

THE CREATIVE JOURNEY OF CONTEMPORARY PUNJABI SCULPTOR- GURMEET GOLDIE

Sandeep Singh

Research Scholar

*S. Sobha Singh Department of Fine Arts
Punjabi University, Patiala (Punjab)*

&

Assistant Professor

SUS Government College, Sunam (Punjab)

Email: sandeepchitarkar@gmail.com

Abstract

A sculpture is an art form born out of clay of virtue and countenance, kneaded with the water of aesthetics. To give an occult shape to a sculpture, the churning of a whirlwind of emotions, expressions and harmonization can only be done by a woman. The present research paper is an attempt to interpret such whirlwinds into words. A renowned contemporary sculptor of Punjab, Gurmeet Goldie is one of such artists, who completed her education at the Government College of Art, Chandigarh in 1981. Lit with emotions, Goldie began her journey through various mediums such as drawing, painting, terracotta sculpture, graphic design and others. The words of a famous Punjabi sculptor- Shiv Singh, during the first exhibition, "Goldie, you are doing great work in the art of Sculpture, never give up, keep working hard and always keep the longing to touch the sky with glory," got absorbed in her conscience. She looked at many artists for inspiration and adopted new techniques by following the paths of technology. During this creative journey, she kept participating in every art workshop, watching artist's work top to bottom, which gave her pleasure and kept her motivated. Her art continued to improve with the time. As per the laws of Nature, new techniques continued to grow while incorporating new methods in art. Influenced by Nature and preferring relationships, Goldie put art into practice.

Keywords

Punjab, Sculpture, Gurmeet Goldie, Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh, Henry Moore, Shiv Singh, Terracotta, Metal, Fibre-glass and Stone.

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 07.02.2024
Approved: 24.03.2024

Sandeep Singh

*THE CREATIVE JOURNEY OF
CONTEMPORARY PUNJABI
SCULPTOR- GURMEET GOLDIE*

Article No.21
*RJPSS Oct.-Mar. 2024,
Vol. XLIX No. 1,
pp. 149-156*

Similarity Check - 0%

Online available at:
[https://anubooks.com/
view?file=3532&session_id=rjps-
2023-vol-xlix-no1-mar2024](https://anubooks.com/view?file=3532&session_id=rjps-2023-vol-xlix-no1-mar2024)

[https://doi.org/10.31995/
rjps.2024.v49i01.021](https://doi.org/10.31995/rjps.2024.v49i01.021)

Introduction

A sculpture is an art form born out of clay of virtue and countenance, kneaded with the water of aesthetics. To give an occult shape to a sculpture, the churning of a whirlwind of emotions, expressions and harmonization can only be done by a woman. The present research paper- 'The Creative Journey of Contemporary Punjabi Sculptor- Gurmeet Goldie' is an attempt to interpret such whirlwinds into words. Gurmeet Goldie did not only dared to do the art of sculpture but also succeeded in doing it with more competence and artistic expertise. The path leading to the field of sculpture may be undoubtedly more challenging and full of difficulties for a woman, but Gurmeet Goldie's passion for this art from dwarfed the difficulties and challenges. By choosing an art form like sculpture, Goldie shattered the illusion that the field of sculpture is extremely difficult and impossible for a woman artist. Gurmeet Goldie did not take long time to make the difficult into easy, and impossible into possible with her art and courage. Along with this, she also has inspired and motivated many young and budding artists who are interested in adopting this art form i.e. sculpture.

Family Background and Inspiration

Punjab's famous contemporary sculptor- Gurmeet Goldie was born on 27th June, 1964 in the house of S. Pritam Singh Lott (father) from the womb of Mrs. Prem Kaur (mother). Goldie had a passion for art since childhood. Bringing wet clay from the pond near the house, Goldie molded various toys and figures with the touch of her gentle hands. The freshness of the clay in toys and figures stimulated her imagination a lot and she indulged not only her hands with clay but also her mind and soul. It was an occasion that sparked a love affair with sculpture. Afterward, she explored and emotionally loved the three-dimensionality of a sculpture more than the two-dimensional images of drawing, painting and graphics printmaking.¹ Goldie never thought that this mud from the pond would one day take the form of a sculpture with the touch of her tender hands.² After that, she never looked back. She began to explore the naïve forms of idols casually but persistently. She has been devoting precious time of her life to art for the last three decades to attain perfection in the field of sculpture.

A Successful Flight into the Art of Sculpture

A childhood passion for collecting stones planted the seeds of creating sculptures in the heart of Goldie. The independent environment provided by her parents at home gave Goldie the freedom to fly freely in the sky of art. After completing her primary and secondary education, her father admitted Goldie to the

Government College of Art, Chandigarh in 1981.³ Here Gurmeet Goldie has acquired technical knowledge and artistic skill in the field of sculpture. After completing B.F.In Sculpture, Gurmeet Goldie held her first Solo Show in which she presented drawings, paintings, graphics and sculptures etc. to the spectators. The words of a famous Punjabi sculptor- Shiv Singh, during her first art exhibition, “*Goldie, you are doing great work in the art of Sculpture, never give up, keep working hard and always keep the longing to touch the sky with glory,*” got absorbed in her conscience.⁴ This is the reason why Goldie has inspired many young women sculptors to overcome the challenges and obstacles that come in the way of their dreams.

Gurmeet Goldie began her artistic journey by working in various mediums like drawing on paper, painting, terracotta, and graphic design and further explored her path towards art. Following this path, many prominent artists became her source of inspiration. According to Goldie, “*The first and the greatest inspiration comes from my parents because the first society and friend of a man is one’s home, from where a person takes guidance and paves the way for the journey ahead of his life.*” The encouragement she received from her parents, allowed her to fly in the open sky of art. The freedom she got to pursue her dreams further enhanced her art.

If Goldie has been influenced by anyone in the world of sculpture, her favorite European sculptor is ‘Henry Moore’. While in college, she was struck by the abstract sculptures by Moore displayed in an art exhibition at the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh. After getting inspiration from the art of Henry Moore, Goldie embodied many of her artworks in abstract style with her creativity. Goldie is a versatile artist whose artistic journey spans from sculpture and writing poetry. When one starts writing about Goldie, perhaps even the pen would have to think about how to describe her talent. The tools, colors, brushes and pen in her hands, sometimes make her a sculptor and sometimes a painter as well as a very talented writer. She uses her creative energy to create stories and poems that express her artistic sensibilities more beautifully. That is why Goldie’s artworks are more mesmerizing to the audience when they listen to her stories and poems. Goldie has a wealth of ideas and emotions along with her art and these three together seem to add to her art.

Goldie’s rigor and passion for her craft not only provided her with technical expertise but also served as a bridge between her work and her inner self. While, venturing on the technical paths, the adoption of new techniques gave perfection in her art. During her artistic journey, her participation in every art workshop, and her observation of the artist’s work from start to end, is a beautiful joy. This is the source of energy that provides a spark in the artist’s mind. By immersing herself in

Sandeep Singh

the creative process, she has developed a keen sense of harmony and rhythm that is evident in her artworks. Each piece of her art has a distinct mood that conveys the essence of her artistic vision. As Goldie became more and more devoted to her art form, art also took her in her bosom and began to recite the lullabies of art. Her creations continued and gradually refined her style and content. According to the laws of Nature, many new techniques and mediums are kept on adding to the field of sculpture, which gives Goldie a distinct identity and fame in the world of sculpture.

Nurturing of her Artistic Skills in the Lap of Nature

Influenced by Nature, Goldie gives preference to relationships that put her art into practice. According to her, *“My inspiration directly comes from Nature because there is no bigger power than this. Mother Nature has provided me the power to connect with art, which is reflected in my work. Nature has nurtured me and my art. Most of the mediums used for sculpture are born from the womb of Mother Nature like clay, wood, stone and metal.”*⁵ Initially Goldie worked in terracotta, carving stone and wood with ease and had created many pieces of sculptures that were well received and appreciated by artists and the public alike. Gradually, she gained mastery in all mediums. Presently, metal and fiberglass spread the magic of her art in the field of sculpture, but stone and wood are her favorite mediums. Her extensive experience working with these mediums has allowed her to develop a deep understanding of her unique qualities and characteristics.⁶

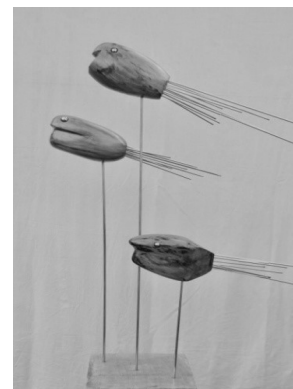
Representations of Human Emotions

Gurmeet Goldie has always chosen the subject matter of her sculptures from her surroundings. She depicted Nature, mother and child, music, family and human relationships in her masterpieces. Her sculptures which are made in stone, metal and wood represent the incredible emotions of women (Feminism) in its true unadulterated form, imparting values and virtues to an evolved human soul. There is a unique kind of fluidity in her sculptures that frees man from the shackles of chaos and gives her serenity. Immersed in the ocean of the art of sculpture, Goldie collected precious gems and imbued her artworks with deeper meanings and aesthetics. For Gurmeet Goldie, whatever the medium is whether it is wood or stone, she chooses and fills it with all the elements of abstract art with her heart's content. She is still trying to give a spiritual form with sharpness and touch of hands. For this style of work, she considers her father- S. Pritam Singh as her source of inspiration. She has never given her artworks under any title as she believes that a title limits the artworks to a certain scope whereas without a title, each viewer explores that subject by experiencing it according to their own personal thinking.⁷

The collection of Gurmeet Goldie's masterpieces can be seen in the Punjab University Museum at Chandigarh, Shimla Museum at Shimla, Dal Lake in Kashmir, Gujarat, Sukhna Lake at Chandigarh in India and also in Sweden. Goldie's exceptional talent and unwavering dedication to her craft have earned her recognition with several state awards. In the field of art, Goldie has been awarded two times with 'The Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi State Award', 'Artist of the Year- 2012', 'Induction Award' by the Department of Education and 'Best Teacher Award' along with numerous other prizes. Goldie herself is an inspiration to the young generation of sculptors as Goldie is the only figure in Punjab who works in all mediums of sculpture. According to Goldie, people go to temples, shrines or religious places for peace of mind, but the artists feel the depth of meditation while working. This is the time when other forces start working with juggling of mind and hands which are in the character's mind and eventually this helps to give a form. Due to her dedication and hard work, Gurmeet Goldie achieved a prestigious position in a very short time and even today she is contributing to the development of the art of sculpture through vast experiments in her sculptures.

A Mirror to Some of her Prominent Sculptures

Flight: The sculpture is created by Gurmeet Goldie by combining two mediums like wood and steel. In it, she has shown three flying birds. The speed of a bird's flight can be estimated easily from the straight feather in the direction of the wind. These flying birds at different heights are looking as if they are trying to make a fence. Although the forms of these birds are abstract but the energy and ability to fly in them seem to be like that of the real birds. Their open mouths, eyes made of steel, and tail feathers made of fine steel tubes present a beautiful scene. Looking at the faces of the birds, it seems as if they are from the same family, a mother, father and child. Further it is also observed that the parents are giving training to their child to fly by paying their duty towards their child. **(Figure: 1)**



**Figure 1: 'Flight',
38"X30"X10", Wood
and Steel, 2016**

Mother and Child: This artwork which is made up of copper, depicts the love of mother and child, whereas the expressions explain a sense of calmness in the sculpture. The eye-to-eye contact shows emotions between mother and child, giving this sculpture a unique appeal. The sculptor has used metal as a medium but the emotions are more tender and soothing to the soul. Being detached from the

surroundings and devoted only to your child is showing the mother's affection. This sculpture has been made in an abstract style but the sentiment of love shown in it is giving shape to the abstract, which gives more peace to the soul of the viewer. The main motive of this masterpiece is to express the feelings of love of a mother and a child towards each other. (Figure-2)



**Figure-2: 'Mother and Child', 12"X12"X4",
Bronze, 2018**

Togetherness: It is Goldie's other artwork which is absolutely amazing and unique in itself. This wonderful piece of art really depicts the essence of unity and connection. This interesting sculpture shows the depth of relationships and the importance of togetherness. The sculpture depicts two figures embracing each other, conveying the feeling of love. The rhythm shown in the sculpture is expressing the positive energy of love. It depicts two bodies and one soul. The sculpture depicts the union of two figures who are shown bound in the bond of love. This is a form of art that celebrates the power of togetherness to bring people together. The artwork depicts people holding hands, embracing, or forming a circle, symbolizing the strength that comes from togetherness. It symbolizes the powerful symbol of peace. Encouraging the message of togetherness, the sculpture seems to be appealing to all to remain bound in bonds of commonality and love. This work of art has the power to evoke emotions and inspire a sense of unity and togetherness. Interestingly, the work is made of wood. The sculpture is a reminder of our common humanity and our collective responsibility to support and uplift each other. In a world that sometimes feels divided, this sculpture serves as a beacon of hope, encouraging us to build bridges, overcome differences, and embrace the strength that comes from togetherness. (Figure- 3)

Growth 19: Another creation by Goldie depicts the concept of development. It depicts natural elements such as plants, trees, or even abstract shapes that symbolize growth. This



**Figure- 3: 'Togetherness',
20"X4"X4", Wood, 2019**

sculpture depicts the continuous journey of life, the visual representation of human existence and Nature. The sculpture is a symbol of humanity's interconnectedness and the continuous cycle of life, human struggle and ability to overcome obstacles, constantly reaching new heights and striving for growth. The idol of growth is made of black marble. This sculpture not only represents the concept of growth, but also can inspire. Growth is a natural and necessary part of life; change and progress are always possible. This sculpture gives the viewer a sense of introspection and contemplation. It also serves as a reminder that growth is not always linear or predictable, but rather a continuous process that requires patience, resilience and an open mind. (Figure- 4)



**Figure- 4: Growth 19,
12"X10"X8", Black
Marble, 2020**

Conclusion

Even after three decades of artistic and creative journey, Gurmeet Goldie still continues her search for unique and diverse experiments in the field of sculpture. She is in search of new subjects and unique forms of sculpture, vocabulary and new beginnings. Her valuable contribution to contemporary sculpture in Punjab will extend the life of contemporary sculpture as much as the folk song, while she will act as a foundation stone for emerging artists. Her art has been praised not only by her friends but also by art critics at the national and international level not only in Punjab. While her artworks and subjects enchant the audience with divine bliss, her art has the expertise to eloquently touch the chords of human relationships.

References

1. Bhatti, Dr. S.S. (2020). *An Odyssey into Modernism: A Brief Account of Art & Artists in Post-Partition Punjab*, White Falcon Publishing: Chandigarh. Pg. **208**.
2. Goldie, Gurmeet. (2021). (Eminent Contemporary Punjabi Sculptor). March 7th, 2021, *Through Personal Interview*, Chandigarh at 11 a.m.
3. Verman, Jung S. (2022). *Art is putting the mind in Creation to associate with the people: Gurmeet Goldie*, The Earth News, Jammu. 31 October.
4. Ibid.
5. Goldie, Gurmeet. (2022). (Eminent Contemporary Punjabi Sculptor). 20th January. *Through Personal Interview*. Chandigarh at 2 p.m.

Sandeep Singh

6. Sharma, Ravinder. (Vice-Chairman, Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi, Chandigarh). (2022). 27th June. *Through Personal Interview*. Office of CLKA. Chandigarh at 4 p.m.
7. Bhatti, Dr. S.S. (2020). *An Odyssey into Modernism: A Brief Account of Art & Artists in Post-Partition Punjab*. White Falcon Publishing: Chandigarh. Pg. **208**.