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A PIONEERING ARTIST WHO LIVED CENTURIES BEFORE HER TIME: THE STORY OF AMRITA SHER-GIL

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ABSTRACT:

Amrita Sher-Gil was like a bright meteor that suddenly appeared on the Indian aesthetic horizon. Her position in the history of Indian modern art is undeniably one of pre-eminence without a doubt. It should not come as a surprise that parts of European and Indian aesthetics may be seen in her aesthetic sense. Especially when it's the work of a remarkable female artist, art may be a powerful tool for undermining beliefs that are already prevalent in society. Amrita Sher-Gil is an artist with extraordinary intuition and talent who has emerged as a definitive symbol of cultural revolt. She is one of the many major artists in India, but she is the only one who has achieved this status. Her body of work represents a watershed moment not just for the advancement of women artists in India but also for modern art as a whole. She had the unique capacity to express liveliness within the complicated reality of her paintings, and as a result, she was able to portray the concepts of human connections in a way that no other artist of her period was able to.

KEY WORDS: Art, Artist, Female, Culture, Performance

INTRODUCTION:

When we fast forward to modern times, when the country is under attack from a fascist and brutal regime, and when ideals of normative heterosexuality and nationalism are dominating and repressive, it becomes a crucial part of the feminist investigation to remember and analyse Sher-Gil. Sher-Gil was a pioneer in the field of feminism and was one of the first people to advocate for the rights of women. She tackled topics relating to gender, identity, and sexuality in her work, and she was able to do it in a way that was successful in eliciting feminist engagements in the process. The following is an autobiography written by a woman who once stated that "Picasso, Matisse, Braque, and many other painters belong to Europe." My possession of India is unique among all others. Amrita Sher-Gil was a Hungarian-Indian painter who, while having a very short life span of only 28 years, was responsible for a tidal change in the artistic landscape of India. Amrita Sher-Gil was born in Budapest, Hungary, and died in New Delhi, India. This is a recounting of her life's events. Art has the potential to be a potent instrument for undermining views that are already

widespread across society, and this is especially true when the artwork in question was created by a wonderful female artist. Amrita Sher-Gil is an artist who possesses amazing intuition and creativity, and she has emerged as a clear icon of cultural resistance. Her work has been shown in several exhibitions throughout the world. She is one of the many prominent painters working in India, but to yet, she is the only one to have accomplished this level of success. Her body of work marks a pivotal turning point not just for the growth of female artists in India but also for the development of contemporary art in general. She had the unique ability to express liveliness within the complex reality of her paintings, and as a result, she was able to portray the ideas of human connections in a way that no other artist of her time was able to do. She was able to do this because she had the ability to express liveliness within the complex reality of her paintings.

CHILDHOOD ART

Amrita Sher-Gil was born in Budapest, Hungary, on the 30th of January 1913. Her parents were Umrao Singh Sher-Gil Majithia, a Sikh aristocrat and scholar in Sanskrit and Persian, and Marie Antoniette Gottesmann, a Jewish opera singer from Hungary. Her father was a scholar in Sanskrit and Persian. Her mother was an opera singer. Sanskrit and Persian were both her father's areas of expertise as a scholar. Her mother had a singing career in opera. Her younger sister was Indira Sundaram. She was the older of the two girls who were born to the couple. Amrita, who was known to be a girl who was inherently disobedient, was not the kind of person who loved coming to school when she was a child. She did not like being in the presence of other people. She enrolled at the Church of Jesus's St. Mary Convent School in Shimla and attended classes there. Because she was an atheist and did not agree with Catholic ceremonies, she was eventually expelled from school, which was the culmination of her formal education. In 1924, she was expelled from school when her teachers became aware of the perspective she held towards the world. She had been an atheist ever since she was a youngster. The majority of her time was spent painting, practising the piano, or attending classes to advance her knowledge, in spite of the fact that she has consistently asserted that painting is her ultimate professional aim, she possesses other qualities that are quite amazing. One of her primary interests was in playing the piano. And despite all of this, she had no trouble becoming a painter; it just came naturally to her. She commented, "It seems to me that I never began painting, but that I have always painted." This statement gives the impression that she has always been a painter. This is in direct opposition to what she stated in the preceding paragraph. And I have never wavered from the oddly strong notion that I was meant to be a painter and nothing else than that. I have always been confident that this was my life's path.

Later on, Amrita's uncle Ervin Bakatay, who was also a painter, observed that she had a talent for painting, and he suggested that she obtain her education at one of the most prominent art schools in Paris. Amrita's uncle Ervin Bakatay was also a painter. After that, she proceeded with her schooling the next year, 1929, at the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere Institute. She painted in her own distinctive manner while she was there, rather than sticking to the norms that were anticipated of her in her studies of art, which she was doing at the time. However, she immediately lost interest in what she was learning there, and with the aid of one of her instructors named Lucien Simon, she switched to a more prominent institution known as Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts. She came to the conclusion that painting the human form was most interesting to her, and she also tried her hand at painting models. She used pencil and charcoal to draw approximately one hundred naked people, both male and female, and she alternated between drawing them. Between the years 1930 and 1932, she produced in excess of sixty paintings. These paintings featured a variety of subject matter, such as landscapes and still-life arrangements; nevertheless, the vast majority of them

were oil portraits, both of the artist and of other people. While she was in Paris, she led a life that was stimulating on both an intellectual and an emotional level. She took part in a number of notable shows that displayed her work during the 1930s while she was still lived there. These exhibits took place in the decade.

In 1935, she relocated her life back to India in order to pursue her artistic ambitions there. Her travels to the Ajanta and Ellora caves had a significant impact on her painting style. When she ran across her childhood beau, Victor Egan, who was also her first cousin, she immediately felt that they were destined to be married. Amrita's mother expressed her disapproval of their decision for him to pursue a career in medicine. The difficulty was that Amrita had no intention of marrying anybody else in the foreseeable future. She continued painting even after the wedding, which took place in a civil ceremony on July 16, 1938, when the couple finally tied the knot. The couple eventually made their home in Shimla after making their way to India from the war-torn continent. On the other hand, Amrita's depression got significantly worse throughout the course of time. During this time period, she painted "*Ancient Story-Teller*" and "*The Swing*," both of these works were made by her. Since she relocated back to India, she has produced a number of remarkable pieces, one of which is seen above. The Indian Academy of Fine Arts in Amritsar expressed their admiration for it. Not only was she a skilled painter, but Vivan Sundaram has also written and published a book that is comprised of the letters that she sent to the people in her life who were the most important to her. Her words provide light on a life that was fascinating, full of freedom and spontaneity, passionate, and exciting.

AMRITA'S WORK

Her work was exceptional in so many different respects. She did, in fact, show herself in a broad array of costumes, stances, and facial expressions that were inspired by both European and Indian culture. She had little trouble inventing new ways to express herself artistically. It is said that when she was seven years old, she started creating illustrations to accompany the stories that she read in books. Amrita comments, "I have drawn and painted, I think from the little youth, and I recalled that the things that I most looked forward to as a youngster were paint boxes, coloured pencils, drawing paper, and picture books." [Citation needed] I loathed having to "colour in" the pictures in picture books despite the fact that I was a youngster with a strong will and the ability to entertain myself without assistance. I have always drawn and painted everything on my own, and I despise it when other people criticise or interfere with my work. I have always done everything myself. In one of her most potent self-portraits, Amrita assumes the posture of a Polynesian lady, occupying the entirety of the painting in a beautiful close-up of the subject. This is characteristic of her work in the sense that it exemplifies everything that should be amplified above its natural size and acts as an excellent model for doing so. Sher-Gil, whose parents came from quite different cultures, experienced a comfortable and natural fit in both of those communities during her childhood. There were times in Paris, particularly while she was displaying her paintings, that she openly acknowledged and celebrated her Indian ancestry. She accomplished this by dressing formally at all events and wearing saris. She must have been under the impression that she was truly exceptional in a culture where men predominated. Because of this, it shouldn't come as a surprise that she's been compared to India's version of Frida Kahlo.

Sher-work Gil's peculiar behaviour first came to the attention of the Indian press in the year 1936. In addition to this, she was the recipient of two honours in the 5th Annual Exhibition held by the All-India Fine Arts Society in New Delhi. On November 20, 1936, she had another exhibition of her paintings in Bombay. The event took place on that day. Some of her best pieces were displayed in the exhibition; they included "Group of Young Girls," "On the Terrace," "Child Wife," "Hill Women," "Portrait of My Father," and "Villagers." Her

journey to South India began when she visited the Ajanta and Ellora caves, both of which had a significant influence on the later work that she did. She had an enormous urge to uncover the artist that was hidden inside of her, which is what prompted her to start daydreaming about moving back to the country. Her professors were of the same opinion as she was, which was that only eastern cultural expressions could bring out the actual brilliance in her colours. Amrita's art was liked by a number of other individuals as well, one of whom being Jawaharlal Nehru. It was said in a letter that he had sent to Amrita that "I admired your images as they demonstrated so much power and vision." Many people regard Amrita's South Indian Trilogy to be her most accomplished body of work. "Bride's Toilet," "Brahmchari," and "South Indian Villager Going to Market" are the three individual pieces that make up the South Indian Trilogy. The pieces have been heralded as the "greatest paintings" of the century. In addition to this, she fashioned a scenario in which elephants swim in a pool of green water, as well as a distinct location for the women. Amrita was a very bourgeois woman who was also stunningly beautiful and aesthetically alluring. She had a lot of class. She relished the opportunity to observe the Indian and Western interpretations of her art from the vantage point of both an insider and an outsider since it gave her a unique perspective. After that, she ignored many different styles of painting in addition to the Indian art that was popular during her lifetime. She was of the opinion that all artists, with the exception of Tagore and Raja Ravi Varma, were erroneously portraying the essence of their craft. In addition to this, the majority of her writings are presented from the point of view of members of the Indian nobility. It was well known that she found "strange beauty in their ugliness," which led her to take pleasure in showing the destitute people of India in her work. The vast bulk of her works focused on more pessimistic and pessimistic elements of the topic matter.

Portrait of a Young Man, which she painted in 1930, was awarded a medal at the Ecole de Beaux-Arts in 1931; Marie Lousie, which she painted in 1932, is a portrait of her friend and colleague Marie Lousie Chasseny; and Young Girls, which she painted in 1933, was awarded the Gold Medal at the Grand Salon in 1933. 1931 was the year when Amrita produced her controversial piece titled "Torso," for which she used her own naked back as a model. In the 1930s, she is credited with being the first person to question why people cared so much about the female body, how it was displayed, and to whom it belonged. You might argue that she was the pioneer in this field. In Paris, she adopted an unorthodox and adventurous way of life that continues to this day. Both her job and the way she lived mirrored an increasing sense of autonomy in her life. Despite the fact that both women vehemently deny the rumours, there is a widespread belief that she and her best friend and roommate Marie Lousie Chasseny engaged in gay encounters while she was living in Paris in the 1930s. This belief is despite the fact that both women have categorically denied the rumours. In one of her messages to her mother, she expressed her need to have a sensual experience with a female companion. Since she was linked to and engaged with a number of men at various times of her life, it is stated that she led a surprisingly sexually open life for her time period. This is in reference to the fact that she was linked to and involved with several men. In November of 1936, an article written by Amrita and titled Modern Indian Art was published in The Hindu. I am a free spirit who is now working on a new strategy that won't be entirely Indian but will have strong spiritual roots in the Indian diaspora. In addition, she was the youngest person ever to be chosen as an Associate of the famous Grand Salon in Paris in 1933, when she was just twenty-one years old. This accomplishment took place in Paris. Several of Amrita's former employees have said that the artist frequently exploited them as models for her work. She played the roles of Indian villagers, despite the fact that she had never lived in that part of the country. The majority of her work was created

using an objective, third-party viewpoint. Her depictions appear to have, at some point in time, made way for the reproduction of east/west polarities.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AMRITA SHER-GIL

On December 5th, 1941 in Lahore, Amrita Sher-Gil lost her fight against cancer after a protracted period of treatment. She had reached the age of 28 in human years at that point. After her death, she was elevated to the status of a person in legend. Although there have been posthumous biographies written on her, it is believed that none of them give an in-depth critical evaluation of the body of work she produced. It is vital to investigate her motives and objectives in order to have an understanding of why she painted the subjects in the manner that she did. She was exceptionally talented, innovative, fearless, and amazing, and she sought nuance in the things that she created. This opened the way for her works to play an important role in maintaining modern art for future generations. She is a gem in the field of contemporary Indian art as well as an exceptional painter in her own right. She was a woman of the upper class who defied convention by bucking tradition via the unique art she created as well as the uncommon lifestyle choices she made. There is no question that she lived a life that was decades ahead of its time, that she did things that were considered inappropriate for women, and that she was extremely pleased with herself, but it is unfortunate that she did not have the opportunity to enjoy the fame that was destined to come her way.

CONCLUSION:

Her writing was straightforward and honest, with a focus on evoking feelings rather than the reader's intellect. People were moved in a way that could not have been accomplished by any other performance. Not only did Amrita lead by example, but she also reinvented the creative process in a number of different ways. Amrita's unconventional upbringing served as inspiration for her daring approach to the creation of work that would go on to have such a profound impact. Since she was given the status of a national treasure artist in 1976, it has been illegal for any of her works that were made on Indian soil to be exported from the country. Her body of work frequently focuses on themes of grief as well as reality and stunning beauty. Her body of work is, in a single word, wrenching. Her body of work may have been lost along with her, but the legacy she left behind endures and continues to be a source of motivation for succeeding generations. Her artwork presents a universe that is rich in nuance and detail, and in order for the spectator to completely comprehend it, they will need to examine it on several occasions. She was a feisty and ambitious lady whose travels and subsequent return to the place that she treasured brought her work to vivid life. Her travels led her back to the land that she cherished. Amrita Sher-Gil was incredibly progressive for her time period, and she actually had a foot in both the eastern and western traditions while living in two very different countries. She was born in India and raised in the United States.

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