

ART– “ An Expression of an Impression”

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Art is a form of human activity. A work of art is a creative work. Some scholars describe **Kala** (art) as—**Expression of an Impression.**” There are so many definitions of ‘**Art**’ which have an endless list, but this word’s definitions are still not clear to us. According to **Eric Gill**, “**Art is a skill that is the first meaning of the world.**” According to **Prof. Bell**, “**All works of art and all in works of art have a significant form.**” Here, the significant form is that which awakens an aesthetic emotion.

Art is a language in itself. During ancient times, i.e. pre-historic period, people used to draw stick drawings on the walls of the caves through which they used to understand each others' views. Thus, art acted as a language which turned out to be a communicative element among people.

Art is born out of necessity. The cave art is not man's first artistic efforts. Man used to cast magic on animals for prey by drawing animal figures on the walls of the caves. The early cave art is the consequence of man's intelligence, imagination and power to create. This was his capability that made him the master who started art through the making of images and symbols.

Then came the power of imagination along with the concepts of identity and meaning. Thus, art was born out of necessity. Akbar was an illiterate. So, he used to express his ideas through art. He established a big '**Library**' (**Fatehpur Sikri**) where books in different languages were translated.

Art is a communication by the artist with not only the spectators but with himself also as he expresses his views through it which define the term **‘Creative Art’**. The artist is always a servant of mankind as he can give new shape to the society and the gift of art is granted to him by the God, which is a miracle.

An artist should be of sacrificing nature as he has only to give to others through his art and not to take anything. He has to maintain balance between both appreciation as well as criticism. The question **“What is Art”** ? is somewhat more comprehensible than the question **“What is Beauty”** ? and these two form the basic questions of Aesthetics.

An artist should have full faith and confidence in himself while creating an art and should always be ready to serve and should not compromise at any cost to do justice to his inner feelings. Communication between an artist and the spectators is must and that is called the mutual understanding.

The quality for better creation for an artist is the deep thinking. **“Art is metalanguage, with the help of which people try to communicate with one another.”** Communication provides information of the creator to the observer and vice-versa. It helps in gathering different experiences of each other.

To understand Art, we have to look into the **Nature-Art** relationship. To make a true creative work, we must have a selective and explanatory nature. Our eyes and ears should always be attentive to see and hear. Our eyes should see what has never been seen in the universe and it will definitely not be an ordinary thing. Our ears should hear the low sound of the spirit of the woodland. For this, we should have the **Wordsworth's ears**.

An art is called a real art if it is appreciated by all and for attaining appreciation, some principles and elements of art are there. They are helpful in comprehending the meaning of art. The **elements** of art are the essential features of art that deal with the beginnings of a subject of study.

These are line, colour, tone, texture, form, surface, light and shade and space. The **principles** of art refer to the rules and regulations of art according to which we are to move further. These are proportion, balance, contrast, dominance, harmony, rhythm, unity, perspective and symmetry.

A great artist is he who faces the limit of creative activity and he can't go against all the rules. He favours in modifying the rules in the changing conditions. For example, something that has been kept for centuries in reserve, aesthetics sums up the experiences of art and supplies a theoretical proof and favours for everything in it which is truly new.

In Europe, '**Kala**' is called '**Art**'. This word '**Art**' is derived from a **Latin** word '**Ars**' or '**Artem**'. It means to create or to produce. Different European artists have given different views about Art. The impressionists believed when one sees something collectively in a hurry and captures that moment very fast in the painting is termed as Impressionism and it is their art. They gave importance to colour than line, whereas the academicians considered line to be more important than colour. So, art differed from time to time.

The Neo-Impressionists put their focus on the theory of pointillism where they used to fill the surface with dots of different colours which resulted in the mixing of the colours in the eye of a viewer. The academicians used tonal modelling and the Impressionists did not use tonal modelling as they added the middle tone, whereas the Neo-Impressionists restored to tonal modelling, but in a different manner by using dots of different colours.

According to Cezanne, “**Drawing was a consequence of the correct use of colour.**” He believed that **contours** were the meeting of the two areas of colour. These post-Impressionist artists like **Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin** etc. adopted abstraction in the field of art. **Cezanne** created abstraction through geometrical shapes of cone, cylinder etc. and in his paintings, the aerial perspective was at a minimum, i.e. the nearer and the distant colours in a painting have the same intensity.

Gauguin believed, “Art was an abstraction to be dreamed in the presence of nature, not an illustration of nature, but a synthesis of natural forms reinvented imaginatively.” In him, we find the origin of modern primitivism. The **Fauvists** were very much bold. They were short-lived and their belief was in the freedom of expression where they exaggerated the drawing and perspective

Then the Expressionists moved to a different kind of abstraction. Afterwards, **Cubism** came into existence where **Picasso** depicted his art through geometrical shapes. The modern artists like **Amrita Shergil, Jamini Roy** etc. were also fascinated by these European artists and made paintings in European style, but their content was purely Indian. So, art acquired different shapes from time to time and cannot have a single definition.

Nature is handicapped by mind and Art is the handi-work of the mind. **Rabindranath** defined art as the ‘**response of man’s creative soul to the call of the real.**’ Some consider Art to be an explanation, especially of nature. Art explains the powerful speech of Nature in a poetical language. Art is best found in nature. For example **Wordsworth’s** poem ‘**Daffodils**’ about nature.

The cave artists painted bison, bulls etc. from nature. They took inspiration from nature because **Nature is an inspiration**, we should not copy it. Nature is the best healer. A dedicated artist will never copy Nature, but will be always inspired from it. Mere copying of nature lacks freedom. Without freedom, art is not possible. The **depiction of real life is not concerned to art**. According to Coleridge, “All the fine arts are different species of poetry.”

According to all ancient Indian conclusions and according to **Aristotle**, “**Art is the imitation of Nature.**” An artist learns about the principles of art like harmony, rhythm, balance, proportion etc. through Nature only. It is evident in the art of India and Greece. The realistic art is best found in case of ‘**Still life painting**’ or ‘**Portraits**’ of various types of humans and animals because the principles of art are fully followed by the artists here.

In the pre or protohistoric period, man endeavoured to represent the nature. But he faced a great difficulty in imitating. He was only able to imitate an object coming in contact with him. that Art should not only look as a mere copy of nature but according to the shadanga—‘**Sadrishyam,**’ if we paint a flower or a hut etc., they should resemble a flower or a hut and it is not compulsory that they should be copied as they are in nature.

The aim of art is that people must recognize art. What the painter is making should have the quality of '**Sadrishyam,**' i.e. it must resemble the object present in nature. The image of that object should be clear in the minds of the spectators. Otherwise, the object will suffer from the lack of communication and will be unable to appeal to the people.

Art is a source of one of the most purified divine experiences. When we derive happiness and joy from an art-work, we consider it as an **Aesthetic Delight**. An aesthetic sense (Aesthetics) is necessary to maintain a taste in Art and therefore form through admiration of art. Aesthetics checks our creative view in a similar way as a medicine checks the disease.

The artist's brush becomes the means of his determination to create. An artist believes that Nature may be the beginning but not an end. An artist is considered to be a second creator (first being God). He creates shapes and forms according to his own liking as the Creator (God) creates forms and shapes of His own taste. Art guides us about emotions and not endeavours to make us emotional. God speaks through His creation. In the same way, an artist speaks through his art (creation). **Goethe** believed art as the 'magic of the soul'. Art provides man his lost respect.

The history of Art is as old as the beginning of the cave art. The cave paintings found from different caves of the world reveal the emotional life of the people of those times. Paintings were made not only for man's entertainment, but for the sake of religion also. These were also not made for the decoration of the caves as a great darkness was evident wherever these paintings have been found. It is clear from this that man had a faith in some kind of power present in the Nature.

We can express our views and feelings through art. Art has many important functions. Art relates us with the historical events. Art provides us a pleasant experience and it acts as a communicative element also for the society. Till now, religion was considered as the most significant process of motivation in the society, but later, art was also motivated by religion. Art provided honour to the authority of the kings in the ancient times by being decorated on the walls of their palaces.

In the traditional Indian society, there were no museums and art galleries for displaying the art-work. So, art was displayed in the religious places like the temples, the mathas, the manuscript libraries etc. All these were the only places where the high arts found space for displaying themselves. As the art was related in some way with religion, there were also royal places and residential houses of the richer people which were built mainly of wood and there, the art-works were also displayed.

Art has made us disciplined by teaching the concepts of **detachment and disinterestedness**. Artist is the torch-bearer of the society. In the traditional society, nothing is there which can separate beauty from utility. The object which gives us aesthetic joy remains in demand for longer time period and that demand is born out of mechanical industries.

Art is a consciously intelligent process. An artist is well-educated, learned, fully disciplined, has creative attitude and has deep and intense perception. He has skilful ingenious and disciplined organization which is different from other concepts of a human. Every artistic creation is related to the individual and his social requirements. So, art is related to the social environment and is a part of the society.

An art-work is not limited to any practical or material end, but is an end in itself. An artist paints only intertionally and the pleasure of that intention is so deeply personal that the artist gets contentment through it and gives his own justification. Any outer suggestion to him while indulging in his work will be an attack on his identity. To accept or reject any suggestion is his choice. Art has no purpose and it serves a human need. That need is not material, but a need of man's inner self.