

Design Course

History of Indian Illustration

A Combination of Art and Information

by

Neha Alice Kerketta

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/history-indian-illustration>



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Introduction

Illustration

- Noun
- The act of illustrating something.

In visual communication, an illustration is a visual aid used to communicate ideas, concepts, instructions or processes. It is a combination of art and information that aids or complements data. An illustration as opposed to a text explanation can improve perceptibly and thus help the viewer understand the topic better.



Alphabet Chart. (Image source)

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From minimal geometric shapes to elaborate detailed drawings, illustrations are made in a range of styles based on their intended purpose. They are used in print and digital, media and publishing in various forms like posters, flyers, magazines, books, teaching materials, animations, video games and films.



'Sandesh' cover art by Satyajit Ray. (Image source)

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Applications

Illustration design is a field that incorporates both function and form in various blends based on its application. The various forms of illustrations include:

• Fashion Illustration

In the field of fashion design and apparel production, illustrations are used for three main purposes.

1. To document existing clothing trends.
2. To conceptualise new garment ideas.
3. To make detailed technical sketches called 'Flat sketches' with exact measurements used for creating garment manufacturing standards.



(Image source)

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• Product Advertisements

Before the arrival of cameras, product advertisements were largely hand illustrated and printed. Illustrations for ads usually depict usage of the product.

E.g. Magazine ads



1960, Eno Fruit Salt Ad, (Image source)

• Product Packaging

Product packaging design often uses illustrations on the box.

E.g. - Matchboxes in India have a history of illustrations printed on them as part of branding.



Matchbook, Indian Match Box Labels. (Image source)

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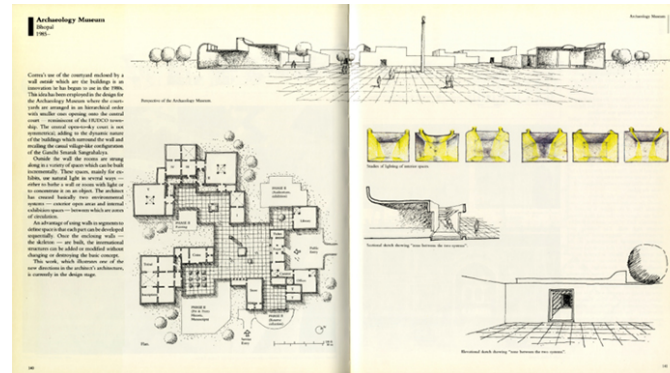
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• Technical Illustration

In the field of architecture, drawings depicting the structural plans of the buildings are used in many ways while designing. From concept sketches to form exploration sketches, illustration in architecture ensures a visual communication of ideas and concepts.

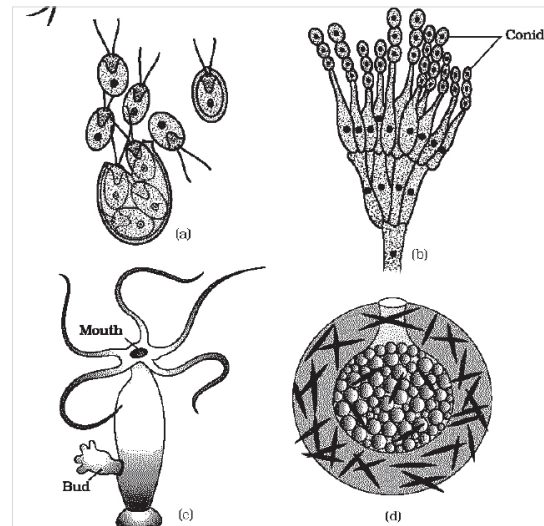


Architectural sketches by Charles Correa. (Image source)

• Medical Illustration

In the field of medical sciences, illustrations are used to document various life forms as well as to explain the biology of the organic form.

E.g. - Diagrams



NCERT Books, CBSE 12th Standard. (Image source)

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• Narrative Illustration

In comic books as well as graphic novels, illustrations are used to narrate the story along with text. E.g. - Ajanta paintings, cartoons

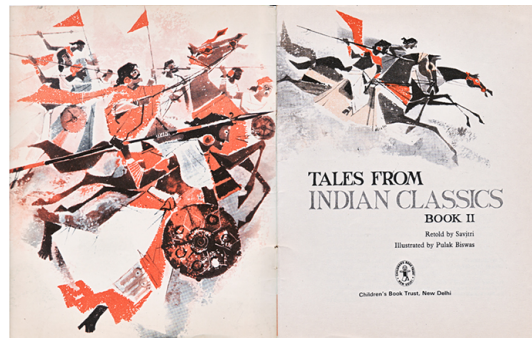


Amar Chitra Katha: Suppandi the simple. (Image source)

• Picture Books

Various children's books across languages use the medium of illustration to make stories more engaging for children. From books for young age groups to adults, illustrated images are a widely appreciated medium.

E.g. - Children's book



Pulak Biswas for Children's Book Trust. (Image source)

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• Archaeological Illustration

In the field of archaeology, illustrations are used to describe and document various properties of any structure under study.

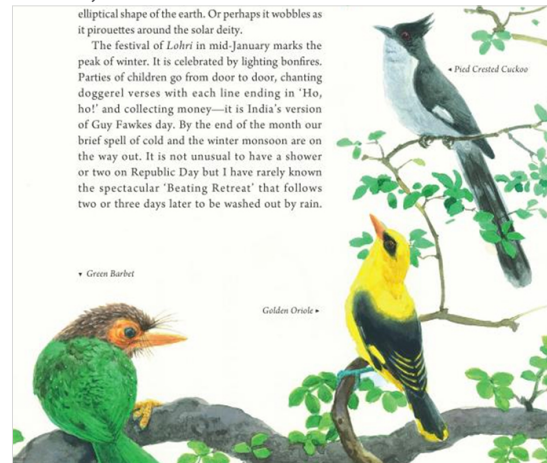
E.g. - Topographic sheets



Survey Sheet No. 45 D/7, Geographical Survey of India. (Image source)

• Book Illustration

From textbooks to novels, Illustrations are often used to complement the text. Unlike comic books and graphic novels, book illustrations are more text heavy with a few illustrated examples.



Delhi Through the seasons: Khuswant Singh, Illustrated by: Suddhasattwa Basu

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- **Graffiti**

Illustrations are used widely for informal but direct communication Via the medium of graffiti by various artists. Either as campaign, promotional art or decorative art, street art and murals are a significantly popular form of creative communication.



Street art by Inkbrushme (Image source)

- **Posters**

Film posters are a simple yet engaging way of reaching out to the audience. In India, hand painted film posters not only have a utilitarian purpose but also have a cultural legacy in promoting the two highly skilled creative fields of filmmaking and painting.

E.g. - Film Posters



Ramachandraiah prints (Image source)

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- **Decorative**

Illustrations are often used in decorative forms in India. Even though the form of the illustration may not signify a direct meaning but there are several cultural and intangible messages depicted in decorative illustrations of India.

E.g. - Tribal Tattoos, Festival Rangoli.



Gondan, Indigenous Tattoo art of India. (Image source)

- **Signboards**

In India, many small business owners use illustration to make hand painted signboards of their business field or name. Signboards are also used during campaign rallies and in public places for directions.

E.g. - Information signs, Protest Flyers, Signage, and Privilege sign.



Hand Painted Signboard at a Tailor shop (Image source)

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History of Illustration (Timeline)

Since the advancements in technology built the various styles and approaches to illustration, the story of how illustration grew in India also can be traced back to these advancements.

• 9000 BCE

The earliest illustrative drawings to be found in India go back to Bhimbetka Cave Paintings. Cave walls and stones being the favoured surface and paint used with hands representing basic forms from nature became the very first example of 'illustration' in India.



Cave Paintings of Bhimbetka. (Image source)

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• 3300 BCE

Indus Valley Civilisation emerging in the northwest part of India developed into the first organised settlement. This period saw the development of art, economics, language and architecture all of which had to be documented and recorded. Thus the Indus Valley script was developed. These symbols in the form of seals were applied in many ways, including carving, chiselling, painting and embossing and the seals themselves were also made of many different materials, such as soapstone, bone, shell, terracotta, sandstone, copper, silver and gold.



Indus Valley Seals. (Image source)

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- **2500 BCE**

Pots and clay were a popular choice to decorate with illustrations in the Indus Valley Civilisation. Red based pots were painted over by black paint to add further graphics on the pots for decorative purposes only. Red pottery with red and black slip-painted decoration - Indus Valley.



Red Pottery from Indus Valley. (Image source)

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• 2600-2000 BCE

Metals like gold, silver, brass, bronze, iron and tin, copper were used as printing materials too, incised with mirrored images and text.



Metal stamps from Indus Valley. (Image source)

• 15th to 6th century BCE

In southern India, palm leaves tala or tala or tali were widely used for writing manuscripts. Rig Veda itself contains many illustrations accompanying the texts, handwritten on birch bark or palm leaves.



Vedic Illustrations. (Image source)

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- **5th century BCE**

Buddhism not only urges the devout to hear, learn, remember and study the text but to obtain a good copy and to preserve it. This 'cult of the book' led to techniques for reproducing texts in great numbers, especially the short prayers or charms known as dharanis. Stamps were carved for printing these prayers on clay tablets from at least the seventh century, the date of the oldest surviving examples.

- **3rd century BCE**

Ashokan Pillars were used by emperor Ashoka for Buddhist documentation and spread of religion. Pillars and temple walls depict the life of Ashoka.



Wheel of Law at Sanchi. (Image source)

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• 2nd century BCE to 1st Century CE

Ajanta Frescos was created during the Satvahana empire on cave walls.



Wall paintings from Ajanta Caves. (Image source)

• 3rd Century

During the Gupta Period art and craft in north India reached its peak. Textiles woodblock printing on textiles emerged as a major craft. Wooden blocks were also used for writing.

• 6th to 7th Century

Chalukyas Art craft reaches its zenith and temple architecture flourishes.



Badami cave temples. (Image source)

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• 7th Century

During this time literature in various parts of India exploded. Paper, invented in China was introduced to India in 7th century by Chinese prisoners from Samarkand but was not in popular use. During this time The Palas of Bengal pioneered miniature paintings.



Astasahasrika-prajnaparamita, Mahipala era, c. 983 A.D. (Image source)

• 9th to 13th Century

Coins and temples are illustrated with the life of the Cholas. Scenes from Ramayanam Mahabharatam, Puranas and lives of the 63 Nayanmars are sculptured in narrative panels. The Cholas excelled in the art of portrait making. The best specimens of portraits are found on the walls of various temples from the Chola dynasty.



Coins of Chola Empire. (Image source)

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• 12th to 16th Century

During the Mughal Period of Turks and Mongols, Akbar nama/Ain-i-Akbari, A chronicle of Emperor Akbar is commissioned by Akbar Himself and written by Abul Fazl. At least 49 different artists contributed to illustrating the stories in the form of Mughal miniature paintings. Apart from Painting on paper and Architecture, Mughals also patronise 'Kalamkari', an art form of illustrating on textiles.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

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• 16th Century

The first printing press in India reached Goa, in 1556, from Portugal. In 1568, the first illustrated cover page (the illustration being done with the relief technique of woodblock) was printed in Goa for the book 'Constituciones Do Arcebisado De Goa'.

• 1706 - Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, a Danish missionary, arrived at Tharangambadi and printing in India could flourish again.

• 17th Century

During the East India period, Chamba Rumal craft originated, developed and flourished in the erstwhile state of Chamba.



Chamba Rumal depicting the life of Krishna.
(Image source)

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• 18th Century

The Hastividyārṇava, an illustrated manuscript of Assam was written by Sukumar Barkaith, commissioned under the patronage of King **Siva Singha** and his queen consort **Phuleswari**. The manuscript deals with the management and care of **elephants** in the royal stables.



Hastividyarnava, Illustrated manuscript of Assam. (Image source)

Oriental scenery by William and Thomas Daniell (1769-1837), printed in monochrome and individually stained in coloured ink became the first example of single sheet printing on a large scale in India. The first magazines were published by the British. The earliest to appear was the Oriental Magazine; or, Calcutta Amusement (1785–86).



Oriental scenery by William and Thomas Daniell. (Image source)

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- **1816** - The first printed illustrations of engravings by an Indian artist were by Ramachand Roy for the book An-nadamangal. Published by Ganga Kishore Bhattacheryee, a journalist, teacher and reformer, it was printed at the Ferris and Company press of Calcutta.



Annadamangal illustration. (Image source)

- **1822** - Credit for the first single sheet lithographic print goes to the French artist De Savignac. He made a lithographic reproduction of a portrait of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal, after an original painting by George Chinnery.
- **1824** - The Government Lithographic Press was established in Calcutta in 1824 leading to the printing and publishing of lithographic illustrations.
- **1850** - The Madras School of Art is established in Madras



Government College of Fine Arts, initially known as the Madras School of Art. (Image source)

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- **1854** - School of Industrial Arts in Calcutta is founded.
- **1861** - The Archaeological Survey of India was founded, leading to extensive documentation of Indian subcontinent in the form of detailed maps and illustrations of heritage sites of India.



Churches of Old Goa. (Image source)

- **1866** - Sir J.J. School of Arts, is founded in Mumbai.



Sir J.J. School of Arts. (Image source)

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- 1866 - Jeypore School of Industrial Art, is established in Jaipur.



Blue Pottery from Jaipur school of Art. (Image source)

- 1875 - Mayo School of Art established in Lahore.



Mayo School of Art. (Image source)

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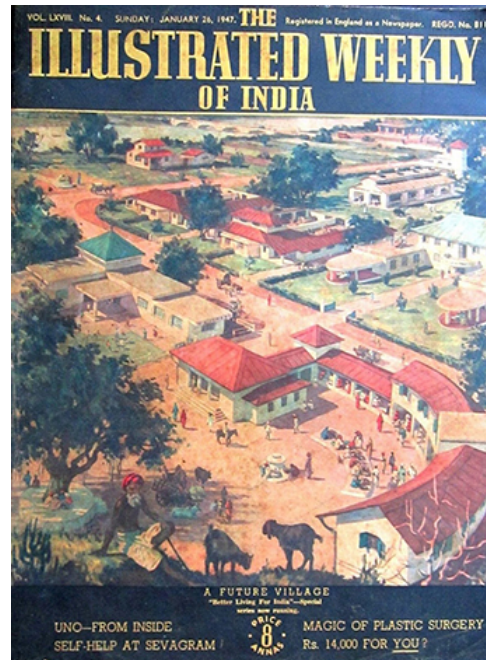
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- **1880** - The Illustrated Weekly of India starts publication.



The Illustrated Weekly of India. (Image source)

- **1895** - Upendrakishore first introduced modern block making, including half-tone and colour block making, in South Asia. When the reproduction using woodcut line blocks of his illustrations for one of his books, “Chheleder Ramayan” were very poor, he imported books, chemicals and equipment from Britain to learn the technology of block making. After mastering this, in 1895 he successfully set up a business of making blocks.



Illustrations from the book Chheleder Ramayan. (Image source)

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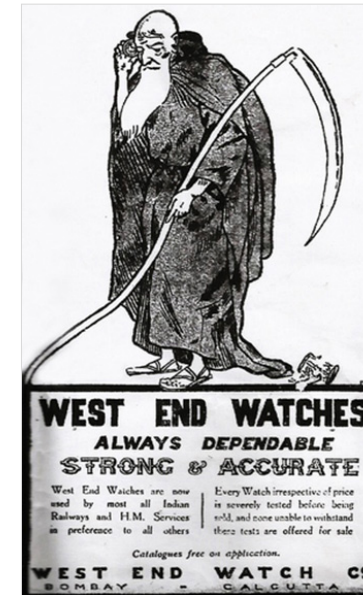
- 1899 - The oleographic prints of Raja Ravi Varma published from his lithographic press at Lonavala in Maharashtra.



Arjun Subhadra by Raja Ravi Varma. ([Image source](#))

- 1905 - Dattaram & Co, oldest existing Indian agency in Girgaum in Bombay.

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Print ad by Dattaram & Co. ([Image source](#))

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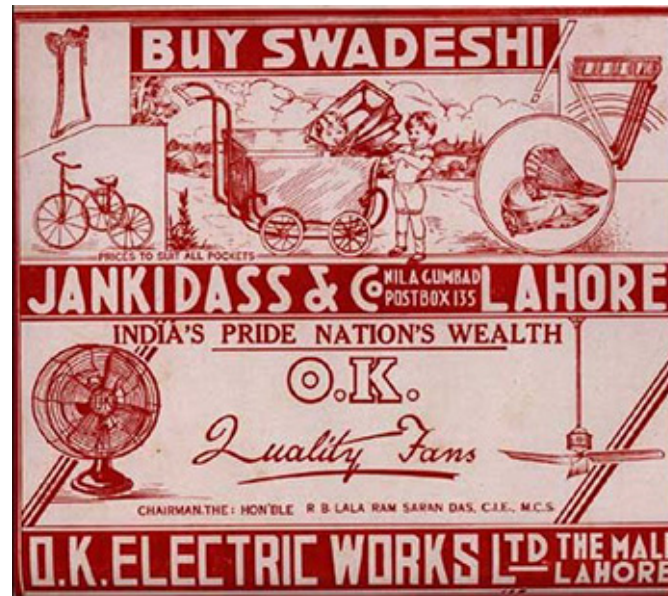
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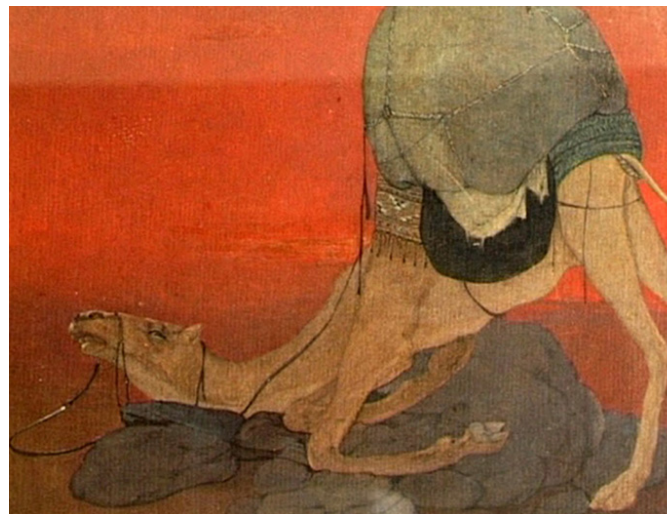
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- 1905 - Swadeshi Movement gaining momentum, rejection of 'company style' art.



Buy Swadeshi Ad Campaign. (Image source)

- 1907 - Indian Society of Oriental Art is founded by Abanindranath Tagore.



Journey's End, 1913 by Abanindranath Tagore. (Image source)

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- 1907 - Bhartiya Bhandar Pustakalaya, was started in 1907 in Pakistan.
- 1910 - Sir J. J. College of Architecture founded in Mumbai.



Sir J. J. College of Architecture. (Image source)

- 1916 - Banaras Hindu University, established in Varanasi.



Banaras Hindu University. (Image source)

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- 1919 - The Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore established a school of art in Santiniketan called Kala Bhawan.



Kala Bhawan. (Image source)

- 1924 - Statesman Weekly, an illustrated magazine of Indian news and views begins publishing.
- 1926 - Balak Magazine Published by Acharya Ramlochan Saran.
- 1932 - Mathrubhumi Illustrated Weekly, a malayalam magazine begins publishing in Kozhikode.



Mathrubhumi Illustrated Weekly, Logo. (Image source)

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- 1936 - Rupa & Co. (Rupa Publications) was founded in Kolkata by D. Mehra
- 1942 - College of art



(Image source)

- 1942 - Indian Thought Publications is a publisher founded in 1942, in Mysore by R. K. Narayan.
- 1944 - K.C.S. Paniker founded the Progressive Painters' Association (PPA).
- 1946 - Air India's launches it's mascot, the Maharajah (Emperor). It was created by Bobby Kooka, the then-commercial director of Air India, and Umesh Rao, an artist with J. Walter Thompson.



Air India Mascot. (Image source)

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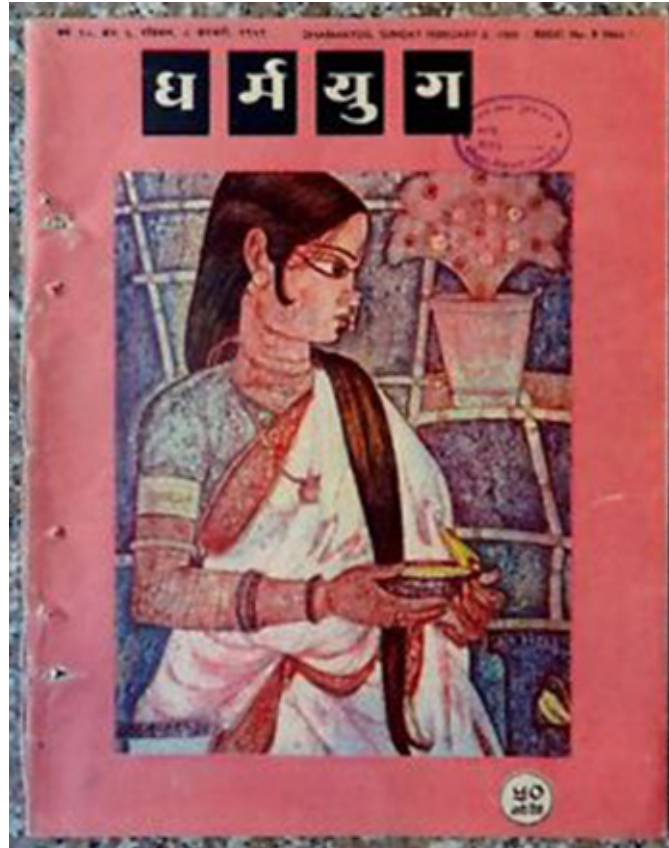
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IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/history-indian-illustration/history-illustration-timeline>

- 1947 - Chandamama, an illustrated children's monthly magazine is published.
- 1949 - 'Dharmyug', a Hindi pictorial weekly is published.



Dharmyug Magazine cover. (Image source)

- 1950 - Bhartiya Bhandar Pustakalaya was re-established in India after partition as 'Punjabi Pustak Bhandar'.
- 1952 - Post independence, a group of six artists - K. H. Ara, S. K. Bakre, H. A. Gade, M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza and Francis Souza, founded the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group.

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Progressive Artist's Group, Bombay, 1949
1st row (left to right): F. N. Souza, K. H. Ara, H. A. Gade
2nd row (left to right): M. F. Husain, S. K. Bakre, S. H. Raza

Progressive Artists' Group. (Image source)

- 1952 - India Book House is formed in Mumbai.
- 1957 - Children's Book Trust (CBT) is founded.

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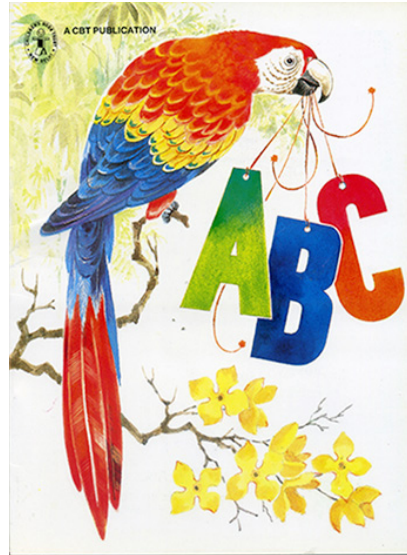
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Book cover by CBT. (Image source)

- 1961 - National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) educational books publisher is founded



NCERT Logo. (Image source)

- 1961 - Design Colleges like NID founded in 1961.



National Institute of Design. (Image source)

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- 1967 - Amul India designs its mascot 'Amul girl'.



Amul Girl. (Image source)

- 1967 - Amar Chitra Katha, a comic series was started by Anant Pai in Mumbai.



Amar Chitra Katha, Book cover. (Image source)

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- 1969 - Industrial Design Centre is founded in IIT Bombay, Mumbai.



Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay. (Image source)

- 1969 - Chompak, a children's magazine is published by the Delhi Press Group. Lotpot, a Hindi comic magazine published by **Mayapuri Group** of publications also published.
- 1971 - Cartoonist Pran Kumar Sharma, published the cartoon character Chacha Chaudhary for Lotpot magazine.



Chacha Chaudhary, illustrated by Pran. (Image source)

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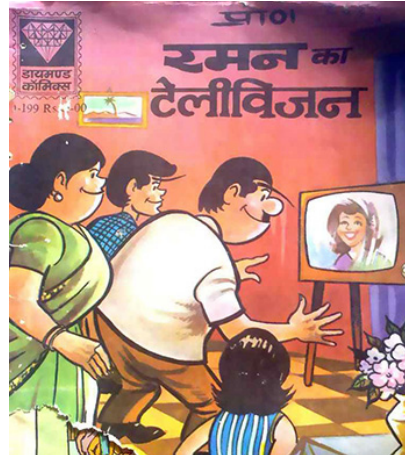
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Source:

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- 1974 - DC books, a publishing house is established in Kottayam, Kerala.
- 1978 - Diamond comics P Ltd. is established in New Delhi.



Diamond Comics. (Image source)

- 1980 - Chitra Bharti Kathamala was a popular Indian comic book publication during the early 80's.
- 1986 - Raja Pocket Books published in 1986 by Rajkumar Gupta. Later grew to become Raj comics.



Characters of Raj comics. (Image source)

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- 1986 - National Institute of Fashion Technology is founded.



National Institute of Fashion Technology. (Image source)

- 1982 - Eklavya Foundation is an Indian NGO, setup in Madhya Pradesh. Eklavya aimed at reviving the Indian School Education system by developing the National Curriculum Framework.

- 1988 - Katha is a non-profit and non government organisation set up in New Delhi with the aim of community development, child welfare by education and literature. Founded by Geeta Dharmarajan.



CBSE recommended books by Katha. (Image source)

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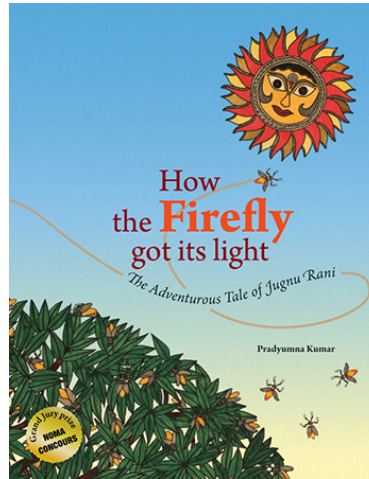
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Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/history-indian-illustration/history-illustration-timeline>

- 1984 - Mapin Publishing is an Indian art book publishing company started in Ahmedabad by Bipin Shah and Mallika Sarabhai.



Book Cover, Mapin Publishing. (Image source)

- 1984 - Urvashi Butalia and Ritu Menon set up India's first feminist publishing house, Kali for Women.



Kali for Women, Logo. (Image source)

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- **1990's** - Computers enter Indian Markets leading to blossoming of design firms and private design institutes as well as design departments in the industry owing to market liberalisation.

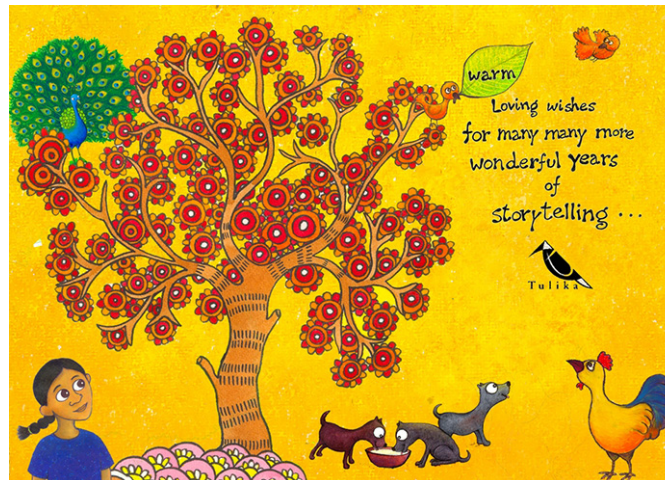
- **1994** - Orijit Sen published his illustrated novel, River of Stories, regarded as one of India's first graphic novel.



River of Stories by Orijit Sen. (Image source)

- **1994** - Tara Books is an independent publishing house started by Gita Wolf in Chennai.

- **1996** - Tulika Publishers was founded as an independent publishing house by Radhika Menon. Based in Chennai, they published multi-lingual children's books.



Tulika Publishers. (Image source)

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- 2001 - Indian Institute of Cartoonists is founded in Bangalore.
- 2004 - Zubaan, a publishing house was formed headed by Urvashi, the co-founder of Kali for women.



Zubaan, Logo. (Image source)

- 2007 - Campfire Graphic Novels is set up in Delhi.



Graphic art by Campfire Graphic Novels. (Image source)

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- 2008 - Independent illustrators emerge pan India with new forms of self illustrated publications.



Graphic Novels 'Kari' by Amruta Patil. (Image source)

- 2012 - Adivani Publications, founded in Kolkata.
- 2012 - Abhishek Singh's 'Krishna- The Journey Within' becomes the first Indian graphic novel to be published by Image Comics, an American publisher.
- 2014 - Penthrill Publication, founded in Kohima, Nagaland.
- 2014 - Kickstarter crowdfunded Graphic novel released called 'Black Mumba'. Written by Ram V and featuring art by Devmalya Pramanik, Kishore Mohan, Rosh and Aditya Bidikar. Black Mumba is a collection of short stories revolving around life in Mumbai.



Cover, Black Mumba. (Image source)

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Illustration Processes in Detail

• Painting and Stamping on various materials

Prior to any technological advancement, the earlier civilisations relied on painting on materials like leaves, Tree Bark, Fabric, Metal, Ceramic and Plaster of Paris. To make prints clay or wood carved seals and stamps were also used. Metal Stamps were even used for marking clay bricks and imprinting on animals. Stone sculpting was often used to illustrate the zeitgeist of the era and mythological stories on temple walls.

• Woodblock Printing

Woodblock printing is a technique originating in China for printing text, images or patterns on textiles and paper. The technique involves creating a 'relief' of the content onto a piece of wood by carving. The block is carved along the grain of the wood and ink is then evenly spread on the wooden surface. By pressing the flat material against the piece of inked wood, the image is then transferred onto the material. Earlier woodblock printing was used in India to print on textiles. Eg: Bagh Prints. Once paper was introduced, the technique further developed to print large sheets of paper using wooden blocks. For making coloured prints, different blocks are used, each with a different colour. Eg: Ajrak Prints.



Ajrak hand block printing. (Image source)

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• Illustration as Fine Art (Handmade)

Drawing by hand is the oldest method of creating illustrations. What has evolved so far is mostly innovation of tools to help an artist draw. Highly trained fine artists are commissioned as illustrators to create innovative and original ideas for different mediums and bringing them closer to the masses. Owing to the influence of social media and growing demand for illustration skills, many independent illustrators today make their own artworks and self publish.

• Printing Press

A printing press is a mechanical device that transfers ink to paper in the form of print. It was invented in 1440 by a German goldsmith named Johannes Gutenberg. But printing technology did not reach India till about a hundred years after its invention. The first printing press in India reached Goa, in 1556, from Portugal, as requested by a Goan clergy of Portuguese origin. For a long time, printing was only used to publish bible in vernacular languages to spread missionary work. In 1568, the first illustrated cover page (the illustration being done with the relief technique of woodblock) was printed in Goa for the book *Constituciones Do Arcebispado De Goa*. Eventually, printing led to a language and literature revolution in the country as it spread from Goa to other parts of the country.

• Printmaking

A print or 'chaap' is an impression of an object transferred from one surface to another. Printmaking is the art of creating printed images of original artwork. Due to the existence of different printing techniques printmaking can be artistically explored not just for duplicating artworks done in other mediums but also for creating innovative artwork by using printmaking techniques as a tool for artistic expression.

• Relief Techniques - Woodcut, Linocut



Haren Das, wood-cut print. 1950. ([Image source](#))

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- **Intaglio Techniques** - Engraving, Drypoint, Mezzotint, Etching, Aquatint, Spit bite



Sanar Kar, wood Intaglio, 1978. (Image source)

- **Stencil Techniques** - Screenprint, Pochoir



Jyoti Bhatt, Screen-print. (Image source)

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• **Other Techniques** - Photogravure, Lithography, Collagraph, Digital Prints



Somenath Hore, Lithography, 1977. ([Image source](#))

• **Digital Illustrations**

The method of creating illustrated images using digital tools like computer and mouse along with a software interface is called digital representation technique, the result of which is digital illustrations also known as Computer Illustrations.

Softwares advancements: Microsoft paint 1985 > Corel draw 1989 > Adobe Photoshop 1990 > Google Tilt pen 2016
Input tools advancements: Mouse 1964 > Pen tablet 1983 > Drawing tablets 1989 > Google Tilt pen 2016

• **Illustration in Craft**

Kalamkari is the art of storytelling with hand painted and printed visuals on a large piece of cloth. These cloth pieces were carried around by groups of singers, musicians and painters called Chitrakattis who moved from village to village reciting the great stories of Hindu mythology. These performers would illustrate their accounts by painting them on the spot using simple tools and organic dyes. The Mughals patronised this art in Golconda, Andhra Pradesh and named the artists 'Qualamkars' who created works of 'kalamkari'.

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Kalamkari artisan at work. (Image source)

Mithila painting (also known as Madhubani painting) is the art of painting on cloth, handmade paper and canvas, practiced in the Mithila region of India. Painting is done with simple tools, sometimes even fingers, twigs and matchsticks, using natural dyes and pigments. The graphic style is the most striking quality of these paintings as they are very peculiar in their simple yet painfully detailed geometric patterns and colours. Often depicting rituals such as birth, marriage and festivals and sometimes in moments from daily lives.



Madhubani Painting. (Image source)

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Pattachitra is the art of scroll painting on cloth depicting mythological stories originating from Orissa.



Pattachitra artisan at work. (Image source)

Chamba Rumal is the art of embroidered illustrations on a piece of cloth from Chamba, India. The illustration style is influenced by the Pahari style of miniature painting. Silk threads are used on cloth to depict various scenes ranging from famous battles to wedding ceremonies.



Chamba Rumal. (Image source)

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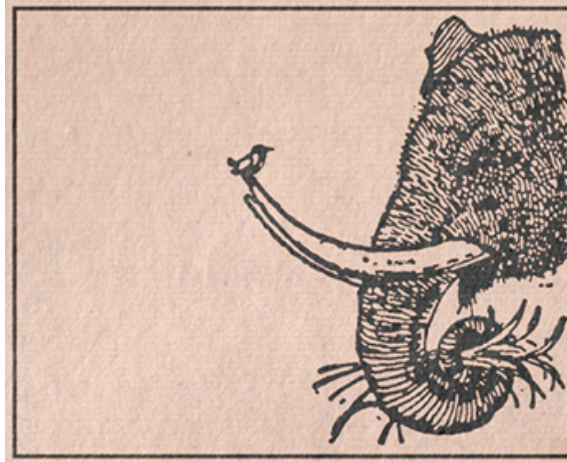
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Prominent Indian Illustrators

Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury - Illustrator and Writer



The Weaverbird & the Elephant, Upendrakishore Ray, 1912. (Image source)

Satyajit Ray - Filmmaker and Illustrator



Collection of book covers, Satyajit Ray, 1961. (Image source)

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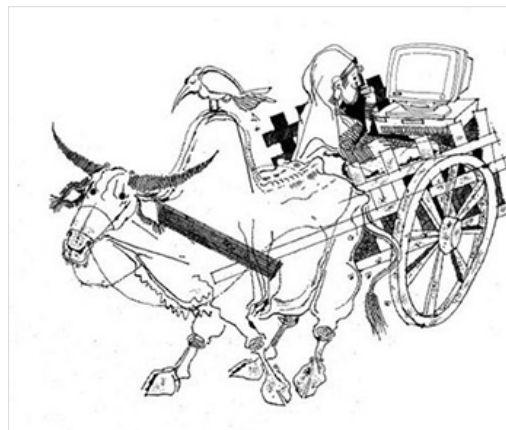
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A.S. Nair - Illustrator, Mathrubhumi weekly



Niyogam, Mathrubhumi by A.S.Nair. (Image source)

Mickey Patel - Cartoonist, Painter, Designer and Illustrator



Cartoon illustrated by Mickey Patel. (Image source)

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Vaddadi Papaiah - Illustrator

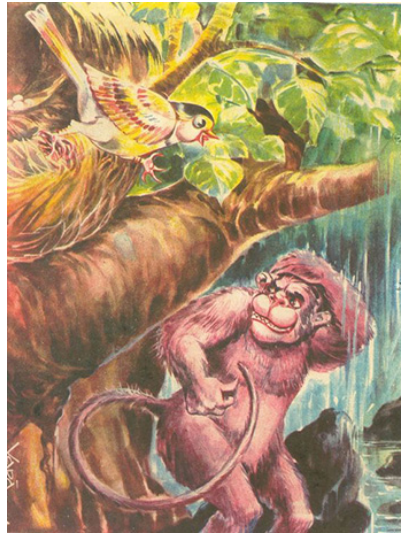
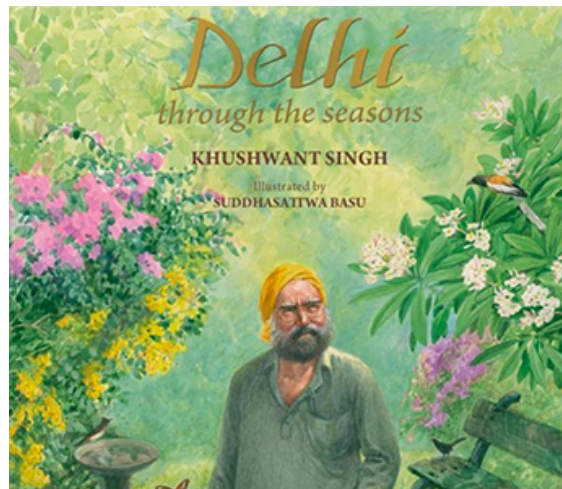


Illustration for Chandamama Books, 1961. (Image source)

Suddhasattwa Basu- Illustrator



Illustrations for the book 'Delhi Through the Seasons'. (Image source)

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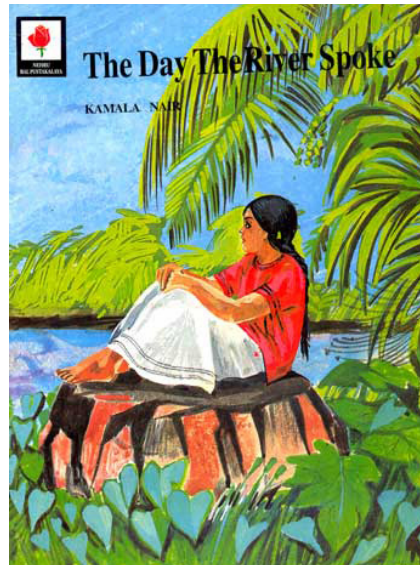
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Jagdish Joshi - Illustrator



Book illustration by Jagdish Joshi for Children's book trust,1990 (Image source)

Raobail - Illustrator



Illustrations by Raobail. (Image source)

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K. Shankar Pillai - Cartoonist, 1932



Cartoon by K. Shankar. (Image source)

Abid Surti - Cartoonist



Book Illustration by Abid Surti. (Image source)

Gopulu - Illustrator



Illustration by Gopulu for Ananda Vikatan. (Image source)

M.T. V. Acharya - Illustrator



Book illustration by M.T.V. Acharya for Chandamama Children's Books. (Image source)

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Jayanto Banerjee - Illustrator and Cartoonist

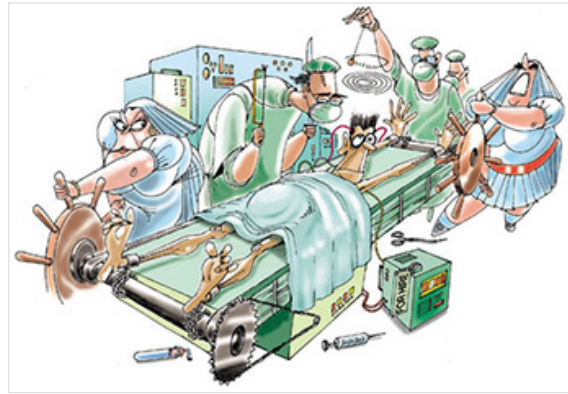
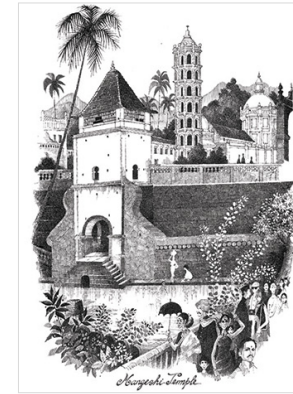


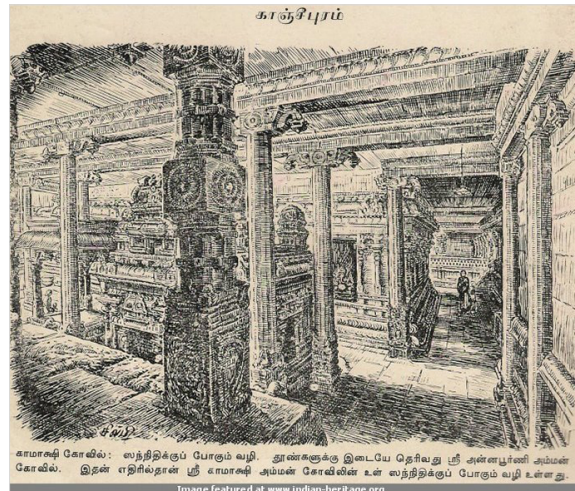
Illustration for Target Magazine by Jayanto Banerjee. (Image source)

Mario Miranda - Illustrator and Cartoonist



Illustrations of GOA by Mario Miranda. (Image source)

P.M.Sreenivasan - Illustratortorator



Detailed illustration for Ananda Vikatan. (Image source)

R. K. Laxman - Illustrator and Cartoonist



The common man, cartoon character created by R. K. Laxman. (Image source)

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Manjula Padmanabhan - Writer and Illustrator



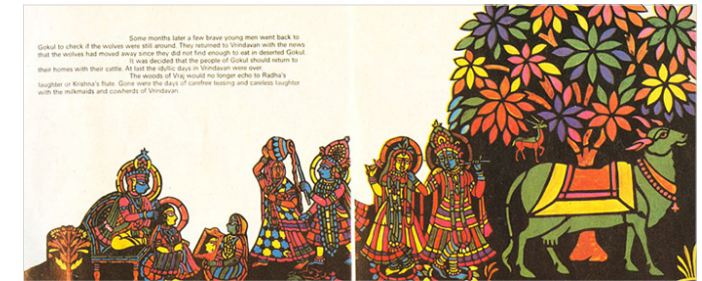
Illustration from the book 'Where's that cat?' by Manjula Padmanabhan. (Image source)

Amruta Patil - Writer and illustrator



Illustrations by Amruta Patil. (Image source)

Manu Desai - Designer, Illustrator



Childrens Book - Krishnaleela, Illustrated by Manu Desai. (Image source)

Avinash Godbole - Artist and Illustrator



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October	●	●	●	●	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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Illustration for Calendar of Zaveri Jiten Ramniklal, Illustrated by Avinash Godbole. (Image source)

Design Course

History of Indian Illustration

A Combination of Art and Information

by

Neha Alice Kerketta

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/history-indian-illustration/prominent-indian-illustrators>

Pulak Biswas - Artist and Illustrator



A village scene, Illustrated by Pulak Biswas. (Image source)

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State of Illustrators Today

The British opened art schools in India to train artists in European styles of art, who were then employed in British advertising agencies. The job of an 'illustration artist' first emerged during this time since the British extensively wanted to document India. Many famous Indian illustrators emerged from these schools but had an excessive European influence in their work. Seeking an alternative to European influenced art in imperial India, Gagendranath aimed at reviving the inherited wealth of Indian art practices while using modern printmaking techniques. Rabindranath Tagore furthered the cause by establishing Kala Bhawan in 1919. Thus began the era of Indian fine art revival. More artists could now have their work mass-produced as prints and spread across the continent. From there on the students went and learned not only modern reproduction techniques but also nurtured their own Indian Indigenous art practices and Indian fine art illustrators slowly rose to prominence. Post-Independence Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru pushed the introduction of design in nation-building. With the growing demand for communication and broadcast, various fields of illustration emerged. From architecture to industrial design, filmmaking to books, today skilled illustrators are thriving in India and with them, Indian Indigenous art is also slowly gaining back its prominence.



Hand embroidered portraits by PLAY CLAN. (Image source)

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Resources, Books and Blogs

Books:

- 101 Indian Children's book we love! by [Samina Mishra](#)
- Diamond Comics
<http://www.diamondcomicsindia.in/company-profile.php>
- History of Publication
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/publishing/Magazine-publishing#ref398433>
- The History of Printmaking in India
<http://www.saffronart.com/sitepages/printmaking/history.aspx>
- A for Ajrak- The A to Z of Block Printing, Nina Sabnani
<https://tinyurl.com/hkjb82a>

Blogs:

- Pinaki Designs
<http://pinakide.blogspot.in/2005/11/covers-of-bengali-books.html>
- Indian Institute of Cartoonists
<http://www.cartoonistsindia.com/htm/history.htm>
- The story of Indian art
<http://engrave.in/blog/indian-art-gaganen-dranath-tagore/>
- Pao Collective
<https://paocollective.wordpress.com/>

Studio:

- Bombay Duck Designs
<http://bombayduckdesigns.com/>
- Kokaachi
<https://store.kokaachi.com/>
- Studio Kohl
<http://studiokohl.com/>
- Turmeric Design
<https://www.facebook.com/turmericdesignstudio/>

Artists:

- Harshwardhan Kadam
<http://inkbrushnme.com/>
- Radhashyam Raut
https://tarabooks.com/?s=Radhashyam+Raut&post_type=product

Events:

- Comic con India
<http://comicconindia.com/>
- Aravani Art Project
https://www.facebook.com/pg/aravaniartproject/about/?ref=page_internal

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Places:

- Dilli Haat, New Delhi
- Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi
- National Museum, New Delhi
- National Library, Mumbai

Publishers:

- Rupa Publications
<http://rupapublications.co.in/>
- Adivaani Publication
<https://adivaani.org/about/>
- Zubaan Books
<http://zubaanbooks.com/>
- Children's Book Trust
<http://www.childrensbooktrust.com/>
- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
<http://ncert.nic.in/>
- Tulika Books
<http://www.tulikabooks.com/>
- PenThrill Publication House
<https://www.facebook.com/PenThrillPublicationHouse/>

Magazines:

- Chandamama Weekly
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandamama>
- Gaysi Magazine
<http://gaysifamily.com/>

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Contact Details

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