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BENGAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING

Jamini Roy

Jamini Roy (11 April 1887 – 24 April 1972) was an Indian painter. He was honoured with the State award of Padma Bhushan in 1955. He was one of the most famous pupils of Abanindranath Tagore, whose artistic originality and contribution to the emergence of modern art in India remains unquestionable.



Jamini Roy was born on 14 April 1887 into a moderately prosperous Kayastha family of land-owners

in Beliatore village of the Bankura district, West Bengal. He was raised in an average middle-class, art loving household which ultimately influenced his future decisions.

When he was sixteen he was sent to study at the Government College of Art, Kolkata. Abanindranath Tagore, the founder of Bengal school was vice principal at the institution. He was taught to paint in the prevailing academic tradition drawing Classical nudes and painting in oils and in 1908 he received his Diploma in Fine Art. However, he soon realised that he needed to draw inspiration, not from Western traditions, but from his own culture, and so he looked to the living folk and tribal art for inspiration. He was most influenced by the *Kalighat Pat* (Kalighat painting), which was a style of art with bold sweeping brush-strokes. He moved away from his earlier impressionist landscapes and portraits and between 1921 and 1924 began his first period of experimentation with the Santhal dance as his starting point. Jamini Roy had 4 sons and 1 daughter.



- **"Ramayana", 1946, Spread across 17 canvases (106 × 76 cm, each) Roy's Ramayana is considered to be his magnum opus. Patronized by Sarada Charan Das, Roy created this masterpiece series in Kalighat pata style with natural**

colors, using earth, chalk powder and vegetable colors instead of dyes. Later Roy also created individual replicas capturing various moments from the entire series. Some of these paintings have been preserved in the National Art Gallery of India and are also in display in the Victoria Memorial Hall. His story of Ramayana begins with sage Valmiki and completes the circle back to his hermitage after Sita's aagnipariksha. All his 17 canvases are frequently characterized by decorative flowers, landscape, birds and animals typical of the Bengal School of Art. His lines are simple, bold and roundish initially derived from clay images but they lead to complex moments rendering subtle yet powerful emotions. Jamini Roy's complete "Ramayana" is on display today at Sarada Charan Das' residence "Rossogolla Bhavan" in Kolkata along with 8 other large-scale originals. The Das residence today harbors the largest private collection of Jamini Roy paintings with 25 of the master's originals.

"Bride and two Companions", 1952, tempera on card, 75 x 39 cm. Coates described the painting: "Note the magnificent indigo of Bengal, and how the palms of the bride's hands are smeared with red sandalpaste. Jamini Roy's choice of colours looks at first sight purely decorative. In fact, nearly every thing in his pictures has a reason and a meaning." It is very flat and heavily outlined. Roy portrays a traditional woman without the artificial beauty and the mythological background portraying the folk-art inspiration that has always been present since his beginnings.

- **"Dual Cats with one Crayfish", 1968, tempera on card, 55.5 x 44 cm. Coates wrote: "Yet another new style, colours reduced in number and very restrained, an almost overwhelming sense of formality."**



GANASH JANANI (Jamini Roy)

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PGT Fine Art**