

CHAPTER

3

Art Appreciation



At the end of this chapter the students will be able to:

- Apply the four steps of art appreciation.
- Locate sites of historical importance in one's own surroundings.
- Gain an insight into the historical and contemporary artworks of the sub-continent, focusing on sculpture, pottery, ceramics metal and wood work.
- Know about the master sculpturists. and ceramicist of Pakistan.
- Communicate about artwork (own and other) verbally or in writing using art vocabulary describing the work and its intention, moods and feelings.



Four steps of Art Criticism

Edmund Feldman, Professor of Art at the University of Georgia, developed an easy four-step method for evaluating a work of art.

1. **DESCRIPTION:**

What can be seen in the artwork?

2. **ANALYSIS:**

What relationships exist in what is seen?

3. **INTERPRETATION:**

What is the content or meaning, based on steps 1 and 2?

4. **JUDGEMENT:**

What is your evaluation of the work, based on steps 1, 2 and 3?

Critical study of a painting

This painting is by Salman Farooqi, a Karachi based Pakistani artist. In order to criticise any type of art, you simply carry out the four steps;

- Description
- Analysis
- Interpretation and
- Judgment



Description

Just as it says, first you describe the facts, including the name of the work, artist, size, medium, etc. Next, what does the art look like, what is it made of, what objects do you see in it? What textures, shapes, or colours are there? Remember, all of these are straight facts, with no opinions added yet.

If you want to be really systematic, look for and describe each of the “elements” of art: line, shape, form, colour, texture and value.

The first step goes something like this:

The painting given on page 92 is a landscape (obvious but necessary) but I don't see any land in it because the artist has painted the portion of buildings that is above land. In this painting I see some buildings on both sides and a big sun in the centre. There are some trees here and there. It is day time. I see some electricity poles and electric wires too. Birds are sitting on the wires. The sky is clear. The colours are bright and in contrast, blue and orange. There are strong black outlines. The landscape is painted semi-realistically. I can't see any humans, animals or vehicles etc. Cast shadows can be seen only on the lower half of the front buildings which suggest other buildings that are not included in the painting, yet we know they are there.

Analysis

Next, tell how everything you mentioned in the description is related to each other, i.e. how the above facts are organized, compliment one another, or create harmony or distress.

This painting evokes a cheerful feeling as I view it. It seems to be the result of the fresh and vibrant colours the artist has used. A strong colour contrast is applied, i.e. the yellow and orange sun and buildings against the blue sky, and then the blue door and windows in the building. The artist has used the complementary colours very cleverly as it is a hard task in painting. Apart from colour contrast, the artist has used good tonal/value contrast in the dark green trees against the light yellow sun. Another very interesting thing about the painting is that the artist has interpreted everything in rectangles which is his personal style. Even the sun is given an angular

form with straight lines that goes well with the rectangles. His style is inspired from cubism, an early 20th century art movement. Because in this style you have to simplify complicated shapes into simple squares, rectangles and cubes, we find no minute details in the objects.

By looking carefully at the sides of the buildings we find that the artist has not paid much attention to perspective.

Interpretation

How does the painting make you feel? What does it make you think of? What do you think the artist is trying to communicate to you as a viewer? But just because this step is more open-ended than the previous two, and there aren't really any "right or wrong" answers, therefore it's the most important and fun step.

It creates a joyful feeling in me. The colours are bright and alive. The lines, depicting the electric wires, are contrast to the regular geometric shapes and create a feeling of movement among the static rectangles. They also guide the eye of the viewer around the painting.

It shows how different an artist' vision can be, how he can create his own world the way he wants or how he mixes his inner and the outer worlds. It also inspires me to see the world around me in a different way.

Judgment

In general, I think this is an interesting artwork masterly handled. It is well-composed and harmonized. I enjoy the bright colours. The composition is strong. I appreciate the technical skill it took to create such a painting

HISTORICAL ARTWORKS IN THE SUBCONTINENT

Arts and entertainment in subcontinent have a rich and ancient history. Right from ancient times there has been a mixture of local and foreign influences that have shaped the course of the arts of subcontinent, and as a result, the rest of Asia.

Arts refer to painting, architecture, literature, music, dance, languages and cinema.



Indus Seals

The Indus Valley Civilization flourished between about 2500-1900 BC in an area which is now a days western Pakistan and north-eastern India. Our Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa ruins in Sindh and Punjab are the remains of this civilization.



The term Indus Seals refers to series of symbols, similar to language characters, associated with the Indus Valley Civilization. About 2,000 pieces of Indus Seals have been discovered at Indus sites, mostly on square or rectangular seals.



Priest King

In 1927 a seated male figure was found in a building with unusually ornamental brickwork and a wall-niche. Though there is no evidence that priests or monarchs ruled the city, archeologists named this dignified figure as "Priest King"

Dimensions: 11 cm width, 17.5 cm height, National Museum, Karachi

Fasting Buddha

This statue is carved out of stone.

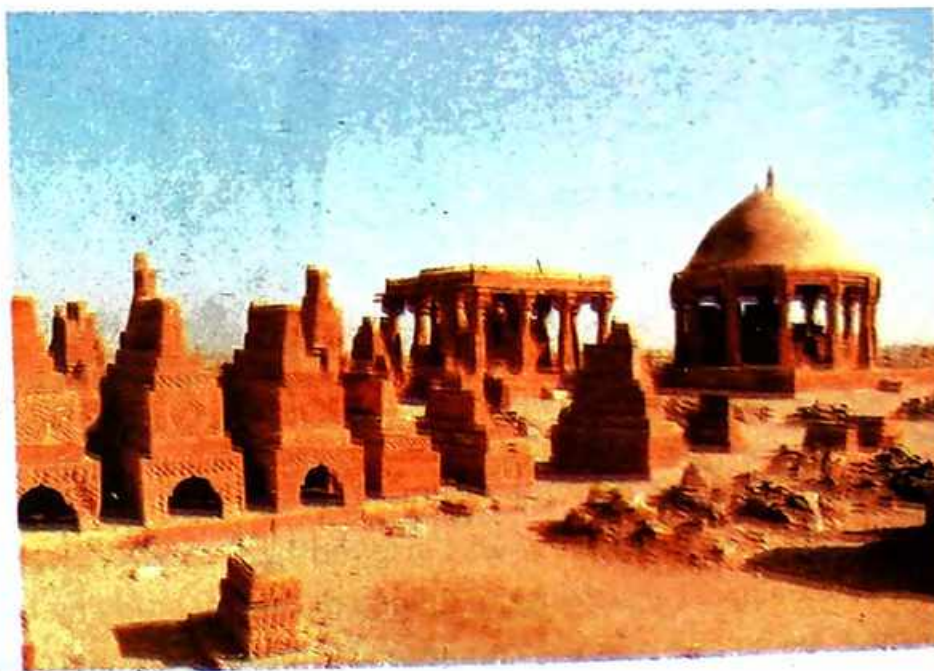
The young prince Siddharatha left his palace in search of enlightenment and practised for six years such severe religious practices and intense meditation that his beautiful body withered away to skin and bones. Ultimately he attained enlightenment at the age of thirty five and became known as the "Buddha" - "The enlightened one".



Chaukhandi Graves

The Chaukhandi Graves are situated 29 km east of Karachi. The Chaukhandi tombs are famous for the complicated and delicate stone carving.

It is generally considered to be the family graveyard of the Jokhio tribe. These tombs are mainly built during the Mughal rule between 15th & 18th centuries.



MAKLI HILL

Makli hill is one of the largest graveyards in the world, with the diameter of approximately 8 km. It lies approximately 98 kilometers east of Karachi and is the burial place, of some 12,5000 local ruler's, Sufi saints and others. Makli is located on the outskirts of Thatta, Sindh. It was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981. It is often believed that the graveyard grew around the shrine of Muhammad Hussain Abro in 14th Century.



Master Sculptors of Pakistan

Shahid Sajjad

Shahid Sajjad is Pakistan's most famous sculptor he was born in 1936, at Muzaffarnagar (British India).

Shahid sajjad is a self-taught sculptor who began his career in advertising in 1955. Shahid travelled through South-East Asia, the Middle East and Europe on a motorcycle between 1960 and 1963. In Paris he was inspired by woodwork carved by the French artist Paul Gauguin. He also visited China and Japan, studying the lost Wax Bronze casting technique under Japanese sculptor Akio Kato whom he acknowledges as his only master.



His first one-man show was held at the Karachi Arts Council in 1964. Shahid held a solo exhibition of wood and bronze sculptures at the Karachi Arts Council in 1974 and won the first prize in sculpture at the National Exhibition in Islamabad in 1977. He was awarded national prize for sculpture in 1982. Shahid's sculpture 'Woman in Agony' remains on permanent display at the Seoul Olympic Sculpture Park, Seoul, South Korea.



Rabia Zuberi

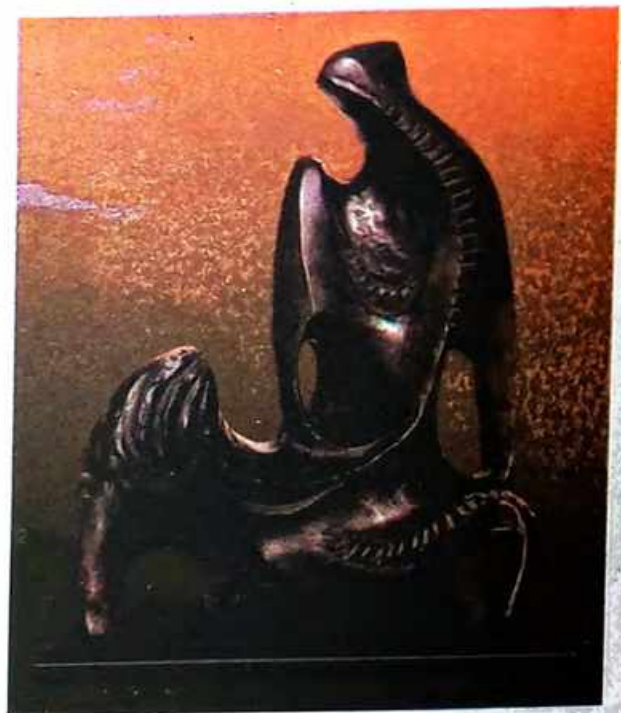
Rabia Zuberi is Pakistan's leading woman sculptor and the recipient of numerous national awards. She has dedicated her life to art and art education in Pakistan.

In India Rabia was awarded top honor for sculpture from National Youth Art Exhibition, held in Calcutta and New Delhi in 1961.



In Pakistan Rabia Zuberi's work has been nationally acknowledged by awards in 1986, '87 and '88, and in 1996 when she was awarded top honours from the 7th National Art Exhibition. In 2003, she was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by Pakistan National Council of Arts.

One of her monumental sculpture 'Plea for Universal Peace, is in the collection of the National Art Gallery, Islamabad.



Pottery/Ceramics

Pottery or ceramics is the art of making wares such as vases, pots, bowls etc from non-metallic material like clay or porcelain and hardened by heat.



Ceramics and glazed pottery are among the oldest art forms in Pakistan, dating back to the Indus Valley Civilization 25,00 B.C.



**Pottery from Indus valley civilization
(3,300-1,300 BC)**

The Indus valley civilization flourished around the Indus River in Pakistan and India.



Pottery from Mehrgarh; (Balochistan)



Jade Bowl-Mughal period, 18th century white jade, red and green enamels, gold and diamonds

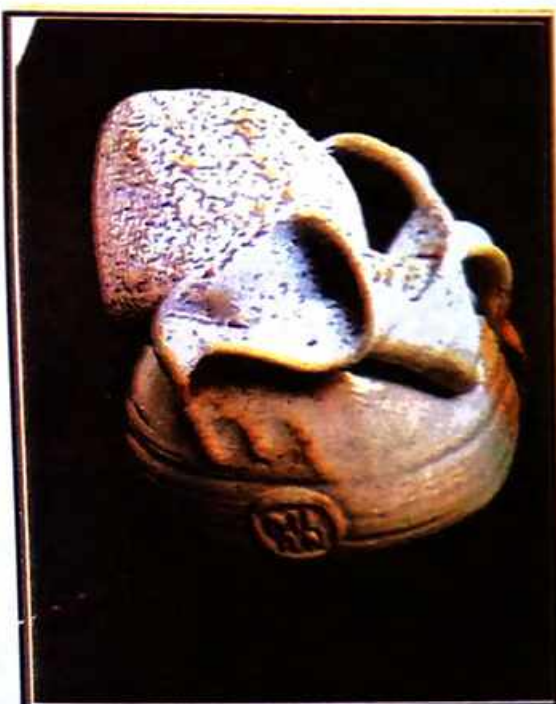
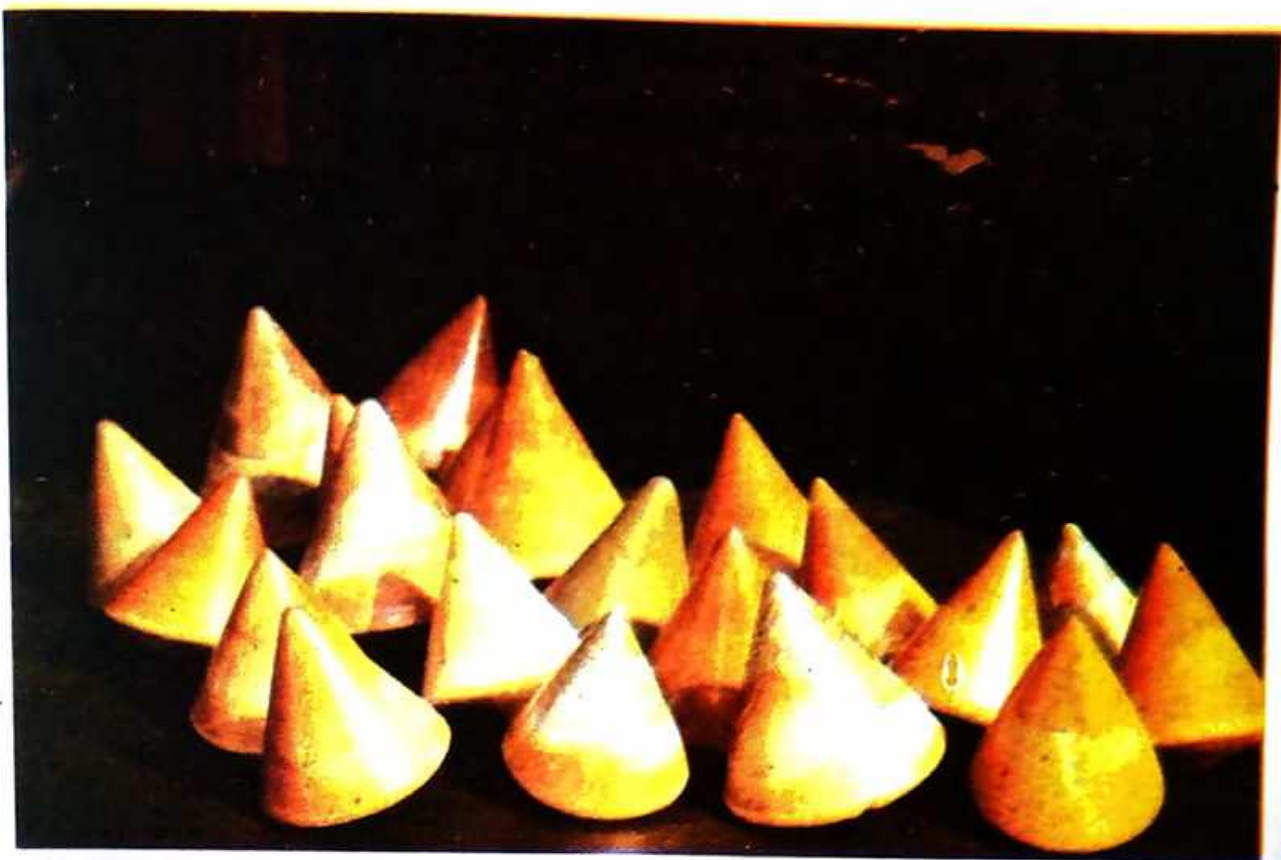
Master Ceramists of Pakistan

Mian Salahuddin (1938-2006)

Mian Salahuddin is said to be the first ceramic artist in Pakistan. He says his inspiration to become a ceramist came from where he was born, a locality of potters in the town of Qasoor, Panjab.

He got his early education from government school in Qasoor in 1958. Later he joined National College of Arts (NCA) Lahore. There he studied under the Japanese ceramist, Koichi Takita Sensei. He started teaching in NCA in 1963. He was awarded the Full bright scholarship in 1965. He got retirement from NCA in 1998 as head of the department.

Following are few of his works.



Sheherzad Alam

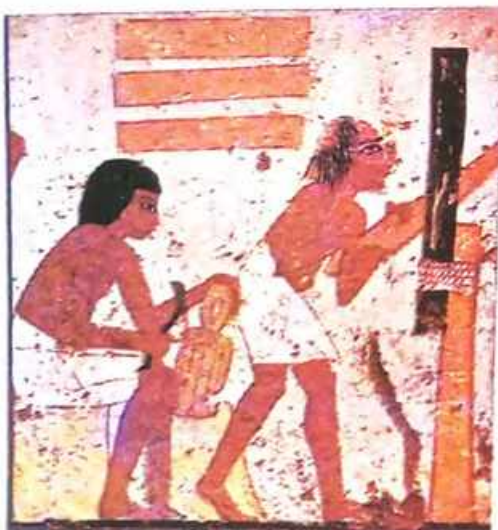
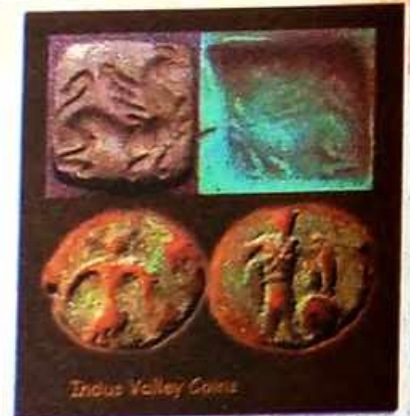
Sheherzad Alam, an internationally renowned Pakistani female ceramist, was born in 1948 in Lahore. She got her Bachelor degree in Fine Arts (BFA) with a distinction in ceramics from National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore. Here she remained// student of the first Pakistani ceramist Mian Salahuddin.

Her work is displayed throughout the world. Some of her famous work is given below.



Metal work

Metal work refers to making something out of metal. We use it for making artworks out of metal.



Ancient Egyptian Woodworking

Woodwork

Woodworking is the process of making or carving something out of wood. Along with stone and mud, wood was one of the first materials used by early humans. There are two kinds of woodwork; Functional and Decorative.

Functional woodworking

The woodworking that has some practical function or use is called functional woodworking like furniture or architectural components e.g. windows, doors, cupboards etc.



Decorative Woodwork

The woodworking that has no practical use and is done purely for aesthetic purposes is said to be decorative. There are two main techniques in decorative woodworking; carving and inlay. Study the pictures for example





GLOSSARY

Archaeology	The study of history and pre-history with the help of things the ancient people made, used and left behind
Civilization	The stage of human social development & organization which is considered most advanced
Criticism	Analyzing and describing the good and weak points of something
Cubism	An early 20th century art movement stressing basic geometric shape
Landscape	A drawing, painting or photograph of a piece of land with its commonly natural, components e.g. water, trees, rocks, mountains etc.
Monarch	A king
Niche	A recess in a wall, specially one that contains a statue/sculpture
Priest	A person who has the authority to perform ceremonies and rituals in a religion
Sculptor	One who makes sculptures
Semi realistic	Not completely realistic
Systematic	According to a proper system



EXERCISE

Q.A. Fill in the Blanks

- i. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa ruins are the remains of civiliation.
- ii. About pieces of Indus Seals have been discovered.
- iii. The buddha's real name was..... .
- iv. The word "Buddha" means..... .
- v. The chaukandi grave yard is situated in
- vi. "Plea for universal peace" is a sculpture by..... .
- vii. is the art of making wares.
- viii. is said to be the first ceramist of Pak.

Q.B. Answer the following questions.

- Q (i) Describe the four steps of evaluating an artwork.
- Q (ii) What is the difference between functional wood work and decorative woodwork.
- Q (iii) Write notes on!
- i. Shahid sajjad
 - ii. Rabia Zuberi
 - iii. Makli Hills