggesting hidden realities through connotation (*Vyanjana*) and Western symbolism/allegory implying transcendent ideals—transforming static images into dynamic revelations.(Books on Indian Aesthetics / Classical Indian Aesthetics Texts)²⁰

Indian Aesthetics: *Dhvani*'s Infinite Layers

Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* establishes *Dhvani* (resonance) as aesthetics' soul: literal meaning (*Abhidha*) yields to suggested essence (*Vyanjana*), creating layered truths mirroring Vedantic *Maya*-veils. Bharata's *Rasa* amplifies this—symbols evoke *Bhava* cascades (*Vibhava-Anubhava-Vyabhicharibhava*). Visual art layers proliferate: motifs imply cosmic narratives.(Narayanan et al.)⁶

Example: Ragamala Miniatures (17th CE, Rajasthan). A *Raga Bhairavi* painting shows lovers amid lotuses—surface romance (*Shringara*) suggests seasonal melancholy, layered with *Karuna Rasa* (pathos), cosmic union (*Yogini* symbolism), and musical *Raga* evoking eternal cycles. Asymmetry, jewel tones, and microscopic details unfold via contemplation, embodying *Dhvani*'s "soul of suggestion." (Mitra)¹⁸

Western Aesthetics: Allegory and Symbolist Depths

Western symbolism evolves from medieval allegory (Dante's *Divine Comedy*) to 19th-century Symbolism, where Gustave Moreau and Odilon Redon imply spiritual mysteries through encrypted motifs. Romanticism (Goethe, Blake) layers nature with metaphysical import; Plato's Forms inspire archetypal resonance. (English journal)²⁴

Example: William Blake's *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun* (1802-1805). Apocalyptic dragons dominate ethereal women—literal Biblical struggle layers psychological turmoil (Newtonian reason vs. imagination), alchemical transformation, and cosmic dualism. Fiery tempera, muscular anatomy, and visionary scale suggest infinite narratives: dragon as repressed libido (Freud), sublime chaos (Burke). Blake's "minute particulars" demand successive unveilings. (Wikipedia contributors)²³

Shared Layers and Contemporary Synthesis

Convergences: Both prioritize connotation over denotation—Ragamala's *Raga*-symbols parallel Blake's mythic archetypes; layered revelation defies single reading. Proliferating motifs create hermeneutic spirals: Indian *Alamkara* (ornament) echoes Western *hieroglyphic* density.(Dhvani. ijels)²⁵

Contemporary fusion: Shilpa Gupta's *Untitled (There is No Border Here)* (2005-2006) threads barbed wire into maps, layering geopolitical *Bibhatsa Rasa* (disgust) with Blake-like existential barriers and Ragamala flux—

physical barbs suggest psychic divisions, infinite migrations. Digital extensions amplify: glitch art layers *Dhvani*-glitches with Symbolist distortion.(SINGH)¹⁶

This shared symbolism affirms art's polyvalence: Ragamala and Red Dragon beckon successive *Sahridayas* and interpreters through veiled infinities, uniting traditions in depth.(KAMBLE and CHOUHAN)¹³

Conclusion

Indian and Western aesthetics complementarily enrich visual art: *Rasa*'s emotive spirituality versus *Mimesis*' formal empiricism. A comparative study illuminates the cultural shaping of expression, with contemporaries bridging divides. Future inquiry into digital hybrids advances intercultural theory. Beyond divergences, shared pursuits of universal emotion, transformation, viewer empathy, and cosmic proportion unite traditions, enriching global visual art.

The comparative analysis of Indian and Western aesthetics in visual art reveals not merely divergences but a profound intercultural dialogue that enriches global artistic practice. Indian aesthetics, anchored in *Rasa*, *Bhava*, and *Dhvani* from Bharata Muni's *Natyashastra* and Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka*, prioritizes spiritual transcendence and emotional immersion, transforming viewers into active *Sahridayas* who relish universalized bliss (*ananda*) through symbolic asymmetry and meditative *Darshana*. Western aesthetics, evolving from Plato's and Aristotle's *Mimesis* through Kant's disinterested beauty and modernist opticality, emphasizes empirical representation, proportional harmony, and cathartic intellectuality, positioning art as an autonomous object for analytical contemplation. These foundations—Vedantic non-dualism versus rational empiricism—manifest distinctly: Ajanta murals evoke layered *Karuna Rasa*, while Michelangelo's *David* embodies ideal *symmetria*. Yet, as dissected, six key similarities bridge them: universalization of experience, emotional transformation, empathetic viewer engagement, harmonic proportion, moral elevation, multi-layered symbolism, inspired genius, and timeless beauty ideals.

This study's aims are fully realized. First, philosophical cores were unpacked—Indian idealism's suggestive infinity contrasting Western form's perceptual clarity—illuminating influences on composition and reception. Second, cultural contexts were examined: Indian art's ritual integration versus Western autonomy shapes participatory versus observational experiences, evident in temple sculptures and Renaissance frescoes. Third, contemporary implications spotlight hybridity, where artists like Raja Ravi Varma fuse mythological *Shringara* with oil realism, Amrita Sher-Gil blends *Bhava* pathos with Post-Impressionism, and Subodh Gupta's utensil installations layer *Dhvani* minimalism for cultural memory. Dayanita Singh's serial archives, Bharti Kher's bindi resins, and Jitish Kallat's neon speeches exemplify postcolonial syntheses, negotiating identity amid globalization, while digital AI art promises further convergence.

These convergences affirm aesthetics' universality: both traditions elevate art beyond decoration, pursuing eternal truths through human form—*bhang* echoing the *Canon*, *Rasa* paralleling catharsis. In an era of ecological crises and cultural flux, such hybrids offer resilience: Gupta's consumer critiques evoke shared *Karuna*, Kapoor's voids universal *Shunyata*. Challenges like appropriation persist, yet Venice Biennales and digital platforms foster equitable dialogues, training global *Sahridayas*. Ultimately, Indian and Western aesthetics complementarily redefine visual art as a transcultural bridge—emotion tempering form, spirit informing sense.

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