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NOTE FROM THE HOI DESK



Since its inception in July 2021, UID has traversed the field of design education, constantly working to be ahead of the curve in our continuous pursuit of excellence. The foundation year aims to understand the visual and sensory elements of design while cognizant that Design is hands-on; practice based learning i.e. doing, making, and creating great products, services & experiences. Design education is dynamic and innovative, constantly adapting to changes in society, industry & technology. Our recent curriculum enhancements are aimed to provide our students with immersive experiential learning in the crafts sector, understand the subcultures of its myriad clusters and communities while contributing towards the socio- economic development of this sector through interventions and design development.

Discover Design in India started as an idea, the ideation process premised around traditional craft ecology, living cultures until its purpose and narrative evolved to an accredited course of contemporary experiential learning into a deep dive to redefine and discover design in India. DDI is an integral part of the experiential learning component of the Undergraduate curriculum of UID/Karnavati University. The programme primarily focuses on exploring, understanding, and experiencing the rich diverse culture and heritage which resides in the in the length and breadth and far corners of India.

The purpose of this module is to introduce and facilitate an understanding of India's rich and varied heritage, traditional crafts, culture, community, and social environment. The DDI curriculum begins with perspective building, skills and competencies for communication, problem-solving skills, creativity, innovation, teamwork and ethics that also meet the needs of the diverse craft sectors of the country. It prepares students to welcome new ideas, value diversity, understand and document each cluster to give their best to succeed in this onerous task. This profound immersive experiential learning opportunity binds knowledge, character and empathy in students to link their theoretical and practical knowledge with the real world, getting to know the cluster, community and human development through various mediums.

I wish all UID Foundation Leaders, faculty / staff members sterling success to build empathy & create craft documentation and guide Year 1 students to imbibe the experience, knowledge and technology into their individual design practice

Col Surojit Bose
Head of Institution / Director
UID

BAGRU CRAFT STUDIES: DISCOVER DESIGN IN INDIA

By Rithika Jayachandran & Shreen Shah, B. Des Fashion Design Sem II, UID.

Wooden blocks used for Bagru printing.



Deep in the heart of Rajasthan lies the town of Bagru, which has been widely regarded as the focal point of the beguiling Bagru hand block prints. This form of printing is based on a model of fine artisanship and impeccable attention to detail. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the process of creation is strenuous, to say the least. Thirty kilometers away from Jaipur is the homeland of artisan Mansoor Ali and his family who have been practicing this craft for three generations now. The artisan and his family work from their own home to cater the orders they receive from merchants who are their single point of contact.

The traditional and hand-tailored Bagru printing process begins with washing the cloth in clean water. This is done to remove the starch from the cloth. The fabric is then treated using a mixture of castor oil, camel or goat dung and soda ash in a process known as 'sacj'. The still-wet fabric is then soaked in a paste of 'harda', which gives the cloth a yellow tinge. This yellow tinge on the cloth is crucial because this holds home for the natural dyes, which sets Bagru apart from other block prints. The cloth is set to dry and made ready for printing. The fabric is printed with the 'syahi' (black), 'begar' (red), and mustard brown. Bagru prints traditionally consist of motifs inspired by nature but over time, the designs have evolved into geometric and contemporary styles. The black 'syahi' dye is made from three natural ingredients: jaggery, water, and rusted iron. The distinctive red color gets its pigment from 'babool gond' which is mixed with alum and water. The brown-yellow color is obtained from mustard seeds. The colors are poured into a tray containing a metal frame called as 'jalli', a jute cloth is then placed over it to prevent excess color in the block. The wood block with the desired design is then slightly pressed over this tray of color and meticulously placed over the fabric.

The wooden blocks are in sets of three namely: 'gudh' (background), 'rekh' (outline) and 'datta' (filling). The 'gudh' is placed first followed by the 'rekh' outline and then the 'datta' completes the design. After the desired design is printed, the fabric is let to dry in the sun for thirty minutes and is then put into a bucket of clean water to be washed thoroughly. The color red does not show up as red when printed. Therefore, the fabric gets boiled in water with alizarin in a 'tambadi' (copper vessel), which brings out the color. The other color printed fabrics are boiled in a 'tambadi' with 'dawoodia' flowers. After that, there is another cycle of washing and drying. The desired color is obtained after this wash. The fabric is let to sun dry, packed and sent to complete the order.

Bagru print has changed with the times and now requires greater market exposure to stay alive. It is vital to encourage and support the local craft and the local artisan in order to preserve the historic craft tradition. The major strengths of the craft is that it is a sustainable process and has little to no waste production. As Bagru printing is heavy on natural colors, the risks of infections and rashes is nearly nil. The natural 'syahi' black color and the 'begar' red color gives bagru print its distinction from other block prints. The artisans are not aware of the options that are available to them and are hence being exploited. One meter of hand printed fabric is sold in the market for about 200 Indian rupees but the craftsmen who made it are merely getting 30% of the revenue. This is due to the presence of a middle man/merchant. It is vital to bridge this gap. Artisans must attend public events to display their work in order to gain more market and understand the needs and opportunities present.

The enormous efforts that go into each stage of the block printing process make the art genuinely deserving of worldwide attention and adoration. After this trip to the Chhipa community we recognized the distinctiveness and beauty of the form and the efforts that go into the fabric that we wear every day. We as future designers should come together and find ways to expand and explore such rich and traditional crafts of India. We are hugely grateful to those artisans, the community, the institution and our faculty without whom this project would not have been a success. We extend our gratitude to Baijan for hosting us in their humble home.

MEENAKARI CRAFT STUDIES: DISCOVER DESIGN IN INDIA

By Chahak Jain & Diya Doshi, B. Des Fashion design Sem II, UID



Meenakari artisan at work.

The history of this intricate art form finds its genesis in Persia (its origin can be traced back to the Parthian and Sassanid period of Iranian history). During the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's rule, a member of his court introduced this art form. They initially used the art form to adorn the palace walls, ceilings and doors. Later at the queen's behest, it was used to create jewelry. Raja Man Singh of Amer is credited with bringing the art of Meenakari to India at the hands of skilled artisans from Lahore and has been passed down through generations since then.

To this day, Jaipur prides itself on being a brimming hub for Meenakari. In addition to Jaipur, Delhi, Punjab, Lucknow, Udaipur, Pratapgarh, and Varanasi are also famous for their Meenakari artwork. Rajasthan and Gujarat are also renowned for this particular art form.

The artisan first sketches the motifs he wants to make on his product. These motifs are mostly inspired from nature. Persian artisans used more geometric elements as compared to Indian artisans. These patterns are the most appealing blend of geometric and ornamental elements. The design is then sent to the goldsmith to be carved and engraved on metal sheets. It is made in the form of depressions on the metal that has to be enameled. Engraving and sanding of the depressions enables us to add to the luster of Meena. Gold was initially used to make Meenakari products but due to commercialization and increase in the cost of raw materials, it is now practiced on gold and silver plated copper or brass products.

The carved products are filled with Meena. There are two techniques that are used for the same:

Kacha Meena

The colors are made using chemically prepared coloring solutions and a hardener. (colored solution + hardener = Kacha Meena color). The liquid color obtained is slimy and gooey. These colors are then set in the depressions using sticks and the product is left to air dry overnight. Kacha Meena is faster and easier to make and prepare. It caters to the faster needs that have arisen due to commercialization and immediacy of the market. Though made using different materials, the feel of Kacha Meena is very similar to that of Pakka Meena.

Pakka Meena

The colors or the enamel that is used for filling up the design depressions on metal are not filled with any normal colors. Meenakari colors used for Pakka Meena are essentially metal oxides infused with powdered glass. These highly expensive stones are chemically prepared and were initially imported from Germany and are now also available in India. 'Meena' gemstones are ground in an instrument called 'Kharal' (made with either brass or glass). This powder of colors is washed with water and acid nine to ten times to remove iron and other impurities to achieve a more finished product. This sandy mixture of colors is then transferred into a brass palette to protect it from impurities. These colors are also kept moist and water is continuously added for easy use. These colors are filled in the depressions using a 'takhva'. A piece of cotton fabric is also used to absorb excess water content from the compound. In order to intensify the appeal of the enamel, the metal goes through intense heat. The product is subjected to high temperatures for 10-15 minutes to bring out the true colors of the enamel and also fix it in the depressions. Finally, the metal is polished for finishing, empty areas are re-filled and the artisan can choose to apply heat on the design further to polish it. Electric Sigrees are now used for the same.

WEAKNESS

- Expensive raw material and a time consuming process
- Lack of market knowledge and current demands amongst the artisans
- Limited color palette; does not match the current tastes
- Imitation jewelry made using the craft is not easily available in the local markets of Jaipur (lack of knowledge amongst the shopkeepers)
- Lack of workforce and workspace in order to meet bulk orders
- There is no one in the family of the artisans to carry down the art form

OPPORTUNITIES

- Production of affordable daily wear jewelry and daily use products using the intricacies of the craft
- Using the craft to make unique products and using it differently (contemporary uses) example - watch dials, cufflinks, buttons, handbags, metal bottles, keychains, souvenirs etc.
- Young designers should be introduced to the craft in order to increase knowledge about the same, add a new perspective to the craft and help come up with novel uses for the craft and its techniques.
- Artisans can conduct workshops to facilitate increased knowledge
- Creation of a platform which helps artisans and designers to collaborate

THREATS

- The artisans do not get credit for their commission work for big brands. The designers get the credit for the products they make
- The intricacy of the craft had to be reduced to meet the current wave of commercialisation
- Artisans only receive 20-30% profit margin on the products they supply in the market through shopkeepers

SWOT

SWOT Analysis of the Meenakari craft.

STRENGTHS

- It is a highly authentic and culture oriented craft which helps protect the heritage of India
- Contributes to the handicraft industry of India
- Customisation of products offered by the artisans opens up opportunities for increased financial support.

Introduction of the craft to the international markets and at various events can help artisans propagate the craft and enable them to preserve our prestigious heritage. Increasing knowledge about the craft amongst the youth can also facilitate the development and contemporisation of the craft. Diversification of product range can also increase the market size and demand of the consumers. Adapting to the current tastes and trends can also aid in expansion. Provision of more workspace and workforce to the artisans can also be of huge help to them. Helping the artisans collaborate with designers and brands can also add to their financial growth along with creating a market identity for the craft.

INTIMATE VISIT TO INTIMATE SHOPS

By: Lakshmi Menon, B. Des Fashion Design Sem VI, UID



On March 21, 2023, a group of 25, 6th-semester students from the Fashion Design Department of Unitedworld Institute of Design, along with our faculty Ms. Anahita Suri, undertook a field trip to the Alpha One shopping mall in Ahmedabad to conduct a detailed study of the different types of lingerie available in the Indian market. This is part of our Lingerie and Intimate wear Design course.

The goal of the trip was to learn more about the lingerie and intimate apparel sector in terms of brands, styles, brand image, pricing, target audience, fabric types & finishes and also to learn how to study a target audience. This learning shall feed into our individual design processes.

We visited brand stores such as Wacoal, Enamor, Jockey, Marks and Spencer, H&M, Westside, and also looked at various other brands such as Insense, Amante, Clovia, Infuse, Parfait, Triumph, Vero Moda & Van Heusen at multi brand outlets like Shoppers Stop and Lifestyle.

Brands like Clovia and Jockey promise to become your second skin to keep you comfortable all day long. Their products are designed to fit perfectly and stay as fresh all day as they are in the morning. They not only provide comfort but also a perfect, pretty, and plush design for all ladies. These brands

do not have a separate section for lingerie, but there are some super stylish bras and panties that you can pair to create perfect lingerie. The prices are affordable. Brands like H&M, and Marks&Spencer are the brands that fit in the budget but still offer an expensive experience. They have the latest styles and unique designer collections available only with these brands. They have a wide range of products like negligees, bras, panties, shorts, and camisoles. Wacoal caters to customers who look for luxury as their key element. The most common materials used in the manufacture of lingerie are polyamide, polyester, wing elastic lace, metalized fibers, cotton spandex, and elastane. Bras consist of padded and non-padded parts, underwires, and stays on the side seam that provides stability. The zig-zag stitch and the overlock stitch were the most common seams in intimate apparel. Both the front and back openings were available and had hooks. Zippers were used in sportswear. Trims included prints and lace.

We can say that the field trip was successful and we believed that our goals were achieved. We learned something new and useful for us to incorporate into our future design development. It was a useful experience, especially for students who want to pursue a career in lingerie and intimate apparel.

BEAUTIFUL BRUSHSTROKES

By: Harshali Nagwekar, B. Des Lifestyle Accessory Design Sem IV, UID



Caprese bag illustration done using watercolour medium during my representation techniques course. Picture Courtesy: Harshali Nagwekar.

Watercolor as a medium in itself is a versatile & flexible that can give a variety of results. There is something magical about watercolor. Every stroke you apply, every color you choose is all enough to excite someone to pick up a paintbrush & try it. It is the most wonderful form of art, which lays out one's imagination on a piece of paper. It is the a very quick and versatile medium that can give you various results & possibilities of expression.

It is such a medium that does not require expensive supplies to work with. Watercolor might look challenging or tricky to use, but once you learn to use the right amount of water to mix with the right amount of paint, then the sky is the limit! The whole process is about trial & error & learning through that; but in the end, it is all worth the process.

Detailed view of my illustration for the Caprese bag. Picture Courtesy: Harshali Nagwekar

This is a watercolor illustration done for the Caprese brand as a part of the Representation technique course, where our main motive was to develop the ability to represent the product through the watercolor medium. As watercolor is such a medium that helps in quick rendering, it has become the most popular medium for the designer to work on as it helps to tackle the feel, impact & emotion of a product even before it is made.

Overall it is always a fun & joyful process for me to work with watercolor as every time you use it will give you various possibilities & eventually would make you feel calm & relax just by looking at it.

JAIPUR-THE PINK CITY

By: Nityashree Iyer, B. Des Lifestyle Accessory Design Sem II, UID



Our group picture during our Jaipur visit. Picture Courtesy: Nityashree Iyer

Planned by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya- chief architect and city planner, Jaipur holds the distinction of being the first planned city in India. Renowned globally for its colored gems, the capital city of Rajasthan combines the allure of its ancient history with all the advantages of a metropolis. The bustling modern city is one of the three corners of the golden triangle that includes Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur.



Amer fort's beauty - greenery amidst the bareness. Picture Courtesy: Nityashree Iyer

The story goes that in 1876, the Prince of Wales visited India on a tour. Since the color pink was symbolic of hospitality, Maharaja Ram Singh of Jaipur painted the entire city pink. This royal city was our destination for the trip of FD and LSA Sem 2 students. It was a five-day educational tour that covered various crafts and lots of fun during our Discover Design in India course.



Heavenly beauty of Amer. Picture Courtesy: Nityashree Iyer

These crafts were demonstrated to us during the day and we had the evenings to explore the city. We were taken to all the well-known architectural places including the Hawa Mahal, Jal Mahal, Nahargarh fort, Amer fort, City Place, and a few others as well. We learnt a lot about the historical significance of these beautiful monuments. The experiences in each of these places were different yet memorable. The first was peaceful and calm while the place added a royal feel. We also visited the famous bapu bazar for their shopping spree. Overall it was an extremely fun and beneficial trip for the students.



The gateway to the beauty of Amer. Picture Courtesy: Nityashree Iyer

Students were taken to the artisans of blue pottery, meenakari, lac-bangles, and bagru block printing to learn the crafts and observe various other detailed aspects of the crafts. They were divided into smaller groups to learn the craft with intricacy. They also made products related to each craft by themselves.

DISCOVER DESIGN INDIA- KUTCH

Tanmay Vartak & Rishi Panagaonkar, B. Des Automobile & Transportation Design Sem II, UID

We students of Automobile & Transportation Design and Interaction Design of Unitedworld Institute of Design (UID) of Karnavati University got a wonderful opportunity to visit Kutch and experience the art, craft, and culture of the people there.



Student group at Kutch. Picture Courtesy: Team ATD.

Kutch is a hidden treasure trove for countless crafts and a lost culture of the world is already aware of. For the same to happen, we as the future of this country were taken to our roots. Mr. Arun Soman Sir and Ms. Sweta Raj Ma'am were part of the course, Discover Design in India, to guide us and help us interact with people there. We were introduced to the rich culture, the numerous crafts, and the people as vibrant, as the desert is white. It was an amazing experience to see fabric spun, to witness the intricate art of embroidery, the soothing tones of the bell smiths, and the calming silence of the great Rann Of Kutch.

The rich culture Kutch holds in its roots and people having ancestral connections to the craft is unimaginable. The people of Kutch were the most down-to-earth and loyal to the crafts they engaged themselves in. We got educated by the artisans on how a piece of fabric is woven to how are intricate designs made on the fabric. The local people have started engaging themselves in a few art and crafts too.



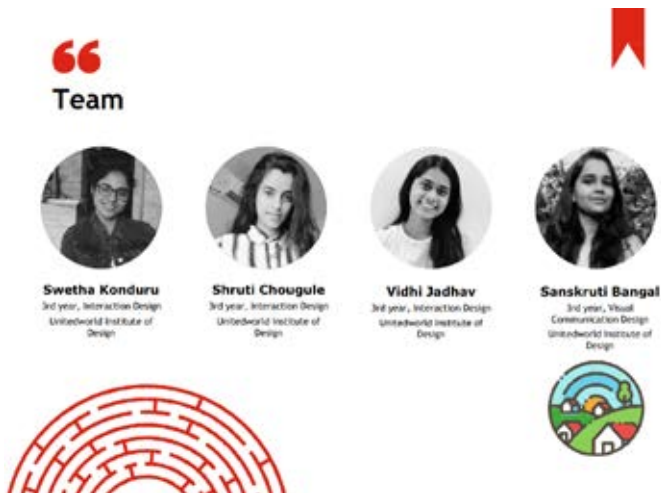
Through this visit to Kutch, we learned about the different types of crafts and cultures of people, but their talent is not known by many. Some organizations based in Kutch conduct workshops all-over the world to showcase the talent of the people of Kutch.

A Visual walk through of Kutch. Picture Courtesy: Team ATD.

UID'S PROJECT NAIYA WINS FIRST PRIZE AT DESIGN HACKATHON

By: Shruti Chougule & Vidhi Jadhav, B. Des Interaction Design Sem VI, UID

The Design Hackathon 2023 was organised by Doon University in partnership with Namami Gange, a government initiative and sponsored by Wacom in February 2023. Project Naiya, designed by a team of UID students won the first prize. Each student team member received a recognition certificate & a Wacom sketching tablet. The students competed against 88 other teams from across the country.

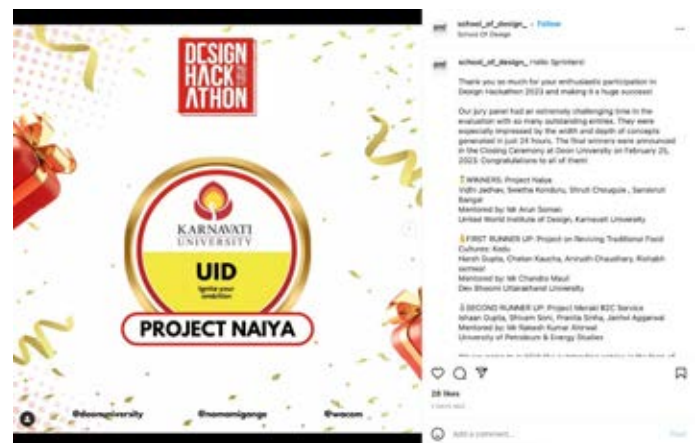


The winning team from UID.

The hackathon was a 24-hour non-stop event that challenged participants from different universities and colleges to come up with innovative solutions to real-world problems. The hackathon was an intense experience that tested creativity, problem-solving skills, and teamwork. Teams were required to work on their solution for 24 hours straight, which meant they went through sleepless nights and worked tirelessly to develop a solution that would address the challenges faced by people living in the Ganga River region.

The Ganga River region is a densely populated area in India that has been facing several economic and social challenges. The communities in this region have limited access to livelihood opportunities, and many struggle to make ends meet. Our team wanted to create a solution that would empower these communities by promoting entrepreneurship and generating livelihood opportunities. After brainstorming for several hours, we came up with the idea of creating a platform that would connect local artisans and entrepreneurs with potential customers. We called our platform 'Naiya' and it would allow these artisans to sell their products and services to a wider audience without the help of middlemen.

We worked tirelessly on our solution, and we went through several iterations to ensure that it was practical, innovative, and met the needs of the communities in the Ganga River region. We also conducted extensive online research on the



Winning announcement on social media.

challenges faced by these communities and how our solution could address these challenges. As we presented our solution to the judges, we could sense their enthusiasm and interest in our idea. They were impressed by our creativity, research, and practicality, and they appreciated the effort we had put into our solution. Winning the first prize in the Design Hackathon was a tremendous achievement for our team. It was a validation of our hard work, determination, and teamwork. It also reinforced our belief that technology and design thinking can be powerful tools for creating solutions that have a positive impact on society.

Participating in the hackathon was an unforgettable experience for us. It was a great opportunity to learn from other participants, share our ideas, and work together as a team towards a common goal. It also helped us build our skills in areas such as ideation, research, prototyping, and presentation.

In conclusion, winning the first prize in the Design Hackathon hosted by Doon University was a significant achievement for our team. We are proud to have represented UID, Karnavati University in the hackathon and to have made a positive impact on society through our solution. We hope to continue working together as a team and using our skills and creativity to create solutions that make a difference in people's lives.

STUDENTS EXPLORE THE CITY OF BHOPAL

By: Shraddha Vaidya, B. Des Global Design Programme Year 1, UID

On February 19, 2023, the first-year students of the Global Design Programme travelled to Bhopal. This excursion was a component of the Discover Design in India course, a seven-day course in which students participated in a variety of activities in Bhopal while learning about its architecture, way of life, history, and cuisine.

Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh, is referred to as the 'City of Lakes'. The city was established by Raja Bhoj, and it is one of the greenest in the nation. It includes numerous natural and man-made lakes. The old portion of the city is full of little alleyways and crowded markets, while the new part of the city is well-planned and full of parks and gardens, maintaining Bhopal's old-world charm despite industrialisation.

On the first day, the students made the choice to tour Upper Lake, one of Bhopal's largest lakes. It is located on the western side of Bhopal. It is a significant supply of drinking water for the city's inhabitants, providing over 30 million imperial gallons of water daily to almost 40% of the population

Over the next two days, the students separated into groups and were instructed to examine the various components of Bhopal's culture, architecture and lifestyle, noting any contrasts from their own. The students then travelled to Bhopal's old city to investigate the market places there. While there, they observed people's various eating habits, daily routines, and language distinctions. They also conducted interviews with a variety of people to learn more about them. Pupils received a lot of encouragement and interest in the same, which cultivated a sense of community. Students found hidden gem locations that passers-by would not go to while enjoying various delicacies in the market.





Students exploring the city of Bhopal. Picture Courtesy: Shraddha Vaidya.

The Moti masjid is one of the city's many architectural landmarks that the students also visited. The Moti Masjid is distinguished by dark red towers with golden spikes in addition to a white marble front and two cupolas and is a magnificent example of Bhopal's architectural legacy. Gohar Mahal also has load-bearing walls and a timber truss with slate roofing. The architecture is improved with courtyards, sprinklers, natural ventilation, and solar orientation. Shaukat Mahal stands out from the other buildings that make up Bhopal's architectural legacy. The structure explores a style of Indo-French architecture with a great blend of Renaissance and Gothic elements. The exterior is decorated with floral designs, jalis, and elaborate fan lights.

The intriguing cultural facility known as the Manav Sanghralay, referred to as the Museum of Man, is situated in Bhopal, India. The museum, which was

established in 1972, is devoted to presenting the rich cultural legacy of the nation, with a focus on India's indigenous tribes and villages. The museum offers a thorough look at the rich and diverse cultural legacy of this fascinating country, showcasing everything from tribal art and handicrafts to ancient antiquities and contemporary technologies. Next to the Museum of Man/Museum of Humanity, is where you'll find the Tribal Museum of Bhopal. Inside, there are six galleries that illustrate different facets of tribal life.

On top of a hill in Sanchi Town, sits Sanchi, a Buddhist complex noted for its Great Stupa. It is located 46 kilometres northeast of Bhopal. One of the earliest stone buildings in India and a significant piece of Indian architectural history is the Great Stupa at Sanchi. In the third century BCE, Ashoka the Great, the Mauryan monarch, ordered its construction.



Students at Sanchi. Picture Courtesy: Shraddha Vaidya.

A workshop on Bhil art was organised for the students by representatives of Studio Mantram, under the direction of Mr. Shubham Vishwakarma, to wrap up the excursion. The students were given an insight into Madhya Pradesh's traditional art form in addition to learning about bhil art in this programme.

Picture credits: Shraddha Vaidya



TARKASHI – THE CRAFT OF INLAY

By: Shreya Chakri, B. Des Product Design Sem II, UID



A Tarkashi product. Picture Courtesy: Shreya Chakri.

Rajasthan is the state of art and crafts in India. It acts as a cultural flux due to the influence of multiple styles from different states. The crafts have not only retained through the ages, but have also evolved. Blue pottery, ivory carving, woodcarving and hand block printing are just a few of the treasured items from the state of Rajasthan.

One such renowned and treasured craft is Tarkashi. The Tarkashi Inlay is a highly skilled art form that is more than 500 years old. As the name suggests, Tarkashi is the technique where thin strips of wire are engraved on the surface of the wood. Boxes, tables, and trays with brass or copper engraving work are a regular sight in the antique stores and gift shops in Jaipur.

The initial step in Tarkashi is sanding the wood. 'Gida' is used for small curves, while 'chunga' is a tool that helps with both straight lines and bigger curves. The carving of the wooden block is supported by these two tools. Once the carving is finished, small pieces of wire are inserted with a marker or ballpoint pen into the carved designs. The metal sheet of the 34 gauge is cut with metal scissors. The three metals used are copper, brass, and white metal, for which only sturdy wood is utilised. The two types of wood

used for Tarkashi are 'sheesham' and 'babool'. Hand labour is used in every step. Designs that are inlaid are represented by tracing or made by hand. Often, inlays have geometric or floral designs that are influenced by Mughal art. Tarkashi craft making includes products like door knobs, furniture, jewellery boxes, frames, and many more. Tarkashi as a craft has intricate detailing and requires undivided attention.

Though Tarkashi is a very well known, the artisan numbers have reduced gradually. Artisans do not favour continuing due to multiple reasons, one main reason being income. Artisans' income varies based on number of craft buyers, who have decreased gradually. This causes even the most skilled craftsmen to retire due to unavailability of resources to take care of themselves. This can make them demotivated to continue in the field and prefer to educate their children rather than continue the craft.

Jaipur is one of the only cities where crafts are still evidently seen, and hope for it to remain this way. Indian crafts are a representation of our culture and heritage and holds lot of value as it has been passed on from generations. Let us take initiative to help artisans and keep our heritage alive.



Tarkashi artisan at work. Picture Courtesy: Shreya Chakri.

THE DESERT AND ITS TRINKETS

By: Atharv Maheshwari, B. Des Animation & Digital Media Sem II, UID



Kutch, a district in the Indian state of Gujarat, is known for its rich cultural heritage, and handicrafts being kept alive for centuries that add a vibrance to the vast salt flats of once dried up ocean. The region is renowned for its exquisite embroidery work, mirror work, weaving, and pottery.

Ajrak block printing is one such example of handicraft. It is a beautiful and intricate form of textile printing that is steeped in tradition and history. The craft demands immense skill and patience, and the final products are a testament to the artistry of the artisans.



Ajrak block printing is a craft of hand-printing textiles that originated in the region of Sindh, which is now a part of Pakistan. It is a traditional form of textile printing, where a complex design is created by hand, using carved wooden blocks immersed in natural dyes. The craft is named after the Ajrak, a shawl or scarf made of block-printed cotton fabric, which is worn by men and women in the region.



The process is a long and arduous one, requiring immense skill and expertise. The entire process can take up to three weeks to complete. Ajrak block printing is not just a craft, but a way of life for the people of Sindh. The craft has been passed down from generation to generation, and many families in the region are involved in the production of Ajrak textiles.

Kutchi Bharat, also known as Kutch embroidery, is another form of craft, a traditional form of embroidery that originated in Kutch. This style of embroidery is characterized by its vibrant colors, intricate designs, and the use of mirrors and beads. The embroidery work is typically done on textiles like sarees, dupattas, and dress materials.

Kutchi Bharat embroidery is done by women from the local communities who have been practicing the craft for generations. The embroidery work is usually done by hand, using a variety of stitches like cross-stitch, chain stitch, and satin stitch. The designs used in Kutchi Bharat embroidery are inspired by nature, mythology, and everyday life. The embroidery work is further embellished with mirrors and beads to give it a sparkling effect.

The handicrafts of Kutch are a treasure trove of beauty and cultural heritage. The region's artisans have preserved and passed down these crafts from generation to generation, making them an integral part of the local lifestyle. The handicrafts serve as a source of income and a means to keep the local traditions and customs alive, with some artisans having spent decades in the pursuit of perfecting their craft and being the last of their creed, keeping these exquisite handicrafts from obscurity.



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