


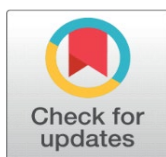
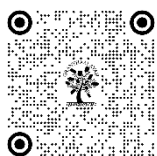
TRANSCENDENT SCULPTURES: EXPLORING THE EIGHT-FOLD PATH OF BUDDHISM THROUGH INNOVATIVE ARTISTRY

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ABSTRACT

Some artists draw inspiration from their personal experiences, emotions, and perspectives, and may use their art as a means of expressing their innermost thoughts and feelings. Other artists may be interested in capturing the beauty of nature, exploring the human form, or delving into social and political issues. Some artists may be motivated by a desire to create visually stunning or thought-provoking works, while others may be more focused on creating pieces that reflect their cultural or historical identity. Ultimately, Artists' subject matter choices can be influenced. It is influenced by a number of factors, including their personal characteristics interests and experiences, their artistic goals and vision, and the broader cultural and social context in which they live. Over the course of history, artists have explored the Eight-fold Path philosophy of the Buddha in a variety of mediums. If an artist were to choose this as a subject for their work, they could approach it in a number of different ways. The artist could explore the challenges and triumphs of following the path, as well as the trans-formative power of enlightenment. Regardless of the approach taken, an artist who chooses the Eight-fold Path as a subject for their work would have a rich and meaningful philosophical tradition to draw from, offering endless possibilities for creative expression and interpretation. There is a new dimension to right thinking, right speech, right memory, right livelihood, as well as right exercise and right samadhi. A combination of black marble and sand stone has been used to create the sculptures.

Keywords: Buddha, Inter-Most Thought, Eight-Fold Path, Influenced, Sculptor, Stone Sculptures



1. INTRODUCTION

Art and Buddhism share a deep connection, as both are concerned with exploring the nature of human experience and the search for deeper meaning and understanding. Buddhism, which originated in ancient India over 2,500 years ago, is a philosophy and way of life that emphasizes the importance of inner peace, compassion, and the pursuit of enlightenment.

Art, on the other hand, is means of creative expression that allows artists to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences through visual, auditory, or performance-based mediums. Throughout history, artists have drawn inspiration from Buddhist philosophy, creating works that explore themes such as impermanence, suffering, and the search for enlightenment.

The Eight-fold Path is one of the key concepts in Buddhism, outlining the steps to enlightenment and liberation. Right Understanding, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration are a few of these stages. The insights and interpretations of artists have been expressed through visual symbols, storytelling, and other artistic techniques.

Many Buddhist cultures, art has also played a significant role in religious and spiritual practices. Buddhist temples and monasteries are often adorned with intricate sculptures, paintings, and other artworks that serve as visual aids to meditation and contemplation. These works often depict scenes from the life of the Buddha, as well as other important figures and symbols from Buddhist tradition.

Overall, the connection between art and Buddhist philosophy is a rich and diverse field of exploration, offering endless possibilities for artists to draw inspiration and create works that speak to the deepest aspects of the human experience.

Buddhism continues to evolve as a religion in many parts of the world. The proper perspective, a precise comprehension of how things work, the right purpose, avoiding thoughts of attachment, enmity, and harmful intent are among the eight elements of the Path. Between austerity and sensual pleasure, the Eight-fold Path is the Middle Way established by the Buddha. Buddhists hold that the Middle Way or the Eight-fold Path, also known as the Path to Nirvana, describes how individuals should live in order to attain Nirvana. The Buddha taught us that in order to find pleasure, we must fully comprehend the root reasons of our suffering. A fundamental change in how we view and interact with the world and ourselves is necessary. Every facet of existence and every moment of life are touched by a practice of the Path. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) The Eight-fold Path of the Middle Way exhorts us to move away from extremes and pursue the straightforward path. Nirvana simply means cessation: stopping to be passionate, aggressive, or ignorant; ceasing to engage in conflict in an effort to prove our existence to others or to survive. We don't need to battle to survive since we have already done so; this additional difficulty is only a result of our loss of faith in how things are already working. Living a flawless life in terms of morals, spirituality, and intellect results in the recognition of Ultimate Reality as well as in total freedom, joy, and serenity.

2. METHODOLOGY

A sculptor were to choose The Buddha's philosophy of the Eight-fold Path as a subject for their work, they could approach it in a variety of ways, depending on their artistic vision and chosen medium. Here are a few possible approaches:

Sculptures representing each step of the Eight-fold Path: The sculptor could create a series of sculptures, each representing one of the Eight-fold Path steps. Each sculpture could be created in a distinct style, using different materials and techniques to reflect the unique qualities of each step. For example, a sculpture representing Right Speech could be created in a flowing, organic form to represent the power of words, while a sculpture representing Right Mindfulness could be

more abstract and geometric, to reflect the focus and discipline required for mindful awareness.

An abstract sculpture representing the Eight-fold Path: Alternatively, the sculptor could create an abstract sculpture that embodies the principles of the Eight-fold Path as a whole. This sculpture could be created using a range of materials and techniques, from traditional stone carving to modern metalworking, and could be designed to provoke thought and contemplation about the nature of the path and its meaning.

A narrative sculpture series depicting the journey along the Eight-fold Path: The sculptor could also create a series of sculptures that tells a story or narrative about the journey along the Eight-fold Path. Each sculpture could represent a key moment or experience along the path, such as overcoming obstacles, discovering new insights, or achieving enlightenment. These sculptures could be arranged in sequence to create a visual narrative, allowing viewers to follow the journey and experience the transformative power of the path.

Overall, there are many creative possibilities for a sculptor to explore The Buddha's philosophy of the Eight-fold Path through their art. Whether using traditional or modern techniques, abstract or representational forms, the sculptor could create powerful works that reflect the deep wisdom and transformative power of this ancient philosophy. Interactive sculpture can serve as a means of artistic expression, allowing the audience to participate and engage with the artwork in an experiential way.

3. OBJECTIVE

- 1) The main objective of this article is to describe the impact of Ashtanga Marg Darshana in the modern world through the stone sculpture.
- 2) A sculptor's abstract form inspired by Ashtanga Marg Darshana themes is also discussed in this article.
- 3) As well, to create awareness about the teachings of Buddhism and how to live a fruitful life through sculptural exploration.

Process: There are a few steps involved in manually carving stone, but they vary depending on the design and tools used:

Design: The first step is to create a design or pattern for the carving. This can be done on paper or develop maquette using a clay.

Select the sandstone: Choose a suitable piece of sandstone for the project. Sandstone is a sedimentary rock that is relatively soft and easy to carve.

Roughing out: Use a metal chisel and hammer to roughly shape the sandstone block into the desired form. This involves removing large chunks of stone to create the basic shape of the sculpture.

Detailing: Once the basic shape has been established, use smaller different type of chisels and hand tools to refine the details of the design. This can be a time-consuming process that requires a lot of skill and patience.

Sanding and polishing: Once the sculptor is satisfied with the overall shape and details of the sculpture, they will begin sanding and polishing the stone. This involves using progressively finer sandpaper to create a smooth finish on the surface of the sculpture. Depending on the desired finish, the sculptor may also use a polishing compound to give the stone a shine.

Finishing: Apply a protective finish to the sandstone to help preserve the carving and enhance its appearance. This can be a sealer, wax, or other type of coating.

Final touches: Once the sculpture has been sanded and polished, the sculptor may add any final touches such as additional texture or detail. Throughout the entire process, it's important to wear protective gear such as eye protection and gloves to prevent injury. It's also important to work slowly and carefully to avoid making mistakes or damaging the sandstone.

Women Sculptor Vandana Singh: Vandana Singh, born in 1969 in Sunderpur, Varanasi, is an accomplished artist. She obtained her B.F.A. from 1987-1992 and M.F.A. from the Faculty of Visual Arts, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi from 1993-95.

Vandana Singh has been mentored by renowned sculptors Shri M.K. Das and Balveer Singh Katt. She continuously strives to progress in the field of art and is known for her intellectual experimentation. Vandana Singh has actively participated in various art camps and has been recognized through Cultural Scholarships, Junior Fellowships, and Senior Fellowships offered by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

As one of the distinguished contemporary women sculptors in the country, Vandana Singh aims to challenge the gender divide by expressing the dual perspectives of women in male-dominated society through the medium of stone. Her work reflects her unique observations of society and the environment.

Women Sculptor Vandana Singh Statement: As a women sculptor I choose this topic because it is the essence of Lord Buddha's philosophy. Many books and texts have been written on this topic, but I have tried to depict his Aastha Marg path in my sculpture. Lord Buddha's Aryasatya impressed me a lot. In which he has done sorrow, sorrow community, sorrow nirodh Marg, these four noble truths are the essence of Buddhism. From these, the destruction of non-attachment, the end of sorrows, peace of mind, wisdom and nirvana are possible. Buddha has considered various experiences of life as truth. There are many types of sorrows in life, such as disease, old age, death, worry, dissatisfaction, despair, grief. Adi is said to be the representation of worldly sorrows and also inspires you to get rid of worldly sorrows. Any person can prevent sorrows according to Buddhist philosophy. attains it, he can attain Nirvana. This philosophy is beneficial for humanity. This philosophy has impressed me a lot. I have tried to depict the paths told by him in my sculpture. This path is called Ashtangik Marg. A person who lives a life following the philosophy of Lord Buddha can get rid of many of his problems and lead a successful life. The aim of female sculptor Vandana Singh is to understand the thoughts of Lord Buddha and implement them in her life for the welfare of humanity, which she has tried to show through sculpture.

4. ASSUMEMENT

A sculptor represents the Noble Way of Eights as a sculpture, each step being represented as a ray, stressing the interdependence of each step and balancing them all. Through the Fourfold Path, the Fourth Noble Truth of Buddhism offers a practical guide to ending suffering and attaining liberation. The spiritual and behavioral qualities that lead to lasting peace and happiness can be developed through wisdom, ethics and meditation.

The eight paths are the soul of Buddhist Philosophy. The eight paths are given below:

The Noble Eight-Fold Path		
1	Right View	Know the truth
2	Right Determination	Free your mind of evil
3	Right speech	Say nothing that hurts others
4	Right conduct	Work for the good other
5	Right Livelihood	Respect Life
6	Right Effort	Resist Evil
7	Right Mindfulness	Control your thought
8	Right Concentration	Practice Meditation

1) Right Views: (Sam-yak Dristi) (Figure 1)

Figure 1



Figure 1 Sam-yak Dristi Medium – Black Marble Size – 35x25x34 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble, 2001

Right views are the first step in Buddha's ethical teaching. In order to know the four Noble Truths correctly, one must have the correct knowledge. The actual explanation of the world can only be achieved through meditation. It ceases the wrong views. In Buddha's view, moral reformation requires a right view. Nirvana can be reached through this path. All other factors follow the right view, which sets the tone for the whole journey. Our beginning and our destination are guided by it. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) Sanskar does not come due to ignorance; the root cause of misery is avidya. Having knowledge of reality is very important in the life of man, which is obtained from knowledge.

Sculpture is a form of art that exists in three-dimensional form, giving a physical presence to the artist's thoughts and ideas. This physicality allows viewers to engage with the artwork on a different level and it more immersive and impactful. Sculptors use different surfaces and textures to convey the character, feelings, and emotions of their subject matter. The choice of surfaces, whether smooth, rough, or intricate, can evoke specific feelings and ideas, enriching the overall message of the artwork.

Sculpture is often symbolism and metaphor. Artists use the physical attributes of the sculpture, such as the pose, gestures, or the use of certain materials, to symbolize deeper meanings and concepts. This symbolism adds layers of interpretation to the artwork. Sculpture has historically been used to preserve and communicate cultural and historical ideas. Sculptures from different time periods and cultures serve as important artifacts that reflect the thoughts, values, and beliefs of their respective eras.

In the modern world, sculpture continues to evolve and adapt to contemporary issues and thoughts. Artists use sculpture to address current societal, political, and environmental concerns, effectively making their statements and ideas tangible.

In summary, (Right Views) sculpture is a dynamic and versatile art form that enhances the thoughts and ideas behind it through its physicality, use of expressive surfaces, symbolism, cultural significance, and artistic techniques.

2) Right Determination: (Sam-yak Samkalpa) (Figure 2)

Figure 2



Figure 2 Sam-yak Sankalpa Medium – Black Marble Size – 42x30x31 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble, 2001

The second step teaches us that we should lead a life with true knowledge. Buddha believed that all human behavior, intentions, and thoughts should be controlled and cultivated. It is important for us to reform our lives by knowing what is good for others. There are three kinds of right intention, the intention of renunciation, the intention of good will, and the intention of harmlessness, according to Buddha. We can guide our mind away from desires when we methodically aim for the benefits of renunciation and the risks of desire. A good intention is the opposite of an ill intention. Doing any harm to others is against the intention of harmlessness that prevents ill-will, hatred, greed, and anger. As a result, the three kinds of right intention mentioned above prevent the three desires, ill will, and harmfulness. Moment by moment in our lives, our path always comes back to ourselves, to the intentions we generate. Chandra & Sharma (n.d.) According to the Samyak Sankalp, Figure 3 the truth must be followed or accepted. Violence and hatred towards others should be given up for a successful life.

3) Right speech: (Samyak Vachana) (Figure 3)

Figure 3



Figure 3 Sam-yak Vachan Medium – Sand Stone Size – 32x15x31 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Sand stone, 2001

In Buddha's view, speech is the only strong means of communication between people. If we speak well or well with others, then we will live happily in society. Thus, abstaining from false speech and tale-bearing are included in this step. Whenever someone avoids false speech and speaks only truth, he speaks only the truth. There is no lie he will ever tell, either for himself or for others. We can control our speech with the right determination. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) Right word - one should stay away from lying, one should be realistic and one should do one's work by staying away from slanderers. Speech which gives happiness is this right word.

4) Right conduct: (Sam-yak Karmanta) ([Figure 4](#))

Figure 4

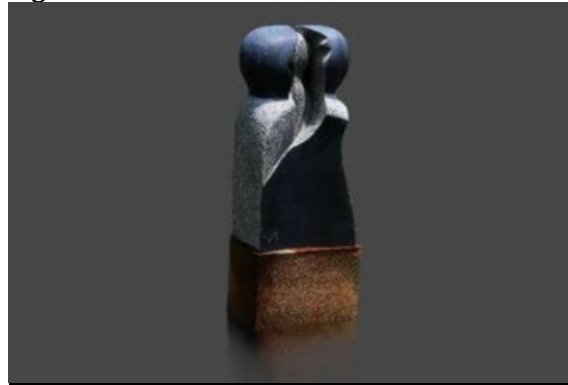


Figure 4 Sam-yak Karm Medium – Black Marble Size – 19x18x54 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble & Sand Stone, 2001

Respecting all life and maintaining good relationships with others is the essence of right conduct. Among the positive aspects of right conduct are acts of kindness, loving, and so on. The Buddha's abstinence from taking life indicates his development of kindness for other beings. If you take what you don't have, you are stealing. Honesty is the quality of not stealing, and respect is the quality of abstaining from stealing. Improper sense gratification and intoxication should also be avoided. Respect for others also implies self-respect, so one should be mindful of how they interact with others. Respect for others also means being accepting of differences and embracing diversity. Lastly, respect for others includes being mindful of how one's words and actions affect others. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) One should give up bad deeds and live life by giving up violence and sense enjoyment, this shows right action. Giving up violence and the sense of enjoyment is the right way to live life.

5) Right Livelihood: (Sam-yak Ajivaka) ([Figure 5](#))

One should earn his livelihood by doing so in an honest manner. That means no killing, no selling of slaves, weapons, poisons, intoxicants. One must choose his earnings rightfully. Any occupation that violates the right to speak and the right to action is an improper form of sustenance. We should also demonstrate honesty and ethics in how we treat others. Participation in the production of poisons and intoxicating substances is detrimental to human life and health. So, we have to try to avoid intentionally injuring other creatures. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) It has been told not to do five types of business. Do not trade in arms, meat, items, poison, animals. Therefore, along with bitter words, bad deeds, one should also abandon the inauspicious path.

Figure 5



Figure 5 Sam-yak Aajeevika Medium –Black Marble and Sand Stone-Size – 32x22x24 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble & Sand Stone, 2001

6) Right Effort: (Sam-yak Vyayama) (Figure 6)

Figure 6



Figure 6 Sam-Yak-Vyayam Medium–Sand Stone Size–30x15x43 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble, 2001

Right effort means cultivating positive state of mind. The moral aspirant should maintain a consistent effort to remove old bad ideas and prevent them from popping up in the future. Our minds ought to be full of good ideas. It is a matter of maintaining a positive attitude and tackling tasks with enthusiasm and joyful determination. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) Efforts should be made to keep the mind full of good feelings and remain active. By this action, the inauspicious state of mind ends and goodness emerges.

7) Right Mindfulness: (Sam-yak Smriti) (Figure 7)

This means being able to concentrate on the task to be accomplished with a calm mind without our mind wandering or overwhelming worries. The moral aspirant must constantly be mindful of what he has already learned. Mindfulness signifies mindfulness. So, when we do anything, we have to focus completely on that

specific work. Mind awareness is very important. Full consciousness provides the experience of light in its pure immediacy. There is no value in a mind without full consciousness. Right mindfulness leads to the serenity, wisdom etc. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) During this process, the perishable body and the perishable things are destroyed moment by moment, thus the work, the pain, the noun, and the mind, are all destroyed minute by minute.

Figure 7



Figure 7 Sam-Yak Samriti Medium – Black Marble and Sand Stone Size – 40x21x35 inch Sculpture Created by Women Sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble & Sand Stone, 2001

8) Right Concentration: (Sam-yak Samadhi) ([Figure 8](#))

According to Buddha, one who has reformed his life in the light of the above seven rules has become fit to enter the scene of Samadhi. That means practicing meditation. It produces interior quality and sharpens consciousness at the same time. This is a state of perfect peacefulness and equanimity. So, Samadhi is a particular type of state that can be achieved through meditation. In this state there is a fact of joy, peace and happiness and indifference to pleasure and pain. Meditation points to different levels of knowledge. When the focus is successful, it dispels any doubts. [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) After following the Seven Noble Truths, Lord Buddha followed the Eight Path. This state, which is beyond happiness and sorrow, is called Nirvana.

Figure 8



Figure 8 Sam-yak Samadhi Medium – Black Marble and Sand Stone Size – 29x10x26 inch Sculpture created by women sculptor Vandana Singh, Black Marble & Sand Stone, 2001

5. EXPLANATION OF ARTWORK STONE SCULPTURE

Stone sculpture is a captivating form of artwork that involves skillfully manipulating and shaping stone to bring forth a desired form or figure. Artists employ a variety of tools and techniques to carve, chisel, and polish the stone, meticulously refining it to achieve the desired artistic expression. The art of stone sculpture encompasses a wide range of sizes, from intricate small pieces to grand, monumental installations. These sculptures can depict various subjects, including human figures, animals, abstract forms, or symbolic representations, each conveying its own unique message.

The choice of stone plays a crucial role in the final outcome of the sculpture. Stones such as marble, granite, or limestone possess distinct qualities that greatly impact the texture, color, and overall aesthetic of the artwork. Marble, for instance, offers a smooth and elegant appearance, while granite provides a more rugged and durable quality. The selection of the stone is a thoughtful decision that contributes to the overall artistic vision.

Throughout history, artists have been captivated by the allure of stone sculptures, creating magnificent works that stand the test of time. These sculptures continue to be cherished for their enduring beauty and timeless appeal, captivating viewers with their intricate details and profound expressions. The art of stone sculpture remains a testament to the creativity and skill of artists throughout the ages.

Stone sculptures have been appreciated for centuries for their durability and stability. They are made from various types of stone, such as marble, granite, and limestone, and are carved by skilled artisans using chisels and other tools.

Along with their aesthetic value, stone sculptures also hold cultural and religious significance. For instance, in Buddhism, stone sculptures embody the Eightfold Path's core tenets, including right understanding, intention, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and concentration. Each of these tenets is represented by a specific symbol or image that can be depicted in stone.

The physical characteristics of stone sculptures can also symbolize various aspects of the Eightfold Path. For example, a sculpture's smoothness and symmetry may represent the concept of right intention, while its intricate details and textures may signify the importance of right concentration.

Stone sculptures are not only visually compelling but also serve as a powerful reminder of the principles of the Eightfold Path. They are a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of their creators and continue to inspire awe and admiration in viewers worldwide.

6. CONCLUSION

Artists' subject matter choices can be influenced by their personal characteristics, interests, artistic goals, and the broader cultural and social context in which they live. The Eight-fold Path philosophy of the Buddha has been explored in a variety of mediums, offering endless possibilities for creative expression and interpretation. A combination of black marble and sand stone has been used to create the sculptures. Philosophies of Buddhism are positivist in nature. Buddha's practice is based on the Eight-fold Path. In order to grow spiritually, one must follow disciplines, practices, and insights. Buddha offered a simple and efficient method for removing obstacles and insecurities. In the practical life of the people, the eight steps

can be used to solve every problem. Buddhism teaches the importance of just being a good human being and taking care of others. Therefore, Buddhism plays a special role in modern society. We always have access to the eight factors of the path. In conclusion, we can see that the teachings of Buddha help mankind live a more fulfilling life. Despite not being the most popular path, the eight-fold path is most likely to lead us to our goal. We are only left with tension and insecurity as a result of modern developments. To solve this problem, Buddhism offers a very simple and effective method. So that we understand how important Buddha's messages and his eight-fold paths are in our daily lives. According to the Buddha, "Hatred cannot be appeased by hatred, only by kindness. This is an eternal truth." We can only have a better world if we have better people first [Chandra & Sharma \(n.d.\)](#) The Noble Eight-fold Path is inspirational; using it as a guideline will surely improve our lives. Being human requires us to touch the earth, accept our human limitations and our planet. Ultimately, the path out of suffering lies not in escaping our human experience through refined consciousness. Rather, it comes from embracing the totality of all human and Brahma realms through mindfulness. Consequently, the Buddha emphasized total realization rather than temporary escape through beauty and refinement. The Buddha points the way to Nirvana in this way. The sculpture made by the sculptor in stone using the carving method belongs to the entire community. In sculpted form, Buddha's eight-fold path, the path of liberation, is made tangible and visible to society in three dimensions. This eight-fold path teaches everyone what it is, how to become acquainted with it, and how to follow it.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

I am writing to inform you that there is no conflict of interest associated with the manuscript titled **A new form of sculpture based on Buddhism that expresses the novel The Eight-fold Path**, which I have submitted for consideration for publication in the **ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts**. I declare that neither I nor any of the co-authors have any financial, commercial, legal, or professional relationships that could be perceived as a conflict of interest about this work.

We have complied with the guidelines provided by the journal regarding the disclosure of conflicts of interest, as outlined in the instructions for authors. We have carefully considered any potential conflicts and are confident that any conflicting interests have not influenced the research and its findings.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or clarification regarding this matter. I appreciate your attention to this declaration.

Thank you for considering our manuscript.

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Author Declaration:

Dear Editor

In my study, I have used references for the purpose of understanding rather than directly quoting or copying. Some references have already been cited and mentioned. Additionally, I conducted an interview with a female sculptor, which allowed me to obtain images of the sculptures mentioned in the article. "I have already included it in the references.", it is not possible to add or create something that does not already exist. References are used to summarize content rather than copying phrases or words. I am grateful to these authors for their contribution to the development of my article.

Sincerely

Shree kant

