

# RAM GOPAL VIJAYVARGIYA

Ram Gopal Vijay Vargiya was a genius and innovative artist from Rajasthan who became a protagonist of the Bengal school. He was born in 1905 at Baler Sawai Madhopur district in Rajasthan state in India. He learnt painting at the Maharaja School of Arts in Jaipur where the artist Asit Kumar Haldar was Principal. Later he went to Kolkata where he absorbed further influences from the Bengal School, especially the artist Shailendra Nath De whom he considered his guru. He was Principal of Rajasthan Kala Mandir and Rajasthan School of Art from 1945 to 1966.

Ramgopal Vijaivargiya found his inspiration from the Bengal School of painting though he remained wholly unattached to any particular school of Indian art. In the foreword to *The Art of Vijaivargiya*, Ram Chandra Tandan wrote: "The Art of Vijaivargiya is

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## ^ Life and career



Born in Mau Rajasthan in 1922, he studied original painting at the [Shanti Niketan](#) in [West Bengal](#) and later did a diploma in Oriental Arts from the [Tokyo University](#), Japan.

He was also the director of Sawai Ram Singh Shilpa Kala Mandir at [Jaipur](#) where he taught Indian painting and Blue Pottery.

He was conferred the [Padma Shri](#) in 1974 and was also honoured with the title [Shilp Guru](#) by the [Government of India](#) in 2002.

Unknown to many, Kripal Singh is renowned for his illustrations in the original document of the [Constitution](#) of India.

He died on 15 February 2008 in Jaipur.

Chandra Tandan wrote: “The Art of Vijaivargiya is noteworthy not only because of its actual achievement, which is considerable, but also because of its great promise: for the artist is still young and full of confidence in himself.” (R C Tandan, *The Art of Vijaivargiya*, At the time, Ramgopal Vijaivargiya was 30, and had sold nearly 1000 paintings in the small space of the Indian art world of the 1930s. R C Tandan noticed his talent and printed an album of a few select works for the Hindustani Academy in Allahabad, which were later displayed at exhibitions in Calcutta and Bombay. Vijaivargiya later headed the Rajasthan Kala Mandir and Rajasthan School of Art from 1945 to 1966, and went on to win several state and national awards.

Vijaivargiya had a “strong individualistic sense” as a student of Hindu mythology, and his themes “...have a wide range, grading from the spiritual at one end to the almost erotic at the other, all characterized in their execution by a certain suppleness and grace of lines.”

## ^ Art

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A distinguished traditional artist, Kripal Singh's paintings are poetic. They carry the expression of the traditional and early styles of painting with bold innovations in a delicate and refined manner. His works also claim an important historical place in the organic evolution of traditional paintings. There is no one who can create his style of painting with great detail he has shown the birds, clothes, animals flowers which shows the dedication with which he creates a real painting.

## ^ Legacy



He revived the art of blue pottery, with the help of patrons such as [Kamladevi Chattpadhyay](#) and Rajmata [Gayatri Devi](#). He learnt all the secrets of the nearly extinct art as it had been perfected in Jaipur in the 19th century, and made many changes to make it a modern practice. His hard work helped re-establish an entire tradition.

Despite rumours to the contrary, Kripal Kumbh, the pottery studio founded by Kripal Singh Shekhawat is still in operation. It is run by his wife Sajjan Kanwar assisted by her three daughters, Minakshi, Himani and Kumud Rathore.



- Sharma, Bhawani Shankar, and Kripal Singh Shekhawat. 2007. *Kripal Singh Shekhawat: virtuoso of line and colour*. New Delhi: Lalit Kala Akademi. Chiefly color reproductions of the works of Indian artist Kripal Singh Shekhawat; includes brief biographical and critical text.
- Khandalavala, Karl J., and Kripal Singh Shekhawat. 1974. *Wall paintings from Amber*. New Delhi: Lalit Kalā Akademi. Portfolio comprising copies of the now damaged murals made by Kirpal Singh Shekhawat.
- Shesh, Hemant. 1984. *Kripal Singh Shekhawat* (In Hindi): Artist's detailed Monograph, Jaipur: Rajasthan Lalit Kala Academy includes biography and critical analysis on his art and pottery.