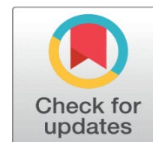


## WOMEN FIGURES IN FANTASY ART

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### ABSTRACT

People say that “*Never judge a book by its cover,*” but the cover of the book invites us towards it. I remember, during my college years, of going to a bookstore, named “IDEA” in New Delhi, and buying an expensive book named “**ENCHANTMENT**” stories by Doris Vallejo, Illustrated by Boris Vallejo. The thing, that attracted me, was cover of the book. At that point of time, I was not prepared for reading stories, but I bought this book because of its illustrations, which enchanted me.

In Fantasy Art, we see a visual world and feel a World of Imagination which is a representation of reality. In Fantasy art, we can time travel and become anything of our choosing. This is not the world, we know and live in, but a world of our conceived and perceived imagination.

In this imaginative world, female figures, plays a key role in provoking our feelings, invite us, for a heroic journey to explore an unknown world.

Through this article, I would like to invite you to join me, on a fantastic journey of this female representation in Visual World and become part of this Fantasy Artwork.

To build the idea of FANTASY ART from a linguistic understanding following writings lead us on, the Meriam webster dictionary define art as “The conscious use of skill and creative imagination, especially in the production aesthetic objects; also; works to produce”.

In ShabdKosh Hindi Dictionary, “The creation of beautiful or significant things”. “The product of human creativity; works of art collectively”.

The definition, I listen in my college is “*Art Is Representation of Reality*”.

Regardless of definition, we all know about what art is and what it is not.

Dictionary meaning of word fantasy is “Imagination unrestricted by reality” and fantasy art meaning is, an imaginative world, that could be, may it be, would have been, or could never be. In this imaginative art style, the artwork which can be thought provoking, whimsical, challenging, disturbing, unreal, and challenging of notions of rationality.

**Keywords:** Provoking, Whimsical, Challenging, Disturbing, Unreal

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. FANTASY ART: SEEK TO PROVOKE BEAUTY AND MAGICAL FEELING

We use artwork as a compliment of/to/for story. All stories have an imaginative world where, we use creativity to portray reality, which look at other worldly things

Authors like J. K. Rowling (Harry Potter Series), George R.R. Martin (Games of Thrones),

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J. R. TOLIKEN (Lord of Rings) and Grim Brothers take references from the real world and create fantastic stories which best portray in Fantasy Art.

Fantasy Art is a well painted visual story for evoking feelings. Artwork is a compliment of the stories, as a visual representation reflecting our imagination.

Fantasy is a fuel for creativity. Everybody has a different opinion about result of any art creation or its purpose. Some may understand a pic and said it is beautiful or some roughly thought, it is unpleasant. But we all like art works in one way or another.

Female representation in art goes back to the times when human being was dwelling in caves and reflected in works on these walls. Human desire to express, has been the key reason why we find these paintings, visually depicting everyday life and its stories which centre around Birth, Death and Survival.

Looking at them, we find that these women figures cut across continents only some of the flora and fauna and yet human depiction remain constant. As paintings evolved, we find representation of the female figure undergoing changes with element of beauty, voluptuousness and sensuality, findings acceptance in the celebration of human race.

From the Indian perspective, we find this growth by looking at works from Bhimbetka Caves (Madhya Pradesh), Edakal Caves (Kerala) and Fresco and Murals of Ajanta and Ellora.

It is these, that formed, further, progress of thought, technique, and skill for future artists in visual representation of not only paintings but sculptures too.

In the sculpture's figurine, we see key feminine physical representation with clarity. We find on study of these paintings' sculptures that beauty emerges as a central theme of these piece of works. It also moved from mere representation, religious representation to a domain where beauty existed for its own sakes. Hence also bringing, human emotion and desire for things beautiful, which is the material for creating Fantasy Art.



**Figure 1** Alok Kumar. Portrait of a lady: College Memories Series. Watercolour on Paper. 8" X 12". Personal Collection. Delhi

## 2. WE DEPICT WOMEN FIGURES IN FIVE CATEGORIES

**GODDESS:** we have Goddess images represented in diaphanous clothes, laying emphasis on form, and reflecting fertility in many cultures. The common form being of Mother Goddess or Earth Goddess.

In India, we have goddess figures which are beautifully sculpted tastefully painted and adorning in beautiful jewellery. All Devi Figures are part of this group.

**WARRIOR:** we have a skinny and unpractical body Armor, most images we see in Manga and Japanese animation from 19<sup>th</sup> century starting.

In Indian temple sculptures and paintings, we find the goddess accompanied by warrior female companions which also could be Yakshani's.

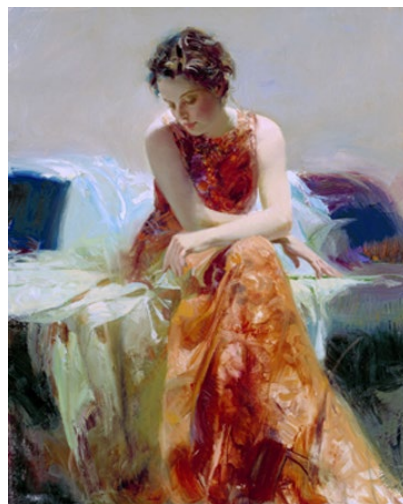
**PRIMITIVE:** we have stories in forest and tribes, where we see women wearing minimal clothing because of the nature of their profession and environment. We see this type of women figure in the cover page of 1960 fantasy magazine and in the recent years Marvel movie characters named Mystic is an example of this genre.

**PRINCESS:** Wearing clothes with multiple layering emphasizing counters are the figures, we usually see in this category. Indian Princess Greek Figurines and Walt Disney female characters, Barbies dolls for young girls, are some of the best examples.

**WITCH:** Magical Creature Portraying / Signified Negative characters with minimalistic clothes are usually an important part of most fantasy stories in western cultures including movies like Van Helsing movie character, She Hulk in Marvel comics and movies are some of the examples.

These categories have celebrated the feminine form, sensuality and evoking diverse feeling in the voyeurs from Love to Lust and the in Between.

## 3. WOMEN FIGURES FROM ARTIST PERSPECTIVE



**Figure 2** Pino Daeni (November 8, 1939 – May 25, 2010), Thinking of You (Painting), Oil on Canvas

**Source** [https://pino-artist.com/Pino Daeni](https://pino-artist.com/Pino%20Daeni) | Romantic book illustrator | Tutt'Art@ | Pittura • Scultura ... [tuttartpitturascultrapoesiamusica.com](http://tuttartpitturascultrapoesiamusica.com)|1281



**Figure 3** Marta Dahlig (Born: 23 December 1985) Lust (Digital Art)

**Source** <https://www.deviantart.com/dahlig> Marta Dahlig | Digital painting, Fantasy, Dark art, Courtesy: Pinterest.

There are three different thought schools in the art world:

First school of thought is Realism, which believe art is a representation of reality and it must paint as it is. In this thought of school all 18<sup>th</sup> century Great artists falls. They paint women figure realistically in their paintings. Some of them are Aaron Coberly, Abbott Handerson Thayer (1849-1921), Addison Thomas Millar, Albert Joseph Moore (1841-1893), Annibale Carracci (1560-1609).

Second school of thought which believe that art is a representation of beauty, and we paint nature in its beautiful form. We identify them in and as Idealism. Artists like Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), Edgar Degas (1834-1917), Edvard Munch (1863-1944), Jack Vettriano is some of the famous names.

There is another (Third) school of thought which think artwork is part of sell and in this Commercial world, we sell art, as a need for survival. Artists Like Julie Bell, Boris Vallejo, Marta Dahlig, Frank Frazetta, Pino Daeni is some of the famous names.

We the artist are also social people and need boarding and lodging, many for survival and cannot exist in vacuumed. With creating fantasy art, we sell our work and it purely, is a commercial artwork, where we create work, some time with our urge to create beautiful figure or some time on demand. There is nothing wrong to be a commercial and popular in the artist world. More popular we are, more priced our work is!

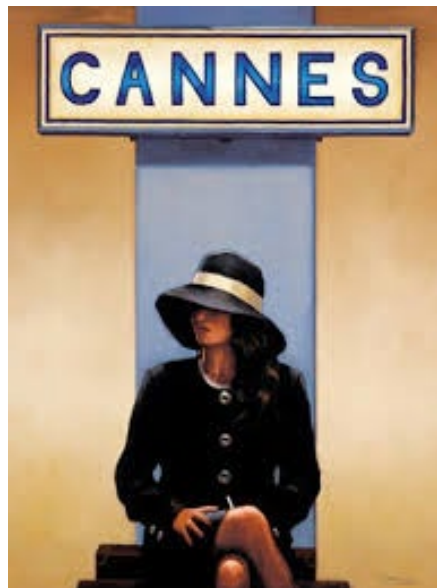
This is a simple economic reality, but we also create which may not sell but are off no lesser value.

#### 4. EXAMPLES OF WESTERN AND INDIAN ARTISTS WITH THEIR CREATIONS



**Figure 4** Boris Vallejo (Jan 08, 1941 (age 81) · Lima, Peru) Boris-Vallejo-000001

**Source** [https://thegallerist.art/boris-vallejo/Boris Vallejo and His Great Fantasy Art + Bay Rum BorisJulie\\_com a\\_files](https://thegallerist.art/boris-vallejo/Boris-Vallejo-and-His-Great-Fantasy-Art-Bay-Rum-BorisJulie_com-a-files)



**Figure 5** Jackvettriano, Exit Eaden (Love, Devotion and Surrender) (Painting)Oil on Canvas

**Courtesy** jackvettriano.com **Source** <https://www.jackvettriano.com/>

While many may wonder on my focus of artist in the western world, I would like to bring forth some of the Indian artist who have used the female subject in distinctive form and bringing out all the subtle nuances and celebrating the feminine.



**Figure 6** Raja Ravi Verma Apr 29, 1848 - Oct 02, 1906 (age 58) Sarswati Oil on Canvas

Sources:

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=LWiV0Bsi&id=333D410755F2E9209C6E1E758D73CD6395CE9B9E&thid=OIP.LWiV0BsiCrpt0tIQiH-HoQHaLw&mediaurl=https%3a%2f%2fth.bing.com%2fth%2fid%2fr.2d6895d01b220aba6dd2d210887f87a1%3frik%3dnpvOIWPNc411Hg%26riu%3dhttp%253a%252f%252f4.bp.blogspot.com%252f-XiNwLYbqa-A%252fUssFZEqE0-l%252fAAAAAAAA9NI%252fx46kcgMJA1Y%252fs1600%252fravi-varma-paintings%2540fineartandyou5.jpg%26ehk%3dJLFXWny0jHBXF4yOA8E2yGoOfPMT%252bGe%252fQ8v5ogZzmhU%253d%26risl%3d%26pid%3dImgRaw%26r%3d0&exph=952&expw=600&q=raja+ravi+varma+paintings&simid=608048853993550003&FORM=IRPRST&ck=6A933B597D989B30PCCF7266EE45D008&selectedIndex=53&ajaxhist=0&ajaxserp=0>



**Figure 7** John Fernandes in My World, Watercolour on Paper

Source:

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=N2SU3XhS&id=6EF3CA61F65F217C91799B6429D3E3B2667187EE&thid=OIP.N2SU3XhSer1xn40tYNwmXwAAAA&mediaurl=https%3a%2f%2fi.pinimg.com%2foriginals%2f9a%2f54%2f2c%2f9a542c7b04696d619c9cd5e8ad4c308d.jpg&exph=550&expw=348&q=john+fernandes+indian+painter.&simid=607999333025084355&FORM=IRPRST&ck=CBC23CB7776426CDE011FB6C00C8A017&selectedIndex=16&qpvt=john+fernandes+indian+painter.&ajaxhist=0&ajaxserp=0>

## 5. WHY I CHOOSE THIS TOPIC

As an illustrator and book designer, when I start my art profession, a lady from an established publishing house hint me, “Alok if you want to be a successful painter or illustrator you should work on face and body language specially Women figure and their different moods. If you successfully portray female figure, your chance of success maximizes as compared to other fellow artists.”

This piece of advice helps me to think and keeps me motivated and is the reason I choose this topic. Her suggestion helped me a lot.

Many artists paint women in many forms but a beautiful, attractive women figure always gets extra marks and support in the creative circle.

Artists like Raja Ravi Verma, John Fernandes, M F Hussain, Boris Vallejo, Jack Vettriano, and Pino are the time less women figure artists. Their images are references for future artists in their endeavours to become successful.

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**Author Note :**

I have made a study of the books mentioned in my references and have not used any line as it is from there but used the understanding gained from thereon and hence it is not possible to add/create what does not exist.

All reference materials in this article have been used by me not as sentence or word by word, or/ and quoted from and has been using the zist of these articles. I am indebted to these authors for shaping my article.

Sign.  
Alok Kumar