

AN IMPRESSIONIST VISUAL ARTIST OF PAKISTAN; ZUBAIDA JAVAID

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Abstract

Pakistan has some finest artists recognized across the globe for their unique work. Artist of this region has played a significant role that evaluates the nature and values of this society. A member of a liberal and cultured family, Zubaida and her two brothers were encouraged to try all form of art. Her outlook and approach of visualizing things are well intuitive. Zubaida was less interested in portraiture; she gave precedence to landscape and cityscape painting that makes the horizon of her thoughts and originality broader and distinctive proving to be peculiarly creative yet innovative of the period.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan is a rich and diverse country with its roots entrenched in centuries old culture that is of great traditional value. The history of art shaped in this region is ingrained and attributed, having old and refined tradition of art, with deep roots of artistic pronouncement. This region has sound resonance of our old cultural traditions that shows the essence of its civilization. Infusion of different civilizations not only enhanced the cultural identification of Pakistan but also inherits that gave roots for the advancement the development of art over the years.

Pakistan has some finest artists recognized across the globe for their unique work. Male and female artist have been contributing well towards an eminent change, cultivating great significance to the local patronage of art for decades. This region has produced many names that have been representing Pakistan around the globe. Artist of this region has played a significant role that evaluates the nature and morals of this society.

One of the most prominent names of this industry includes the name of female visual

artists, Zubaida Javed, who was born in 1939. She was a versatile artist, nurtured by her educationalist father Chaudhary Abdul Ghafoor, a professor of education at Aligarh University. She used a variety of material to create her art including paper, palette knife as well as watercolor and oil on canvas.

As a member of a liberal and cultured family, Zubaida and her two brothers were encouraged to try all form of art. She with her brother learnt music for a little while too. Her mother influence was rather indirect; a simple and devoted woman spent most of her time at home. Whenever young Zubaida brought any sculpture piece at home she was instantly told to place the sculpture outside. On the other hand, she appreciated her color choice and landscape paintings. The artist's paintings express her view of urban and rural landscapes depicted in a singular Impressionistic style. Zubaida Javed, an artist of exciting palette and mysterious ambiance, is considered as the harbinger of conceptual landscape painting in Pakistan (dawnnews n.d.).

Art of Pakistan

The term Art refers to any 'skill or mastery'. "Art is a broad subdivision of culture, composed of many expressive disciplines with the arrangement of colors, forms, movements and other elements in a manner that affects the sense of beauty" (Siddiqui n.d.). Arts in Pakistan can broadly be categorized in different branches i.e.

Visual Arts

Visual arts focus on the creation of the work which is visual in nature such as painting, photography, printmaking, and filmmaking. Some major forms of visual arts are as follows:

- Calligraphy
- Landscape Painting
- Miniature Painting
- Modern Art
- Sculpture

Performing Arts

- Drama and Theatre
- Puppetry

Modern art is designated as the country's visual language. Pakistani artists aimed to present themselves as modern that they paved their way towards the new era and modern standards of art (A. Ali 2004), they also espoused western styles, also experimented with indigenous traditions to see how these could fit into the modern world (A. Ali 2004). Before Pakistan came into existence; Chughtai had already proven his creative and intellectual abilities, established himself internationally as the pre-eminent artist of the subcontinent. The first artist in Pakistan to have an exhibition of modern paintings was a woman Zubaida Agha (1922–1997) her images of landscapes and people are simple and has variety of vibrant colors of both Fauvism and Rajput miniatures.

Painting is one of the excessively celebrated medium throughout the art history, in the 1950s, Shakir 'Ali, brought a style and notion of Cézanne and Cubism with him. "Anna Molka (1917–1994), coming from London to Lahore with her husband, also experienced the art world in both Pakistan and Europe. Her paintings are suggestive of French Impressionism in her use of

thick, impasto brushstrokes to present life in Pakistan" (A. Ali 2004).

"Shakir 'Ali along with Gulgee and Sadequain also engaged in local practices. These artists experimented with calligraphy in paintings that placed centuries-old texts into modern formats (A. Ali 2004)".

Art of Noble Woman of Pakistan

Amongst many others that includes the names of Anna Molka Ahmad, Zubaida Javed, and Lubna Agha, emphasize their imaginative yet creative styles leaving a significant amount of societal impact. Zubaida Javed was one protruding artist, who founded a modern and conceptual style in landscape painting in Pakistan. She with time developed her own style under the supervision of her teachers.

Impressionist style

Her perspective and approach of visualizing things are well instinctive. Zubaida was less interested in portraiture; she gave priority to landscape and cityscape painting that makes the horizon of her imagination and creativity broader and distinctive, and leads her in an expression of impressionism, she was also inspired by Anna Molka style of using palette knife, while studying art books on impressionist and artists like Manet, Pissarro, Degas, Cezanne and Renoir, she strengthened her style of work, a vitalizing element of expression in her painting. With the help of deeper and profound study of Persian painting provided by Anna Molka, she explored herself more in Persian miniature paintings and experimented with her imagination, representational and non-representational elements that gave meaning and uniqueness to her paintings. She tactfully unruffled her compositions, and choose her subject matter considerably and artistically. She had a God gifted vocabulary of colors and represented her feelings, thoughts and emotions, above all the purpose of composing the painting in a peaceful yet intriguing manner (Rasheed 2010). She worked almost entirely from sketches, with her memory giving the painting a simple look. Her palette is equally rich with variations of warm and

cool hues describing the mood and spirit of the subject.

Education

She began her vocation at the Lahore College for Women and studies F.Sc (premedical) from there in hopes to become a doctor but soon realized after biology practical that medical profession was not suitable for her, and got admitted in BA at the Punjab University fine arts department, where her work was greatly cherished by her teachers Khalid Iqbal and Anna Molka Ahmed.

In one interview she mentioned that she cannot forget her first meeting with Anna Molka. Zubaida Javaid was equipped with the sketches that she used to copy. Anna Molka looked at those sketches critically and said, you are given a chance to study in this department of arts with the hopes that you'll not do copy work again.

At their insistence she joined the Punjab University's fine arts department in 1961 as a faculty member, where she was a popular and positive influence with her students until her retirement in 1997. During her tenure she served as head of the department in 1982-83, and from 1984 to 1986.

Life

She happily married eight years after teaching at the university. A fairly late marriage. Zubaida husband proved to be encouraging and demanded her palette 'should never be dry'. The match was set by her father after her mother passed away in 1964. She managed home and domestic pressures quite evenly, with a literary husband gently confronting her at every step.

Career

The boost of 1961 towards education pushed her into painting. Zubaida struggled to find her existence in her paintings. In 1964 she was offered to join Punjab university department of arts as lecturer. The very same year classes for masters in fine arts started and she was given the

opportunity to teach them history of Islamic arts. Zubaida being aware of the responsibilities was hesitant but ended up teaching them both eastern and western concepts of Islamic art and soon became popular amongst the students. She taught the ignored eras of arts to her students diligently, example the Safavid and Timurid era that are mostly ignored by everyone.

She also taught composition to her students. Her lectures were inspired from Sir Nutley's picnic oriented painting. Where she used to take the student to the out skirts of Lahore and teach them compositions. She considered that 'a painting is considered well composed only when all its elements like subject matter, surface, spatial environment, colors and treatment forming an effective harmony'.

After chairing the seat as the head of the department...

Associations

The artist was an active member of the Artists' Association and contributed her work regularly to the annual art exhibitions at Alhamra. She once explained that Anna Molka Ahmed's annual exhibitions with three new painting required, was an exercise that stayed with her and she never showed the same work twice. A retrospective exhibition of her work was mounted by the directors of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts at the Shakir Ali Museum, Lahore which was described as "dynamic and in tune with the times" (dawnnews n.d.).

Work

Famous for her hazy landscapes, Zubaida rhythm in color and movement, characterizes her work. Her bold brush strokes are well-defined patterns translating variations of hues. She also used intellectually refined contrasting hues, giving a lyrical feel while using swift linear brush stroke highlighted by strong vibrant colors and contrasting hues that make her whole composition lively and dynamic.



Old Ravi Bridge-oil on canvas

Famous work of art includes 'Steps', mysterious artwork that gives no clue to where they lead. The second one is the 'Valley', in which the road stretches out to infinity unknowingly where to end.

Her major exhibition includes the exhibition organized by the Punjab art council in 2010. Eighty artworks, mostly paintings, by 50 artists from Punjab are on display at the exhibition, which was inaugurated by Parliamentary Secretary on Culture and Youth Affairs Azma Zahid Bokhari. The exhibition also has landscapes, miniatures, still life, ceramics and calligraphy. There is a wide range of mediums: oils, acrylics and watercolor. Other Artists whose works were on display at the exhibition are Dr Musarrat Hasan, , Rahat Naveed Masood, Maliha Azmi Agha, Naila Amir, Saira Dar, Riffat Chughtai, Sumera Jawad, Shehla Farooq, Zarina

Khurshid, Farah Khan, Amna Pataudi, Zara David and Dr Shahida Manzoor (PPF n.d.).

Vibrant exhibit of Colors

She has an excellence dexterity in her style of painting, unique aesthetic thinking, creative concerns reconstruct by her own worldly imagination, technique of handling the dragging strokes of pure and distilled colors and brush strokes; she is very versatile in dealing with dynamic contribution of palette knife work and oil on canvas and watercolors on paper. Her work was highly appreciated by her teachers Khalid Iqbal and Anna Molka Ahmed, her evoked and stimulated colors, obscure in nature, tone, mood encompassing the whole composition of the painting is dynamic way; her work gave the conceptual art of landscape painting focusing and enclosing the surroundings of Pakistan.



Murree Hills- Zubaida Javed

She profoundly contributed and exhibited her work of art regularly in the annual art exhibitions at Alhamra, she was an active artist, a creative element and a unique style seen in her work and she never presented the same kind of work. Her husband proved to be very supportive towards her painting, he used to say to her that, your palette 'should never be dry'.

Awards and Honors

Besides many awards she received during her life. Most noted is the one she received in 1997 called Anna Molka Award, awarded by the department of Fine Arts Punjab University. In 2004, she was awarded with Presidential *Tamgha e Imtiaz* Award for her countless efforts in field of education.

Conclusion

Zubaida as an icon and a unique female painter of Pakistan not only she has created a distinctive style but also inspires many artists as well. Her active and memorial work always appreciated in the domain of art especially in Pakistan. Dr Rahat Naveed Masood said that Zubaida was one of the outstanding painters of Pakistan, her individualistic renderings of colors and composition had inspired several generations of artists. She said that as her student and later a respectful colleague for over thirty years, she has

had the unique privilege of sharing with her a relationship of mutual respect, trust and deep regard" (Ali 2012). She added that there were very few artists like Zubaida in the world, for whom material concerns stood secondary to absolute commitment to work and for whom sincerity and compassion were a modus operando. She was one of those rare gems whom we treasure not only as a great painter but also as a great human being. (Ali 2012).

Though, during her last years Javed was unable to continue painting, her interest in the art activities never waned. She has left us but her work will live on for future generations (Husain 2005).

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