

### **Artform: Patachitra Painting**

Patachitra is an ancient and traditional form of painting originating from Odisha, India. The term "Patachitra" derives from the Sanskrit words "Pata" (cloth) and "Chitra" (picture), meaning a painting on cloth. This art form is renowned for its intricate detailing, bold use of contrasting colors, and deep-rooted connections to religious and mythological themes. Predominantly featuring Hindu deities like Lord Jagannath, Lord Krishna, and Lord Rama, Patachitra paintings often narrate stories from the Mahabharata, Ramayana, and various puranas. The figures in these paintings are depicted in a stylized manner with elongated eyes, pointed noses, and prominent chins, set against richly decorated floral and geometric patterned borders.

Patachitra holds significant cultural importance, especially in the rituals and festivals associated with Lord Jagannath. These paintings are not only religious artifacts but also serve as decorations in homes and temples during special occasions. The storytelling nature and intricate artistry of Patachitra have earned it a revered place in Indian folk art, preserving the cultural heritage and artistic traditions of Odisha.

### **Artwork: Navagunjar Avatar**

The "Navagunjar Avatar" is a compelling subject within the Patachitra tradition, vividly brought to life by the artist's meticulous attention to detail and vibrant color palette. Navagunjar, also known as Navagunjara, is a unique and fascinating form of Lord Vishnu, described in the Odia Mahabharata by poet Sarala Das. This avatar symbolizes the unity and diversity of life, illustrating that the divine encompasses all forms and beings. It represents the idea that every element in the universe is a part of the divine whole.

The Navagunjar form is a composite of parts from nine different animals: the head of a rooster, neck of a peacock, back of a bull, waist of a lion, tail of a serpent, three legs belonging to an elephant, a tiger, and a horse, with the fourth leg being an upraised human arm holding a lotus. This surreal and composite nature of Navagunjar is depicted harmoniously, maintaining an aesthetic balance and capturing its awe-inspiring and mystical essence. The painting showcases the intricate artistry, philosophical depth, and the extraordinary aspects of the avatar, making it a distinctive and revered subject within the Patachitra tradition.

### **Artist: Manoj Mohanty**

Manoj Mohanty, a distinguished artist from Bhubaneswar, has dedicated over 20 years to the creation of wall murals and traditional painting murals. A graduate of the B.K. College of Art & Crafts, Utkal University, Manoj's artistic journey has been marked by numerous awards and recognitions. His works have been exhibited in a multitude of art exhibitions, reflecting his profound skill and creative vision. Manoj has also actively participated in various art camps, further honing his craft and contributing to the artistic community.

Manoj's expertise in Patachitra is evident in his ability to blend traditional techniques with contemporary themes, creating artworks that resonate with cultural significance and artistic excellence. His depiction of the Navagunjar Avatar in Patachitra showcases his mastery in this ancient art form, capturing the intricate details and vibrant essence that characterize this unique and symbolic avatar. Through his work, Manoj continues to preserve and promote the rich artistic heritage of Odisha, making significant contributions to the world of Indian folk art.

**Location:** Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

**Team Member:** Shibanshi Moharana

