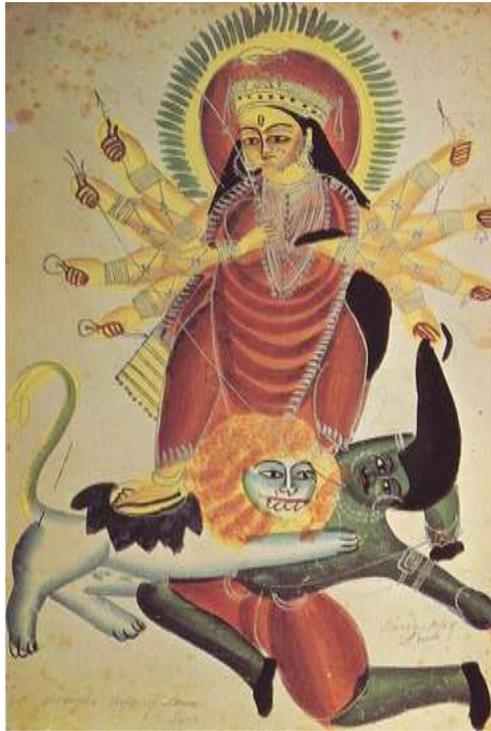


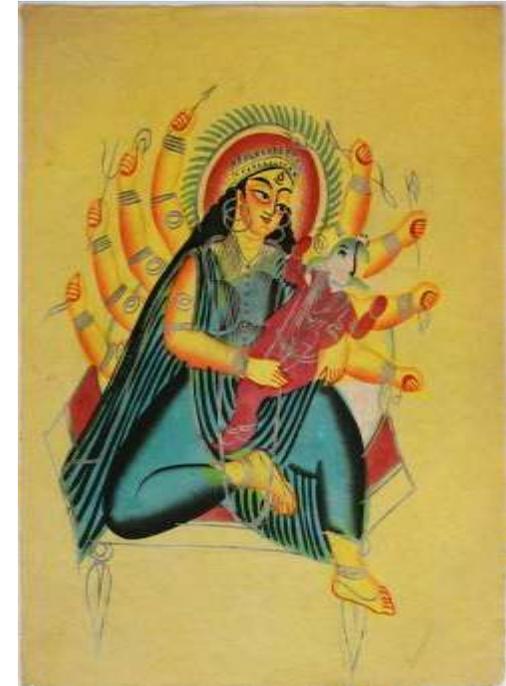
## Paintings of Bengal

### Kalighat painting :

Originated in the 19th century Bengal, in the vicinity of Kalighat Kali Temple, Kolkata, from being items of souvenir taken by the visitors to the Kali temple, the paintings over a period of time developed as a distinct school of Indian painting. Kalighat painting grew so popular form of art in past that these were replicated by the German lithography on glazed paper.



From the depiction of Hindu gods, goddesses, and other mythological characters, the Kalighat paintings developed to reflect a variety of themes. Their paintings depicting different professions and costumes were also popular with the tourists. Even contemporary events like crime were the subject of many paintings. The artists also chose to portray secular themes and personalities and in the process played a role in the Independence movement. They painted heroic characters like Tipu Sultan and Rani Lakshmibai



The Kalighat painting was basically the drawing, the outlines of which were made in bold single stroke with brush 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 and they influence modern artistes like the late Jamini Roy even to this day.

### **Patachitra:**

The folk painting of Orissa & Bengal, has a history of great antiquity which exhibit the use of strong lines and brilliant colors. These are religious paintings which covers themes and events from Indian mythology and Puranas and mainly made on silk or on old cotton glued with paper. Patachitras are painted in a regular series like Dashavatar of Vishnu and activities of Lord Rama & Krishna etc. The best Patachitra paintings are found in and around Puri, especially in the village of Raghurajpur. The artists' colony, known as Chitrakar Sahi, is in the vicinity of the local temple .



Apart from the mythological stories, there are figures like a dancing girl or mother and child. Krishna's dancing with gopis and playing of various pranks on his playmates charging the environment with an air of mischief are favourites.

The folk paintings or patachitras are done on cloth which the artists prepare themselves by coating it with a mixture of chalk and gum made from tamarind seeds to give the surface a leather like texture on which the artists paint with earth and stone colours. Painting is done by brushes with a mixture of clay and powder from a stone rich in iron - oxide, or by incising and cutting a pattern on the raw pottery using comb - like and knife like tools.

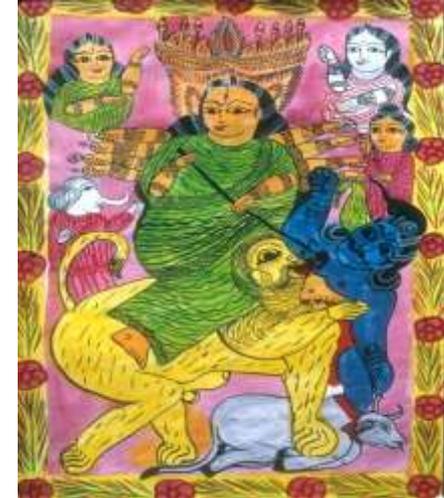


### **Patua painting**

Patuas, like the kumars, started out in the village tradition as painters of scrolls or pats telling the popular mangal stories of the gods and goddesses. For generations these scroll painters or patuas have gone from village to village with their scrolls or pat singing stories in return for money or food. Many come from the Midnapur district of West Bengal or else from the 24

Parganas and Birbhum districts and call themselves chitrakar. The pats or scrolls are made of sheets of paper of equal or different sizes which are sown together and painted with ordinary poster paints. Originally they would have been painted on cloth and used to tell religious stories such as the medieval mangal poems. Today they may be used to comment on social and political issues such as the evils of cinema or the promotion of literacy.

Mangal kavyas are auspicious poems dedicated to rural deities and appear as a distinctive feature of medieval Bengali literature. Mangals can still be heard today in rural areas of West Bengal often during the festivals of the deities they celebrate, for example Manasa puja in the rainy season during July-August when the danger of snake bite is at its peak. Interestingly, it is the mangal stories connected with this particular art form that provide us with some of the earliest clues about the worship of clay images in Bengal.



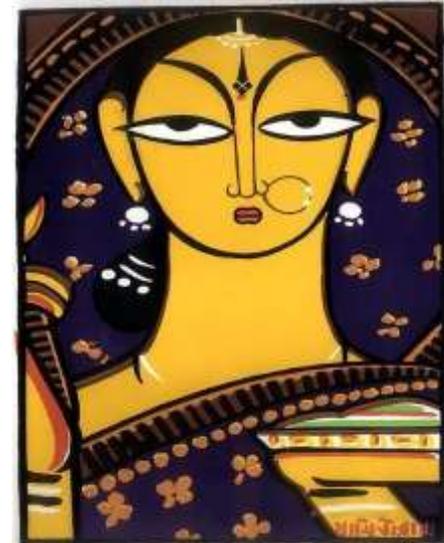
### **Bengal School of Art:**



Bengal has given some of the first and best painters of India like - Abanintranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Paritosh Sen and Ramanada Bendhopathya. Jamini Roy the world famous painters also hailed from Bengal.

Bengal continues to produce some of the best artists of modern India. Among them the best known artists of present day Bengal are Ganesh Pyne, Manishi Dey, Nirmal Dutta, Nilima Dutta, Jahar Dasgupta, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Sudip Roy, Devajyoti Ray and Paresh Maiti.

Sanat Chatterjee is one of the last living pioneers of Bengal School of art. studied under Asit Kumar Haldar around fifteen years.



*A painting of a lady by Jamini Roy*