

Analytical Study of the Works of Contemporary Artists of Bikaner Division

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Abstract

In the field of sculpture, Mahavir Bharti is counted among the prominent artists of contemporary Indian sculptural tradition. He has the ability to transform lifeless materials—such as stone, metal, or fiber—into artistic forms and bring life into them. His art is the result of dedication, discipline, and continuous practice. The sculptures created by him are not merely forms; they also express emotions, ideas, and cultural values. From this perspective, Mahavir Bharti can be called a sensitive, experimental, and original sculptor.

Mahavir Bharti was born on 3rd February 1977 in the village of Nohar in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan. He belongs to an educated and culturally rich family. His late father, Nandkishore Bharti, was a teacher and a writer. Among three brothers and four sisters, he is the youngest. His elder brother, Babulal Bharti, has been associated with social and political activities. His mother, Mrs. Teja Devi, currently lives with him in Jaipur.

Due to the importance of education and literature in his family environment, he developed a sensitive and creative mindset from childhood. Although his father wanted him to move forward in the field of education, Mahavir Bharti was more inclined toward art. While going to school, he was especially attracted to the statue of the generous Bhamashah installed at a crossroads. This attraction sparked curiosity and interest in sculpture within him.

From an early age, he was interested in drawing. He learned the finer aspects of art under the guidance of his local art teacher, Laxmi Narayan Chaturvedi. The various forms, colors, shapes, and structures of nature also inspired the artist within him.

In 1996, he took admission in the Rajasthan School of Art and completed a four-year diploma in painting in 1999. There, he received formal art education and his creative energy found the right direction. His art teacher was Surendra Pal Joshi, under whose guidance he not only pursued painting but also moved forward toward sculpture.

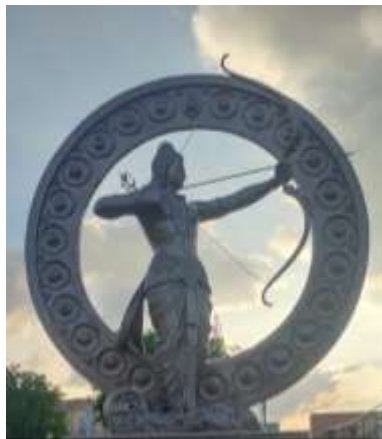
Other sources of inspiration mention Surendra Sharma and Thomas Sir, who encouraged his talent.

Although he initially studied medicine, gradually his inclination turned towards sculpture. He began working with various materials—metal, marble, stone, fiber, bronze, and cement. By understanding the technical features of these materials, he made them a medium for his creative expression.

In a workshop in Udaipur, he created a sculpture named “Achar Ki Katori” in stone, which showcased his skill and experimental nature. Due to continuous practice and dedication, his art began to gain recognition on a wide level.

The sculptures of Mahavir Bharati clearly reflect dynamism, innovation, and experimentation. He is not limited to traditional styles but also expresses contemporary sensibilities. His works show a balanced inclusion of Indian cultural symbols, philosophical indications, and human emotions.

His art is marked by fine detailing, balanced proportions, and clarity of expression. He has the ability to carve soft emotions even in hard materials like stone or metal. This is why his sculptures seem to establish a dialogue with the viewers.



The grand statue of Lord Rama set up at Shri Ram Vatika, located in Nohar tehsil of Hanumangarh district, is a notable creation of Mahavir Bharati. This statue is made of bronze. Its height is approximately 9 feet 3 inches, while the total height including the circular frame is about 11 feet.

In this statue, Lord Rama is depicted holding a bow and arrow in a calm and firm posture. The circular structure behind him symbolizes time, dignity, and the cosmic order. It shows that truth and righteousness are eternal. The symbols engraved on the circle represent various aspects of life. They indicate dimensions and divine qualities. In this way, the statue is not merely a symbol of religious faith, but also a lifelike representation of Indian cultural ideals.

Mahavir Bharti is not only a skilled sculptor but also a simple, friendly, and devoted person. He is known among his friends and colleagues for his balanced behavior and positive outlook. His simplicity and dedication are also reflected in his art.

This statue of Ram expresses fundamental Indian ideals such as righteousness, dignity, and victory. The drawn bow symbolizes vigilance against injustice, courage, and the firm power of truth. The humanity in Ram's face reflects a balance of compassion and determination, which clearly defines his form as "Maryada Purushottam." The wave-like rising forms at the base of the statue can be seen as symbols of life's struggles and victory over them. The entire composition presents a harmonious vision of devotion, morality, and bravery.

From an artistic perspective, this statue appears to be an excellent example of a developed, balanced, and mature sculptural tradition. In its overall structure, the artist's keen observation, technical skill, and sense of aesthetics are clearly visible. The design of the statue has been created in such a way that its three-dimensional balance appears fully harmonious. The posture of the body, especially the position of drawing the bowstring, conveys movement and energy throughout the form. It feels as if the statue has been frozen at a particular moment, yet the continuity of action within it still seems to flow.

In contrast, the circular form created behind it generates a sense of stability and steadiness. In this way, the artist has skillfully combined both motion and stillness—two opposing elements—into a single balanced composition. This very balance transforms the statue from merely a visual object into a living experience.

From the perspective of form and structure, the statue is extremely well-organized. The placement and direction of each part of the body have been thoughtfully determined. The spread of the arms, the positioning of the feet, and the slight turn of the torso together create a natural sense of action. In this instrumentation, no imbalance or unpredictability is visible anywhere. Due to the three-dimensional effect, the statue appears balanced and impressive when viewed from any angle. This feature shows that the sculptor not only understood the form seen from the front, but also had a deep understanding of the complete volume and spatial structure. Thus, the statue is not merely a figure carved on a flat surface, but a fully developed, lifelike form in all dimensions.

Proportional accuracy is also a major feature of this statue. Scientific and aesthetic proportions have been carefully maintained in the body structure. The stretch of the arms, the tension of the muscles, and the curve of the bow are arranged in such a way that they appear complementary to each other. Every part of the body is balanced in its place and does not show any kind of exaggeration. This makes the statue appear natural and realistic. The precision of these proportions saves the statue from stiffness and provides it with grace and dignity. The viewer feels as if they are standing before a living personality, which is a wonderful blend of strength, control, and balance. This is why the statue becomes not only worth seeing, but also worth experiencing.

From the perspective of carving and ornamentation, this sculpture is extremely refined. The subtlety with which the folds of the garments have been carved is proof of the artist's keen observation. The flowing of the cloth, its closeness to the body, or its slight lifting at different places—all are depicted in a very natural manner. The hair arrangement also shows a balance of detail and beauty. The strands of hair are not only decorative but are arranged with structural balance in mind. The carving of ornaments shows a fine combination of delicate detailing and symmetry. The small motifs and decorations engraved on the halo further highlight the technical skill of the sculptor. These minute details add depth and attractiveness to the statue. It is clear that the artist did not focus only on the external form, but considered every small element as part of harmonious beauty.

The effect of light and shadow also plays an important role in enhancing the artistic quality of this statue. The open space and the circular halo at the back, when exposed to natural light, create a striking visual effect.

When we come into contact with it, the raised lines and depths of the statue become clearer and more distinct. When light falls on it from different angles, sometimes the form of the arms emerges, sometimes the expression of the face, and sometimes the texture of the garments. In this way, light and shadow together present the statue in changing forms. At different times of the day, its effect can also change, giving a new experience each time. This quality provides a dynamic experience even though the statue itself is still.

From the perspective of symbolic structure as well, this statue is extremely important. The circular halo created behind it is not merely a decorative element, but it also contains deep philosophical meaning. In Indian thought, the circle is considered a symbol of time, infinity, and the cosmic order. In this way, the halo presents the subject of the statue not just as a physical personality, but in a broader spiritual context. It suggests that the depicted figure can represent a universal presence beyond the limits of time and space. The continuity and completeness of the circle point toward that eternal truth which lies at the core of creation.

If viewed comprehensively, this statue is a beautiful confluence of art, technique, and philosophy. Along with visual beauty, it also possesses emotional richness and symbolic depth. The balance of movement

and stillness, precision of proportions, fine detailing, the effect of light and shadow, and philosophical indications—all these elements together make it an excellent work of art. In simple terms, this statue is not merely a figure carved in stone or cast in metal, but a concrete expression of thought, emotion, and beauty, which has the ability to attract the viewer externally and also influence them deeply within.

From the works of Mahavir Bharti, it is clear that his art is deeply connected with Indian culture, spirituality, and ethics. His sculptures show a harmonious blend of heroism, peace, nationalism, and cultural dignity.

Through royal figures, soldiers, saints, and couple-forms, he has expressed Indian cultural consciousness, heroism, duty, and spiritual peace. In the meditative images of saints, the inspiration of great personalities like Swami Vivekananda and Adi Shankaracharya is reflected.

Bharati's style can be characterized as "Spiritual Realism." It features a balanced portrayal of the body's natural structure alongside inner emotions and symbolic elements. His sculptures embody a harmonious blend of valor, serenity, and dignity.

His sculptural works demonstrate the use of realistic modeling, balanced proportions, intricate carving, mold-casting techniques, and surface finishes such as antique bronze. The interplay of light and shadow creates a sense of three-dimensional vitality.

Mahavir Bharati views art as a medium that harmonizes three distinct realms: spiritual discipline (meditation), culture, and society. According to him, art is not merely an aesthetic display of form, but rather an expression of emotion, consciousness, and a sense of self appraisal.

In 2018, he established a studio in Jaipur named "Bharatiya Shilp Kala Private Limited," which he developed in collaboration with Nirmala Ji. Today, this studio has established itself as a renowned art center. He also served as a member of the Progressive Art Council in 1997.

He has created sculptures depicting the culture of Rajasthan—including its valiant warriors, heroic women, and prominent political, social, and religious figures—as well as animals, birds, and life-size statues. Notably, he has crafted numerous statues and equestrian sculptures of Maharana Pratap.

His installed sculptures can be found in over 15 states across the country—including Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, and Assam. Through a body of work comprising over 200 sculptures, he has earned recognition at the national level.

He has created statues of numerous eminent personalities, including B. R. Ambedkar, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, Major Dhyan Chand, as well as other historical and religious figures.

Mahavir Bharati has been honored with numerous prestigious awards and accolades over time in recognition of his exceptional craftsmanship and creative contributions. His art is characterized by its originality

A beautiful synthesis of subtlety and tradition is evident in his work, a quality for which various social and cultural institutions have accorded him special tribute. In 2013, he was conferred with the Veer Durgadas Award in Jaipur. This honor served as a symbol of public acceptance for his artistic prowess and cultural offering. The very next year, in 2014—also in Jaipur—he received the Abhinav Samman, an award that acknowledges his creativity and spirit of innovation.

In 2016, during a ceremony held in Karnal, he was bestowed with the Global Diamond Award. This accolade reflects the widespread recognition his work has garnered, as well as his growing stature on the national stage. Subsequently, 2017 proved to be a year of exceptional achievements for him. That year, in Jaipur, he received the Vivekananda Guru Samman, an award that highlights the guiding and inspirational

qualities inherent in his personality. In the same year, in New Delhi, he was honored with the Great Achiever Award, symbolizing appreciation for his sustained success and accomplishments. Additionally, in Tonk, he received the Rashtriya Kala Ratna Award, which further elevated his artistic talent to a position of national prestige.

The series of his achievements did not end there. In 2019, in Mumbai, he was presented with the Rashtriya Purna Award, acknowledging his role as a source of inspiration within society. That same year, in Patna, he was conferred the title of “Indian Rising Star,” a distinction reflecting his continuously growing influence and creative identity. Furthermore, in Beawar, he was honored with the Rajasthan Paramshri, a testament to his exceptional achievements at the state level. Collectively, these honors clearly demonstrate that Mahaveer Bharti’s artistic influence was not confined merely to the local sphere; rather, he garnered widespread acceptance and recognition within a national context.

He has been actively associated with various social and cultural organizations. He has served as the National Youth Secretary for the Akhil Bharatiya Dasnam Goswami Samaj, as the Vice President of the Rajasthan Yuva Chhatra Sanskriti Sanstha (Jaipur), and as the Provincial Secretary for Sanskar Bharati. Sanskar Bharati was established in 1981 and is dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Indian art and culture

A pivotal turning point in Mahavir Bharti’s career as a sculptor occurred when the Government of Haryana entrusted him with the responsibility of creating a bronze statue—standing approximately 12.5 feet tall—of the former Deputy Prime Minister, Devi Lal. This assignment proved to be a major achievement for him. Impressed by the quality and artistic merit of the statue, the government subsequently commissioned him to create other statues intended for installation across various districts of Haryana.

This opportunity gave a new direction to his professional life. Following this, he continued to make steady progress and established his own independent studio in Jaipur, which is today recognized as a renowned art center. To date, he has installed over 350 statues across various states of the country.

Mahavir Bharti has installed statues of eminent personalities and meditative saints in numerous states, including Rajasthan, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and Assam. Notably, he has created more than 30 statues of Maharana Pratap alone.

His works have been installed in the country’s sacred cities of Ayodhya and Dwarka—an accomplishment he regards as one of the most glorious moments of his life.

His art has also garnered recognition on the international stage. Statues created by him have been installed at the “Chokhi Dhani Resort” located in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. These include magnificent statues of Maharani Padmini and Maharaja Ganga Singh. Through these sculptures, the rich history of India and the cultural grandeur of Rajasthan are showcased even on foreign soil.



Mahavir Bharti views art not merely as a personal pursuit, but also as a social responsibility. He provides training and employment opportunities to young people at his studio. He firmly believes that children should not be confined solely to traditional professions—such as becoming doctors or engineers—but should instead be encouraged to pursue careers in the field of art, in accordance with their own interests. He conveys a message to parents, urging them to adopt a positive and encouraging attitude toward the arts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the art and sculpture industry faced a severe economic crisis. Despite the completion of numerous large-scale statues, their timely delivery proved impossible. Installation ceremonies and events had to be postponed due to lockdowns and transportation disruptions. Furthermore, many technicians returned to their native regions, thereby disrupting workflow processes. Numerous orders were cancelled, and the installation of several statues had to be deferred until the following year. In this situation, artists encountered difficulties of both an economic and practical nature. Mahavir Bharti, too, experienced these challenges, yet he continued his work with unwavering patience and commitment.

A distinct influence of the realist style is evident in Mahavir Bharti's sculptures. In addition to an equestrian statue of the illustrious warrior Maharana Pratap, he also created a sculpture depicting the Maharana mounted on his elephant, "Ram Prasad"—a piece standing approximately 14 feet tall and weighing nearly 2 tons. In this statue, Maharana Pratap is depicted in royal attire. He is portrayed holding a sword in one hand and a pouch of gold coins in the other. Both the elephant and the palanquin are adorned with intricate ornamentation, which further enhances the grandeur of the sculpture.

Comparably, a statue standing approximately 12.6 feet tall, depicting him mounted on his warhorse, Chetak, was also created. Alongside these statues, historical details have been inscribed on plaques, enabling viewers to familiarize themselves with the lives and contributions of the respective personalities.

In his studio located in Jaipur, statues of numerous historical and cultural figures have been crafted. Utilizing exquisite materials such as Makrana marble, he has created several life-size sculptures. For

instance, he also sculpted statues of the parents of the renowned actor Amitabh Bachchan—Harivansh Rai Bachchan and Teji Bachchan—which were presented as special gifts.



Mahavir Bharti’s artistic journey stands as a testament to struggle, dedication, and continuous evolution. His trajectory—from his early opportunities to achieving international acclaim—demonstrates that unwavering commitment and artistic excellence can indeed earn an artist widespread recognition. He does not merely sculpt statues; rather, he gives form to Indian history, culture, and heritage. His art has emerged as a powerful medium for expressing Indian identity and cultural consciousness, both within the country and overseas.

References:

1. Based on personal interviews...