

Environment awareness through Miniature landscape of Mud-Fort Art: An Observation

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ABSTRACT

The majority of the States in India have their own rich culture and heritage. The richness of their identity is preserved in various cultures and art. In Maharashtra, the trend of replicating the miniature Forts is the one preserved in play activities by school children. Nowadays such activity is recognized as healthy practice on social media. Such informal art practices are only appreciated by the locals but its close similarities with the concept of Land Art sculpted in miniature forms are to be studied for the awareness of the ecosystem. Land Art and Earth art emerges as the new concept of the art movement in 1960 and 1970 to sensitize environmental study (Marcia and John,). The majority of the areas near the forts have an environmental setting along with its beauty that needs to be conserved and sensitized. There are 350 Forts in Maharashtra that symbolize the liberal society and are part of their celebration (<https://memumbai.com/fort-making-workshop/6/10/2017>). To restore the aesthetic beauty of the fort and its environment the build-up model of the same can in developing an exclusive action plan for its conservation. The Mud fort activities of the children have the potential to convey major issues in miniature forms related to the ecosystem. The process of Making Mud Forts too requires lots of preparation in terms of proportionate soil and water, consistency of the mixture, and supportive material borrowed from recycling waste materials (Ashwin Khan, 2017). In this search, the aim was to identify and conserve authentication of the derived information from the tendency to observe natural form and associate it with innovative concepts of Modern Art. Data collected from the various workshop records provides training in sculpting the basic structure of Mud Forts in different places in Maharashtra was analyzed. The observation made on the artwork of a trained and untrained population was studied based on their awareness of representing the features of the replicated monument. The alternate technology used in this process was examined. The study found that the trained population was more advance, focused on presenting built-up space, and also enjoy the desire to learn about such environmental issues derived from land art. This study encourages the use of traditional methods to introspect the major issues, by using the sustainable model to find the solution to the ecosystem. It formulates that informal education in art can help in collaborative work on a project with true environment art.

Keywords: Making Mud-Fort, Maharashtra Culture, Land-Art, Environment Study.

INTRODUCTION

Earth art land art and grass art are frequently used terms for replication of environmental sites that transferred the art production outside the artist's studio. Such an innovation in the art movement starts in 1960, to tackle the issues related to environmental awareness as Installation art. (Guzman, A. I. 2014). The majority of artists express their gratitude for the said art as a green art movement indicates the green factor of the grass. Artist Hans Haacke's installation 'Grass grow' in Reina Sofia of Madrid pursues the need for artwork with actual mud and grass structure replicated from the actual site outside the city. (www.gessato.com, google search). The gradual growth in concrete cities and their space deprived the young generation of the land covered with natural elements like grass, waterbodies, forestation, etc. In India, grass and mud-related festivals had great importance for women's celebrating the events like *Hartalika*, *Hariyali*, *Kejri*, and *ghathasthapana* during the Monsoon season in most of the states. (Swati K.2021) The procession to collect different types of mud in earthen pots and growing grass indicates the sensitivity towards environmental activities. In Maharashtra, such procession is observed as a symbol of the personification of fertile soil. ([Pandey K. 2020](#)). Such miniature installations near premises allow the family to experience the overall impression of Greenland. The aroma of wetland and the freshness of grass are not only accessible to all members but also aware of the responsibility of the ecological practice. A similar miniature is the replica of a heritage fort, prepared by children. Replica of such heritage helps in the Conservation of heritage sites including buildings, artefacts', structures, areas, and precincts of historic, aesthetic, architectural, cultural, or environmentally significant nature. (Buena, M. 2013). The sensitization towards the environment seems to be further nurtured in children's activities during their vacation time, in constructing Mud Fort and growing greenery surrounding it. Children dig up the earth and make a miniature fort using clay. The structure of the miniature fort is based on any one of the famous forts of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaja. (www.hindu-blog.com/2009/10/mud-forts-or-Shivaji-killam). *There are hundreds of miniature forts are built up during Diwali vacation without any official guidance in many residential premises as a leisure activity for school-going children. Such activities are encouraged by many corporates as a competition to select the one exhibiting talent to replicate the geographical likeness. Many workshops are conducted for such activities as it has the sustainable potential to aware the public about environmental changes. Through such activities, children become aware of the Fort, its surrounding water bodies, and its future condition to restore the beauty of the surrounding environment.*

Making of Mud fort, children activity in leisure time.

The making of Mud-Fort began during the Diwali period when children spend their leisure time engaging in various historical events and stories of legends and heroes from different cultures in the leisure time for a week. Construction of the Fort begin with the collections of different pictures of actual forts. The process of analysing the material and place with proportionate measurement gets approval from the experts. The whole structure with minute details is shared with innovative ideas with the collective distribution for the execution (Jog S. 2021). The execution of the entire structure holds the sense of multiple possibilities and modifications required in the actual site of the monuments that children decorate their fort and its citadel with fairy lamps, coloured sawdust, sow plants with mustard, and coriander seeds, and see them grow every day. It also teaches them about the ecosystems, a lake is necessary for the aquatic beings, a zoo provides space for the giraffes and the

deer, trees are where the birds will perch and humans need homes to dwell. Many such 'forts' have special scenes recreated to depict planes flying, dams gushing or light effects to depict war. It requires a lot of technique and coordination to achieve that. Sowing seeds, watering them, seeing them grow, and nurturing the plants teach them the importance of agriculture and water harvesting. (<https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com>)



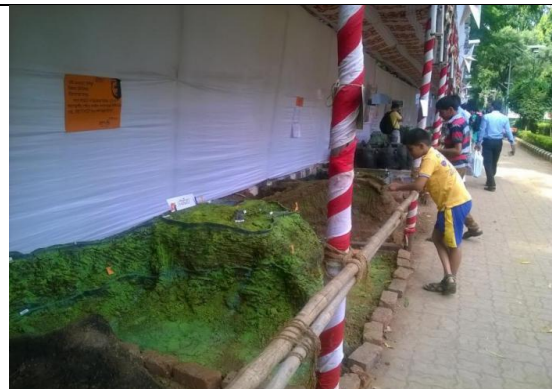
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1. <https://www.templepurohit.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Ghatasthapana-Puja-Vidhi.jpg>
2. *Photo courtesy: Manish Jayant Naik: The fort opposite Ram Mandir, Acharya Galli, Shahapur*
3. *Photo courtesy: Manish Jayant Naik: The fort opposite Ram Mandir, Acharya Galli, Shahapur participates*
4. http://static.dnaindia.com/locality/sites/default/files/styles/news_slider/public/newsimage/WP_20151110_14_36_36_Pro.jpg?itok=R4MBXhMI
5. Photography by Olav Jason Benjamin Havneraas
6. <https://www.gessato.com/not-red-but-green-grass-installation/not-red-but-green-grass-art-installation-1/>
7. <https://artinspain.wordpress.com/2012/04/11/grass-grows/>

Research Method

The observation was made for both trained and untrained children activity during Diwali vacation organized by the private bodies in local region at Mumbai. *In Pune, there are regular competitions where many children in such competition (<https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com>)*. Detailing of the Replica of the Fort and Visual understanding of environment-related topics was the central theme to aware the spectator. Percept informant perspectives to serving Images, discussion, and technicality were the result of the events. Two types of the group were categorized in the competition, the untrained and trained group of school-going children from the local regions. On basis of their experience in the task, additional information about the Actual fort and the trending Installations of various environment artists was supplied. Both the Participant after formal introductory training follow the task that lasted for a week. During the process, participants were involved in various activities like planning, recollecting the environment elements, and the Final artwork in the provided space was performed. In the end, each group completed one authentic artwork.

Result

These participants' collective reactions were documented for gauging their capacities (technique), as well as their levels of interest (curiosity) and purpose (value). The children staying on the periphery of the city utilize more environment-friendly elements in their art pieces more effectively than the children staying in the center of the city. The peripheral group follows a dexterity approach and modified the logistics in reframing the landscape of the fort with ecosystem, energy conservation, and water supply strategy. then a central city child that shows engagement in the Collection of information from visual mode, and textual representation for some of the concepts. The dexterity approach seems to be more impressive in attracting the audience than the utility of textual instruction in replicating nature, and eco-friendlier pieces of artwork. Outskirt children were conceptualizing the eco-friendly approach by recreating the actual site than the main city children's approach in recollecting and transforming it into a published write-up. Both saw the importance of an environment-friendly art form. Further demonstration of this technique was shown to these two groups when it was morphed into "modern" elements.

Conclusion

Researchers studied, analysed, and figured out how to get engage with the total awareness of nature. In the case of the outreach, the children should be learning the basic concept of earth art and its

ecosystem; examples have been studied and are proving successful. In terms of interest levels, students exhibited a keen interest in learning practicality and cultural expression when applying the art form to any viable use. Furthermore, sustainable methods in Earth art have mainly been applied to improve the environmental behaviours of products. The research work evaluates the environmental and social perspective uses in project as appropriate sustainable object in products and services. Art practitioners implemented this approach in higher education to develop community projects. Collaboration with different companies and institutions allowed the study of some cases.

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