CHITRASŪTRA
OF THE VISHṆUDHARMOTTARA

C. SIVARAMAMURTI

KANAK PUBLICATIONS
NEW DELHI INDIA
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke thus —

1-2 And now I shall expound to you, oh peerless prince! the principles of art. *Chitrasūtra* was produced long ago by the sage Nārāyaṇa for the benefit of the world when he created Urvaśī to mislead the celestial damsels that approached him.

3 The great sage used mango juice to create a peerless nymph by drawing a picture on his thigh, whence she issued as an exquisite Apasara endowed with great beauty.

4-5 Ashamed as they beheld her, all the celestial damsels went back. Having thus created a picture perfect in all its definition and principles of portrayal, the great sage made the unerring Viśvakarmā receive this knowledge. As in dance, so in art, the three worlds are closely followed.

6-7 The glances, the moods, the limbs and all their auxiliaries, the disposition of hands already defined by me in dance, all these are to be known as existing in art as well, as dance is art supreme. Whatever definitions have not been explained in dance, I shall now narrate, as you listen.

8 There are five varieties of men, Hāṁsa, Bhadra, Mālavya, Ruchaka and Śaśaka. I shall now define them.
9-11 These have all equally proportionate height and width in terms of their own individual aṅgula, finger. Haṁsa is 108 aṅgulas in measurement in terms of his own aṅgula, Bhadra is similarly 106 aṅgulas, Mālavya is 104 aṅgulas, Ruchaka is 100 aṅgulas, and Śaśaka 90 aṅgulas. A length of twelve aṅgulas is described as tāla.

12 The height of the foot up to the ankle is a fourth of a tāla. The shank is two tālas and the knee has the same measurement as the foot.

13 The thighs are of the measurement of the shanks. From the penis to the navel is a tāla. It is the same measurement from the navel to the chest and similarly from the chest to the neck.

14 The neck is one third of a tāla, and the face is a tāla. The height of the head above the forehead is a sixth of a tāla.

15 Centrally placed is the penis. Thus is height defined. The tāla measures a hand (palm). The arms are seventeen aṅgulas each.

16 The forearm is of similar length. Half the chest is eight aṅgulas. This is the measurement in terms of length for a Haṁsa.

17 In this manner measurements have to be arrived at for the others (Bhadra, Mālavya, etc.). In length and breadth all are computed in a similar fashion.

18 The general proportions of a princely Haṁsa have thus been stated by me. Now listen to the measurements of individual limbs as I narrate.

Thus ends the 35th chapter on the Measurements of Length and Height in the Treatise on Painting from the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishṇudharmottara.
Märkaṇḍeya spoke —

Now the limbs are treated separately. The girth of the head is 32 anāgulas. The forehead is four anāgulas in height and eight in length. The temples are four anāgulas in height. The cheeks are five anāgulas. The chin is four anāgulas. The ears are two anāgulas wide and four in length, the centre of the ear is an anāgula. The lobe from the root of the ear cavity is undefined in length. Pāli is the word for the earlobe. The nose is four anāgulas, two anāgulas in depth and three anāgulas in width. The nostrils are an anāgula wide and twice that in length. The space between the nose and the lip is half an anāgula. The upper lip is an anāgula. The mouth is four anāgulas in length. The lower lip is an anāgula. The chin is two anāgulas. There are 24 teeth and 8 canine. The height of the teeth is half an anāgula, the canine teeth still longer by a twelfth part of an anāgula. The eyes are an anāgula in width and three anāgulas in length. The dark pupil is a third part of the eye while the central part of the pupil is one fifth. The brows are half an anāgula thick and three anāgulas long, with an anāgula space between them. The distance between the tip of the eye and the ear cavity is four anāgulas. The neck is ten anāgulas in height and 21 anāgulas in girth. The distance between the nipples is 16 anāgulas. The distance between the collar bone and nipple is six anāgulas. The girth of the arm near the armpit is sixteen anāgulas and further up twelve. The palm is seven anāgulas and five across. The middle finger is five anāgulas. The forefinger is a division less. The ring finger is its equal in proportion. The small finger is smaller than these. All of them have three equal divisions. The nails are half the length of a division. The thumb is three anāgulas with two divisions. The girth of the abdomen is 42 anāgulas. According to physicians and in terms of proportion the navel
is an aṅgula. The waist is 18 aṅgulas in width. Its girth is 44 aṅgulas. The testicles are four aṅgulas in width. The penis is six aṅgulas long. From its centre to the thigh is four aṅgulas. The knee is twice four i.e. eight) in width and three times that in girth. The lower end of the shanks is five aṅgulas wide and 14 in girth. The feet are twelve aṅgulas long and six wide with the toes three aṅgulas. The next to the big toe is equal to the toe. The rest are shorter by an eighth part. The nail of the toe is less than a fourth of an aṅgula. The nail of the next is half of the former. One eighth of it is the measure of the rest. The foot is all along an aṅgula but eight aṅgulas at its highest point. The heel is three aṅgulas and four in height. This is the measurement of a Hāṃsa. And thus —

1 For the rest of the princely figures, the measurements have to be provided by an intelligent understanding on the lines indicated and from one’s own experience.

2 A Hāṃsa has honey-red eyes, is fair like the moon, has arms rounded like the elephant’s trunk, is swan-like in gait, with beautiful waist and charming face.

3 A Bhadra is bushy on his cheeks, elephant-like in his gait, noble-minded, with arms rounded and heavy and lotus-like in complexion.

4 A Mālavya is dark like green pulse, attenuated in his waist, bright in form, with long hands reaching his knees, broad-shouldered, prominent in his nose like an elephant and with pronounced chin.

5 A Ruchaka is fair like the autumn, conch-shaped in his neck, full of strength, noble-minded, truthful and endowed with great taste.

6 A Śaśaka is dark red in complexion, a little gray and mottled, full in his cheeks, honey-red in his eyes and quick-witted.

Thus ends the 36th chapter on Measurements being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishnudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke:-

1. Oh best among men! Please note that as there are five male categories with their own measurements of their limbs and their parts, there are similarly five female varieties as well.

2. The female is to be located close to the male, and portrayed as reaching the shoulder of the male of her category by calculation.

3. The waist of the female is two āṅgulas less than that of the male. Similarly her hip should exceed that of the male by four āṅgulas.

4. According to the measurements of the chest the breasts are to be fashioned of captivating beauty. All those of the five princely categories are to be portrayed with the characteristics of super-humans (mahāpurushalakṣaṇas).

5. Universal monarchs (chakravartins) are to be portrayed with webbed fingers and toes. The auspicious curl of hair between the brows is to be shown in its place.

6. There are three beautiful prominent lines to be marked on each palm of a prince. They are best drawn when they are red like the blood of a hare and have thin terminals.

7. The hair should be done up to appear auspicious, wavy in the curls, thin and fine, oiled, groomed and gleaming, dark like laden clouds.
8. There are these varieties of hair known as Kuntala, Dakṣiṇāvarta (i.e. curling to right), Tarāṅga (i.e. wavy), Simhakesara (i.e. like leonine mane), Vardhara and Jūṭātasara (frizzled).

9. The eye may be either bow-shaped (chāpākara), or fish-belly like (matsyodara), dark and charming like the blue lotus (upalapatrābha), pinkish like the petal of the red lotus (padmapatranibha).

10. And somewhat circular like the conch (śāṅkhākṛiti), is the fifth. The bow-like eye is three yavas in measurement.

11. The fish-belly type is of the measure of four yavas. The eye like the blue lotus is six yavas in its measure.

12. The eye like the petal of the red lotus is nine yavas by its measure. The globular eye is to be understood as ten yavas in its proportion.

13. The measurement of yavas is by that of each category. The bow-like eye is when the eyes are set down in yoga.

14. The fish-bellied type is to be used for portraying women in general and those lovelorn in particular. The blue lotus petal eye is best for one who is not overcome by any emotion whatsoever.

15. The red lotus petal type is for the frightened or weeping. The conch-like globular is for the one in anger or tormented by pain or anguish.

16. The sages, the manes, and celestials are to be portrayed effulgent, haloed and adorned, almost eclipsing the lustre of others by their own.

17. Having appropriately and satisfactorily contemplated on these measurements in accordance with their respective forms, their stances and flexions, their appropriate background, the figures are to be drawn in unswerving masterly stroke of line work.

Thus ends the 37th chapter on the General Proportions being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishvudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke :-

1. Oh king! The eye resembling the blue lotus petal is red at its tip, dark in its pupils, pleasant, with long lashes, attractive and exceedingly soft.

2-3. When this is fashioned for celestial figures, it augurs well for the welfare of the people. A pair of eyes, equal in proportion, wide, lotus red at the tips, attractive, pleasing to behold, with dark pupils, vouchsafes prosperity and happiness.

4. Symmetrically squarish, full, serene, of auspicious import, neither angular nor curved, but charming in shape should be the face.

5. In the case of celestials, excess of length, rotundity, curvature, angularity and other such traits should be avoided, if the prosperity and welfare of the people is intended to be secured.

6. Celestials are to be portrayed in the proportions of a Haṁsa. They should be provided hair only on their eye lashes and brows.

7. In the rest of the body the celestials are free from hair growth. Celestials are also to be represented as youths of sixteen summers.

8. They should be always beaming in their countenance, almost smiling in their looks, adorned with crown, earrings, necklets, armlets and bracelets.
9. They should wear auspicious flower garlands, large waist cords, anklets and ornaments for the feet.

10-11. They should be provided the sacred thread, garlands for their hair-do, and draped with lower garment from the waist extending beyond the knee to the left, the right knee exposed by the garment reaching only up to it. This garment for the celestials should be attractive.

12. Their halo should fit the head it decorates, in due proportion to it, should be circular, following the requirements of each of the celestials.

13. Their look should be free from a tilt upwards or downwards or lateral, nor should it be too pronounced a gaze, or feeble, plaintive, angry or fierce.

14. An upward look forebodes death, the same downward brings sorrow, the lateral destroys wealth, the feeble brings on death.

15. The pronounced or plaintive look creates sorrow, the fierce look depletes wealth, the angered promotes fear.

16. Oh scion of the Yadu family! The figure should neither be executed with sunkun stomach nor bloated, nor should any disfigurement be presented.

17. The figure should be neither excessive or diminutive in proportion, or lurid in colour, with mouth agape or bent down.

18. By the limbs being disproportionate or oversized, the figure with sunken stomach produces the horror of hunger, while the one with bloated stomach invites the peril of death.

19. The disfigured or mutilated forebodes death, the undersized destroys wealth, the oversized creates sorrow, the garish in colour produces fear.
20. That with mouth agape destroys the family, the pronouncedly east-gazing depletes wealth, similarly south-gazing brings on death.

21. The pronouncedly west-gazing destroys the offspring, the north-gazing enhances fear. The disproportionate one is generally destructive, the over-sized devastates the country.

22-23. The unpolished figure forebodes death and the angry one destroys beauty of form. The celestials, even when invoked by holy men, do not enter an image that is disproportionate and lacking in its significant characteristics. On the other hand it is always infested by spirits, demons and ogres.

24. Hence there should be every effort to reject the disproportionate figure. The figure conforming to its definition is always considered the best.

25. It assures long life, fame and glory, and increases wealth and material prosperity. The same devoid of definition destroys wealth and material prosperity.

26. Celestials are always to be depicted endowed with splendour and with the gait of the lion, bull, elephant or swan.

27. The figure that conforms to definition is considered to assure prosperity to the creative craftsman as well as the ruler of the realm. Hence it should be fashioned by them with a special effort to follow its own special definitive characteristics.

Thus ends the 38th chapter on the Definitive Characteristics of Figures being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishṇudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke—

1. There are nine poses for figures, auspicious in form and movement and varied in colour and tone. Listen as they are described one after the other in succession.

2-3. The first is Rījvāgata, the next is Anṛju, then Sāchikrīta-śarīra, Ardhavilochna, Pārśvagata, Purāvṛitta, thereafter Prīshṭhagata Parāvṛitta and Samānata.

4. These are the nine main positions vastly differing in details. Listen as the definition of each is narrated.

5-6. The first among them is Rījvāgata, the front position facing the spectator, clear in its proportions and characteristics, full in form and beautiful, polished and shaded without a blemish, immaculate, sweet, with clear linear outline decorating it, where the full view of none of the limbs is impaired.

7-9. That is Anṛju where the face is full and undiminished, the chest, stomach, waist, shoulder, thigh are slightly diminished, the nostrils, lower and upper lips are diminished by a quarter, only three-fourths of the form is visible, and that beautiful to behold, with its pose as a fitting background for several lovely karaṇa stances.

10-13. That is Sāchikrīta which has a horizontal background, pleasing to behold, with fine shading, delicate, with a fourth part diminished, lovely in all its limbs, portraying more than a half of the brows, forehead and raised nose, the remaining half of the body
visible, the eye diminished slightly, not quite a silhouette or a front view, but just a modification.

13-16. Ardhyardhāksha is that which in form is as follows, shows half an eye in the face, half a brow invisible, part of the forehead, a visible half of the nose, half a cheek visible and the other half hidden from view, with only a half of the line on the neck, with only a small part of the chin perceptible, half the chest, the full face lost from view, a fraction of the aṅgula of the navel seen, a little over half the waist revealed, the rest rendered imperceptible.

17. This is also known as Chhāyāgata (silhouette), a word which is a synonymn. Here can be had a side view whether from the right or from the left.

18-20. It is called Pārvagata that shows only one eye, one line of the brow, lip, nose and forehead, one ear, half the chin, similarly hair-do, but is yet not a whit lacking in proportions, charm, sweetness and other qualities. It is also styled Bhittika.

20-23. That is styled Gaṇḍaparāvṛitta where the form partially cut off from view has a sixteenth measure of the neck, the cheek, forehead, an eighth of the arm, chest, waist, legs and the private parts, all diminished carefully taking every part into account, and in adequate proportions, no limb diminished overmuch.

23-26. That is known as Prishṭagata in picture and sculpture, where the disposition of the body is clear and attractive as a back view, with curved brow streak, polished in all the limbs, their joints and position, the terminal of the eye slightly visible, as well as a part of the cheek and stomach, set straight, appealing to the sight, and possessing in no small measure qualities like undiminished proportions, charm and sweetness.

26-29. That is to be understood as Parivṛtti where the top part of the head has a diminution of visibility, does not show some limbs (like nose, lips, chin, etc.) on account of its being a back view, though half the rest of the body (from shoulder to thighs) is visible.
It thus appears without facial contour as a silhouette in its upper and lower parts (face and legs). Only the buttocks are seen in this three fourths back view which though revealing similarity of form partially is not so pleasing or refined as the same view from the front.

29-32 That is to be reckoned as Samānata where is a full view of the buttocks, the soles, the head seen only half, the waist seen in full, the toes completely hidden from view, is symmetrical, full in its (back) view, and in no way fearful (because of the lack of the smiling face seen only in the front view), half the arms seen (from the rear), the neck and face hidden from view completely and the legs lost to view except for their back view.

32-34 These are all the nine in their order as explained and understood by their definitions. Of these there can be many more created by the artist’s imaginative fecundity in the case of each one with proper background and in accordance with the major principles governing them.

35 These nine positions as seen in all attitudes are to be drawn flawless in their proper measurements and in every other respect with a special effort at accuracy.

36-37 There are no more positions than these anywhere among sentient beings, mobile and immobile, the best, middling and worst, according to measurement or qualities. Pictures are also threefold.

38-39 Oh flawless one! you have been already fully informed of foreshortening (kṣhayavṛiddhi), and now I shall tell you the mode of foreshortening, as artists should know very well all about it in epitome and in detail.

39-43 Foreshortening (kṣhayavṛiddhi) is thirteensfold, as there are several positions depending on the limbs and their parts, the first is what is seen or frontal (dṛiṣṭāgata or abhimukha,) then anvijugata, madhyārdhārdha, ardhārdha sāchikṣitamukha, nata, gāndaparāśvita,
prishṭhagata, pārśvagata, ullepa, chalita, uttāna, valita. Thus they are thirteen positions. These are all to be prepared according to the significance of their name and position. The movements of vaiśākha and pratyālidha maṇḍalas are in the order of the movements of pratyālidha.

44 The padas or feet are together (sama) or separated (ardhasama) steady (sushīta) or in motion (chalita). Sthānaka or stance is of two kinds, resting on both feet or on one.

45-46 The samapada or with feet together is understood as mostly in pījvāgata. Maṇḍala is a second of this category. The rest of the sthānas, whatever they are, are either feet together or a foot alone steady and the other in a variety of pose or motion (chala).

46-48 Here vaiśākha, ālīḍha and pratyālidha are for bowmen. Chitra, gomūtraka and vishama are for warriors wielding sword and shield. For those carrying the lance, javelin, spear, boomerang and such other weapons one leg is either moving or shaking, or fatigued or in ālīḍha while the other is steady. Those carrying the wheel, trident, club or a small spear should be shown leaping or jumping.

49-50 A wise artist should picture a feminine form in a stance resting on one foot that is steady in the samapada (feet together), the other foot at ease, the body in sportive charm and in a somewhat leaning or supporting attitude, sometimes in a rather quicker pace, maintaining a charm in gait and movement, sustaining a vision of the charm of contour of the hips.

51 There are in this world several beings that are disproportionate on account of their age and emotion. This has to be well borne in mind by a wise artist when with his power of discerning he prepares their proportions according to the principles of kṣhayavṛiddhi or foreshortening.

Thus ends the 39th chapter on Foreshortening in the Treatise on Painting from the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishnudharmottara.
Märkanḍeya spoke:-

1-3. Brick powder of three varieties (i.e. smooth, middling and coarse) should be mixed with clay, a third of it in proportion. To this is added fragrant gum resin, bee’s wax, honey, kundara grass, molasses, safflower soaked in oil, all in equal proportions. To these two parts already composed is added powder of lime three fourths burnt, with bel fruit pulp and lampblack. The rest or the remaining fourth part is an addition of sand (a little more or less) according to the experience of the skilful artist.

4. Then it is soaked in water stored in a pot so as to get lubricous and is kept so for a month.

5. When after a month it becomes a very soft paste, it has to be carefully taken out and a coat applied by the skilled artist on the wall after testing that it is quite dry.

6. The coating should be smooth, even, firm, free from uneven patches, neither too thick nor too thin.

7-8. When the wall is dry after this coat and is still not quite smooth, it should be smoothened by an application of the clay bereft of sarjarasa and oil by coats of lamp black and frequent wetting of the surface with milk and rubbing, all with a great effort.

9. The wall dries up very soon and does not perish even after a hundred years.

10. In this same manner a variety of mosaic floors can be made in picturesque fashion by the use of two or different colours.
11-13. When the wall is dry, on a good day with an excellent constellation that is appropriate to the gana (deva in preference to manushya or rākshasa), specially suited for starting a picture (like Punarvasu for Rāma, Ārdra for Naṭarāja, Rohini for Kṛishṇa, Mrigaśīra for Śiva, etc.), the painter, dressed in immaculate white, pure in mind and body, having adored Vedic seers and uttered auspicious hymns (svastivākya), and having bowed to the learned in the art and the Masters in their order, and with great affection for the Masters, facing the east, contemplating on the deity to be depicted, should start his work of painting.

14-15. The wise artist should draw and fix up the proportions and positions of the figures. Then he should colour the painting with colours appropriate in their different situations. Darker and lighter shades should be shown as they occur. This chiaroscuro has been earlier explained by me at length.

16. The primary colours are five, white, yellow, red, black, blue with hundreds of intermediate tones.

17. First the colour scheme is arrived at by separating them and according to the artist’s knowledge and capacity for creating the atmosphere in the picture, there should be produced hundreds and thousands of colour tones.

18. Blue and yellow mixed produce green. It may be pale with a greater modicum of white or deeper with blue.

19. According to the colours used quantitatively there is a predominance of a colour, lighter, darker or in equal proportion, making it threefold.

20-21. With one tone predominant many tints are produced. Thus there is the somewhat yellowish green of dūrvā grass, light wood-apple green, green like green pulse and so on, which can all be produced.

21-22. Blue mixed with white is a tertiary colour which again
is manifold by the predominance, diminution, equal or lesser proportion of one or the other. Thus is formed the tint like that of the blue lily, of the dark chāsha bird.

23-24. Beautiful tints are produced by mixing in calculated proportions. Red lākshā tint mixed with white like the lodhra flower becomes red like the red lotus, a colour so charming. This again produces several other varying tints.

25-26. The material for colours are gold, silver, copper, mica, lapis lazuli, red lead, lead, yellow orpiment, lime, red lac, vermillion, indigo, and several more manifold.

27. There are all these in every country and have to be prepared with one or other predominant. Metal colours are to be laid in delicately thin sheets or by liquefying them by chemical methods.

28. Mica becomes the solvent liquefier when added to iron. Thus when metal colouring is to be done they have to be suitably prepared.

29. The liquefier of mica is mercury. Hide glue and bakula resin glue act to fix and strengthen colours for all of which vermilion juice is also used.

30. The picture painted with brushes of high quality hair and with colours strengthened by the glue of elephant hide, the juice of dūrvā and bark resin cannot be destroyed even though washed with water but has a prolonged life for several years.

Here ends the 40th chapter titled Colour Composition being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Viṣṇudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke—

1. Pictures are of four varieties, Satya, Vaiśīka, Nāgara and Miśra. Their definition is this.

2. What is known as Satya faithfully portrays any object of the world that it intends to represent. It has the limbs somewhat elongate though following proportions in all other respects, is delicate in treatment and with the right background.

3. What is styled Vaiśīka is symmetrical, complete in its form, with no elongation of any limbs, nor exaggeration of form, in true proportions and rich in stances.

4. That is to be understood as Nāgara which has all its limbs well rounded, firmly and powerfully set, though not too exaggerated, and with great restraint in jewellery and garlands as decoration.

5. Miśra is briefly described, as its name implies, as a mixture of the three styles described earlier.

5-7. There are three ways of depicting light and shade, namely, patraka, binduka and raikhika. Patravartana is so called as it is composed of lines crosshatched in leaf pattern. Raikhika vartana is composed of very fine lines. Binduvartana is so called because it is effected by stippling.

7-8. Weak and vague drawing, coarse dotty lines in sketches, lack of symmetry, oversized depiction of cheeks, lips and eyes, awry
line work, celestial figures looking common place human figures, these are defects in a painting.

9. The merits in a painting are appropriate stance, proportions and background, sweetness in execution, symmetry, likeness to the original and foreshortening.

10. Line, shading, decorative design and colour are the decorative element in pictures.

11. Masters are all praise for excellence in line work while connoisseurs value excellence in shading. Feminine taste prefers decorative work. The others in general have a liking for rich colours in a picture.

12. Taking this into account the artist should so direct his effort in painting pictures as to win the hearts of all these with different tastes.

13. The factors that contribute to detract from the value of a picture are the artist’s lack of composure as he is seated for painting, the painting taken up in a disturbed state of mind, the thought of thirst during the act of painting (like hunger where the hungry one can think of nothing else: bubhukshitam na pratibhāti kīchit) and the mind wandering away from the picture distracted by other thoughts.

14. The place chosen for painting a picture should be well cleaned, free from flies, mosquitoes and the like, clean, attractive and well protected.

15. A picture, painted smoothly and clearly in well defined lines with a perfect knowledge of apparel and ornament, appropriate to the country and rank of the figures depicted, and not lacking either in proportions or in charm, would indeed be an exciting one.

Thus ends the 41st chapter on Colour Shading being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishnudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke—

1. Kings in general are to be depicted in pictures like the celestials, while individually each of them should be portrayed in consonance with his features.

2-3. Sages, Gandharvas (celestial minstrels), Daityas (demons) and Dānavas (ogres), ministers, astrologers, royal priests, Brāhmaṇas are all to be drawn in Bhadra proportions.

3-4. The sages are to be adorned with bundled up matted locks of hair, wear black antelope skin as upper garment, and though physically weak are to be full of spiritual lustre.

4-5. Devas (celestials) and Gandharvas do not wear a crown but should be adorned with groomed and well-dressed hair shooting up. Brāhmaṇas are to be full of spiritual lustre and draped in white apparel.

6-7. Ministers, astrologers and priests may wear all their ornaments but very sparingly and not gaudily. They should not wear a crown but should don a turban.

7-8. Daityas and Dānavas are to be shown frowning with knit brows, rolling circular eyes and terrible visage. Their dress should be most flamboyant.

9-10. Vidyādharas (a class of celestials) are to be drawn to Bhadra proportions and as moving in pairs with their wives, wearing
flower garlands and jewels. Whether they roam in the celestial or terrestrial sphere they carry a sword.

10. Kinnaras (centaurs), Nāgas (celestial snakes) and Rākshasas (giants) are to be of Mālayya proportions.

11. Yakshas (a class of celestials, guardians of treasures) are to be delineated in Ruchaka proportions. Principal or important men should be of Śaśaka proportions.

12. Piśāchas (ghosts), dwarfs, hunchbacks, Pramathagaṇas (Śiva’s dwarf attendants) are to be depicted regardless of proportions.

13. The womenfolk of all these are to be in consonance with their proportions.

13-14. Kinnaras are of two types, some human-faced and equine-bodied, and others with human body and equine face.

14-15. The equine-faced ones should be decorated with all jewels, associated with music and musical instruments and look effulgent.

15. Rākshasas are to be depicted with dishevelled hair, ugly eyes and appear frightful.

16. Nāgas are to be pleasing like the Devas, with snake hoods adorning them on their head. All of them including the Yakshas already described have to be decorated with ornaments.

17. Among the gods Pramathas are to be depicted without any specific proportions. Similarly the Piśāchas are devoid of definite proportions.

18-19. The gaṇas of Devatas are to be depicted with the faces of different animals and birds, should be variantly dressed, carry different weapons, and engage themselves in different sports and activities.
19-20. Vaishnava gaṇas are however to be all in one standard form. But even so they have four variations.

20-23. The gaṇas of Vāsudeva are to resemble Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa’s gaṇas are after him, and the gaṇas of Pradyumna and Aniruddha take after the one or the other. They all have the power of their Masters, whose weapons they also carry. They are blue like the petals of the blue lotus, or fair like the moon, or emerald dark, or have the lustre of vermillion.

23-24. Courtesans are to be portrayed in Ruchaka proportions, should be attired in flamboyant dress that is most appropriate for the erotic mood.

24-25. Household women should be of Mālavya proportions, shy and retiring, not too gaudily dressed but wearing a quantum of jewels.

25-27. While the wives of Daityas, Dānavas, Yakshas and Rākshasas are to be portrayed as beautiful, their mothers are to be delineated in their own fierce forms. The wives of Piśāchas, however, are to be shown fearful after their male norm.

27-28. Widows are to be represented somewhat advanced in age with greyish hair, wearing white apparel and unadorned.

28-29. The retinue of princesses should be composed of hunchbacks, dwarfs, aged women and beautiful damsels with an old chamberlain.

29-30. Vaiśyas or the trading class should be portrayed in Ruchaka proportions while Śūdras are in Śaśaka measurement, with their dress in consonance with their caste and profession.

31. There should be attendant women depicted in the case of the consorts of Daityas and the rest.

31-33. The commander-in-chief of the army is to be portrayed by the artist who knows his art as monumental in head, chest, nose,
cheek, ample in his shoulders, arms and neck, liberal in his general height and body build, with triple wavy furrow on his forehead, eagle-eyed, ample in his waist girth and, above all, overbearing in appearance.

33-34. The warriors are to be mostly shown with knit brows, somewhat loud and gaudy in their dress and looking up in disdain. Warriors on foot carrying weapons should be shown advancing fast.

35-36. Those wielding the sword and shield are to be like the Kāṇṭhakas in their appearance. Bowmen carrying the best arrows are to be shown bare-kneed, with a not-too-gaudy dress but wearing foot-wear.

36. Elephants, horses and the rest are to be portrayed according to their given description.

37. The elephant riders are to be painted dark like the green pulse with their hair frizzled and decked with jewels.

38-39. The horse-riders are to be delineated in northern dress. Somewhat gaudy in dress are to be portrayed bards and minstrels, their look turned upwards, the nerves bulging on their neck as they sing aloud.

39. Announcers are to be shown reddish and with sidelong looks.

40. Pairs in combat engaged like wrestlers are to be shown somewhat like the Dānavas, tall and stately, club in hand, neither swarthy nor with oblique eyes.

41. The usher (pratihāra) should be neither too showy nor too subdued in his apparel, should carry a sword fastened on one side and hold a club.

42-43. Traders are to be depicted with a turban wound round the head. Musicians and dancers and instrumentalists are to be
presented in flamboyant dress.

43-44. Worthy citizens and country-folk are to be represented as elders with greyish hair, sign of approaching age, dressed in immaculate white and bejewelled, full of a spirit of humility, affable, and by nature of a loving disposition and sweet-looking.

45-46. Servants and those of the working class are to be shown engrossed in their daily chores. Wrestlers are to be shown tall and well-built, thick-necked, large-headed and close cropped, overbearing and massive.

46-48. Bulls, lions and other animals and birds are to be depicted in their natural surroundings and in close conformity to what is observed in nature. Though what may not be seen so easily has been explained at some length, what can be easily observed and studied should be so sketched and painted as to lay stress on their proper semblance to the original. In a picture the most essential factor is to bring out prominently the semblance of the portrait to the portrayed.

49-50. The artist should study the difference in features, dress, ornamentation and complexion and accordingly depict people in their special characteristics. Their country, inclination, position, action, even their seat, bedstead, vehicles, dress and apparel should be studied closely and carefully depicted with meticulous care.

51. Rivers and streams are to be conceived in feminine form on their respective vehicles, carrying filled water pitchers in their hands and with knees slightly bent.

52-53. Mountains are to be noble male figures, with the peaks on their head or in their hand. In the hands of personified continents (like Jambūdvīpa) there should be shown the earth globe.

53-54. Oceans are to be depicted with gem-filled pots in their hand, and in the place of their haloes should be the wavy pattern of water, suggestive of its expanse.
54. Personified weapons should have their respective symbols on their heads.

55-56. The pot is a symbol in general for all treasures and should be shown in the hands of personified Śankhanidhi, the lotus similarly for Padmanidhi, and similarly for other nidhis like Makara, Kachchhapa, etc. All the nidhis are to be personified, all of them almost alike, but each differing in his attribute.

56. In the case of celestials of a high order their attributes as well as a rosary and manuscript are to be indicated.

57. And now I shall narrate the form that suits appropriately any particular object intended. The well-versed artist should represent the sky as having no colour in particular, but full of birds on the wing.

58. The celestial sphere beyond is represented adorned by stars. The earth has to be shown with a mix up of different regions of the forests, plains and marshes with their particular characteristics.

59. Mountains are to be depicted in their natural form with clusters of large boulders, peaks, mineral deposits, wild growth of trees, torrents and waterfalls, pythons.

60-61 The forest region is delineated by diverse trees in wild unfettered growth, birds and wild animals. Water is presented by an endless variety of fishes, tortoises and turtles, swans and ducks and other similar aquatic life.

61-62 Cities are represented by picturesque temples, palaces and mansions, markets and well laid out highways and roads. The village is suggested by humbler dwellings and cottages adorned here and there by gardens.

63 All fortresses are to be depicted well planned and with moats, defence walls and turrets and watch-towers tall as mountains.
64 The market area has to be represented by rich merchandise spread out for sale. The drinking taverns are to be liberally stocked with liquor and crowded with drinking folk.

65 Those engaged in gambling should be devoid of even their upper garment, mad in their rush to stake everything, the winners in the game bright and merry, the losers downcast with grief.

66 The battlefield is to be represented with all the four limbs of the army engaged earnestly in fight and striking with their respective weapons, the field itself strewn with corpses, limbs cut and thrown scattered about with the blood curdling all around.

67 The crematorium is to be shown with burning pyres and corpses. The caravan route has to be indicated by camels and other beasts of burden laden with merchandise.

68 The portrayal of night is by showing the moon, stars and planets, people asleep, or engaged in nocturnal amours and thieves prowling about.

69 In the earlier part of the night the loving damsel heading towards the place of tryst, the abhisārikā, is to be shown and the approach of dawn is to be indicated by the lights dimming as the sky assumes a crimson hue and cocks crow to herald daybreak.

70 Another way of representing daybreak is by showing men sallying forth and engaged in their respective pursuits and Brähmanas religiously busy offering their morning ablutions to the sun rising in crimson glory.

71-72 The darkness of night is indicated by men shown feeling their way. Moonlight shed by the moon is to be delineated by the bloom of blue lilies. Also it is indicated by a cool leaf-spread bed with lotus pollen strewn to indicate the mitigating of the heat experienced from moonlight by the love-lorn damsel (virahīṇī) in separation.

72 Rain is indicated by a downpour to avoid which men and women would cover themselves.
73-74 The heat of summer is indicated by the sun in the sky and the folk around tormented by heat. Spring is suggested by the seasonal trees in bloom, humming with bees and resounding with the coo of the cuckoo, and men and women moving about blithe and gay.

74-75 Summer is to be delineated by the fatigue experienced by men, animals seeking the shade of trees and arbours, buffaloes enjoying a dip in the mire of muddy water as the pools dry up, birds hiding themselves in the thick verdure of trees and wild animals like the lion and tiger repairing to the cool comfort of their mountain caverns.

76 The rainy season is portrayed by dark laden clouds rather bent down by their aquatic burden and beautified by the colourful impact of the rainbow and lit up now and again by the flash of streaks of lightning.

77 Autumn is painted by trees laden with fruit, corn ripe in the fields, pools filled with lotuses and swans.

78 Approach of winter is indicated by dew and fog settled all over, the earth bare and dreary, and the whole atmosphere misty.

79 The deep cold of winter is portrayed by crows and elephants joyous, man tormented by cold, and snowfall all around everywhere.

80 The painter should study the picture and mood of nature and depict the seasons as he sees around him by the flowers and fruit on trees and the joy or happiness of men, animals and birds.

81 The moods of flavour are to be depicted as earlier explained, and what has been detailed under dance has to be here utilised as they fit in.

82 The picture with excellent but bare line work and lacking in modelling is called šushka (dry) and is second best. That which is produced with excellent modelling is called ārdra (moist) and is
the best. The inferior type which is neither simple like šuskha nor highly finished like ārdra but is an admixture of both with its definition impaired is šushkārdra (dry and moist). It is the least attractive.

83 The picture painted in conformity with the region, time, form and age is the best, and that which is the opposite of it is clearly so in quality as well.

84 A good painting sets off the prowess of a master who can use his excellence in aesthetic creation to advantage by stress on pleasing stances for figures, brilliance in hue, portraiture of emotions and grace in situations, as all these gladden the eye in inviting attention and assuring all that the heart desires.

Thus ends the 42nd chapter titled Creating Forms being the conversation between Mārkaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishnudharmottara.
Mārkaṇḍeya spoke —

1 There are nine rasas recognised in art (chitra), śṛṅgāra (erotic), hāsya (comic), karuṇa (compassionate), vīra (heroic), raudra (terrific), bhayānaka (fearful), bibhatsa (disgusting), adbhuta (wonderful), and śānta (peaceful).

2 In śṛṅgāra or erotic flavour it is appropriate to portray the figures bright, with iridescence, a certain sweet charm in the lines composing beautiful form, tasteful dress and decoration (jewels, etc.)

3 Hāsya or the mood exciting laughter is that where the sight of deformed ones like hunchbacks, dwarfs and the like as well as movements like the hand awkwardly drawn in a comical mode of shyness excites it.

4 In karuṇa or the mood of compassion should be portrayed the pathos in abject want, cruel separation, renunciation, sale of the beloved ones, unbearable sorrow and the like.

5 In raudra flavour should be depicted harsh, unnatural, angry, unworthy language and import used in abuse and action as if to hurt with flaming sharp weapons.

6 In vīra or heroic mood there is a certain wonder suggested in portraying a smile on the face of a hero with knit brow, a flash of pride and nobility in the sense of heroic purpose in oaths uttered with great emotion.
7 By the use in pictures of bhayānaka or fear-kindling flavour there is to be depicted the wicked, the abhorrent, the mad, the harmful, the murderous and other such fearful themes.

8 That is born of bibhatsa mood in a picture as chosen by an artist, adept in his art, where occur the crematorium, killing the forbidden, against a background composition so heart-rending.

9 That partakes of adbhuta or the mood of wonder where one gazes at another, revealing on his face, rather pulled down, a certain humility, horriputation, thoughtful mood apparent.

10 What is depicted in sānta or the mood of peace is serene in appearance, meditative, fixed in contemplation and seated at ease, sages and ascetics predominating the scene.

11 Pictures illustrating śṛṅgāra, hāṣya and sānta are to be painted in residential buildings. The rest of the moods are never to be represented in any residence.

12 All the moods can be painted and shown in temples and royal palaces, but even in the latter, they are not to be portrayed in the residential part of the royal palace.

13-14 All the moods are to be depicted in the halls of audience of the king. Apart from the public halls of the palace and the temples, never and nowhere else can be painted inauspicious themes, and themes depicting battles, crematorium, exciting compassion, scenes portraying death, agony and anything despicable.

15-16 Bulls with horns holding treasure and elephants holding treasure pots in their trunks, the treasures themselves personified, Vidyādharas, sages and Garuḍa, Hanumān and all the rest that are considered auspicious objects in the world, should be painted in the homes of men all over.

17 Painting should never be done by anyone with his own hand for decorating his own house.
17-18 Weak drawing, coarse line work, crooked or awry lines and muddling of colours are counted as defects in painting.

19 Appropriate stance, proportion, background, sweet execution and distinctive symmetry, semblance to the original and foreshortening are the eight merits in a picture.

20 That is considered unpraiseworthy which shows any defect in stances, flaw in the depiction of emotions, a vacant look, is smudgy, and is devoid of life and movement.

21-22 That picture is considered auspicious which has the background in it that fits it, and almost embraces it by being appropriate, when its sweet execution almost smiles, where the figures seem to be alive and breathing.

22-23 The artist should ever avoid painting what is devoid of auspiciousness, defective in form, tainted, vacant, agitated by being overpowered, disease-stricken or fear-struck, wild with dishevelled hair.

24-26 Pictures painted by knowledgeable, good-natured and qualified painters assure speedy arrival of prosperity and the removal of all adversity, wash off all anxieties, prevent imminent ill luck, spread pure satisfaction generating it beyond all measure, kill the effect of bad dreams, please the household deity. The place where a good picture is displayed would not at all appear vacant, and it assures the auspicious fruit of the purushārthas, dharma, artha and kāma.

27 He is well versed in painting who can draw the ear in a natural way without any ornaments on it, who can depict one wounded by an arrow and in great pain, and an aged one with the difficult marks of age.

28 He is to be reckoned knowledgeable in art who paints according to the movement of the wind, the waves, wavelets and ripples, flames of fire and smoke, fluttering banners and apparel blown by the wind.
29 He is an adept in painting who can depict the difference between a sleeping pig that is alive and breathing and a dead one bereft of life, and similarly the variation in heights and depths determining light and shade or chiaroscuro.

30 Proper arrangement of figures in the composition of a picture is praiseworthy. By special effort, the crowding of figures, one directly in front of another, should be avoided.

31 As in painting, so in the case of dug up metals like gold, silver, copper and so forth, it is mentioned that the figures are to be prepared as seen practised in the world around by the respective craftsmen.

32 Following the process that has been explained at length for painting, images in stone, wood and metal are to be fashioned.

33 Modelling in clay and metal (i.e. as it is from the original wax) is according to the same process. It is prepared in two ways, solid and hollow.

34 The solid ones can be in metal, stone, wood and clay. The hollow ones may be of leather, wood and metal.

35 A thick coating of clay has to be applied to the leathern figure which should be covered similarly by cloth and painted.

36 Oh king! This has all been explained to you in brief as it is impossible to elaborate this even in several hundreds of years.

37 What has not been explained here has to be supplemented from the directions in the section on dance. What is not given there has to be supplied from the section on painting.

38 Of all arts the best is chitra. It gives the fruit of dharma, artha, kāma and moksha. Wherever it is established in a house, it is the harbinger of the best of auspiciousness.

39 Just as Sumeru is the best of mountains, as Garuḍa is the
foremost of the birds, as the king is the chief among men, similarly the best of chitra is the most praiseworthy among the fine arts.

Thus ends the 43rd chapter titled the Application of Flavours and the Rest, being the conversation between Markaṇḍeya and Vajra in the Vishṇudharmottara.