

TRADITIONAL ART FORMS IN DIGITAL AGE

Art in any form is a manifestation of human brain's potential for creation. The capacity may be latent, but it is there in every human being... concealed as vigour and vibrance of the verve of life. Artistic traditions have kept changing and will continue to do so since creativity is a phenomenon of incessant evolving. Digital enhancement technology has been instrumental in keeping their journey synced with that of human race.

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Artistic traditions of any civilisation comprise its cultural scaffold. Its progressional journey is made alongside a framework that is provided by various arts and their sublime forms, a fact that has not changed even in today's digital age of connecting through the multiverse. The multi-dimensional equations today's generation is beginning to touch upon cannot possibly be gratified without our artistic traditions finding a way to merge with technology.

Whatever has travelled with us since millennia has become our cultural institution today. Talking from a global perspective, we have retained the quintessential – forsaking the transient, invoking the perpetual on every threshold that our journey has stepped through. And now we are on the brink of yet another threshold, that of the digital age. What can be our approach to conserving, preserving, expanding, and enhancing our exquisite cultural/artistic traditions? The answer is probably,

connecting our art forms to today's futuristic world - the digital world.

The revolutionary idea of connecting various virtuosity techniques through a digital interface is already being increasingly adopted by numerous artists in many fields. These include sculptors, artists, painters, writers, designers, glass and pottery artisans, weavers, architects, and a lot more. Using electronic devices and computer codes, digital artists are able to create their unique art-works through specific design tablets. This has enhanced their rewards in many ways – design innovation, increased access, convenience of working, instant sharing, increased productivity, wider reach and recognition among many others.

Digitisation of Art allows the artist immense diversity and spontaneity. Experimentation with visualisation enables the blending of varied disciplines, providing multifarious planes of exploration with the components to achieve unique and imaginative outcomes. Through interactive multimedia elements, installations, and 2D (2 dimensional), 3D, or even 4 dimensional



projections, plus cutting-edge concepts like virtual reality (VR) or augmented reality (AR) there is an unfathomable scope for creating and popularising masterpieces of Art with the help of technology.

Artistic traditions have kept changing and will continue to do so since creativity is a phenomenon of incessant evolution. Because unless they evolve with time, they may touch closure. Digital enhancement technology has been instrumental in keeping their journey synced with that of the human race, and there is hardly any unacceptance of this fact. And yet there is a cause for concern for the dedicated lovers of traditions here.

A traditional art form embodies the authenticity and craftsmanship that have been revered for centuries. The skill, dedication and element of individuality put into it by a craftsman plus the imperfections and subtleties that arise from a human touch or human hand, evoke a sense of timelessness. The aesthetics of such a phenomenon resonate in human hearts across ages, surpassing the realms of regional boundaries and centuries of time. There is this never-dying essence of human creation, that breathes new life into generations

that are preparing for emergence.

Accepting machine-built tools for electronic artistry is not always welcomed by the masters of this arena. Reasons may be varied – age-old beliefs, traditional temperament, lack of knowledge or technical know-how, or other restraints concerning area age or education. But there can hardly be any doubt about their being an institution in themselves – far from the maddening cities, tucked away in some peaceful corner of the world, they are invaluable preservers of some of our priceless art forms. Without a doubt, they will continue to do so, no matter how far the technology stretches ahead of them.

Hence, there is no question of technology ever taking over from the human hand. But the available support cannot and must not be overlooked. Merging technology with artistic imagery can be a tactile and emotional aspect that can definitely be explored more.

Next, when it comes to performing art forms there is yet another layer to be probed. The tangibility of performing arts is and shall always remain distinctive. The mastery of performances





that get displayed materially, are imbibed by the audiences as beautifully – like a sublime verve transcending the corporeal. The effect is enhanced through an earthly, physical connection that the artist is able to establish with the audience. Here, digitisation seems inapplicable beyond an exterior role, that of providing the promotional tool needed for their competitive survival.

Speaking of the ancillary role of electronic technology, in this context, one cannot, however, skip a very vital point. Not only does the internet offer multiple avenues to create better reach and awareness for a performance, but it also gives us high-tech tools to bring the art-performer-audience trio closer. By helping popularise an artistic performance through social media and other cyber platforms, the digital world offers a plethora of campaigns that can help create enhanced interest and better responsiveness. This is not just an option for the performers or the audiences; but, it has emerged as an indispensable need for any artistic-society at large.

The role of digital media in promoting performing art forms has been quite miraculous. So many *Durbal* or dying Art forms have seen a resurgence orchestrated through dedicated digital media campaigns. So many long-lost artists have re-emerged from oblivion... by the spirited

efforts of committed pursuers rummaging through social media networks. So many slumbering art-techniques have been revived by ardent enthusiasts who are not prepared to 'let it be lost forever'. The heritage that we could have lost, never to regain has certainly been restored, primarily through the alleviating arm of electronic media.

Unquestionably, such are the magnificent boons of achieving wider human connectivity that are being provided for by the digital world.

A quick eye now at the counter-effects in hindsight, the technical advancement has also allowed certain alchemists to push their statements on controversial and inartistic issues through this medium. It is happening because of the absence of a filter that can prevent non-artistic experimentation with the artistic genre. Here, one cannot help but strongly feel that there is a need to specify the supportive role of digital technology instead of being generative.

Discerning the insinuations thus, having a hybrid view point seems to be the key wherein human creativity remains irreplaceably in its righteous place as the core, while its enhancing effects may be supplanted through digital working.

The effects of digitisation must be utilised to enhance – not create. □