Art Forms of Maharastra

- The art refers to the theory and physical expression of creativity found in human societies and cultures from Ancient Time in India. Major constituents of the arts include
  A. **Literature –** including poetry, novels and short stories, and epic poetry;
  B. **Performing arts** – among them music, dance, and theatre; and
  C. **Visual arts –** including drawing, painting, photography, ceramics, sculpting, and architecture – the art of designing and constructing buildings
- Maharashtra is a state known for its vibrant, diverse and vivacious culture.
- The cultural heritage of the state is rich and sustained over centuries by numerous settlers and diverse people, customs and geography.
- The rich culture and heritage stem from its countless traditions and art forms that have been preserved over the centuries.
- Its long tradition in art and craft has flourished from the cave paintings to Warli paintings and handicrafts of Maharashtra are beyond any comparison.
- The art and craft of Maharashtra are captivating and exciting.

Theatre a Performing Art

Origin of Theatre in India

- ***Bharata's Natya Shastra*** was the earliest and most elaborate treatise on dramaturgy written anywhere in the world.
- India has a longest and richest tradition in theatre going back to at least 5000 years.
- The origin of Indian theatre is closely related to ancient rituals and seasonal festivities of the country.
- In Natya Shastra, Bharata Muni consolidated and codified various traditions in dance, mime and drama.
- No book of ancient times in the world contains such an exhaustive study on dramaturgy as Natya Shastra.
- It is addressed to the playwright, the director, and the actor because to Bharata Muni these three were inseparable in the creation of a drama.
- Hindu theorists from the earliest days conceived of plays in terms of two types of production:

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1. ***Lokadharmi*** (realistic), which involved the reproduction of human behaviour on the stage and the natural presentation of objects
2. ***Natyadharmi*** (conventional), which is the presentation of a play through the use of stylized gestures and symbolism and was considered more artistic than realistic

- Theatre in India has encompassed all the other forms of literature and fine arts into its physical presentation: literature, mime, music, dance, movement, painting, sculpture and architecture - all mixed into one and being called ***'Natya'*** or Theatre in English.

Tamaasha Theatre of Maharashtra

- Traditional folk theatre form of Maharashtra.
- It has evolved from the folk forms such as Gondhal, Jagran and Kirtan.
- Unlike other theatre forms, in Tamaasha the ***female actress*** is the chief exponent of dance movements in the play. She is known as ***Murki***.
- Classical music, footwork at lightning-speed, and vivid gestures make it possible to portray all the emotions through dance.

Yakshagaana Theatre of Maharashtra

- It is the traditional theatre form of Karnataka
- It is based on mythological stories and Puranas.
- The most popular episodes are from the Mahabharata i.e. Draupadi swayamvar, Subhadra vivah, Abhimanyu vadh, Karna-Arjun yuddh and from Ramayana i.e.
- Raajyaabhishek, Lav-kush Yuddh, Baali-Sugreeva yuddha and Panchavati.

Shadow Puppets Art

- Shadow puppets are flat figures. They are cut out of leather, which has been treated to make it translucent.
- Shadow puppets are pressed against the screen with a strong source of light behind it.
- The manipulation between the light and the screen make silhouettes or colourful shadows for the viewers who sit in front of the screen.
- This tradition of shadow puppets survives in Orissa, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

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Maharashtra Architecture

- Maharashtra is famous for its caves and rock cut architectures.
- It is said that the varieties found in Maharashtra are wider than the caves and rock cut architectures found in the rock cut areas of Egypt, Assyria, Persia and Greece.
- The Buddhist monks first started these caves in the 2nd century BC, in search of serene and peaceful environment for meditation, and they found these caves on the hillsides.
- Later, Hindu cave temples at Ellora and Ajanta became finest designs of human art. Some of India's oldest wall paintings can be seen here.
- Maharashtra's famous rock-cut caves have several distinct design elements; even though sculptures of the time are regarded to be so stiff and unmoving.
- The Buddhist caves particularly the older ones are either temples (Chaityas) or monasteries (Viharas).

Cave Architecture

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Rock Cut Architecture

- Rock cut architectures are also found in the countries like Egypt, Assyria, Persia and Greece, but not so wide as the kinds of Maharashtra's caves.
- It is different as it is more of sculpture type than architecture. In this type, the visualized final product is carved from a huge rock.

Famous Painting Art Form of Maharastra

Warli Paintings of Maharashtra

- Warli painting derives its name from a small tribe inhabiting the remote, tribal regions of Maharashtra.
- These are decorative paintings on floors and walls of ‘gond’ and ‘kol’ tribes’ homes and places of worship.

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- Trees, birds, men and women collaborate to create an amalgamated whole in a Warli painting.
- These paintings are made mostly by the women as part of their routine at auspicious celebrations.
- Subjects are predominantly religious with simple and local materials like white colour and rice paste and local vegetable glue on a plain contrasting background, made in geometric patterns like squares, triangles, and circles.
- Dots and crooked lines are the units of this composition.
- Flora and fauna and people's routine life also form a part of the painted.
- The paintings are expanded by adding subject after subject in a spiraling manner.
- The rhythm of the Warli way of life is beautifully captured in simple images.
- Unlike other tribal art forms, Warli paintings do not employ religious iconography and is a more secular art form.
- The language of Warlis contains many Sanskrit, Gujrati, Marathi and Hindi Words.
- Among the Sanskrit words Dhartari or Dharitri (earth), Gayatri (Cow), Sura (liquor), Maniya (Man) and Pavana (wind). Warli also have their own archaic tongue which can still be distinguished by words like Valuk (cucumber), Vepar (to cook), Lisan (ladder), Bahara (broom), and Lothi (young girl).

Performing Art- Dance/Music

- Dance may be defined as the non-verbal form of expression or the artistic expression of emotions.
- The remains of Bhimbetka rocks indicate that dances must have existed in the pre-historic era over 9000 years back.
- It had been an important part of the religious rituals and ceremonies.
- Folk dances have spread over the length and breadth of the globe.
- Each form describe the traditional life of the region and is performed in the local specific costumes and jewelry.
- The folk dances are performed on the every occasion, be it the arrival of a new season, a festival, the birth of a child or a wedding ceremony.
- The folk dances are usually passed from generation to generation and are associated with social activities of the rural country-side.
- Povada is the dance form that showcases the lifetime achievements of the Maratha ruler Shivaji Maharaj.

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- Lavani and Koli dance forms entertain the Maharashtrians with its mesmerizing music and rhythmic movements.
- Dhangri Gaja dance pays respect to their God by the Dhangars of Sholapur.
- Dindi and Kala are the religious folk dances, which expresses of religious ecstasy of Lord Krishna.
- Tamasha is the folk dance that is so popular all over the state

Famous Dance of Maharashtra

1. Lavani,
2. Nakata,
3. Koli,
4. Lezim,
5. Gafa,
6. Dahikala Dasavtar or Bohada,
7. Pavri

Songs of Maharashtra

- Every festive occasion is accompanied by song, music and dance in Maharashtra.
- Talking about the music of Maharashtra won't complete without the mention of Natya Sangeet, numerous folk songs and its great saint poets.
- Although music in Maharashtra like Marathi literature has an ancient tradition, the popularity of classical music in Maharashtra began through Gwalior.
- Miraj town of Sangli district is known as the 'town of music'.
- The world famous Indian musical instrument the Sitar is made in this town.
- Folk songs are an inseparable part of the daily lives of the rural Maharashtra.
- Folk forms like lavani, nautanki and tamasha music are very famous.
- However, a lot of these art forms are dying out as performers are finding it difficult to sustain.
- Amongst the saint poets, Jnandev, Namdev, Tukaram, Jani and Soyara are imorptant to mention.
- They believed in the fusion of Bhakti (devotion) with Jnana (knowledge).
- They taught to worship and merge into oneness with the God.

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