

The history of art



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Full s the Paper is due] Art History Art is simply self expression, may it be of an individual, or that of a certain culture. History has many segments, and one of these is the history of all the art works - showing how each culture came to be. Art is of many forms, such as paintings, sculptures, architecture, and so on. One of the works in art history that I find to be most provocative is the Oliphants.

I have reconstructed my idea of " the power of art", as before I thought of art as merely decorative objects of self-expression, by the artist, and with no other function. However, these historical accounts on the Oliphants opens up the imagination and causes one to envision the lifestyle during the era it was being used. The intricate carvings on the Oliphants, as seen in the Oliphant at the Metropolitan Museum of Art show a meticulous spirit in the carver.

Perhaps it was culture and tradition that dictated such workmanship at that era, but the intricacy of the design is impressive. Although there are Oliphants that are simply decorated as well, yet the design is still beautiful, as it is designed by hand. Aside from historical accounts of such, there is also the religious historical aspect that is associated with the Oliphants. As documented, it is stated that decorated Oliphants, usually with animals and scrolls are usually correlated with traditional Islam settings.

The Oliphants is one of the unique creations of man that is functional - as it is used as a horn, and at the same time, an instrument of self-expression as it is designed intricately with meticulously done carvings, and even adorned with silver bands.

As documented, the documentation of Oliphants is usually associated with traditional Islamic imagery. " Oliphant", being a word borrowed from old French, meaning " elephant", was first documented in the (English)

translation of the Song of Roland in the 12th century. It was describing the ivory sounding horn that the hero, Roland, used to summon for assistance during the battle of Roncesvalles. This was shortly before his death at the hands of the Arabian enemy in 778. These Oliphants are noted to have been carved from an elephant tusk and was originally banded with silver, and hung with a cord. These horns produced a low, but loud call and were prized symbols of wealth and power, passed down through the centuries in Europe's treasure houses.

Through this work of art, my curiosity upon its history has introduced to me the historical accounts linked to such an object of art, as well as its religious accounts in history. Through the learning of its historical origins, the Oliphants have become more interesting to me as they show me art and functionality in one. It is amazing how an object could bring one's mind back to the past and appreciate the beauty of handmade crafts, long before there were machines or equipment that could do the work, as it is today.

Aside from the wonders it has presented to me as mentioned, it too is provocative for me as it is made out of an entire elephant's tusk, which, in order to get one, the elephant must be killed. This is quite an intriguing twist, as it is quite clear that the "power of art" is really a strong one. Elephant tusks are made of ivory - beautiful material, rare, and expensive. These descriptions definitely tell us how much of a treasure Oliphants can be.

Now knowing all these, just by learning about a piece of art, it has definitely enriched and embellished my imaginative powers so much, that the beauty of the Oliphants is something that I highly appreciate.