



# Artistic Journey of Siva Kumar K V: A Case Study

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**Abstract:** The paper explores the artistic journey of Venkata Siva Kumar Kappala, a multidisciplinary artist and an art educator based in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. Siva Kumar's artistic journey began in his childhood with sketches and added interest in art at school, which progressed through formal art education at Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University in Hyderabad. The artist draws inspiration from his local environment, global issues, Indian traditions, etc. Siva Kumar's work spans between painting, sculpture, collage, video, and others. His thematic focus includes human figuration, nature, and societal concerns. The paper explores the artistic journey of Venkata Siva Kumar Kappala, a multidisciplinary artist and an art educator based in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. Despite challenges in his artistic and professional life, including financial constraints, Siva Kumar remains committed to his creative vision and continues to inspire others through his work and teaching. The artist seeks to deepen his exploration of Indian history and mythology and may embrace new artistic performances in the near future. However, Siva Kumar's journey reflects passion, perseverance, and dedication to the skill of art.

**Index Terms -** *Artistic Journey, Nuance Artistic Developments, Artists Life, Contemporary Art*

## INTRODUCTION

It is all about a different world in which a child has his own wings of imagination that affect both innocence and unknown but in a steady manner. Like another child prodigy, Siva Kumar. K. V went on creating smokey ships on the pieces of paper in his early childhood. It was time to take the entrance into class one at Railway High School, Guntupalli, but instead he was making the pencil drawings at the corner of the room attached to the balcony. The mind is inspired by many things, like ships, rainy roads with fallen flowers, people and their thoughts and activities, streaming rail wagons, the faraway smoky chimneys of Narla Thatharao Thermal Power Station (NTPS) in Kondapalli, and the map of India, which were desired items boggling and made them attempt to draw on papers. He is an ardent admirer of culture, tradition, heritage, and the arts. At a point, the artist's childhood hobby of watching Doordarshan (a government national television channel) paved the way for intangible cultural elements to enter his cognizance. He now makes the visual feast through his artistic practice and presentation as a multidisciplinary artist.

## Methodology:

The Paper display the qualitative design and of and an experimental case study of self which delves in the field of Fine Arts declaring the depth of life events, activities, artistic processes of an individual artist. The chronology details the step-by-step process of development of an artist which relates to a particular geographical art practice connected to the traditional methods at one-part of southern part India.

### **The artistic endeavors at childhood:**

The artist's father had found the interest and desire for art in master Siva Kumar's regular drawings at a young age and tried many ways to get him to educate him in art. Finally, in Class 5, Siva Kumar joined the art tuition that was directed by art teacher Jakkula Hari, an ad-hoc teacher of Kendriya Vidyalaya-2 at Guntupalli-Wagon Workshop Colony. Siva Kumar learned the basics of drawings such as human hands, heads, facial features, geometric and floral patterns, floral designs, etc. The task at hand was to replicate the instructor's illustrations from the left page of the drawing book onto the right page. This practice has a big picture in its future outcome.

### **The support from School Education:**

Siva Kumar has taken every opportunity to participate in the competitions held outside and in the school's internals. In the competitive world sometimes, a student may get a prize, and sometimes may not. Siva Kumar has received many laurels for his creative works and had been appreciated widely in his school. The school art teacher, Prasad Babu, taught him the basics of art like pencil shading, object study, geometry, and drawing.

### **Art as part of Intermediate and Collegiate Education:**

While Siva Kumar is finishing his intermediate education, he wept a lot to enter a college that provides a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting in Hyderabad, which was not an option for his parents. Prior to this, Siva Kumar passed the Andhra Pradesh state lower and higher-grade drawing examinations, which the Andhra Pradesh government is conducting, and later he also received a Higher-Grade Technical Teacher Certificate course from the same in his teenage. At this time, he applied and appeared for a Bachelors of Fine Arts entrance exam in Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University, Nampalli, Hyderabad and topped the test in the year 2001. Later, his parents accepted for the University education. The studies at university helped young artists understand broad and nuanced ideas about a wide range of arts and mediums, in clay modeling, water colours, woodcuts, dry point, lithography, tempera, acrylic painting, miniatures, murals, oil paintings, and the history of art, etc. He experienced the experiments and varieties of art practices in the faculty of Lalitha Kala Peetam, Nampalli, Hyderabad.

Faculty members of the college like Late Laxmana Murthy, Srinivasachary. K., Sajid Bin Amar, Mahesh P., Durga Prasad, and some other supporting staff are the finest art academic mentors and inspiring practitioners to the collegiate batches with their guidance in the Department of Painting and Sculpture. Siva Kumar worked on various mediums in the college, but showed a special affection for egg tempera and miniature art. He studied murals, miniatures, and some other techniques under K. Srinivasachary, who specialized in them. Under the guidance of various art teachers, the batchmates have learned a lot about various practices and understood the material culture, surface painting and Print Making. The young artist also reached the sphere of artistic life by participating in competitions and exhibitions. The department has provided plenty but limited paper to work on drawings and paintings etc.

**Figure 1, Mural study at university**



*Note 1: Learning mural painting (old Dean Office), Lalithakala Peetam, Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University, Hyderabad, 2004*

### **Motivations from Hyderabad School:**

Siva Kumar's art works were selected for exhibitions in the combined Andhra Pradesh state and at all-India-level exhibitions like the Hyderabad Art Society and others. There were floating art exhibitions in Hyderabad every fortnight among

the good spread of art galleries. Artists from Bengal, the Bombay Boys, Chennai, Kerala, and other circles regularly present their works here. The students have had the opportunity to meet many artists of national repute, like Rini Dhupal, Manjit Bawa, Kishen Khanna, Prabhakar Kolte, and many other prominent artists in the art scenario, and they were truly inspired by their practice, philosophy of art, technical qualities like textures, coloring, and figuration, etc. Besides some group exhibitions, Siva Kumar got a chance to present a solo show in 2007 at the Chitramayee State Art Gallery, Hyderabad, and his journey continued as an artist beside teaching in private schools. Siva Kumar never tried to leave Hyderabad after his graduation in fine arts, but found great likeness in his native place, Vijayawada.

### Inspirations and influence:

The study of the four-year Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) at Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University taught the students the roots of Indian traditions and styles, especially in the miniatures and mural studies. For instance, in field trips, Siva Kumar and his student friends had been to Ajanta and Ellora in their final year excursion to see and learn the composition and styles in the cave painting of Ajanta and the sculpture from Ellora. The students saw the mesmerizing paintings in Ajanta's colossal caves being painted in secco fresco (Manager Singh, 2014). Siva Kumar was first inspired by the Ajanta paintings at a young age. Siva Kumar remembers that he got the opportunity to participate in the South Central Railway's Bharath Scout, and Guide state-level camp at Nanded, Maharashtra, and his friends and himself got the opportunity to see Ajanta and Ellora. The students of the 10th grade had seen the marvelous architecture and art of Ajanta and Ellora, and the only things left in Siva Kumar's minds were the painted Padmapani Avalokiteshvara, Dammaparinibbana, repeated Buddhas of Ajanta caves, Gajalakshmi, and Ramayana bas panel from Ellora. The child artist also tried to capture the small fragments of the ceiling paintings in Ellora with a Kodak reel camera.

Though Siva Kumar learned about impressionism, expressionism, and other art forms from the western history of art and practiced the western style of paintings, he was also concentrated on the Indian style of art and had the chance to copy the replicas of Ajanta murals on the large paper fixing on the coarse cloth that is prefixed to the carrier wall. The paper was treated with Sharas for texture and used egg tempera to replicate the picture of the Royal Procession from cave number 17. The textures, the scratching effects, and the looks of antiquity make a big sense of the painting with elephants and royal men. The students' friends and Siva Kumar have done a large-scale mural and practiced tiny size miniatures smaller than A4 paper, especially Siva Kumar's painted copy of a miniature of a war scenario of gods and demons sitting on the birds done in gouache colors.

**Figure 2, Miniature painting study**



*Note 2. Vikral Bairav, Basholi, Pahari Miniature painting study done by artist on Imperial handmade paper, Img: Artist*

**Figure 3, Replication of Apsara**



*Note 3. Artist using Apsara of Ajanta cave painting in his work of art, Img: Artist*

The Hyderabad School somehow brings the distortions into the art but sticks to the traditional approaches within her scope of transformations. Artists like folklore imagery of Laxma Goud, Thota Vaikuntam, figurative and minimalist D L N Reddy, Impressionist metaphors of Surya Prakash, and some others left a great impact of their art on the upcoming generations. Each year, the Hyderabad School welcomes new students to study fine art, where they are transformed from free-floating amateurs into professional artists.

Siva Kumar preferred working with egg tempera over all other mediums. He was encouraged by his college

instructor, Indian tempera artist K Srinivasachari to pursue this medium (Artist). Artists like Laxma Goud, Kavita Deuskar (Rajendra, 2013) from Hyderabad, and others have paved the way for practicing tempera and egg tempera in India. If it comes to the figuration, Siva Kumar was very much admired by the fine lines and contour of the picture, which was a pre-occupied matter of art adopted from woodcut, dry point on Plexiglas, zinc sheets, and lithography. The BFA program's consistent four-year practice made the artist's fine arts practice airtight. The artist bagged not only a single inspiration but a bundle of opportunities and plenty of aspirations for his practice of art.

### Art Methodology:

It is the basic intuition of an artist that led to the creation of any kind of artwork, which may have been drawn from pre-occupied ideas or emerged from the contemporary substance that is happening around society or from the mind itself. The work of art may reflect society, spirituality, nature motives like lotus, buffalo, cows, reptiles, or the causes of the world, etc. Being a multidisciplinary artist, Siva Kumar works in painting, video, sculpture, installation, photography, writing, etc. The themes or concepts of art works are inspired by the surroundings, local matters, global causes, and crises that touch our hearts. For making the art, there is a great need for research on the theme the artist has chosen, and to study around that subject, like time, space, conduct, life styles, emotive powers, and others, to get the true outcome of the work.

### Creativity and the process of art:

The major portion of Siva Kumar imagery is occupied by figurative descriptions, whether they are human beings, flora, or fauna, within the juxtaposition of desired negative and positive spacing in the compositions. The linearity that dominates was derived from the traditions of Indian mural and miniature traditions that were passing until modern Indian art movements. The linearity that dominates was derived from the traditions of Indian mural and miniature traditions that were passing until modern Indian art movements. The contour line drawings will be repeated throughout the process of painting, while those were

Figure 4, Composition



Note 4, Artist's work of Composition done in Egg Tempera on Imperial handmade paper

Figure 5, Composition- 2



Note 5, Egg tempera composition work by the artist on Imperial paper

overlapped by the surface layer again and again with the thin coats of paint. The textures of the work of art will be done randomly in thin and thick applications of colors, which is an imitation of painting and the scratching technique of egg-tempera. Sometimes it is needed to wash layers to get unknown textures. The artist's conversion to vegetarian and not using egg tempera anymore is a big drawback for the artist, who is now working to bring the same textures, imitations, and tactile appearance of egg tempera to the surface of his paintings on paper and canvas. The making of profiles and 3/4 images of humans is slender or plump, sometimes in sizes with a tactile appearance of textures made with stencils, wash technique, corrugated sheets, rollers, and others imprinted on the desired spaces of the composition.

**Techniques in practice:****Painting:**

The artist applies the primer to the canvas or to the paper. It is needed to apply a base colour coat in yellow to bring out the brightness of the lateral layers of colours or to create unique layers. Line drawing is important to the kind of traditional figurative painting that is developed in many layers of colours in application to the desired results. It is needed to bring the textures and sometimes the plane application of colours throughout the surface painting. The composition of positive and negative spacings is equally important to each other on the canvas. Both the opacity and transparency of the acrylic layering on the surface area are needed for creating the textures and soothing spaces that create interest for the viewers. There are other sorts of textures made with the imprints of corrugated sheet, plastic wrap, or paper applied to wet or drying acrylic colours in the surface painting. Dry brush application of colour all over the surface of the painting makes a unified layer, especially in the acrylic colour on surfaces that make the canvas damp or bright, giving it a feel of viscosity. To bring out the concrete feeling of the tempera textures, artist tries to scrap, imprint, or wash the surface of the paper or canvas works.

**Figure 6, The man, and Bull**

Note 6: artists work of Acrylic colour painting on Handmade paper, 2010

**Figure 7, The Thief of lotus flowers**

Note 7: acrylic painting on Imperial size, 2020

**Video Art:**

The artist uses mobile phones and, in some cases, DSLR cameras to take the raw footage in fragments. A video art work or moving image should be captured artistically on a tripod or by hand. Siva Kumar may incorporate moments of nature, people's movements, or acting characters into his frames. The editing process, sound quality, and some other things will be considered when bringing out a video. A video can be produced in a day, or it can take months to get the desired results. The artist takes basic options into mind while making a video work of art, such as a 16:9 ratio of horizontal view, 1080 x 1924 resolution of the screen or HD, color capture, application of filters (if needed), audio in stereo, text (if needed), voice-over (if needed), background experimental score, manual drawings on paper (if needed), and others. The artist edits the video work on a laptop, and, if supported, on mobile as well. Beside many options, the artist prefers the output of the video in MP4-H264 and others, like MOV, AVI, FLV, or others, upon the demand of the film or video art festivals.

**Figure 8, Refugees are Welcome**

Note 8, artist's Video art work done in stop motion animation. 03:08 Sec, 2017 (V, Refugees are Welcome, 2017)

**Figure 9, Work in Progress**

Note 9, Artist performance video work, 01:01 Sec, 2014 (V, Work in Progress, 2014)

**Other Forms or Art Practices:**

Siva Kumar's collages are based on humor and are very simple in logic and composition. He opts for the limited, desired, ready-made imagery from newspapers and magazines. He assembles the cut and pasted papers, which look more like a graphic design or photographic work than real collages of coloured papers. The final output of the collage work is to keep a big laugh or a small smile on the viewers' faces. He takes thick chart papers, assembles two to three ready-made images, and amalgamates them.

A thick white chart, a glue stick or white glue, and selected prepared images are the components of making the collages. The style of ready-made collages is the art of Dadaists and other movements used for satire in the European world of art. Siva Kumar exhibited more than 70 collages in a solo exhibition of collages titled Readymade (India, 2017) in Iconart Gallery, Hyderabad. Being a multidisciplinary artist, Siva Kumar makes other creative works like terracotta sculptures, paper mache works, and poetry as well.



Note 10, Miniature works of terracotta by artist, 2013- 2015

### Themes of the works of Art:

Siva Kumar paints human figuration beside nature. His nature includes women, flora, and fauna. Animals like bulls, cows, and birds appear beside the lush green setup and keep the lotus motives in his compositions. Sometimes artists establish the concrete jungle and the problems with plastics and other contamination in society on the canvas. The artist's depiction of human figurative forms and bulls is inspired by the forms of mural paintings of the Lepakshi temple of Hindupur in Ananthapur. The contour lines are as bold as the Lepakshi murals, which are submerged into the layers of painted layers of the art works. The video art work is quite different in genre and holds matters of fun, grief, relationships, and other world crises, etc. Siva Kumar collages make fun of and satirize, for example, the gigantic Gangnam Dancers performing in the dam water, keeping water float out of the dam. His sculptures speak a serene tone and express the inner silent attitude boldly.

### Expositions:

Siva Kumar's first art exhibition was held in Victoria Technical Institute, All India annual art and crafts exhibition, Anna Salai, Chennai. The show showcased the masks made of paper-mache with a binder of fenugreek seeds. It was a consecutive participation for 3 years in 2003, 2004, and 2005 at Chennai. He received a Gold Medal in the All-India Arts exhibition held at Pullaiah Kala Nilayam, Jangaon, Warangal, in 2001. Participated in Karnataka Chitra Kala Parishad Art fair - 'Chitra Santhe' in the year 2003. In the process of artistic carrier, Siva Kumar got the opportunity to present three solo exhibitions in the years 2007, 2010 (Dubey, April 15, 2010), and 2017 in Hyderabad.

The video art works that were being made since 2013–14 had screened at international video art festivals and film festivals around the globe. The first screening was held at Toride Railway Station, Subway, Japan, in 2014. A pen drawing and mixed media work titled *'The Faraway Wounds of Syria'* was selected in Camel Art Foundation Exhibition from the southern part of India in 2017. Some of the works were selected for the Odessa Biennale, Ukraine, in 2017 (video art), the Osten Biennale, Macedonia, in 2016 (drawing), ZKM Museum, Germany, in 2017 (video), Geumgang Nature Art Biennale, South Korea, in 2022 (box art), the Torrance Art Museum, USA (video), and other international art exhibitions.

### Artist's Livelihood:

As an artist, it is difficult to work hard to keep the family well with all the desires and to settle into life. Beside working in a school with limited salaries, it is also necessary to paint commissioned paintings and murals in the buildings for some reasonable prices. Though the work is commercial, in this way the artist gets the chance to paint portraits and murals, which helps to keep the medium of art consistent and in control of hand the hands. The clients bargaining in the market is not feasible for the artist's life. An artist's life is not only about studio practice but also having time to keep the family in mind when paying the children's school fees, bills of electricity, home rent, groceries, easy monthly installments (EMI), and many other items on the monthly list. As man is a bundle of desires, he deserves to buy new things for the needs at home, especially if an artist desires to buy art materials like canvas, colours, and books of recession prices that just blow away a big heat in the family. One may get

topped with distinction in university studies, but getting out of academics faces a big problem called life, excluding the artistic life. The art must be accepted in colleges for marking and in families for sustaining. Staying in the remote capital cities beside society with less familiarity with the nuance of art is also a trouble for the artist's consistent survival. It is a hope that these many conditions may make the artist suffer from bipolar disorder (Jacquelyn Johnson, 2022), loneliness, and other traumatic experiences in his or her life.

#### **The artist as a teacher:**

As a teacher, the artist is rendering his service full time in school, facilitating the best for the student's creative growth. As Picasso said, "*Every child is an artist...*" The artist is just facilitating the students to enshrine their inner creatives and impart the new skills to them. Being a hero-like figure an art teacher does many odds with the corporate impact while teaching in private schools. An art teacher always gets a multitasking job role that the teacher gets assigned. Like other teachers, he moves and runs here and there for final approvals from the Head of the Institutions, decoration works, digital design works, working on the regular Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) circulars, photography, videography, editing, supporting other faculty, print works, summer camps, and substitution classes, in addition to the role of teaching. His relentless support made his students bag many laurels at the state and national level art competitions. The artist started his career in 2007 and worked in many institutions, including the teaching faculty of visual design at Image Multimedia-Hyderabad, the art and craft facilitator at Pranav International School in Hyderabad, the art and clay modeling teacher at Nalanda Vidya Niketan in Vijayawada, and at present he is working as an art teacher at Chitturi High School in Vijayawada.

**Figure 13,** *Conducting an art competition at school*



*Note 13, The art teacher at work, Hyderabad, 2010*

#### **A scope for the future:**

The artist works on traditional Indian approach of art and likes to work on the scriptures of Indian origins. Siva Kumar wants to study the ancient Indian history and mythological philosophy of the Indian past to support his future artistic endeavors. In addition to fine art, Siva Kumar also studied history and pursued a Master of Arts in History (MAH) at Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU-Central Open University) in the year 2020. Shivkumar wants to keep other mediums apart from painting to express artistic intuitions like video, sculpture, collage, etc. The mediums that Siva Kumar chose for expression may vary in style and technique, but with a touch of a philosophical attribute amongst the thoughts of Louise Bourgeois, who states that artists should revisit and re-interpret (Kedmey, Dec 16, 2017) past works of art and approach them again with the same style. Artist Laxma Goud says that all the mediums are different from each other, one can express themselves differently, and artists must have freedom, as stated at the State Bank of India Art Camp held at LHO- Hyderabad in 2005.

#### **Conclusion:**

the artistic journey of Siva Kumar K V is a testament to the transformative power of passion, determination, and dedication to the craft. From his humble beginnings as a child prodigy sketching smokey ships to his multidisciplinary approach as an educator and artist, Siva Kumar's evolution reflects a deep connection to his local environment, global causes, and the rich cultural heritage of India. Siva Kumar has embraced various mediums, from traditional painting techniques like egg tempera to contemporary forms such as video art and collage. His themes often draw inspiration from nature, human figuration, and societal issues, reflecting a distinction understanding of the world around him. As both as an artist and a teacher, he continues to inspire

others and nurture the next generation of creative minds. Looking ahead, Siva Kumar seeks to delve deeper into the ancient history and mythological philosophy of India, exploring new avenues of expression while staying rooted in his cultural heritage. His journey serves as a reminder of the enduring power of art to transcend boundaries, spark dialogue, and evoke emotions, leaving a lasting impact in the four-decade old artist.

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