

Design Resource

Glass Painting - Tripunithura, Kerala

Visual Art

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Rakshitha

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/glass-painting-tripunithura-kerala>

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Introduction

Glass painting is one of the independent art form of visual arts, which is a combination of both folk and fine art. This art form is highly regarded with several varieties. Across antiquity this kind of painting is found in major differences of style, technique and purpose that are used. Glass painting is one of the few types of painting that is multi-faceted that arrives in a number of forms such as reverse glass painting, fused glass painting, stained glass painting and many more to name. Reverse glass painting is one among such technique that is similar to the usual glass painting. This glass painting is considered as the sacral painting since middle age.

Generally glass painting is jumbled with stained glass painting. The stained glass painting is referred as the ancient Roman art and the reverse glass painting can also be traced back to Renaissance's fashioned art of Italy. Here the reverse glass painting differs from stained glass painting in several ways. This stained glass was used in the creation of windows in Church. The stained glass window was created out of many glass pieces that were colored by the additional powdered metals. Whereas in reverse glass painting, the clear glass is used as a canvas on which the paints were added. Firing helped the paints to stick to the glass. Gold gilt is often used in the creation of the painted glass work. This practice is known as 'verre eglomise', which was later popularized after an artist named Jean-Baptiste Glomy promoted it.

Now the glass painting is practiced worldwide. The root of this art reaches Romans and later popularized in Byzantine iconography. Further this ancient practice of glass painting was proficient in Italy that influenced the Renaissance art. By 17th century this art started spreading to different countries across the globe. In the mid of 18th century it spread to Europe and the artists of China learnt the art of glass painting from Europeans. Later in early 19th century the trade relations between East India Company and China brought this art to India. The works of Chinese artists of glass painting was immensely praised by the Indian rulers during those days. As this art touched the Indian shores, it showed its splendor in the western part of the country, especially in Gujarat state.

Indian style of glass painting was noted for their sheer brilliance, stunning clarity and use of rich bright colors. This art in India developed the local painters who focused on ornamental nature, portraits of God, figures narrating mythology, famous epic themes, icons and etc that were depicted. This form of art framed the stairs of acceptance among the masses. The artisans also made the depictions of the rulers and lords including their mistresses and dancing girls. The technique of each region differed from one another along with their creativity. These days it has also been incorporated in many new ways. In some parts of India like Gujarat and South India glass paintings that are produced, carry out two distinct ways. Firstly the popular contemporary style of glass painting and in the second the tradition of folk painting. In the contemporary style of glass painting, the predominant India has exceeded the barriers of religious prejudices and mythological inferences. Whereas the traditional paintings that are done on the glasses are typical folk features that are mentioned with great clarity of outset with a symmetrical bias. Here the drawings made are typically bold and vigorous.

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These glass paintings are also embellished with small glitters, gold leaf, and other shining particles that make the painting more attractive. The rich usage of bold and vibrant colors and semi-precious stones that are also used convey the creative splendor of the skillful artisans.

Glass painting themes vary from region to region. In Bihar, the glass paintings are very different in form and theme, when compared to other regions. They are usually large pictures of religious themes and are illustrated by their fine line work with vibrant colors. Bengal glass paintings can be recognized by the distinguishing figures and costumes and the soft pastel shades that are used. The tradition of glass painting in Thanjavur of Tamil Nadu is still carried out. Here the artisans create the paintings of Thanjavur sacred icon. The other major centres of glass painting that are located in India are Andhra Pradesh, Awadh, Deccan, Hyderabad, Karnataka, Kerala, Kutch, Mumbai, New Delhi, Tamil Nadu and Satara.



Glass painting of two women selling flower and fruits.

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Floral painting made on the glass attached to the window frame.



Painting of women and children in the traditional Kerala attire painted on Glass.

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Artisan's information and her craft work published in a native newspaper articles.

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Depiction of two women gossiping in glass painting.



Glass painting portraying a classical Indian Kathakali dancer.

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Glass Painting of Lord Krishna with bright colors.

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Portrait glass painting of an Egyptian mummy with a creative foil background.



Multi-colored Abstract painting portraying nature.

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Glass painting of an abstract form made of a combination of floral and geometrical figures with bright colors.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials used for the process of Glass Painting:

- **Glass:** Glass is the main substance that is used for painting.
- **Water Based Glass Colors:** Water based glass colors are used for the painting purpose on glass that does not require the heating process for the painted glass.
- **Painting Brush:** Painting brush is used for spreading the color and smudging the colors to bring-out the tonal variations in painting.
- **Waste Cloth:** Waste cloth is used for wiping out the excess of color.



Plain colors as well as sparkle paints are used for glass painting.

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Glass liners are used to draw the outlines of the design on glass.

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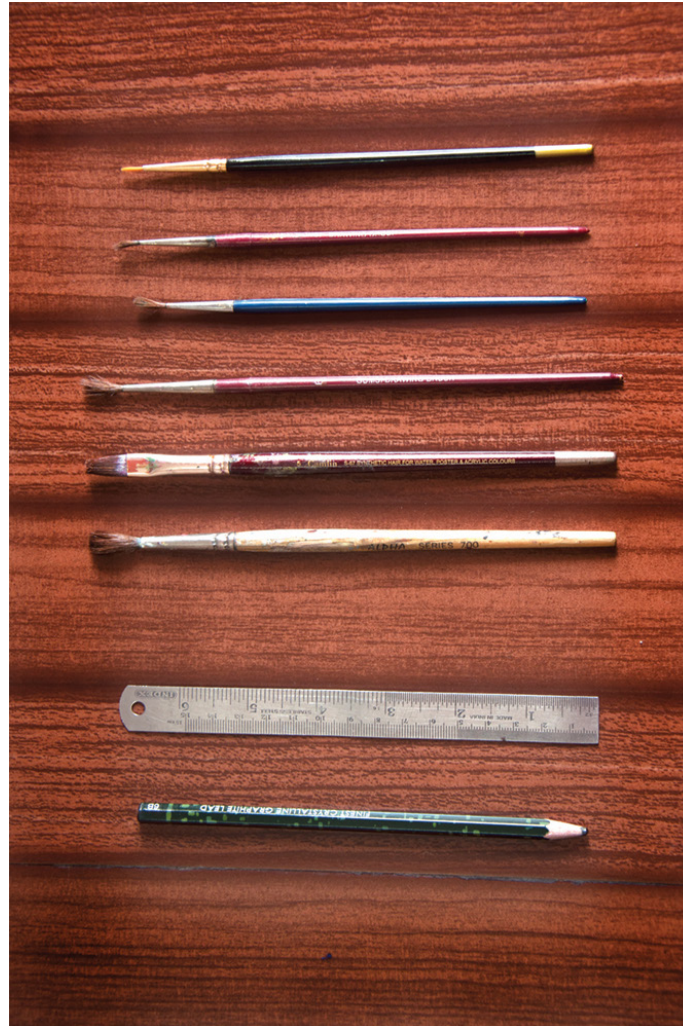
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Various sizes of brushes are used for glass painting.

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Making Process

Glass painting is a notable art form. The process of glass painting requires immense patience and determination from the artist's end. Highly skilled artisans who handle bold and confident strokes execute the paintings. The artisan named Bindu from Tripunithura, Kerala is one of the feminist artists. She tends to express herself and her thoughts through her works. Basically in her works, she gives prominence in narrating the emotions and bondages of women's life. She is been practicing this art since 2007. She has also exhibited her paintings in Durbar hall located at Ernakulam.

Glass painting as the name indicates, the painting is done on the clear glass. Artist initially thinks about the theme for the illustration that needs to be made on glass. Once the theme and the coloring materials are ready, the artisan draws the outline on the glass, boldly, with the tube of water based glass color, according to the desired sense. While outlining the sketch the color tube is gently pressed so that the even stream of color is flowed smoothly and uniformly. The pressure applied on the color tube should also be held uniformly until the sketch is complete. The tip of the color tube is cleaned after applying every single line to maintain the neat sketch. Later the inside area of the outlines are filled with the desired colors with many different shades by adding dark and light colors. The first shade of color is usually the lighter one that is applied. Later the dark colors are applied drop by drop to show the tonal variations of the painting. And then the light and the dark colors are blend nicely with the help of the painting brush. Air bubbles are removed with the help of the dropper and the painting is kept for drying. Thus once the painting is dried it is appropriate for the usage.

The same technique is also used for painting on OHP sheets and acrylic sheets by the artisan of Tripunithura.

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Initially outline of the design is drawn on the glass, in this case a glass tumbler.



Outline of design of the plant is drawn on the glass.



The design further is filled with required glass glitter colors.

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Copper pink glitter color is filled into the drawn design.



Blue glitter glass color is also used on the leaf.



Overlapping of glitter colors with another color is done to make the painting more effective.



Glass tumbler is enhanced with decorative glass glitter colors.

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Usually flat glass sheet or OHP sheet is used for glass painting.



The painting which are made on the glass or OHP sheet can be viewed by both the sides of the painting because the colors used are translucent.



Painting of a damsel lost in thoughts depicted on glass with vivacious colors.

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Products

Glass painting is affectionately referred as a highly valued art that has cherished for many years. Glass paintings are the most popular artifacts. The language of the artistic glass painting of Kerala is very expressive, lively and understandable. The complete appearance of glass with the semi-transparent paints on it provides an ethnic look. These glass paintings allow an expressive mix of form and dimension to glass. Glass paintings are used as the decorative articles and enrich the look of wall hangings, showpieces, napkin holders, cutlery and etc. Now a days the painters are coming up with more creative ideas of contemporary designs on variety of topics for glass painting. These glass paintings deserve the place as an antique collection for their beautiful designs and its craftsmanship.



A beautiful depiction of a lady surrounded by colorful flowers.

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Glass painting depicting of an Apsare (a beautiful lady) looking herself in mirror and getting adorned oneself.



Lord Ganesh depicted with animals and insects in a theme composed by the artisan through glass painting.

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Glass windows painted with floral design with glass colors.



Painting of a women fetching water and gazing at the deer interpreting to an epic character Sita from Ramayana.

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Glass painting of a women dressed in a tribal attire.



Depiction of two gold fishes with gold and yellow glass paints finished a lustrous effect from the aluminum foil stuck behind the painting.

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Abstract colorful painting by the artisan with a mind tree concept behind.



Portrait of a village woman painted on glass interpreting to an epic character Shakunthala from Mahabharata.

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Glass painting of two birds sitting on a tree branch full of colorful flowers.

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