

Artistic Exploration in Scientific Research And Technology
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Lecture – 11
Madhubani Understanding the Technique

Hello friends. In the last two classes, we have seen 10 different folk arts from India, by looking at them you can make out a difference and the similarities across the country. The similarities being that in many of the folk form the naturally available ingredients are used, the natural colors and most of them have ritualistic purposes and they are always accompanied by some or the other ceremonial observation.

In the next few classes starting from today, we will see that techniques of few folk arts. So, today let us start with Madhubani painting from the Madhubani district of Bihar. So, Madhubani painting as we have seen in the previous class it is a common to the Mithila region which now so spreads across Bihar of India and in certain parts of Nepal. So, let us see what some of the techniques used in the Madhubani art form.

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International interest and patronage

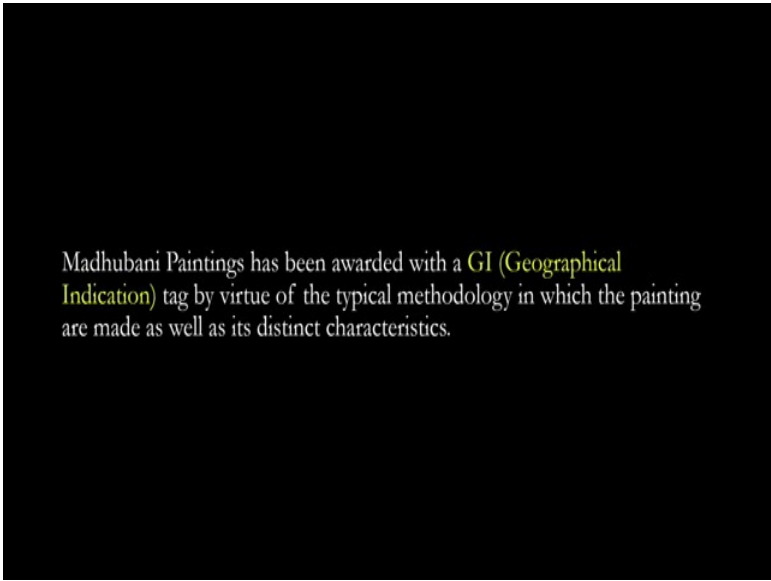
- French novelist and journalist Yves Vequaud- *The Women Painters of Mithila* (1977)
- German anthropologist and folklorist- Erika Moser and American Raymond Lee Owens- Master Craftsmen Association of Mithila (1977) and the Ethnic Arts Foundation in (1980). The Mithila Art Institute (2003) was set up at the bequest of Owens.
- Japanese Tokyo Hasegawa- Mithila Museum in Tokamachi (1990)

So, Madhubani art form has had people have interest in Madhubani art in different period of time, it has gained a lot of international recognition. French novelist and journalists Yves Vequaud has written a book *The Women Painters of Mithila*, which was published in 1977; this has given Madhubani painting a wide recognition across the globe. Then

German anthropologist and folklorist Erica Moser and American Raymond Lee Owens has established a master craftsman association of Mithila in 1977 and the ethnic art foundation in 1980. The Mithila Art Institute established in 2003 was set up at the bequest of Owen. So, people across the world have found this art form very appealing and they have taken measures to propagate to discuss and to preserve this art form.

Then Japanese Tokyo Hasegawa this is a museum in that place Mithila Museum in Tokamachi, in Japan there is a museum which is dedicated only to the Mithila art forms. And throughout the year, the many paintings from the Madhubani region is being displayed, this museum was established in 1990. So, you see that Mithila painting or the Madhubani painting has had a lot of recognition and its being talked about discussed about throughout the world.

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Madhubani Paintings has been awarded with a GI (Geographical Indication) tag by virtue of the typical methodology in which the painting are made as well as its distinct characteristics.

Madhubani painting has been awarded with a GI Geographical Indication tag by virtue of the typical methodology in which the painting are made as well as its distinct characteristics. Madhubani painting has got a GI recognition that is a recognition given to a particular art form as against copyright, the GI recognition is given to a community who owns the particular art. So, Madhubani art has been given this recognition.

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As we have discussed in the previous class that Madhubani art form actually started as a domestic art, which is practiced by the rural women of Bihar and they used to paint the walls of their houses, the mud houses and also the inside walls of the house during auspicious occasion like marriage and festivals. So, this was how it all began women gathering and doing this kind of very bright and very colorful painting in the walls. And Madhubani painting which then is called Alpana is also done on the floors of the houses to welcome auspicious occasion auspicious ceremonies.

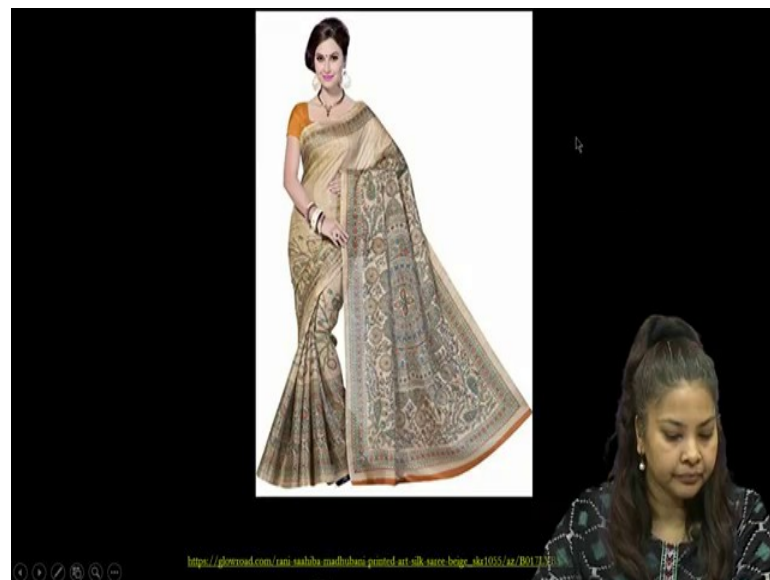
So, we have also discussed that a Madhubani painting is more often than not accompanied by singing and it's a kind of a ritualistic process there is singing there is a very; happy occasion around it.

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But as time progress Madhubani art has also progress, it has now been painted on various objects are coming out from the walls and the floor of a rural household. Now this Madhubani painting has also been painted on umbrellas, as you see in earthen pots in decorative items even in shoes. Now so it is been commercially sold commercially made the in our fabrics I have also changed its done on clothe, it is done on plastic objects, it is done on anything that you can lay your hands on, its also done in bottles glass bottles. So, it has gone through a lot of change in from where it started from.

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This is one example, the Madhubani painting is done on sarees which is widely popular.

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This is Madhubani railway station, of Madhubani district in 2017 hundreds of Madhubani artist got together and they volunteer to do the entire railway station. And if you visit the railway station in Madhubani, you will find this beautiful paintings done by the artist and the done they have done it voluntarily without any remuneration.

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So, as the time progressed we see that there have been changes in the teams also that Madhubani addresses. Earlier we saw that it used to talk about only mythological

characters, mythological scenes it depicted ramleela, rasleela it would depict Ram and Sita's marriage. But now it is time to progress the artists have started making experiments with the art form.

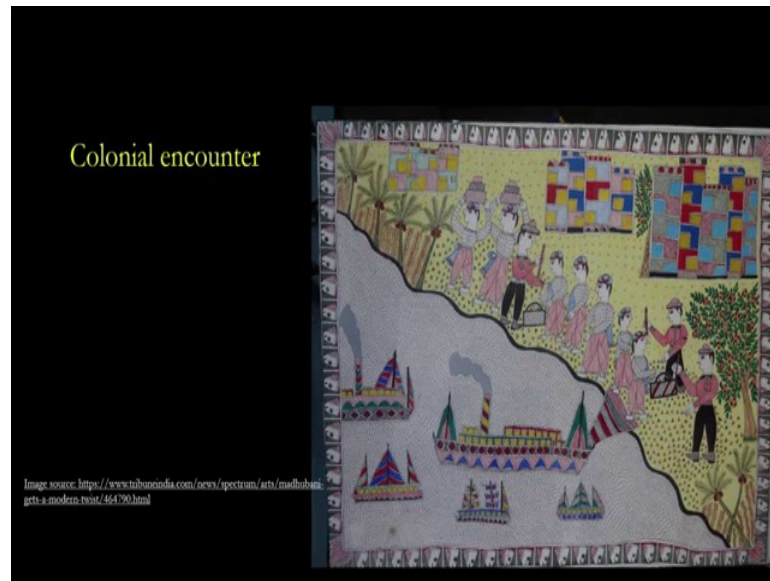
So, this is a painting which shows the female infanticide, you see that it has retained the typical Madhubani the artistic form, but it is talking about various things, its talking about social issues that are being happening in the society. So, the artist is trying to talk about the crimes in the society, the oppression in the society.

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This is the abortion clinic, where the girl children are being killed before even before they are born, the artist is trying to depict how wrong it is through this.

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This is colonial encounter, how the Indians came how when the colonial rulers came what kind of changes happened in India. And this is what the artist is trying to depict. So, the few of the artists have moved away from the traditional themes and they have tried to experiment with modern themes to have a larger appeal. So, that people can relate to it.

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This is one; two paintings from very well known artist from India Ravi Kattakuri he has been inspired by Madhubani painting. And he has been doing something on his own, he is given a individualistic touch to the traditional Madhubani painting and this is what the

modern form looks like what these artists have given a modern twist to the traditional art.

So, now, let us discuss some of the techniques used in Madhubani painting, how traditionally how the artist is to make Madhubani painting and what are the peculiarities and the specificities of the doing the painting.

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So, this is an art form, this is as we have discussed in the previous class that, Madhubani has different styles one is bharni, one is kachini one is godhana geru and gobar style. So, this is a bharni style where the entire space of the canvas is filled with colors, it is made with bright colors and the entire canvas is filled and your will not see any empty space in it. And the colors are solid colors and they are filled they are totally filled in the painting.

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- Bharni means “filling”. That is, it is a composition with colour fills. In this style of painting the subject is outlined with black and the enclosed areas are filled with vibrant colours like Blue, yellow, pink, green, orange etc. The subjects are represented in flat [two dimensional forms] and the colours applied flat without any shading. The skillful artists strike right balance between the patterns and colour. Though no shading technique is used, the outline is done with double lines and the gaps between the two lines filled with crisscross or straight lines.
- Hindu deities like Krishna, Rama, Siva, Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Dhanavanti are the common themes. Very special importance is given to Radha Krishna and Krishna Ras Leela.
- The figures are angular and boldly outlined with bulging “fish” like eyes and pointed noses. While ultramarine blue is used essentially for the figures of Krishna, Rama, Shiva, tones of yellow are used for Radha, Sita, Parvati. The figures are juxtaposed amidst colorful ornate flowers, leafy branches, twisting vines and birds. The Sun, Moon, The Sacred Tulsi and basil plants - all revered by Hindus are also depicted in these paintings.

Bharni means filling as we have discussed earlier, that is it is a composition with color fills. In this style of painting the subject is outlined with black and the enclosed area are filled with vibrant colors like blue, yellow, pink, green, orange etcetera. The subjects are represented in flat two dimensional forms and the colors applied flat with a flat without any shading. So, there is no shading associated with it, it is totally flat and colors are colors are solid patterns.

The skillful artists strike right balance between the patterns and the color. So, artists who are skilled who is well acquainted with its art form knows how to do the patterns and the colors in right balance. The no shading technique is used the outline is done with double lines, this is a very important Madhubani art always has double lines, it starts with double lines and the gap between the two lines are filled with crisscross or straight lines. So, and the gap between the two lines of the outline are filled with again small small pattern, a small small lines which might be slanted or it might be straight.

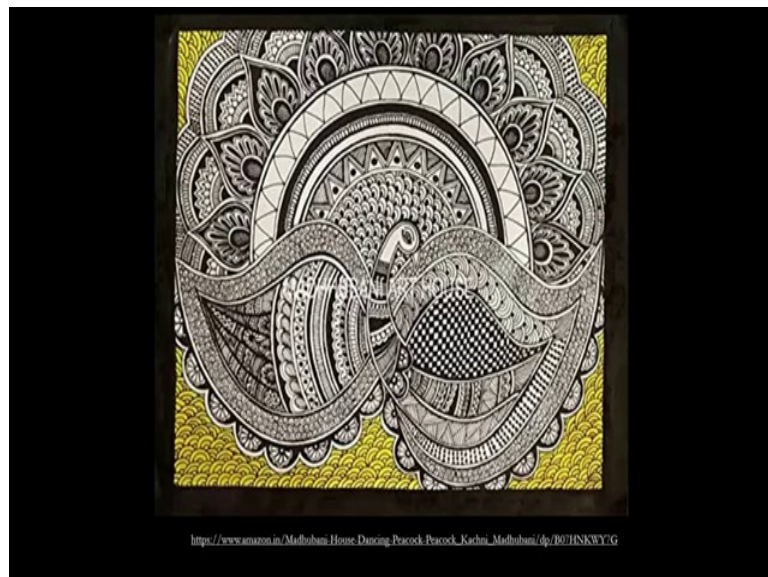
So, in the bharni art form Hindu deities like Krishna, Rama, Shiva, Durga, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Dhanavanti and the are the common themes, very special importance is given to Radha Krishna and Krishna Rasleela. So, in a bharni style of Madhubani painting Krishna Rasleela and Krishna’s activities are very given much importance.

The figures are angular and boldly outlined with bulging fish like eyes and pointed nose as you can see this they have pointed nose and they have quite big eyes big fish like

eyes. The figures are angular and boldly outlined with bulging fish like eyes and pointed noses, while ultra marine use is essentially for the figures of Krishna, Rama, Shiva tones of yellow are used for Radha, Sita, Parvati. As you can see in this Radha, Sita are the feminine characters are given yellow color whereas, Shiva, Krishna, Rama painted with blue color this is typical of Madhubani bharni style.

The figures is extra post and meets colorful on it flowers leafy branches, twisting vines and birds, the sun-moon the sacred Tulsi and basil plant all revert by Hindus are also depicted in this painting. So, all that is revered all that is thought considered religious are depicted in bharni style painting.

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So, the second is the so I forgot to tell you that, bharni style is typically done by the upper caste women it was traditionally done by the upper caste women the Brahmin women. Next comes the katchini style which used to be done by the Kayasta woman the second in Ram after the Brahmin is the Kayasta. So, the women of the Kayasta cast used to do this form of art. And this form of art is represented by lines, is the various pattern lines in this form of style you see diagonal lines if you see in a straight lines you will see curved lines angular, different kinds of line is the tip peculiarity of this form the style of Madhubani art.

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- Kachni means “Lines”. It is a black and white composition. In this style of painting, only one or two colors e.g. black or vermillion is used. The artists draw fine patterns using hatching and stippling to create paintings with the finest details. Double lines are used to depict the outlines and the gaps between the lines are filled with crisscross or tiny straight lines.
- Themes are of flowers, fishes, snakes in union bamboo groves, birds etc symbolizing fertility and life. This form is appreciated for the complex rendition of detail.

Kachini means “Lines”. It is a black and white composition. In this style of painting only one or two color example black or vermillion is used. So, sometimes there is little bit red, little bit maroon color or vermillion color is used but mostly it is black and white. The artist draw fine patterns using hatching and stapling to create paintings with the finest details. Double lines are used to depict the outlines and the gaps between the lines are filled with crisscross or tiny straight lines.

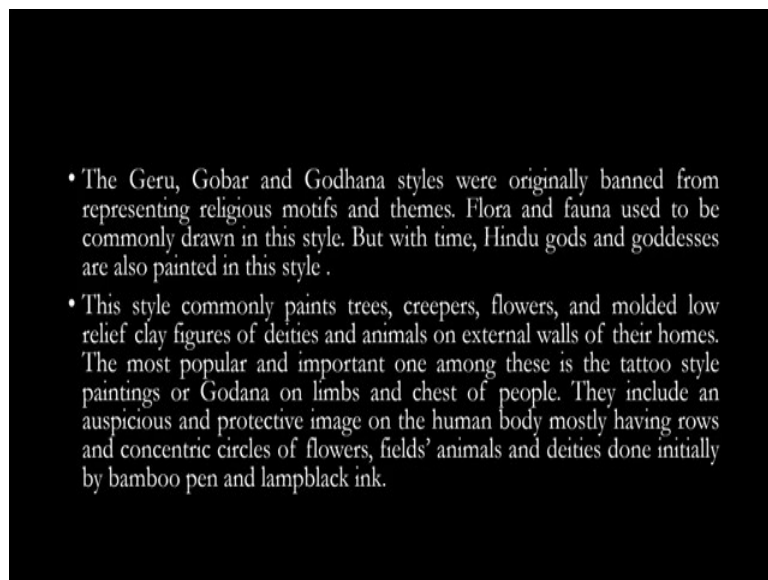
Themes of flowers, fish, snakes in union bamboo groves, birds etcetera symbolizing fertility and life. This form is appreciated for the complex rendition of details. So, as you have seen bharni style the mythological figures take the central importance, but in kachini it is the symbols of fertility and prosperity takes important and that is represented by flowers, fish, bamboos, sometimes tortoise, this kind of symbols are important in bharnis in kachini style of Madhubani painting.

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This is the Godhana style and this used to be done by the lower caste women of Madhubani region. So, the typical of peculiarity of this form is that the repetitiveness you will see a repetitive pattern that goes on and on.

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The Geru, Gobar and Godhana styles were originally banned from representing religious motifs and themes, because the caste system was quite strong in that region. And the women from that region were not allowed to paint religious motive they had to paints something else. So they used to paint flora and fauna that is found around flora and fauna

used to be commonly drawn in the style, but with time Hindu gods and goddesses are also painted in the style.

So, now, there have been lots of experimentation lots of inflow outflow within the style themselves people have experimented with bharni and kachini both combined they have experimented with the Godhana style with bharni style or Godhana style with kachini style.

So, that the strictness that used to be there in the earlier times is being reduced in the present time, when people are giving more importance to the artistic representation rather than the caste based peculiarity associated with this art form. This style commonly paint trees creepers flowers and molded low relief clay figures of deities and animals on external walls of their homes. The most popular and important one among them is the tattoo style painting or Godana on limbs and chest of people. They include an auspicious and protective image on the human body mostly having rose and concentric lines of flowers, field's animal deities done initially by bamboo pen and lamb black ink.

So, the Godhana style was originally done as tattoo on the bodies and it was believed that if you have this tattoo it will protect you from the evil eyes. So, they were done with concentric lines sometimes circle as you have seen this one concentric lines. And it used to be things which they found around like the animals or which they thought were auspicious animals that is to be drawn, here in this painting you see cows and some birds.

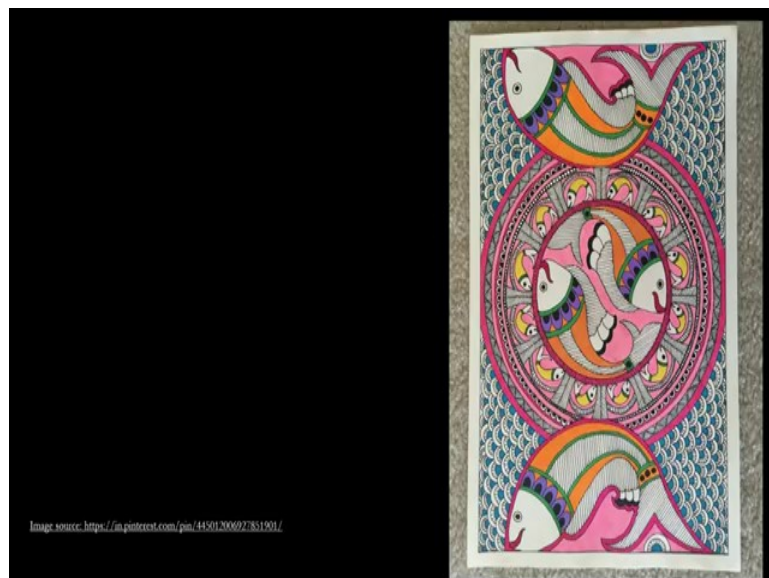
So, they used to draw this flora fauna that is found around them and thought that if it is in your body if it is painted on your body they will protect you from the evil forces. So, this style then came to be represented on the walls later on in paper and cloth and the god that is the tattoo form, it came to be had now become an visual art form.

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So, there are many motives in Madhubani like as we discussed there are like lotus, there is fish there is tortoise which are very typical of Madhubani and this have different beliefs associated with them. So, some of these flora and fauna are very typical and you will see them being repeated in all the traditional Madhubani of forms. One is the fish so I thought that today we will discuss a bit about fish motif. So, this is one way of representing the fish in Madhubani style, please pay attention to the colors used the patterns and the lines used.

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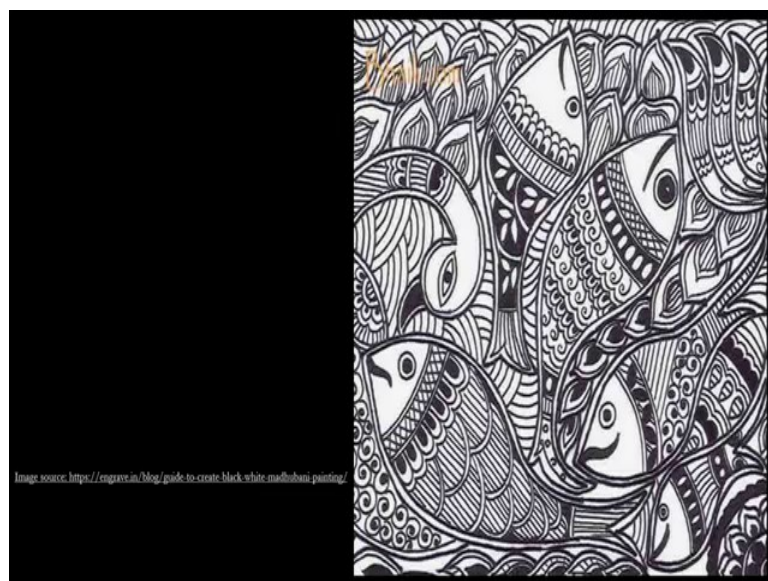
This is another one, where this was rather filled with solid colors and this was more to do with lines the body of the fish is filled with lines.

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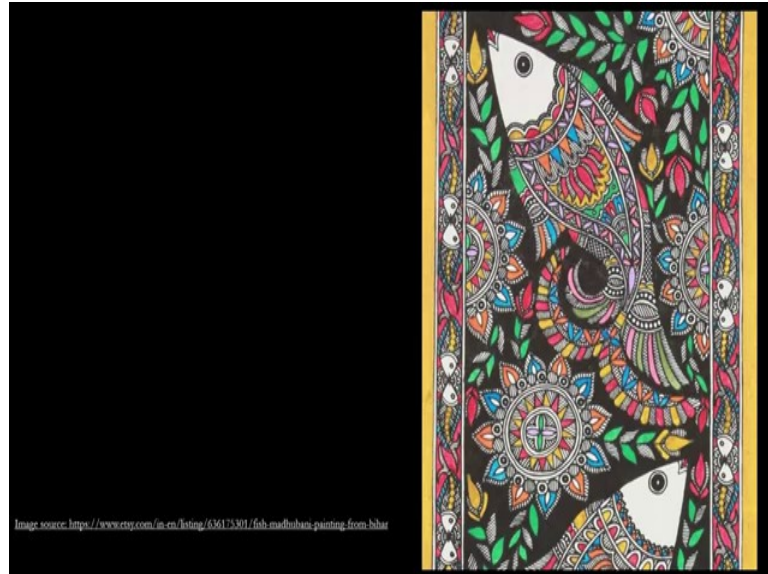
This is another one with lines just see the use of just one color otherwise the painting is entirely black and white, but there is only one color, this is typically a kachini style of Madhubani painting. And also observed the border, every painting has a border they make sure that there is a border kept and a frame is made.

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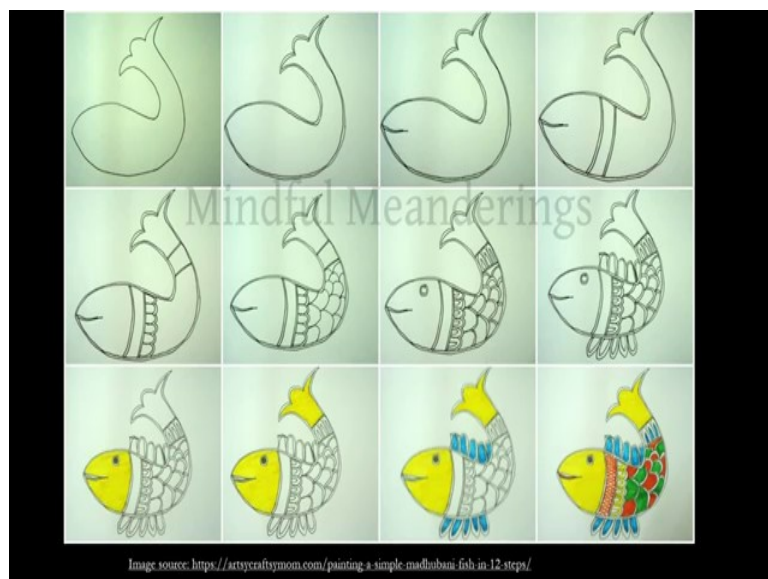
This is another line style Madhubani art just pay attention to all the fish there are 5 fish in this picture and all the five fish have different patterns.

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This is another fish, so as I said that lot of experimentation has is being done, in the recent times this is somewhat experiment which takes the colors of bharni style and the lines of kachini style. So, it is some experimentation done with the both the styles, observed the border here also.

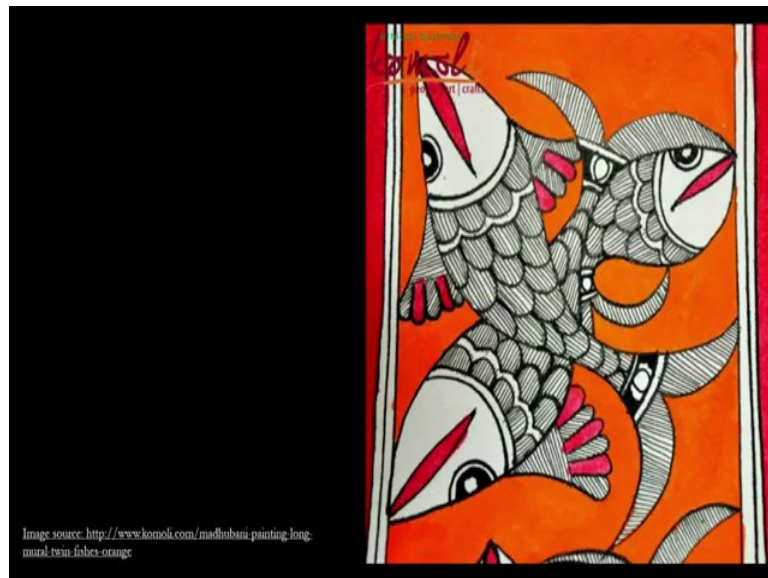
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So, let us see how a fish is made in typical Madhubani art so there these are like 12 steps by which the fish can be made you can try it if you have a pen and pencil with you. I want you to pay a little attention to the lines. Observe here how the fish is made with the angular body, in this you have double the outline is double its Madhubani one peculiarity is that it has always has double outlines. Here the mouth of the fish is made, here a section is made to show the division in the body one is the head part and other is the the body part, and here the body is started to be shaded to be filled with patterns you can also try it.

So, here the patterns are being done more elaborately here the intricacies are there. So however, much the intricacies are that it depending on that the beauty of the Madhubani painting lies, if it is more intricate more advanced more finer lines than the painting has more value. Here the fins have been put, observed how the in Madhubani style the fins are drawn, here some color is used, here the tail is also colored, here the fins are colored and finally, the body is also colored. So, this is a very preliminary style to draw out fish in Madhubani style.

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So, this is what an end product look like.

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So, this is another as I told you in kachini style its only the lines only a few colors are used this also looks very nice. Observe the border here, then the fish and filling of the entire canvas with creepers and flowers, this is very peculiar and very typical of Madhubani any art that you do not leave any empty space you fill it with some pattern or the other.

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Double Outline

One of the most important Madhubani features is - double outlines. Double outlines create an authentic Indian pattern. The outline is usually left uncoloured, in order to create a visual depth and harmony. Sometimes outlines can be filled with vertical lines or have more outlines for a grander impression.

Border

A Madhubani painting will be incomplete without a border. Borders can be narrow - for small paintings and wide - for big paintings. In most border designs a double outline is drawn from the sides and the middle is filled with repeating patterns.

So, some of the peculiarity or some of the specificity of Madhubani artists is the double line and the border. One of the most important Madhubani feature is double line double

outlines as I told you see here, please observe this double outline. Double outline create an authentic Indian pattern as if you will see that in most of the Indian paintings. The outline is always has double outline double the lines always doubled, the outline is usually left uncolored in order to create a visual depth and harmony.

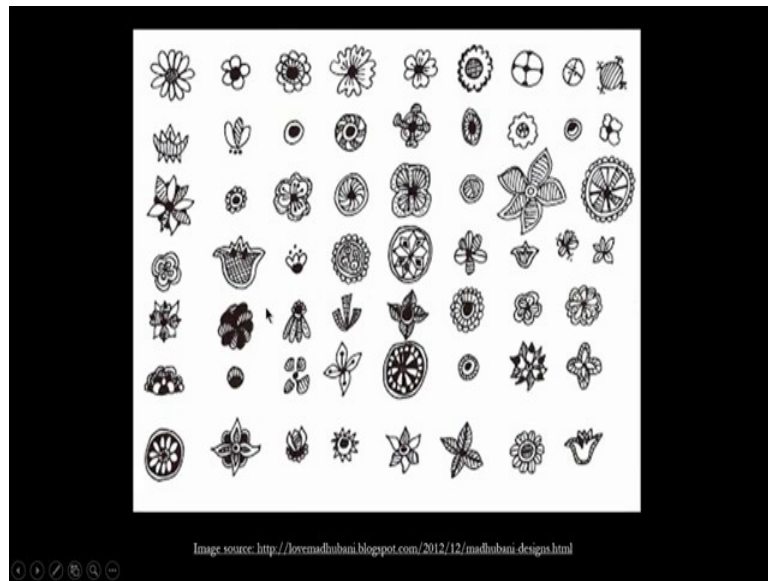
Sometimes outlines can be filled with vertical lines or have more outlines for a grander impression, there can more than two lines in the in the figures it gives a more grander impression it gives a more nuanced impression border. A Madhubani painting will be incomplete without a border, border can be narrow for small paintings and white for big paintings. In most border designs a double outline is drawn from the inside and the middle is filled with repeating patterns, observe the border of this painting. Now let us see some of the patterns used in Madhubani painting.

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So, these are the various leaves observed in all the lives there are double outlines like this one then they have filled, either you leave it you make it thicker you make the outlines thicker, by filling the gap between the two or you live them like this. So, in these are the various patterns of leaves that are used in Madhubani painting and the shading and the line pattern gives them the it makes them nuance and gives them the specificity.

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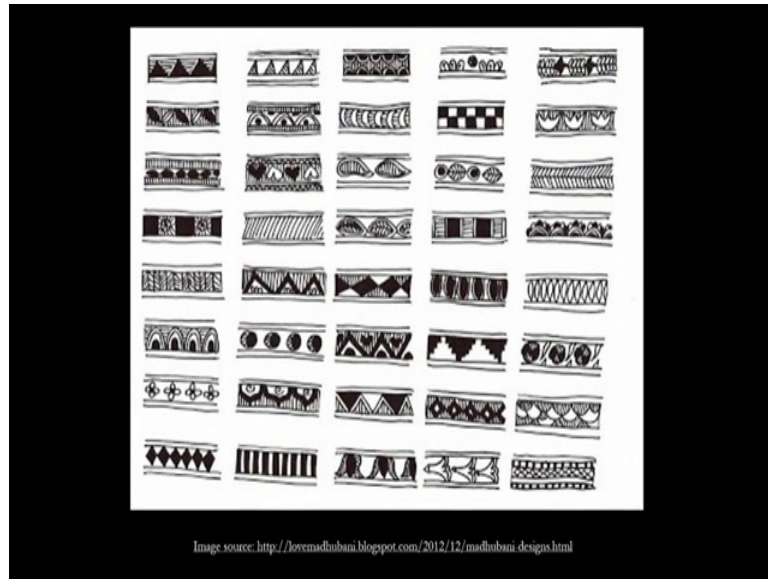
These are flowers used in Madhubani painting observe the various kinds of flowers.

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So, this is a human figure drawn in Madhubani art so they can be a side profile and they can be a front profile also. As we discussed earlier the in Madhubani painting more often than not, its they have wide eyes, big eyes like the fish the shape of the fish and the noses are always pointed see how the dresses are being patterned just by shading in different lines here the patterns are different.

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These are some of the typical border used in Madhubani art, please have a look at each of them, look at how a triangle is used here and triangle is used here differently. So, Madhubani artists filled with geometrical patterns, the patterns are used differently and the shading and the lines give them that make one different from the other. So, this is a black and white example of borders.

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This is a colored after doing the border you can also they also fill the empty spaces with colors, which gives a more vibrant look observe the lotus here, the creepers here and the geometrical patterns here.

So, friends today we have seen the techniques of Madhubani painting you can try it if you like. But I want to pay make you aware that folk artists is does not become a folk artist in a day, it takes a lot of time, it takes a lot of practice to gain the nuances. But the beauty of folk art is that it does not have a code, it does not have a standard, so we can work in that area and try our hand in doing folk art. But it does not mean that we have become expert in that art, we can try our hand, but folk art is as much of the artist and as much it is of the art form. So, the artist has as much important in folk art as the art itself. So, with this I stop today in the next class we will see another art and its technique.

Thank you so much.