

## FOLK ART PAINTING IN CORONA TIMES: ARTISTS AND AFICIONADOS

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### Abstract

Folk Art (FA) helps common people to express their exhilaration uniquely through ritualistic creations which could include paintings that are decorative in nature and objects with utilitarian value. These have evolved with human existence with the purpose of region specific worship, social commitment, community ritual and as family event accompaniments. FA also extends to include the intangible and performance based art forms like oral traditions, dance, music and folk theatrical pursuits of similar category. In her current research paper, the researcher has tried to put together a brief look on how prevalent situation of global pandemic "Corona times" has influenced painting category of Folk art. This includes its viability, social and communication value. Being a contemporary topic the data collection has been from recent secondary sources like social and news media; blogs, survey and business reports of concerned trade and videos by those engaged in FA creations. Primary data has been collected by telephonic interviews of practitioners, leaners and appreciators of folk art, personal notes of the researcher taken from the online course of IGNOU on Intangible Cultural Heritage of India and via online survey data collection of answers to related questions by a heterogeneous mix of respondents. Latter two are referred to as Aficionados in the title of this research paper. Apart from the building on a background of Folk Art, the key conclusive notes by researcher include:

- Economic hardships faced by FA practitioner community due to the pandemic.
- Socially responsive use of FA paintings (FAP) by the Folk Artist
- Study of related aspect, opportunities and challenges that changed scenarios present today
- Alternate viable earning opportunities that FAP is providing to the AA Artists
- Variety of ways that Aficionados (leaners and appreciators of FA) are engaging with FA today.

**Key Words:** Folk Art, Corona, pandemic influences, pandemic hardship, lockdown in India, alternate viability of Visual Folk art, Art therapy, Visual Folk Artist, Folk art evolution, contemporary Folk Art, Background, Madhubani, Warli, Social media use, art in corona time, YouTube, Google forms

### INTRODUCTION

The researcher probed on this topic as it offers a contemporary perspective on indigenously evolved visual folk art of India, especially with prevailing challenges of pandemic time. A part of secondary data highlighted the hunger for learning Folk Arts to best utilise the leisure pools of time the Art enthusiasts have. It was an interesting comparison as Folk Art (FA) co-exists in India alongside the cliché patronised Classical Arts. While the latter distinguishes itself from the former due to its perceived refinement and higher academic study

involve; the former owes its evolution and existence due to its democratic nature of being an art form by the people, for the people and of the people.

Reason for its survival and upkeep with times can be found in the purpose it has served. Initially it served the purpose of appeasing the almighty power that ruled nature and human life. With civilised living, humans used of folk art for social ritual as well as domestic celebration. The decorative character of FA made it an indispensable inclusion for beautifying worship and dwelling spaces as well as human body.

Folk Art was mostly created around religious themes, depicted via iconography, a specific set of images that are unique to the specific geography, symbolism of said visual (groups) icons that matters to each community. For example bamboo, clove, beetle, lotus and fish are inevitably included in Madhubani Kohbar (wedding) paintings due to the auspicious and productive character that each of these bears which is believed to bring in good binding for the newlyweds. Likewise in Warli Tribe's weddings \_Devi Palgut ki chowk that is symbolised by Tree and Kalash, Lagna Chauka symbol adores of walls that is made by the wedded ladiee. Appeasement of natural fauna deities like snake gods by incorporating their images on house entry door is symbolic of the respect that those dwelling in the house give as a visual prayer. Requesting snake god, nag devta to protect them from snake bites. in Warli and in Gondh tribal community Bagh dev (meaning Tiger and God) is important to be appeased for safety purpose during marriages, as the wedding processions often passes through the jungle inhabited by the beasts who prey on humans. Praying to Bagh Dev carries with them an assurance that they will be protected.

Traditionally Folk art was made by special pair of hands, depending on the occasion and the level of ritual. These can be categorised as: - Generational Artist family

- - Community Priest. and
- - Female artists of suitable age in family and community.

There have been Generational artist families that have been making art for religiously important folk art for higher consolidated purpose, example Phad paintings are made by a special class of artist from Joshi community from Rajasthan. (Phad)The artist and artwork have a special role in the ritualistic

“installation” of art as a part of votive offering by reigning family, clan or social class. Anonymity of individual artist(s) who create worship worthy art is important character of this Folk art.

**Community priest** are artists assigned to make art periodically, for a specific community or village dwellers. Example in Kevat community where Bhat, the community priest comes in Savan bhado month and draws a simple schematic commemorating image on every house of boatman community, who claim their ancestral lineage to Kevat’s family who had helped Lord Rama cross Ganga river in his initial tread away from Ayodhya on 14 year long scheduled stay in jungle. This service rendered to Lord Rama by the Kevat (boatman) is depicted on the front wall of every house belonging to this community. The authoritative position of the person who is doing the art in this category is important.

**Female artists** of suitable age and stature in family and community are the third and the most important group in this classification as all the art for the house that make it a home are traditionally made by them. The various celebrations in house call for making of special artwork by the ladies, spinsters (making Sanjhi in Pitra Paksha) and girls of specific stature and age. Likewise Madhubani Kohbar art on walls is specific dutiful art created only by married ladies of house and community.

Most of the Folk Art created traditionally practiced a cyclic system of **Srujan and Visarjan**, referring to the ceremonial creating and dissolution of artwork for said occasions. This can be understood with example of “Rangoli” art on daily basis or the “Pookalam” special floral rangoli created for celebration of Onam in Kerala. This largely contributes to the perishable nature. However there are some exceptional artforms like creation of Phad, Pichwai, Kawad box art, Patachitra, Kalighat paintings, is made to last as long as enduring materials used, which could be layered/ treated cloth, paper, wood, palm leaves etc.

This is also the reason they are made to last longer, preserved folk artworks with longer shelf life. Thus we see the up rise of contemporary purposive category of Folk Art creators, who sell their embellished artefacts as religious or cultural souvenirs. This category is a more recent development, since originally Folk Art never created to be sold, but with changing times and dwindling means of earning livelihood; **Commercial Folk Art** category has gained importance, has been nurtured and developed suitably.

In 1960 “the” important step undertaken by Govt. of India via Development commissioner Handicrafts (previously called: All India Handicraft Board) had two important aspects addressed:

- To recognise and gainfully engage apprentices’ to further add more Folk Art creating artist’s in addition to generations of traditional Folk Artists. This would not have as much in-depth knowledge of the concerned Visual Folk art of India but would surely help to keep good part of it alive. Traditionally Training of the Folk artists took place at home<sup>1</sup> as the elders in family of generational folk artists ensured their ancestral craft is learnt by youngsters. Further formal training done by age of 17-18years, so that an expected level of mastery is reached by 24 with all fine details ingrained.
- --Rewarded recognition to artist who contributes to through their respective art or innovativeness within the concerned Folk Art. Thus Folk artist has move from shadows of anonymity to the lime light of fame and rewards for their exemplary contributions. The two famous artists of the Bhil tribe are Lado Bai and Bhuri bai<sup>2</sup>.

Being Region specific India boasts of a variety of Visual Folk Art forms<sup>3</sup> (VFA) that are practised either as individual within a family or as community or as a part time persuasion of interest and passion. These have Religious, Magical, Profane (jewellery) or magical, Festive and have Sociocultural Significance. There are communities as inclusive as the entire village itself like Raghurajpur, Puri, Orissa, engaged in the particular folk –art, the location is marked as Global Indication (GI) location status<sup>4</sup> for particular Folk art (UNESCO, IGNC, ).

VFA can largely be classified as under, art done on wall, ground, cloth, scroll or wood surface. Following is a list of 10 folk art forms<sup>5</sup> that have the passed the test of time for several generations.

- Madhubani, from Bihar among this list is said to have its roots in the Ramayana Epic where it has been practised by King Janak’s artisans thus it is also called as Mithila art. Others are enlisted as
- Phad from Rajasthan is a 30- or 15 feet-long scroll format of painting on Canvas or cloth depicting folk deities Pabuji or Devnarayan. Vegetable and mineral colours are used.

- Warli Art, from Western Ghats is said to have origin from 2500 BCE (Dalmia Y, 1988). It uses of circles, triangles, squares to make simplified human forms amidst background with depiction of daily life acts like fishing, hunting, festivals, dancing. Contrasting colour scheme of red ochre or dark background and white foreground elements are used.
- Saura is an art form that looks very similar to Warli but it has some key differences, one of them being its origin in Orissa. Propose for making of this artwork in Warli tribe is to celebrate marriages while Saura Art's purpose is to commemorate ancestral departed souls.
- Gond Art by Gondi tribe in Madhya Pradesh has deep connected with nature as these bold, vibrantly coloured paintings, largely depict flora and fauna.
- Kalamkari or 'drawings with a pen' originated and still flourishes in Andhra Pradesh in Machilipatnam pen + block and Srikalahasti (Chitoor). It is either block-printed or drawn as free flowing line artwork with a pen on fabric that is later filled in with natural colours; on Sarees or ethnic clothing. Theme depiction varies from flora, fauna to epics of Mahabharata or Ramayana.
- Cherial Scroll painting is the Visual Folk Art form Telangana practised by the Nakashi family as generational FA. It has evident traces of Kalamkari art, but more stylised version of depicting puranas and epics themes on 40-45 feet scrolls. Look and feel resembles modern-day comic panels, with about 50 on each scroll painted in primary colours using vivid imagination.
- Bhil FA is tribal representative art with Nature, flora and fauna, rituals, festivals, Bhil Gods and Goddesses themes. It is done by Bhil tribes in states of Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Traditionally it was done with natural materials (like leaves, flowers, neem twigs used as brushes to apply colours) on mud walls; moved they are done on canvas.
- Individual panels of Pattachitra from Folk Artist of Orrisa are the art of painting on a piece of cloth is the very popular forms of ancestral folk art

from Orissa. Artworks are primarily depictions of mythology and epics scenes, on Tassar cloth.

- Kalighat paintings are done on cloth and pattas, in Bengal. Artist initially painted Gods and Goddesses using flawless strokes, brushwork, and simple but bold drawings. Later existing social themes/ conditions and upheaval of colonial British were painted to raise awareness about social conditions. Artist use cheap paper, and apply colour pigments using squirrel hair brushes.

This list is indicative of variety in folk art that co-exists in India. They speak in pictorial visual language, and with accompanied spoken words either strung with music, lyrics or narrated as story create an immersive integrated experience that has thrived through the centuries. Today FA exists due to passionate FA artist or artist family or Artist village like Raghurajpur, Puri, Orissa that is popularly known as Heritage Craft village<sup>6</sup>, where entire village consisting of 50 households of “Kalakar” artisans are engaged in making Patachitras. In the regular tourist seasons prospered due to tourist flocking who appreciated them in monetized and non-monetized ways.

Communicative nature of Folk Art was initially limited to the conversation between the devotees and the deity. Later this spread to the social and community level. Today folk art speaks to the global audience, which is why it's study in its possible deepest sense has offshored to land as distant as USA too. Teaching community members takes efforts and pride to learn “Mithila Painting: Folk Art of India” through a three week long intensive course offered by Berkeley's Office of Resources for International and Area Studies (ORIAS), California's passionate Academic Course content provider that relentlessly works to provide quality learning experience <sup>7</sup> for K12 teachers of US.

**AS IT'S APTLY SAID THAT “PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS”,  
CONTEXTUALISING FOLK ART IN CORONA TIMES:**

Folk art today in Covid 19 pandemic hit world following headlines have already made news:

Coronavirus lockdown\_ MSMEs in creative segment bear Covid  
brunt - Telegraph India

From Bengal, A Patachitra that narrates the story of the fight against coronavirus goes viral - The Indian Express

Folk art thrives through online classes in lockdown - The Hindu

Masseuse turns art teacher as Covid nicks income - Mumbai News - Times of India.

Folk Art sector being included under unorganised sector of cultural segment in economic classification of India, folk artists find themselves lock'ed down due to Covid and have bared its brunt as seen in news reports<sup>8</sup>. Huge loses in trade have incurred due to cancellation of various cultural events that were earlier means of financial support for folk artist these included:

- Small scale trade exhibitions which helped facilitate trading of folk art based artefacts.
- Cultural events organised by Govt, NGO and Private sectors' which helped Folk Artist to showcase their talent, network and interact with the prospective buyers, commissioning agents of their services/ products.

In absence of the above uncertainty looms on this industry with 60% avenues partners in the trade either abandoning them or leaving the field altogether due to Covid Curbs (BC, FICCI, AX 2020)<sup>9</sup>. Those with sole dependability on their GI Folk Art trades have been hardest hit, like in Raghurajpur, Puri, Orissa.

- Trend of mass exodus from the villages to the cities, metros and abroad, which also includes both categories of Folk artists, those who move out of their ancestral land to practise their art if patronised or those who abandon their art in search of livelihood means to keep their families alive. In both the cases there is very little to no scope for handing over the art reigns ahead and houses in the cities, metros are not that accommodating to fit in the Folk artworks on walls, absence of kaccha angan gives no scope for practising Maandana, the floor based artform of FA.
- Folk artists do enjoy a high satisfaction levels with their work but the remuneration for their work is not as satisfying<sup>10</sup> as the middle men take away a lion share in the deal cycles wherein selling artefacts to private



dealer on consignment basis, most amount comes back much later (months or years later).

- There is little to very little help that they get when they venture out to independently sell their art but the formalities, time and cost involved often bogs them down.
- Leaving the onus to sell their artefacts with Govt. authorities/ stores teams through scheduled outlets in the Covid time, has costed the folk artist several crores with unsold inventories lying in godowns (*Kukreti I, 2020*)<sup>11</sup> due to lockdown since 2020.

Parallel observations have been noted globally with aftermath effects of Corona related harsh measures being taken that have led to financial stakes of several folk artisans suffering permanent or temporary losses, with little or no assistance provided at large<sup>12</sup>.

**All hope is not lost for Folk Arts in Corona time.** Like the silver lining of the dark clouds.

In order to address the economic survival Folk Art needs to be attuned to the suggestions made in the survey conducted by GVSS as a part of its engagement with Niti Ayog in 2011<sup>13</sup> much before Corona phase in India. The Research-governed recommendations shared by GVSS team for preventing tribal/folk art and culture from fading into oblivion, with primary focus of conserving of their innate beauty, inherent quality and essential core ideology; still hold true in today's time frame:

**Overall:** \*Commercialization of folk art to self-sustain it, strategically modify its presentation pattern with revision and refinement within limits; but saving it from being 'sold' to the popular cultures. \* Effectively presenting it and campaigning to suit contemporary recreational demands. \* Create awareness in common people about the values, styles, forms of different folk arts.

**Folk artist community:**\* Require upgrading skills to acclimatize with current socio-economic and socio-cultural trend of broader society. \*Need to suitably modify the content composed or pattern of expression with creative flair and in pursuit of functional excellence. \* Learn operational skills proactively to strengthening the foundation and ensuring the sustainability.



**Colleges and universities:** \*Incorporating FA as respective course of studies.

**Directorate of Field Publicity, Ministry of Broadcasting,** \* Deployment of folk art to sensitize people and mobilize their support in favour of crucial issues to intensify the usage of folk art and culture in significant and productive issues.\* Special allowance under rural development planning for economically weaker section of folk performers and artisans

After almost a decade, following observations are noted in the contemporary practice of Folk Art in India:

- Folk artists have been suitably rewarded with honour for their individual contributions in field of FA.
- There have been motivating recognition support from Gov. authorities like ICCR that have recognised the Folk artworks<sup>14</sup> representations themed on corona phase at par with the contemporary. An online exhibition was held by ICCR which gave a very good recognition to all participants.
- At their own level the FA artist's are trying to make efforts to commercialize, sustain, and grow with their talents. Little help from individuals, SHG and NGOs has also been rendered in this regard.
- In pandemic time, proactively some forms of FA has been extensively used as recreational tools and several enthusiasts have engaged to learn the art form, without much change essence of art form, but tools, colours and surface painted are chosen as per preference and convenience of the learners.
- In a Unique initiative by Indian Institute of Science (IISc): Dr. Bitasta Das, an Undergraduate Humanities instructor, ran a course for the 2016 UG batch. A creative part of this course required the students to use an Indian folk-art form to convey a scientific concept. The illustrations so produced were remarkably unique as they brought together two seemingly separate disciplines – the Arts and the Science with an Indian outlook. These were published and promoted as “Arting Science”<sup>15</sup>.

However there is a long way to go. Folk Artist's livelihood, practising of their art, craft and identity at stake is a national problem not specific to any place alone<sup>16</sup>

the news covered on Patachitra artist's plight is but a representation of the bigger picture, with assurance by authoritative bodies to be resolved.<sup>17</sup>

Within adversity too Folk Artist community has attempted to contribute back to society inspite of the hardships they are facing. Evolved Art talents in this Pandemic era to communicate through the Folk Paintings to create awareness have as creating tools

- Chitrakar Swarna singing the 7 min narration with her creation of Pattachitra that describes the origin of Covi 19, its advent of virus in India, dos and don'ts that we need to adhere to for ensuring that we are safe from the Corona Beast as she has described<sup>18</sup>. This video was shared on facebook<sup>19</sup> and soon went viral online and also in print media. Media influencers / Gov. Ministers like Ms Smiriti Irani<sup>20</sup> much appreciated this effort and too shared this on her twitter handle, giving further reach to artist's message.

- Several more Folk Artist shot up to fame with their added rich style in showcasing Corona theme line<sup>21</sup>

Seasoned artists have represented Corona tales in their own way adding the humour (either satirical or on a light note), emotional and or narrative as per the folk art illustration; like the news interviews published in various print media the folk artist, urban artist are making art that represents their sensitivity and unity in Pandemic times. Artist Anwar<sup>22</sup>, series painted in 12 days.

As an independent measure from new generation members within Folk artists' family and well-wishers the use of the available technology tools, digital presence, online community opportunities are also being tapped for financial gains. Harnessing the power of social media there are several ambitious and well equipped folk artists, more so in performing artist stream<sup>23</sup> who are actively making their presence felt.

On the global platform we have witnessed how globally creative professionals are marching with their head held high and as per new, alternate, online plans of feasible viability of their art<sup>24</sup>. In India also we can witness the proactive and collaborative measures that are being taken by the Indian Entrepreneurs as well two such examples the researcher collated are:

- Suitable in-demand Product range like Masks embellished with Manjusha paintings<sup>25</sup>

- Awareness created about the Folk Art through the various blog writers<sup>26</sup>
- Learners were enthusiastic to learn Folk art with or without the presence of teachers' offline as seen in the class session by Ms Sandhya who learnt Bhil Art, from asynchronised lesson Videos on YouTube. Popular synchronised learning platforms online are Zoom and Google meet.
- Initiatives like Me-meraki<sup>27</sup>, StudioAmoli<sup>28</sup> and Agneesha Art<sup>29</sup> online sessions help FA Aficionados learn folk art forms, help virtually showcase folk artist talents, network and plough in alternate earning potentials through sale of products, receiving commissioned orders of mural art, assigned artwork creations. The FA artists are introduced, credited as creators of folk art and craft. Previously this wasn't practiced by offline middle men who would buy artefacts for fewer prices and sell for premium gains to end customers elsewhere.

Agneesha art is front ended by mother and daughter duo as learner and preachers of Folk Art. They have helped create awareness about Folk Art as the latter takes online classes now to help beginners and advanced learner tread on the Bhil, Gond and Warli Art forms learning. During 2020 Corona lockdown they have trained 75 beginner and 150 advanced level learners via 26 training sessions online on Google meet. Each learning session is spread over 1.5 to 3 hours session time. *"We have noted that 70% of our learners, return back to learn more folk artforms after taking their 1<sup>st</sup> initial session from us. Several of them have started to create their own artworks or even started to teach this ahead."* informed Ms Eeshita. She also shared that the way Bhil and Gond are rendered in colours is much more evolved, original bhil art work were not as brightly coloured as they are now. The use of acrylic medium is a very recent practise and renders a very attractive look to the final artwork.

Corona time can be seen as a boon and a bane both for the Folk Artist. In words of Mr Mustaq Khan, "Corona time period has provided the much needed leisure time to every one, including the Folk artists who were earlier creating only what would sell. They are now making art that truly expresses them, putting in much needed quality and uniqueness into each artwork". On the other hand, it has taken away the democratic freedom of the travelling folk artist and the tourist alike. The purposive offline showcase and networking opportunity that

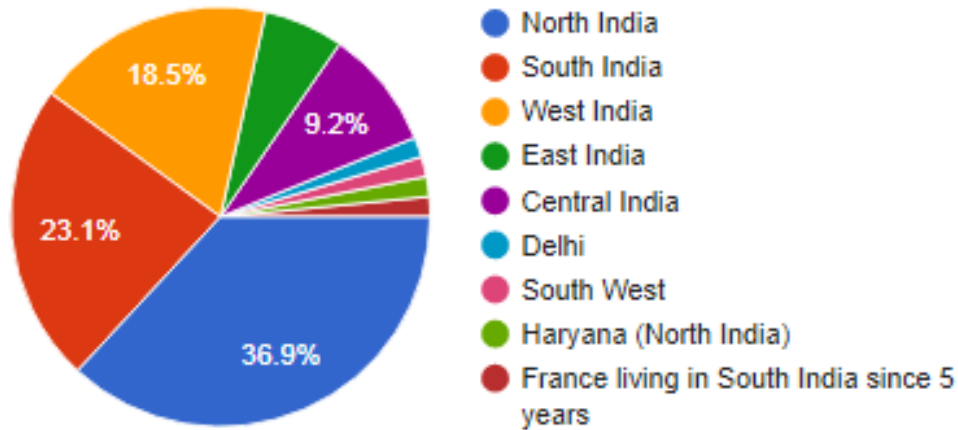
workshops, seminars, exhibitions provided to folk artist has really pulled down their essential financial liberty.

**Researcher’s online Google survey<sup>30</sup> to gauge the responses of 65** heterogeneous representative sample respondents on how they felt FA has changed in the pandemic time.

These respondents were from across India .....engaged in various professional streams

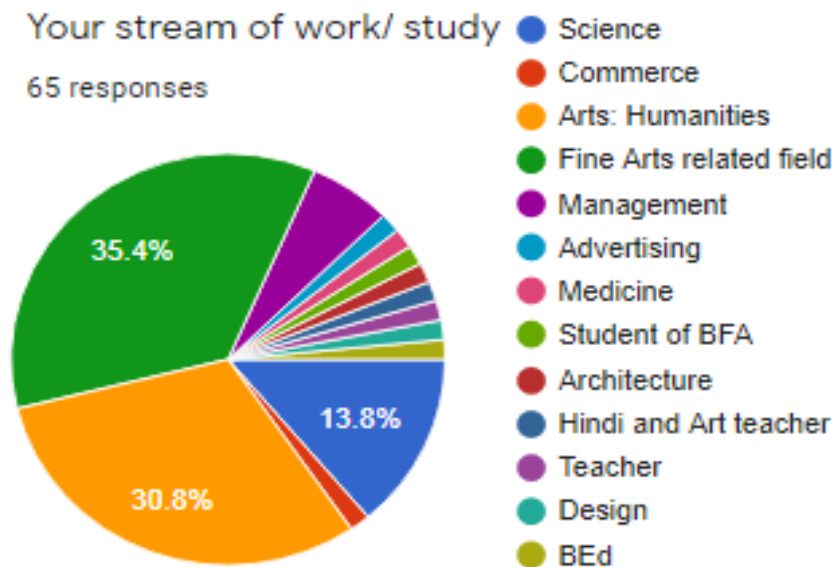
You belong to which region ?

65 responses



Your stream of work/ study

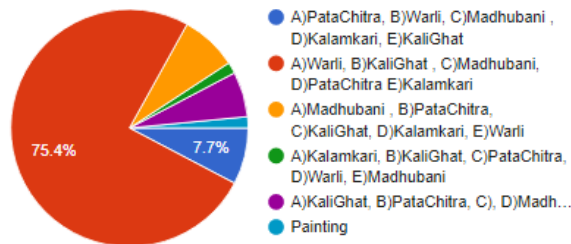
65 responses



Following is a sum up of data was obtained in this survey:

### Survey Question 1:

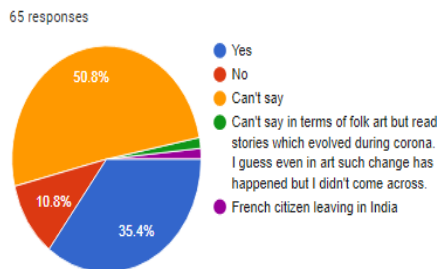
1) Find the correct order of Folk Art names of the following  
 65 responses



More than 75% respondents were able to visually distinguish and match 5 visual Folk art images to names \*Warli, Madhubani, Kalamkari, KaliGhat, PataChitra Indicating positive connect with Folk Art.

### Survey Question 2:

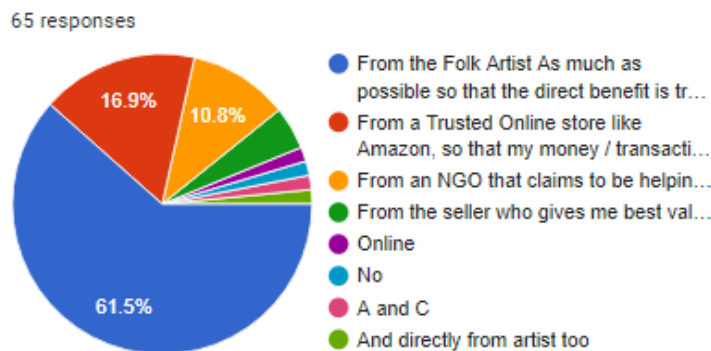
2) Has the Folk Art evolved with any different representation of ideas in the Corona Phase?  
 Is there an evident difference in what the Folk artist are painted before and since 2020.



Almost 51% respondents indicated that they are not sure to have witnessed any difference in the way Folk Art evolved during Corona Phase of 2020-21. However more than 35% were aware of the difference. Almost 11% confirmed that there has not been any change at all.

### Survey Question 3:

3) If you had to purchase a folk artefact where would purchase it from in Corona Time or other wise too?



Almost 62% respondents were positively sensitive to making direct payments to FA artists for artefacts they create.

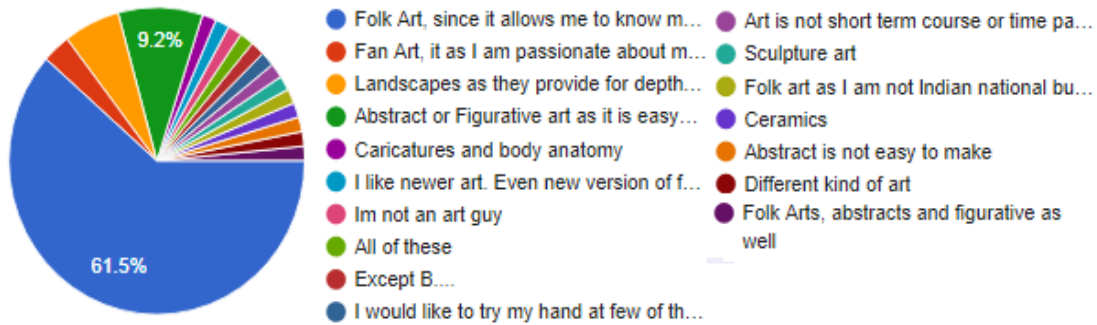
Almost 17% feel the need of trusted online mediators in best interest of the buyer's money security.

11% felt need for a representative NGO to accept such financial deals.

Survey Question 4:

4) If you have a choice to learn visual art online, in leisure time that is available now, what would be your preferred choice?

65 responses



On being asked if there was a choice to learn visual art online as a lot of leisure time is available now in Corona, if they would prefer to learnt visual art? If yes what would be their best preferred choice from Folk Art, Fan Art, Figurative / abstract, landscape artwork. There was scope to fill in with own answer as well. The respondents filled in 13 more options of their own.

More than 61 % of respondents favoured learning of Folk Art in traditional or new avatar.

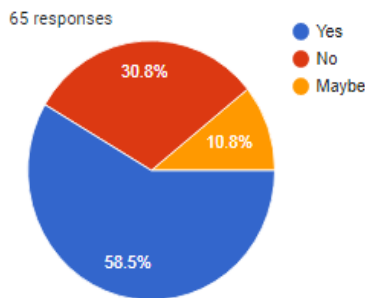
10% indicated they would learn Figurative/ Abstract Art. Rest had a mix of preferences which also included not learning art at all.

As there is ample of learning support available online right from the DIY YouTube videos, to premium courses with synchronised tutor’s presence, to moderated art courses with limited screenings of videos of class shared at a reasonable price. It was the course on Intangible Cultural Heritage, by IGNCA that helped the researcher to further delving into the various aspects of Folk Art, Folk Artist and related nuances. The details, facts and sequential connections on the same laid down by the resource person Mr. Mushtak Khan (Consultant and Research Coordinator, Sahapedia; who had also served as Deputy Director, Crafts Museum, New Delhi) was the key to several learning. These inspired her to study the various aspects, collect data from the online news bank that slowly weaved the facts into a research process presented here as study of “Visual Folk Arts during Corona Times from the perspective of Artists and Aficionados, the latter includes all those who favour the existence of Indian folk arts in its entirety for

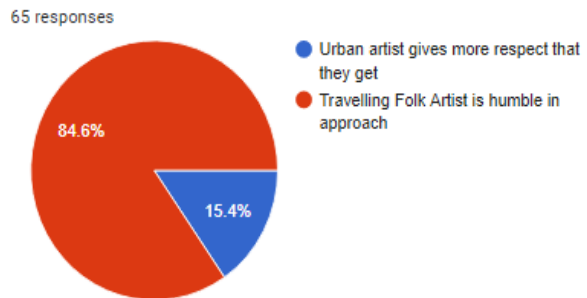
their own gainful reasons be it learning, earning, collaborating or just as a well-wisher of the folk art as a cultural guard or a showcase of India’s richness.

**Survey Question 5 & 6 :**

5) Have you ever met any travelling folk artist, in small neighbour Fair, at High profile event, just while passing by a traffic junction?



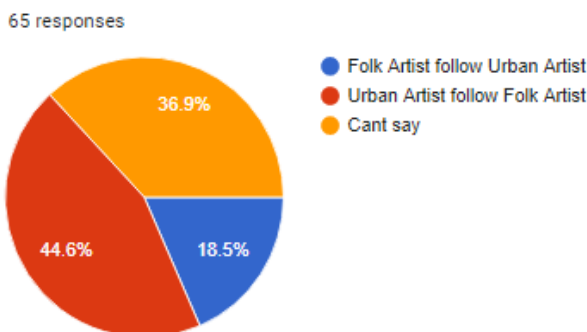
6) How would you best describe your experience about meeting the following category of artist? In case you have not met what is your best guess from the following



It is also important to note that 58% did meet folk artist due to travel, fair, by chance meeting before pandemic. 31% don’t recall meeting any such artisans and almost 11% don’t have neither affirmative or negative recollection on this. On describing their meeting with a folk artist at some point of their life, more than 84% of respondents remember them as humble persona as compared to the Urban artist. More than 15% responses that indicated that urban artists get more respected as compared to the respect they offer back to art aficionados.

**Survey Question 7 :**

7) How would you describe the direction of influence wave in the artist community?



Recollecting their view on originality or inspired approach of the two categories of artist’s (folk and urban) artwork, 45% respondents confirmed that the artworks made by urban artists do have traces of influence from Folk Artists artwork.

While only 19% felt that the urban artist seems to be inspired by Urban artists. Almost 37% said neither.

Above responses affirm researcher’s view that Folk artist represent people’s art, connect & creativity. The integrity and cultural roots they uphold through visual means and methods are critical characteristic today which requires support by one and all.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been suggested by researcher that at 4 levels, to help create the most favourable scenario to help folk art, artists survive with dignity in this pandemic and beyond:

- At Gov. level: - Several Folk Artist are not enlisted under list of Artist category, hence they are often not ignored for entitlement of Gov. relief packages, this needs to be brought to light and revised to help FAist to get their fair share if remuneration especially in hard times.
- There needs to be an organised assured alternate means to provide artists dignified means of livelihoods.
- As a part of Digital Indian drive, gainful digitisation of Indian Folk Art talent and build smart approach to help link up Folk Artist to prospective buyers, learners for deep rooting our cultural heritage as well.
- At Individual level : - Use of Social media at individual level to create awareness about the folk art<sup>31</sup>, folk artist and appeal in the social network to support their talent and make suitable contribution to their integrity and livelihood to help save their talent, artwork for the generations to come.
- Buying directly from folk artist. Paying reasonably for their produced artefacts will certainly be a gesture of paying them respect they deserve but are often deprived of.
- Recommend online learning folk art from the authentic artist will extend their presence online.
- Academic leaders can make a difference by seeding FA into school/ college projects on various levels, be it purely for decoration, integrated learning in social sciences or interconnecting visual art technique with science subjects<sup>32</sup>
- Voluntarily help to train Folk Art painters, especially the younger generation to become internet saavy reach global market online, this has been done by Performing Folk Artists and can be implemented with Visual Folk Artist too.

As Laila Tyabji, chairperson of Dastkar, India's prominent society for crafts and craftspeople, summed up a conversation with BBC. *"Though many fear the impact of Covid-19 may be the end of craftspeople, it is their creativity and resilience that could save them."*

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