



8

MANDANA

You have learnt about the Kolam folk art in the previous lesson. In this lesson, you will learn about the Mandana folk art. Mandana is a traditional folk art of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. It is made on the ground. Usually, it is made in the courtyard outside the house, either adjacent to the wall or in the corner. Mandanas are floor paintings and are also called floor decoration. Usually, they are made on the cow-dung coated floors with red clay and white clay (khadiya). They are made on auspicious occasions and festivals such as Dussehra, Diwali, Holi etc. Only women make them. The literal meaning of 'Mandana' is to draw. However, as a folk art Mandana is popular as a traditional form of painting. From the primordial age till today, Mandanas have enhanced the beauty of house courtyards. The feeling of decorating the ground is associated with them, on auspicious occasions, worship rituals, festivals, ceremonies etc. Mandanas are made using rice paste, sorghum flour, turmeric, Kumkum, red clay, Khadiya, stone and clay colours. Mostly red clay (Geru) and white clay (Khadiya) are used to make Mandana.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain the traditional method of Mandana art;
- learn the importance of Mandana art;
- become familiar with different names by which Mandana is known in different zones of the country and the differences between them;
- explain the method, medium and style of making Mandana;
- state about the meaning of motifs used in Mandanas;
- learn making Mandanas which is most important.

MODULE – 4

Floor Painting



Notes



Notes

8.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Predominantly flowers, leaves, floral patterns, birds and animals, and geometric shapes, are made in Mandanas. Lotus among flowers, triangles, squares, trees, and horizontal-vertical lines are made most often. They represent auspiciousness for the house. Mandana tradition is prevalent all over India. It is called ‘Mandana’ in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, ‘Chowk Purana’ in Uttar Pradesh, ‘Alpana’ in Bengal, ‘Rangoli’ in Gujarat-Maharashtra, ‘Aripana’ in Bihar, ‘Kolam’ in South India. Their names, medium and style of making are different, but they are all made on the floor.

Mostly Mandanas are made for house decoration and the completion of rituals. They represent auspiciousness and fill the house-courtyard with beauty. Merely by looking at them, we are filled with joy and happiness. It is believed that their presence wards off external difficulties. They welcome guests and invoke Gods and Goddesses. Women make them on festivals and occasions by hand. Here we will learn only about ‘Mandana’ made using red clay (Geru) and lime (Khadiya or Chuna).

These have the maximum number of motifs or shapes. Each zone of Mandana has different motifs or interpretations, defining its identity. These are seen on festivals, ceremonies, special occasions and places, for example, the Mandana of the chariot of Goddess Lakshmi on Diwali, Dev Probodhini Ekadashi and Makar Sankranti etc. Diwali is the main festival of Mandana when they are made on every corner of the house courtyard.

- Main places for Mandana
 1. Courtyard coated with cow-dung and near Tulsi bed.
 2. Outside the door, platform, altar.
 3. Beside the threshold.
 4. Temple area.
 5. Corner of the house.
- Occasion for making Mandana are auspicious ceremonies, festivals, new house and after whitewash.

8.2 TRADITIONAL MANDANA MOTIFS

Now, let us learn the different types of traditional motifs of Mandana painting.

1. Paglya (Foot Print) Mandana

Paglya means foot print. The foot print is a symbol of arriving. Indian culture has a tradition of worshipping the feet. The feet make way for the arrival of Gods-

Goddesses, ancestors, guests and paranormal energies. Paglya Mandana is made in every house for this purpose. This Mandana is made outside or inside the threshold, temple area, stairs etc. It is also called ‘feet of Lakshmi-Vishnu’. For Lakshmi Puja on the festival of Diwali, Paglya Mandana is made from the stairs at the entrance to the place of Lakshmi Puja. Footprints of both feet are made in this case. At the threshold they are made as a pair. After that one foot moves ahead of the other. This is an essential Mandana of Diwali.



Notes



Fig. 8.1

2. Chariot of Goddess Lakshmi

The Mandana of the chariot of Lakshmi is made at the place of Lakshmi Puja on Amavasya or no moon night of Diwali. Lakshmi is believed to reside in it. It consists of sixteen square sections in which sixteen lighted diyas or earthen lamps are kept. This is further decorated with the Mandana of a four petalled lotus flower which is surrounded by curves of different types. Another Mandana called ‘Devi Jot’ is made along with it that symbolizes the light of earthen lamps. The eight petalled lotus and other auspicious Mandanas are also made nearby. Lakshmi resides over the lotus.



Fig. 8.2



Notes

3. Four-petalled flower Mandana

The lotus flower is depicted in a prominent way in Mandana art. The lotus flower is shown with four, six and sixteen petals. Mostly four and eight-petalled lotus (Ash + dal Kamal) flower are seen in Mandana. The four petalled lotus Mandana is made using traditional methods and colours. The Mandana is decorated with different types of decorative motifs near it. The six-petalled Mandana may be made in the house, temple area, courtyard etc. The Mandana always spreads on the petals, which symbolizes the expansion of the universe.

4. Eight-petalled flower Mandana

Mandanas are made on the occasion of worship rituals and ceremonies during many festivals. The occasions include Makar Sankranti, Dev Shayani-Dev Uthani Gyaras, Holi etc. Specifically, the eight-petalled lotus flower is made for the Mandana on these occasions. Exercise 2 shows the eight-petalled lotus flower Mandana. It can be made in the house, courtyard and temple area in small or big sizes. Lotus is the most important and popular motif of Mandana art.



Fig. 8.3

5. Threshold Mandana

The threshold Mandana is made inside the main entrance of the house. Its main purpose is the invocation of Gods and Goddesses, welcome Gods, bring auspiciousness into the house and drive away the difficulties. Decorating the threshold is also its aesthetic aspect.

The threshold Mandana is made in many ways. Mostly it is triangular. Threshold Mandana is made in every house on Diwali. Its place is fixed and it is not made in any other place.



Fig. 8.4



Notes

8.3 MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR MAKING MANDANA

- Drawing board
- Pencil
- Scale
- 3, 5, 7, 12 number round brush
- Drawing sheet or hard board
- Red clay (Geru)
- White, brown, blue poster colour
- Small plastic mug
- Fevicol

8.4 TRADITIONAL METHOD OF MAKING MANDANA

Learners, you have learnt the traditional motifs of Mandana. Now you will learn the traditional method of Mandana art.

First step: Preparing the ground. Firstly, the ground is prepared by coating the house courtyard with a mixture of cow dung and yellow clay. This work is done by the women of the house.

Second step: Preparing colours: After making a fine powder of red clay and lime, take some thick paste of each in separate bowls. Ground glue or fevicol is added to the colours to make them durable.

For the red colour, hiramachi is also used. For the whitewash, sometimes lime is used to which indigo or blue colour is added. This gives the Mandana a blue tinge. The use of lime has been reduced these days owing to its harshness.



Notes

Third step: Making the Mandana: Mandana is mainly made by women. The women learn to make Mandana from their mothers during childhood. The folk art of Mandana is a result of this tradition. A brush is used to make Mandana, fingers work as a brush. A cotton ball or small piece of cloth dipped in colour is kept in between the fingers and thumb. The lines of Mandana are made on the floor using Anamika the ring finger. The basic structure of the Mandana is made using red clay. After that, the paste of white clay is used to fill the inner and outer portion of the red lines according to the shape. The most important and challenging work is filling the basic structure of Mandana with white colour. This is called ‘Bharat’. After the Bharat is completed, the whole Mandana brightens up.

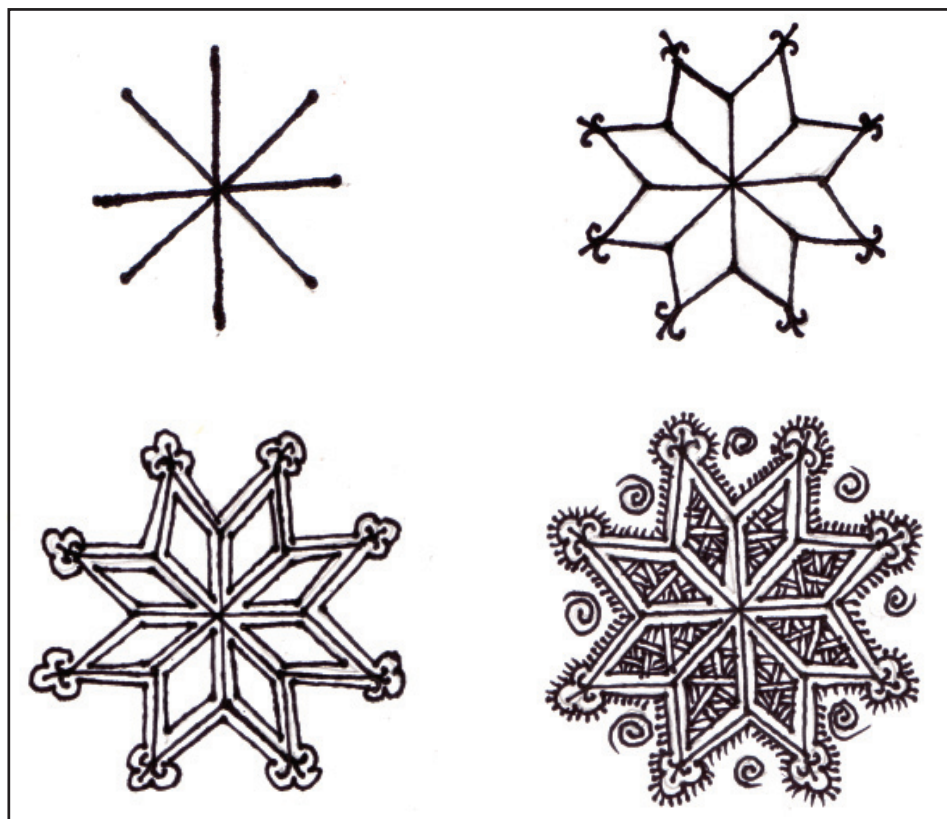


Fig. 8.5

1. Firstly coat the ground with cow dung or take a sheet of cow dung colour.
2. Fingers of the hand or brush can be used to make the Mandana.
3. Prepare a thick paste of lime and red clay in separate bowls.
4. Keep a cotton ball or piece of cloth dipped in saffron colour in between the fingers of the hand and thumb. A brush can also be used.
5. With the help of Anamika ring finger, draw the basic lines of the Mandana, this may be done through a brush or a sheet to make lotus Mandana.

6. Make four to six horizontal and vertical lines cutting each other on a single point. Then join the lines in a triangle above as given in the figure. In this way, make the motif of a lotus flower.
7. Make curves on the vertex of the triangle as shown in the figure.
8. After washing hands keep a cotton ball dipped in white clay paste in your hand. Give the lotus flower a white outer and inner border.
9. Make vertical or standing lines on the outer white boundary.
10. Give the inner white sections horizontal and vertical 'Bharat'.
11. Make small motifs surrounding the Mandana.
12. The size of the Mandana can be increased if needed.



Notes

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 1

Learner, now let us illustrate a Mandana art.

First step: First of all, make an outline of the Mandana on the ground or surface of the painting using pencil, chalk or chalk powder according to the surface, as shown in the figure.

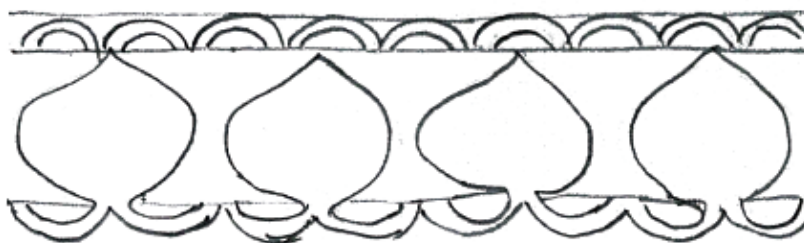


Fig. 8.6

Second step: Apply flat colour with a flat brush on the surface using red or yellow clay, as shown in the figure. The colour should have an adequate quantity of water to make the drawing visible even after filling the colour. After that, make a straight white line and semicircular curves using white clay or poster colour as shown in the figure 2.

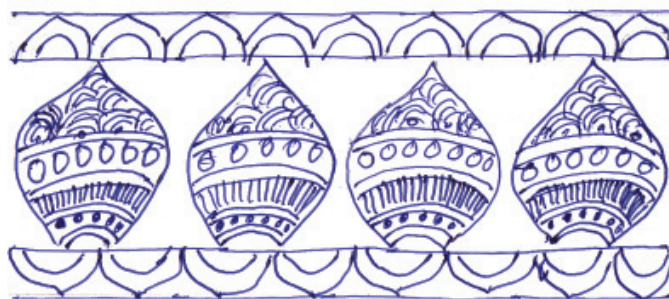


Fig. 8.7



Notes

Third step: According to the given figure, after making all the curves make the shape of a flower leaf, leaving some space over the curve. Thereafter, on the other side of the curve, make a lotus leaf or the shape of a conch.



Fig. 8.8

Fourth step: Now make the shape of these conches along the line over the entire surface of the painting. We will make the same type of curve on the other side just as we made it on one side. After that, decorate the conch with slanting or horizontal lines and curves so that it appears very beautiful. We can make this Mandana inside and outside our house or door threshold. This is popularly called threshold Mandana.



Fig. 8.9

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 2

Now let us draw another Mandana painting.

This Mandana is made in the central area of the house or the house courtyard. An eight-petalled flower is made in this Mandana in a geometric shape. It is surrounded by four circles. These circles are decorated with leaves and flowers.

First step: Firstly, select a central point to make this Mandana. Around the central point, decoration is done. Make a circle surrounding the central point. Joining this circle make four lines cutting each other. When the lines are joined with the circle, an eight-petalled flower is created. Outside this circle, at some distance, make another big circle. Make three-petalled flowers around it toward the inside, as given in the figure. Outside this circle, make another big circle. Make 16 leaves in this circle. Between the leaves make 16 flowers also.



Fig. 8.10

Second step: After that, make 16 triangular-shaped leaves surrounding it and make an outer line leaving some space outside the leaves. Finally, our eight-petalled flower and 16 leaves Mandana is ready.

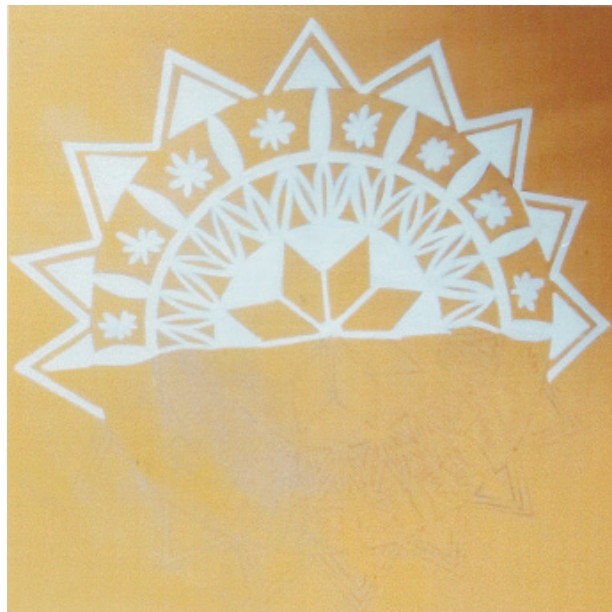


Fig. 8.11

Third step: To colour the Mandana we will divide it into four sections. One section will be coloured using a brush with white poster colour or white clay to make straight lines or curves. Repeat the same procedure with the 1/4 section also to complete the half-section. The four petals will appear once the half-section is completed. If a decoration has to be done adjacent to a wall, it will appear like this.



Notes



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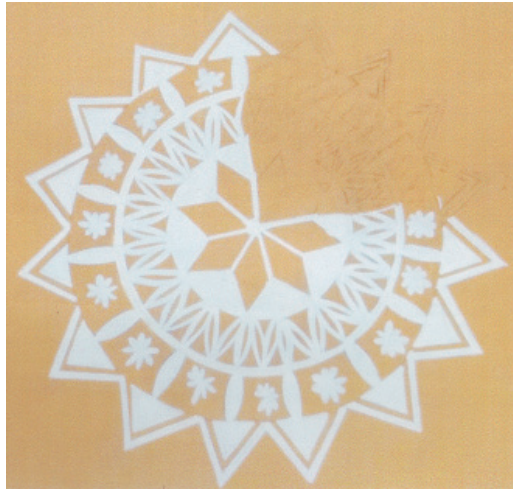


Fig. 8.12

Fourth step: Repeat the same method with another 1/4 section. After making the last section of the Mandana, the full circle having eight petalled flower and 16 leaves on the outer circle with small 16 full blossomed lotus flowers inside can be seen. This Mandana can be spread out by making more circles in the same way.

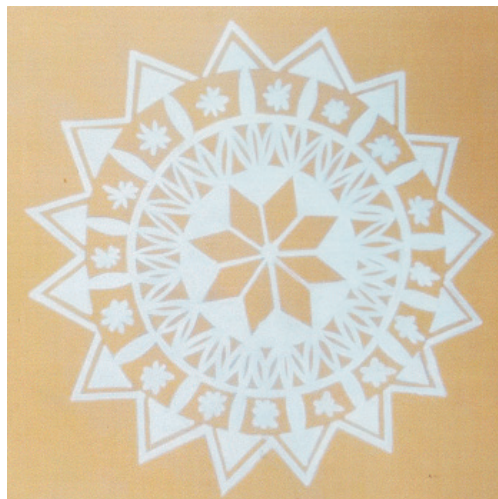


Fig. 8.13

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 3

Now, you will learn another Mandana art illustration.

First step: For making any Mandana, we start with lines from the centre. Let us take six points at a distance surrounding the central point. Make two triangles from these dots in a straight line from the centre. Make 12 triangles all around as in the figure. In this way, we get a beautiful motif of a six-petalled flower. Leaving some

space, make a hexagon around the flower. Around this hexagon, make six inward triangles and six triangles towards the outside. On the vertex of the outer triangles, make curve (kangura) that makes the triangle shapes more attractive. In the centre of the curve design, make four dots to beautify it. Make six long angular shapes from the outer angles of the hexagon. Make a circle over it. Finally, make two semicircular curves over it. Over the outer line, make lines in the form of rays to make a beautiful painting.



Notes

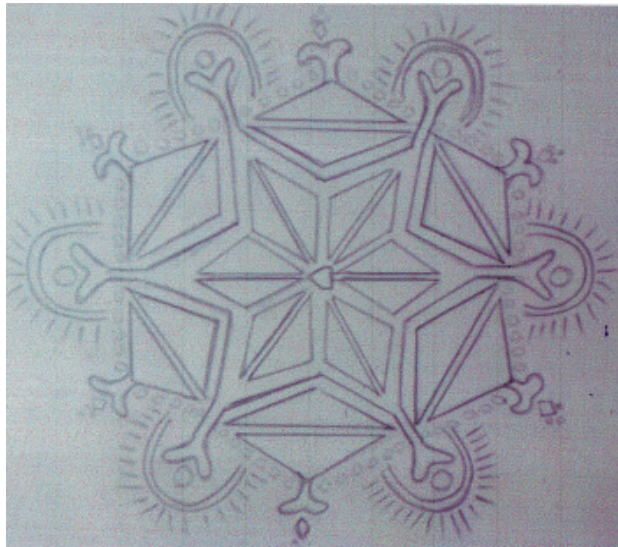


Fig. 8.14

Second step: In this outlined Mandana, use white line or poster colour to make lines using a brush. Fill some of the triangular-shaped leaves with white colour.

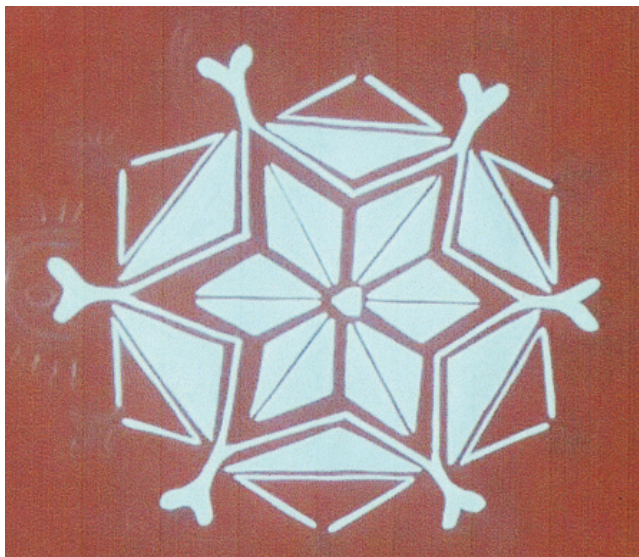


Fig. 8.15



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Third step: Fill the remaining background surface from areas other than the white colour by moving around using a brush.

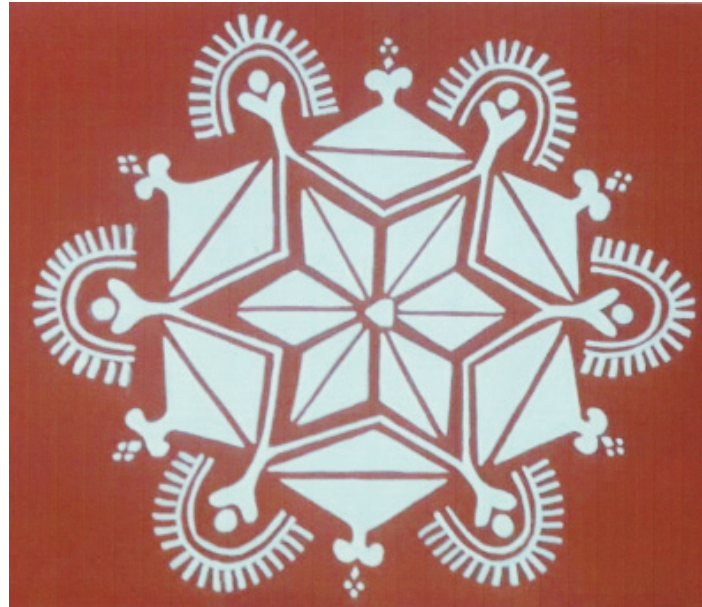
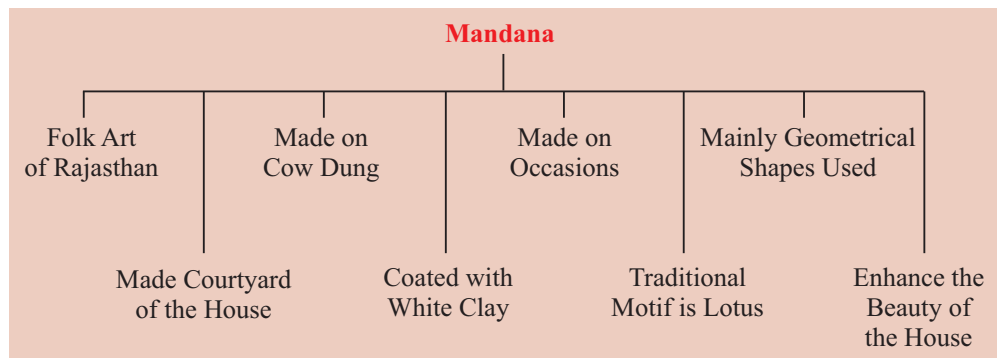


Fig. 8.16



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. Try to make four-petalled lotus Mandana.
2. Make eight-petalled lotus group Mandana.
3. Make sixteen-petalled lotus group Mandana.
4. Make chariot of Lakshmi Mandana.

5. Make threshold Mandana with pagalya.
6. Write a note on importance of Mandana.

GLOSSARY

1. Mandana : painting made on the ground
2. Geru : red clay
3. Khadiya : White clay
4. Threshold : the ground at entrance of the house
5. Anamika : ring finger
6. Tulsi bed (Basil) : a small raised platform with clay meant to plant Tulsi
7. Hiramachi : red clay colour
8. Paglya : foot print motif
9. Saathiya : Swastik symbol

**Notes**

