





The Lecture Contains:

-  Dancing Shiva
-  Feng-Shui Symbolism and Non-verbal Modern Symbols
-  Effective Non-verbal Communication
-  Conclusion

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Dancing Shiva- symbols and metaphors



Plate 4 Nataraj, Bronze

(Source: https://www.google.co.in/search?hl=en&q=dancing+nataraja&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.&bvm=bv.1354675689,d.bmk&bpcl=39650382&biw=1318&bih=600&um=1&ie=UTF-8&tbn=isch&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&ei=49bGUOW4DLG8iAeF7IHQDA ; Dec. 11, 2012)

In other word, to appreciate and understand traditional art is much more difficult than 'modern art'. The Dancing Nataraj represents a composite image of Shiva in 3-D form. Dancing Nataraj with four hands having four different symbols- left hands show- fire ('destruction') and Bhumisparsa Mudra (maintaining the Universal Equilibrium) and the right hands are showing - Damaru (the Universal Rhythm) and Abhay Mudra (assurance to mankind). The Nataraj is dancing on a Dwarf that signifies Ignorance as the devil of our wisdom or knowledge. Hence, without knowing meaning such symbolism and metaphors may appear only decorations. Gothic Art in Europe had similar symbolic representation. Aesthetic appreciation of traditional are, therefore demands specific knowledge. It would be untrue if we think modern day art does not bear symbolism or metaphor. Modern Symbolism communicates with people at a different context that may not have religious connotation. Modern symbolisms represent contemporary concept and philosophy. Symbolism may become tool for the non-verbal communication.

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Module 3 : Art & Aesthetics in Design

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In modern period the world has become much closer even though having multi-cultural environment. Knowing different language and their meaning has raised difficulties in trades. Non-verbal communication is playing extremely important role in increasing the range of interactions. Therefore, symbolism and metaphor are part of our civilization since the beginning of mankind that displays manifestation of the cultural ethos and aesthetic understanding.

The image of Dancing Nataraj, Egyptian Wall Painting, and Gothic Art cannot be appreciated fully unless one knows about the culture and read the ancient text. Various symbolic forms and expressions appear in decorative forms. Each symbol or iconography denotes especial meaning. Therefore, in order to understand traditional art one has to know much more in-depth about the culture their habits, rituals, myths etc.

Feng-Shui Symbolism and Non-verbal Modern Symbols

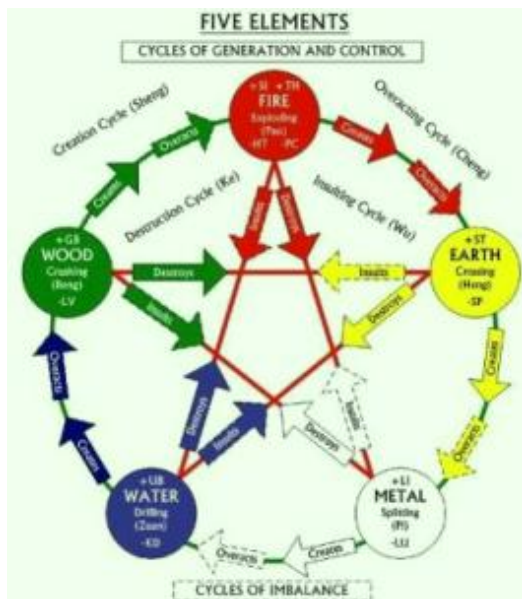


Plate 5A Feng-Shui



5B Non-verbal Communication

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(Source: https://www.google.co.in/search?hl=en&sugexp=les%3B&gs_rn=0&gs_ri=hp&tok=6sHjV0OohF2Mv10H4K7KWw&pq=god+indra&cp=4&gs_id=2vn&xhr=t&q=feng+shui&bav=on.2,or.r_gc.r_pw.r_qf.&bvm=bv.1354675689,d.bmk&bpcl=39650382&biw=1318&bih=600&um=1&ie=UTF-8&tbn=isch&source=og&sa=N&tab=wi&ei=FQPHUKeJNsTXrQfkvYHoAw ; Dec. 11, 2012)

The ancient philosophy of Feng-Shui in China (plate 5A) is embedded with abstract symbolic meanings. It has a complex body of knowledge that reveals how to balance the energies of any given space to assure health and good fortune for the people living around. Water and Wind are the two most important elements in nature without which no living being can survive. Feng means wind and Shui means water. Like many ancient cultures around the world, Chinese culture places especial attention to water and wind. Wind and water are associated with good health and prosperity. Eastern cultures have traditionally believed in nature and its harmony with living beings. Like Indian traditional believe of 'Five Elements in Nature' (Earth, Water, air, Fire and Space), China believed and practiced to maintain balance between five basic elements of nature- Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood. Each element is represented by a color that has its close association in nature. Believing traditional culture and appreciating the spirit of ancient ethos has continued to survive parallel among many modern cultures around the world. However, since late 19th century and early 20th century scholars and intellectuals started questioning the logical and rational meaning of such ancient believes. Consequently some of the established believes are being challenged.

Effective Non-verbal Communication

Modern Symbolism is directly related to our application. The modern symbolism is related to non-verbal Communication (plate 5B) so that it may be accepted universally. Language will not be the hindrance to understand the meaning. The symbols such as- women, me, 'stop', stairs, fire-extinguisher, etc. are commonly used for effective communication. Such signs and symbols do not require any language to read. The pictorial representation denotes clear meanings. Therefore, the application of symbols and metaphors increases the level of appreciation, whether it has religious, social or direct application orientation. The essence of aesthetic appreciation emerges of understanding the visual language.



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The perception of aesthetics has over and over again being challenged by scholars and intellectuals based on new concept. Aesthetics does not mean conventional sense of 'beauty' always. In 1916, a group of artists, poets, writers, musicians, and philosophers in Europe challenged the conventional aesthetic appreciation and creativity. They showed the aesthetic properties could exist in mass produced objects as well. Bicycle-wheel, bathroom wares, and various household products that were never considered as work of art were exhibited with the signature of artists. Readymade consumer products are baptized and elevated to the rank of art. Ready-made object, machine produced consumer products were never considered work of art that could possess aesthetic beauty like any other art.

Conclusion

Understanding art and its relationship with aesthetic has raised many questions through ages. It is found that the aesthetic realization is quite relative experience. Based on cultural and traditional diversity the aesthetic appreciation varies. Symbolism and metaphor have played extremely significant role. Unless in-depth understanding is achieved one cannot perceive the meaning of traditional art. Along with art, design has also been influenced through ages. The motifs and symbolism in various architectural decorations and household articles have enriched the social customs in the form of metaphors. In traditional period, artist-architects have played important role through creative manifestations.

Late 19th C AD and early 20th C AD initiated new thinking process liberated from the older traditional practices. The effort resulted in intellectual revolution through literature, art, music, architecture, performing arts etc. The movement started questioning the established beliefs and practices. Common men discovered the new language of liberated thinking. '**Art for Art's Sake**' and the DADA movements introduced new wave of free thought and liberation from the bondage of old traditional doctrine. Art and Aesthetics in Design has squarely benefited from the movement.

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