

Dying folk art 'Patachitra' gets digital makeover

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Giving traditional folk art form a contemporary twist, a 'Patachitra' (scroll painting) which used to be made on palm leaves once upon a time has now been created by digital artists on a computer.

To be unveiled at the five-day Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF) which kicks off here from Wednesday, the 'patachitra' pays tribute to the creative minds of rural Bengal and tries to revive the dying art form.

The traditional art form, which is believed to have originated from Midnapore of West Bengal, uses scrolls to visually depict a scene which is then explained by a

narrator in the form of songs in front of a live audience.

As a visual motif for the lit fest, the 'Patachitra' would be unveiled during the inauguration ceremony, which would be attended by West Bengal Governor M. K. Narayanan and eminent filmmaker Shyam Benegal.

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Reflecting a new language, the painting records the changes in lifestyles, values, and sets a new visual vocabulary which caters to the transient, urban populace.

"We gave clear guidelines to our team of digital artists that the 'Patachitra' created with modern graphic techniques on a computer

must follow the seemingly effortless strokes of a 'Chitrakaar' (painter) who draws the 'Patachitra' in real life," said Apeejay Surrendra Group Vice-President Renu Kakkar.

In bold, bright and intense colours, the first part of the attractive painting highlights some of Kolkata's heritage landmarks - River Hooghly, Shaheed Minar, Dakshineswar and Victoria Memorial.

The occasional ambassador car amidst the traffic shows a typical Kolkata street where a policeman is dressed in white uniform.

Tigers in the garden specially denote young

readers where students will be paid a visit by Justice Lila Seth and Poet Tishani during one of AKLF events.

Kites denote freedom and ideas, specially set out to fly out of buildings which one normally reserves as professional work places but are abuzz in a world of new ideas and experiences during literary festivals.

The author and his besotted reader is shown in discussion denoting the meeting of a guest with his favourite author in an informal atmosphere.

The irregular border is close to what a 'Patachitra' is as it is normally framed up and is on cloth not evenly cut or stitched.