

## Kalighat paintings

Kalighat painting or Kalighat Pat originated in the 19th century in West Bengal, India, in the vicinity of Kalighat Kali Temple, Calcutta. The paintings over a period of time developed as a distinct school of Indian painting. From the depiction of Hindu gods, god, and other mythological characters, the Kalighat paintings developed to reflect a variety of subjects, including many depictions of everyday life.

In the 19th century, the only school of painting that was flourishing in Bengal was the traditional art of scroll paintings, that was popular in the rural areas. These paintings were done on cloth or patas. They depicted conventional images of gods and goddesses and scenes from epics like Tulsidas' Rama Charita Manas. The artists were villagers who travelled from place to place with their scroll paintings and sang the scenes from the epics depicted in the paintings during village gatherings and various festivals. These artists, called patuas or 'painters on cloth'. Meanwhile, the British, having established themselves in the country politically started to evince interest in art, literature, and music. They set up institutions that imparted a European style of academic training to Indian artists. The Calcutta School of Art was one such school and attracted traditional artists—the patuas—to the city.

Initially, these artists were concentrated around the temple at Kalighat where there was a demand for religious art. Gradually, they have started to learn from the newer techniques and discovered that these could help them increase their earnings. They started creating new forms of art and the Kalighat painting was born. The earliest Kalighat paintings were made on long scrolls and the artisans would sing songs related to the theme of the painting in order to sell them.

Patachitra or painting kalighat on scrolls refers to the traditional folk art of eastern India, found in the states of West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand. Kalighat paintings have their origins in West Bengal. The style is characterized by broad sweeping brush lines, bold colours, and simplification of forms

suitable. This Kalighat painting depicts a Bengali woman leisurely sitting in a chair with her hand-fan. Out of Indian tradition and impressions of Western, the “ba-zaar” painters, descendants of low-caste and hereditary craftsmen. The customer base for the Kalighat paintings increased and expanded to include traders and merchants from the Western parts the country, in the 19th century.

An important achievement of the Kalighat artists was that they made simple paintings and drawings, which could easily be reproduced by lithography. Such prints were then hand coloured. This trend continued up to the early part of the twentieth century and these paintings ended up in museums and private collections. The charm of the Kalighat paintings lies in the fact that they captured the essence of daily life ..

Kalighat painting is a school of modern art that originated in 19th century Calcutta, India, which was then the capital of British India. Religious Paintings. The Kalighat Paintings are watercolor paintings done on mill-made paper by the scroll painters-cum-potters that migrated from rural Bengal to Kolkata in the 19th century.











