



भारतीय शिल्प संस्थान
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CRAFTS & DESIGN, JAIPUR

संगोष्ठी

Sangoshthi
2025

Book of Abstracts

2nd-4th November, 2025

5th Biennial International Conference on
**Recent Trends and Sustainability in
Crafts & Design**

Edited by :

Prof. (Dr.) Toolika Gupta
Dr. Rena Mehta & Dr. Bessie Cecil

Sangoshthi
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Chairperson's Message

It gives me immense pleasure to present the Book of Abstracts for the 5th Biennial International Conference on Recent Trends and Sustainability in Crafts & Design – SANGOSHITHI 2025, organized by the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design (IICD), Jaipur.

The theme of this year's conference "Kumbh and the Culture of Making" celebrates the essence of collective creativity, cultural confluence, and community spirit. Drawing inspiration from the grand cultural gathering of the Mahakumbh, it reminds us of the power of shared knowledge, collaboration, and the interdependence that defines the craft ecosystem. Craft has always been central to India's identity, shaping not only our economy but also our cultural and social fabric. As we move towards a sustainable and inclusive future, it becomes imperative to reimagine traditional practices through the lens of innovation, technology, and sustainability.

This conference aims to bridge these dimensions, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2030) and reaffirming IICD's commitment to nurturing responsible design practices. I am heartened to see enthusiastic participation from researchers, designers, practitioners, and academicians who continue to explore the evolving dialogues between craft, culture, and sustainability. Their contributions, documented in this volume, reflect the diversity of thought and the shared vision for preserving and advancing the craft sector.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the participants, keynote speakers, sponsors, and volunteers who have made this conference possible. Your contributions and commitment to sustainability in crafts and design are truly commendable. I am sure it will make this event a meaningful platform for exchange and collaboration. May this conference and the ideas it fosters inspire continued dialogue and innovation in the craft and design community.

I wish you all an engaging and enriching conference experience — one that brings insightful discussions, meaningful connections, and inspiring ideas to shape the future of crafts and design.

With all good wishes,

Smt. Madhu Neotia
Chairperson, IICD





Director's Message

It is now 2025, eight years since we began our first International Conference, Sangoshthi, in 2017. This year, as I write this note for the fifth edition of Sangoshthi, I am filled with a sense of achievement, which is no small feat! Like every alternate year, this year too we are hosting our Biennial International Conference on 'Recent Trends and Sustainability in Crafts & Design', at the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, Jaipur, from 2nd November to 4th November 2025.

As a podium befitting research associated with varied aspects of crafts, which include making, designing, sustainability, innovation, market opportunities, and future directions; this conference welcomes artisans, designers, craft researchers, practitioners, and scholars to come and share their views, or to come and listen to the views of those who have done primary research in these areas. It is planned as a three-day immersive exploration and dialogue within the broader knowledge systems of craft practice and sustainability. Our aim through the conference is to bring forward urgent conversations and exchange of ideas from across the world, from Australia to America, including France, Great Britain, and voices from India, to tether the social, cultural, and economic domain of crafts into a holistic amalgamation of perspectives.

Craft is an expression of community, heritage, histories, and a contemporary expression of change. Imbibing this perspective, IICD has strived to inculcate a grounding and, therefore, sustainable approach to design. It takes pride in engaging with Indigenous knowledge technique and skill development that engage with artisans and craftsperson at the grassroots level and empower a social dialogue amongst our students.

With this spirit, the conference is vested to bring voices from across the country and abroad, with discussions on topics ranging from Indigenous craft knowledge, vernacular architecture and heritage, circular economic production through sustainable design interventions, lost craft and oral traditions, and contemporary engagement with craft. This year, we have received an astounding submission of over 273 abstracts, following which 26 papers and 20 posters have been selected for presentation after a rigorous peer review of abstracts and final papers. Over the span of three days, the first day is dedicated to the Craft Award Ceremony and Student Awards, and the inauguration of the Craft Demonstration and Bazaar, including showcasing a film on crafts. The next two days have been divided into multiple sessions for the presentations and dialogue within the craft sector. Our keynote speakers, who are well-known names in the Craft sector, bring a wealth of expertise in the areas of design practice, craft revival, and academia. Their presence and insights shall help us engage with critical questions about the sustenance of craft.

In this day and age, at a time when climate change, sustainable growth, and economic development are the need of the hour, I hope this conference is able to engage in impactful conversations, build relationships amongst like-minded thinkers and practitioners. With collaborative efforts and mutual curiosity, we can certainly look forward to a positive impact within the craft sector and our fellow artisans.

With all good wishes,

Toolika Gupta

Director, IICD



Editor's Message

We are pleased to present the Book of Abstracts for the 5th Biennial Conference on “Recent Trends and Sustainability in Crafts & Design”, held at the Indian Institute of Crafts & Design, Jaipur, under the thematic focus “Kumbh.” The theme Kumbh—a vessel symbolizing creation, collectivity, and continuity—beautifully resonates with the essence of this conference. It reflects the convergence of ideas, disciplines, and practices that sustain our crafts and design traditions, while embracing innovation and responsibility toward the environment and society.

The abstracts compiled in this volume represent a wide range of perspectives that address the intersections of sustainability, craft practices, material exploration, cultural preservation, and design interventions. Each contribution echoes the broader vision of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2030), emphasizing inclusivity, responsible production, and the preservation of cultural and natural resources.

We believe this compilation will serve as a valuable reference for researchers, practitioners, and students, encouraging continued dialogue and collaboration toward a more sustainable and creative future.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all authors, reviewers, and organizers whose collective effort has shaped this scholarly exchange of ideas.

— **Editors**

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Chief Guest

Dr. Ritu Sethi is the editor of Global InCH Journal of Living Heritage (www.globalinch.org) while additionally overseeing the Asia InCH Encyclopaedia (www.asiainch.org). Ritu's research interests examine aspects of pre- and post-colonial histories of the arts, crafts and textiles, their contemporary continuities and interpretations in design, fashion, and the everyday. Her publications include, *Handmade for the 21st Century: Traditional Indian Textiles, Embroidering Futures – Repurposing the Kantha, Painters, Poets, Performers – The Patuas of Bengal, Designers Meet Artisans – A Practical Guide* (trans: Spanish/French), besides essays on cultural histories, creative industries, sustainability, and policy in international, and national publications.

She presently serves on committees in India, including the advisory board of the National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy, Government of India; Asia Society India – Arts and Culture; INTACH, Heritage Craft and Community Division; and others. In addition, she serves on committees in Japan, UK and Europe. Her most recent assignments being on the editorial board of UNESCO's State of the Education Report, with a focus on Culture and Arts Education, and representing India as an expert on Craft, Culture and Creative Industries at the G-20 meetings in South Africa. She is the founder-trustee of Craft Revival Trust, India.



Guest of Honour

Dr. Kevin Murray is the editor of Garland Magazine. He is also Vice-President of World Crafts Council - International, coordinating editor of the Online Encyclopedia of Crafts in the Asia Pacific Region and the Encyclopedia of Crafts in Latin America (the next volume about African crafts is in development). He is co-founder of the Knowledge House for Craft, Senior Industry Fellow at RMIT University, and International Adviser for the Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2023.

From 2000-2007, he was the Director of Craft Victoria where he developed the Scarf Festival and the South Project, a four-year program of exchange involving Melbourne, Wellington, Santiago and Johannesburg.

He has curated many exhibitions, including *Symmetry: Crafts Meet Kindred Trades and Professions*, *Water Medicine: Precious Works for an Arid Continent*, and *Seven Sisters: Fibre Works from the West*. His books include, *Craft Unbound: Make the Common Precious* (Thames & Hudson, 2005,) and with Damian Skinner, *Place and Adornment: A History of Contemporary Jewellery in Australia and New Zealand* (Bateman, 2014).





Keynote Speakers & Resource Persons



Dr. Ritu Sethi

(Keynote Speaker)

She is the editor of Global InCH Journal of Living Heritage (www.globalinch.org) while additionally overseeing the Asia InCH Encyclopaedia (www.asiainch.org). Ritu's research interests examine aspects of pre- and post-colonial histories of the arts, crafts and textiles, their contemporary continuities and interpretations in design, fashion, and the everyday. Her publications include, *Handmade for the 21st Century: Traditional Indian Textiles, Embroidering Futures - Repurposing the Kantha, Painters, Poets, Performers - The Patuas of Bengal, Designers Meet Artisans - A Practical Guide* (trans: Spanish/French), besides essays on cultural histories, creative industries, sustainability, and policy in international, and national publications.

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Title: The Absent Archive - Writing Craft and the Historiography of Making in India

The Absent Archive: Writing Craft and the Historiography of Making in India explores the long-overlooked intellectual history of India's craft traditions, and the complex processes by which they have been represented, classified, and institutionalized. While India's artisanal practices constitute some of the most enduring systems of making in the world, the historiography of these traditions has remained fragmentary. This talk argues that this absence is not merely a lacuna, but a reflection of knowledge hierarchies that privileged monumental art and architecture over the lived practices of craft communities.

The talk traces this history through successive frameworks. It begins briefly with the pre-colonial and further on to the colonial period that introduced new regimes of documentation and display that redefined craft as economic specimens and ethnographic objects. The Nationalist movement that reclaimed craft as the moral and aesthetic foundation of *Swaraj*, transforming handwork into symbol and pedagogy to the post-Independence decades that repositioned craft as both heritage and development, embedding it within planning, policy, and design education.

The talk concludes by proposes a new historiography grounded in material evidence, practitioner narratives, histories of institutions, of interventions, and of design.

- Dr. Ritu Sethi





Dr. Kevin Murray

(Keynote Speaker)

He is the editor of Garland Magazine. He is also Vice-President of World Crafts Council – International, coordinating editor of the Online Encyclopedia of Crafts in the Asia Pacific Region and the Encyclopedia of Crafts in Latin America (the next volume about African crafts is in development). He is co-founder of the Knowledge House for Craft, Senior Industry Fellow at RMIT University, and International Adviser for the Cheongju International Craft Biennale 2023.

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Title: The Storied Object Today - Why We Need Handmade Objects as Homes for Shared Meaning

Stories are the thread that link lives across generations. In the modern world, it is assumed that books are the natural homes for these stories. But apart from spines on a shelf, books have little presence in our everyday lives. Also, we are reading fewer books as their content is now being processed through AI Large-Language Models. This has an upside. It promises a return to the object as a home for stories. I will provide a number of examples of craftspersons across the world who are making objects that can help bring stories into our everyday life.

- Dr. Kevin Murray





Dr. Francesco Mazzarella

(Keynote Speaker)

He is a design researcher, educator, and activist, striving to plant seeds of hope and change, especially working with marginalised communities. He is Reader in Design for Social Change at the London College of Fashion, UAL. His work at the Centre for Sustainable Fashion (CSF) aims at exploring ways in which design activism can be used to create counter-narratives towards sustainability, in and through fashion. Francesco's research spans the fields of design activism, textile craftsmanship, decolonising fashion, design for sustainability, social innovation, and place-making.

Francesco is a member of the Design Council Expert Network, Fellow of Advance HE, co-founder of the DESIS Cluster *Design from the Margins*, and of the Cumulus Working Group *Design Education for Social Change*. He has experience in design research, education, and practice in the UK, Italy, the Netherlands, Hungary, Brazil, South Africa, Vietnam, and Australia. Francesco's work has been presented at international conferences and published in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings.



Title: Crafting Cultural Sustainability - Ethical Designer-Artisan Collaborations in Postcolonial Contexts

In this keynote, Dr. Francesco Mazzearella (Reader in Design for Social Change at London College of Fashion, UAL) will share insights from his work on fashion and design for cultural sustainability, and social change. He will discuss the emotional labour involved in initiating and sustaining collaborations between designers and artisans, foregrounding the ethics of care, and the importance of researcher self-care in facilitating transformational change. Drawing on case studies with diverse communities in the UK, South Africa, Vietnam, and Australia, he will unpack the challenges and opportunities that designers and artisans face when navigating postcolonial contexts. By highlighting the cultural sensitivity required to enable processes of change, and presenting a range of adaptable methods for designers, Dr Mazzearella will point to ways of decolonising dominant design practice. Ultimately, this keynote will outline pathways towards a fashion system that respects and integrates Indigenous knowledges while contributing to more equitable, diverse, inclusive, and sustainable futures.

- Dr. Francesco Mazzearella





Isabelle Moulin

(Keynote Speaker)

She is a consultant in contemporary valorization of textile heritage. Her initial training in Haute-Couture consolidated with Lolita Lempicka and Lanvin has gradually turned towards research and museography: an approach that closely combines heritage and contemporary expressions which has now been deployed through exhibitions, editions of books and limited series, educational programs along the Silk Road. All these achievements have earned her the title of *Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters* in 2017. She is also a stage designer for Esmod Lyon/Paris and the Martinière-Diderot School of Textile Design, lecturer and contributor to the Académie des savoir-faire/Hermès Foundation.



Title: Silky Yours

Since 2016, through my missions and my editions, I have been cultivating the Silky link existing between India and France, and more particularly with Lyon, capital of European silk. These reciprocal inspirations have been expressed for centuries in our respective imaginations, and today, find a new breath in the contemporary re-interpretations of our traditional know-how. This desire to combine the past with the future together, but also to hybridize the different cultures encountered during my missions along the Silk Road, constitutes the foundation of my research. Moreover, sustainability has so strongly returned to the taste of the day and for good reason. It is an integral part of the *Textilian DNA* map, it is as old as the world in our sector here as elsewhere, in India as in France. Know-how is the vigilant guardian of these *Nothing is lost, everything is recovered, everything is transformed, Doing, undoing and redoing, it's always doing*, that we have been combining since the night of times, and that today it is a matter of responding to the questions posed by the economic, climatic, and societal changes that we are all going through. Currently in residency at Kaithoon, I am experimenting with these lines of thought in close collaboration with the wonderful weavers of this village in Rajasthan, and I will deliver therefore live, the first results of this research laboratory during my intervention.

- Isabelle Moulin





M.J. Levy Dickson

(Keynote Speaker)

The dynamic artistry of M.J. Levy Dickson is inspired by the beauty she experiences every day. She is an artist and educator, who has created an extensive body of work spanning oil paints, acrylics, watercolor, charcoal, pencil, pen and ink, glass, and repurposed materials. M.J.'s abstract interpretation of nature in her work allows the viewer to see the world in an entirely different way. Her creativity is the art of the possible, the fusion of harmonious elements with variations of light and shadow, colorful accents, and shapes revealed in interesting and thought provoking ways. MJ has taught at MIT, set up the art studio in the graphic design department at Wenzhou-Kean University in China, NISDA, and teaches in the Studio One Program of Fountain House in New York, an organization for people with mental illness. She is currently working on a project in India on a Fulbright Scholarship. She explores global interconnectedness, and has discovered a deep affinity with the natural world. She was the first Artist-in-Residence at the Perkins School for the Blind, where she expanded on her theories for making art accessible to populations that perceive it in different ways. She has done residencies in Tangier, and at The Farm in Jaipur. Her work finds, records, and is inspired by the similarities of all global cultures, and she celebrates the differences.



Title: Wildflowers and Plants Bring People Together

Wildflowers and plants unite people of different cultures. I will illustrate how people can be brought together through nature and art. Indian woodblock printed textiles have universal appeal. My project begins at a Woodblock Printing Studio in Jaipur, where I will catalogue design motifs in their collection, identifying each plant species and where it grows. The resulting catalogue will be available in print and online. Then, using my research, I will work with artists in India to create sculptures inspired by wildflowers using re-purposed materials. My researched catalogue and my art, will identify globally used patterns and designs, showing the power of nature to unite all people.

- M.J. Levy Dickson





Vijaya Krishnappa

(Keynote Speaker)

He is a co-founder of KOSHA.ai, a deep-tech start-up working traceability, circularity in crafts and textile sector. He holds a background in both engineering and Management degree's from XLRI, Jamshedpur India and has over 16 years of experience in the fashion sector, and management consulting. Before starting KOSHA.ai, Vijaya was working in consulting sector with Technopak a retail consulting firm and IMaCS (Part of Moody's investor service, India/ICRA). He has advised several corporates from India and other geographies on business strategy and planning, market assessment, and market entry strategy. In addition to corporate clients, Vijaya has advised government organizations and industry bodies on policy advisory, implementation, and impact assessment. Beyond his professional life, he is a barefoot marathoner and a practitioner of minimalism. Vijaya has conducted workshops/guest lectures organized by IIM Bangalore (NSRCEL), Deshpande Start-ups, Radboud University(Netherlands), TEXPROCIL, CCAMP, Jain University, and AICTE among others, covering areas of entrepreneurship and technology.



Banhi Jha

(Session Chair)

After graduating, *Summa Cum Laude* in Fashion Design from Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, she has conducted research on the global fashion retail sector under a UNDP grant, and holds a PhD in Education. She has over three decades of teaching experience at National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi, where she served as Dean Academics, Chair of the Fashion Design department, the first Head – Publication, and Editor-in-chief of the NIFT Journal of Fashion. She has conducted Training for Trainers workshops, and Masterclasses in the areas of fashion studies, sustainability practices in the apparel industry and crafts sector, and fashion education for NIFT and CBSE. She has been consultant to several government projects on design of uniforms and prototype development. She has presented research papers at national and international conferences, contributed to trade magazines, peer-reviewed journals, and has book chapters to her credit. She has written and edited textbooks on *Certificate in Fashion Design* (CFDE) and *Diploma in Fashion Design and Retail* (DFDR) for SOVET, IGNOU. She continues to serve on committees on curriculum development for fashion education.



Lokesh Ghai

(Resource Person)

He is a researcher and design educator working with traditional craft practices and communities. Lokesh received research awards from the Victoria & Albert Museum in London and the Indian Foundation for the Arts in Bengaluru. As an associate curator and artist, he presented the India Street exhibition in Scotland, a runner-up for the Most Sustainable Design Practice award. Currently, he is pursuing a PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University, on a prestigious fellowship by the NWCDTP, and co-editing a book on printing crafts. He has been given the title of a *song catcher* for his strong connection with craft communities and contribution to the international Garland platform.



Jaymin Modi

(Resource Person)

He is a filmmaker based out of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. He primarily works in the Gujarati film industry. He learned film-making at the National Institute at Design (NID), Ahmedabad, which grants him a unique ability to see film-making as a design process. He helms multiple departments while working on a film. According to him, it brings a synergy between various processes that results in a unified, seamless film.

Abstracts

1. Threads of Resistance and Revival: Through the Lens of Women Artists in India

The proposed research explores the reinventions of textile, and embroidery craft traditions in contemporary art practices in India, focusing on how contemporary women artists reclaim and reinterpret these forgotten practices as both visual and conceptual tools. It examines how craft traditions act as catalysts and voices for social, cultural, and personal change. The study investigates how women artists challenge traditional hierarchies of art and craft by elevating and contemporizing traditional methods to address issues of gender, caste, politics, and cultural identity through forms, materials, threads, and weaves. Yet, whether the essence of these crafts is lost or revived in this process remains an area of contemplation. Through case studies of selected women artists such as Afrah Shafiq, Varunika Saraf, Mayuri Chari, and community-based practitioners like Anitha N. and Sriparna Dutta, the research explores how they revisit and redefine traditional techniques, merging them with modern aesthetics, to create narratives that resonate with contemporary audiences. These practices emerge as acts of resistance, and reclamation of lost histories and traditions, underscoring the vital contribution of Indian women artists to cultural discourse. The study also incorporates surveys and interviews with emerging artists, employing traditional methods, focusing on sustainability and heritage, and exploring how adaptations of craft traditions function as metaphors and mediums, within visual and multidisciplinary art practices.

Keywords: Community, Embroidery, Gender, Practice, Resistance, Revival, Textile



Author: Manashri Pai Dukle is an Artist, Art Historian and an Art Educator based in Goa, she is the founder of The Art DocuMentor Project, and is currently a Research Scholar at SNTD Women's University, Mumbai.

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2. Buddhism and The Economy of Craft: Monastic Patronage and the Artisanal Industry

Buddhist monasteries were not only spiritual centres, but also patrons of crafts. They commissioned artisans to make sculptures, manuscripts, and textiles that sustained local artisan communities. Despite much literature being available on Buddhist art, very few treat the economic impact of monasteries on craft production. This research fills that vacuum by focusing on the landscape of monastic patronage and how it shaped trade networks such as the Silk Road and the Indian Ocean pathways, thereby providing lifeblood to Buddhist material culture. The research goes into some details of inscriptions, literary sources, and archaeological evidence from places such as Nalanda and Ajanta, demonstrating that monasteries are economic agents fostering artisan livelihoods. The findings reveal that monasteries stood not only as patrons, but also as a step further into their impact on ethical trade practices, ethical labour relations, and the transmission of artistic traditions throughout Asia. The study bridges religious and economic history, positioning Buddhist institutions as active economic agents. It also provides background information deeply relevant to heritage conservation and craft revival, emphasizing how lessons from historical patronage could rejuvenate sustainable methods for supporting artisans today.

Keywords: Monastic Patronage, Artisanal Industry, Craft Economy, Buddhist Monasteries, Trade Networks



Author: Himanshu Pandey is pursuing his Master's in History at Pondicherry University, focusing on trade, culture, and religion in early medieval Kashmir. After earning his Bachelor's degree in History from Delhi University, and interning at the French Institute of Pondicherry, he aims to further his studies with a PhD in cross-cultural historical research.

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3. Adornment and Identity: Traditional Practices and Symbolism in Apatani Tribal Jewellery

Arunachal Pradesh, located in Northeast India, is known for its diverse communities of Indigenous peoples, each having different distinctive cultural identities. The *Apatani* tribe has a specific practice of wearing jewellery that carries significant cultural, and spiritual meaning. This study explores the conventional order of wearing these ornaments, underlining their symbolic significance, and the specific manner of their placement. Studies on *Apatani* jewellery provide differing perspectives on their origin some suggest that these ornaments were historically sourced from Tibet, while others highlight their connection to folklores passed down through generations. With no current production of these traditional adornments, their cultural significance is preserved primarily through oral traditions, and historical accounts. With no active production of these traditional adornments today, their cultural significance is preserved primarily through oral traditions, and historical documentation. These narratives provide valuable insights into the spiritual and social roles of these ornaments. With an ethnographic approach, the study was conducted among the tribal women of the *Apatani* community in Ziro Valley, Lower Subansiri District, Arunachal Pradesh, India, focusing on their traditional jewellery practices. Ziro was selected as the study location, as it is the Indigenous homeland of the *Apatani* tribe, where they are primarily concentrated. Data was collected through in-depth focus group discussions and photo-ethnography. The study aims to connect oral traditions with academic discourse, providing a thorough understanding of *Apatani* jewellery practices. The findings contribute to the broader study of Indigenous adornment systems, emphasizing the need to preserve traditional knowledge in the face of cultural change.

Keywords: Apatani, Tribal Jewellery, Cultural Symbolism, Traditional Adornment, Beaded Jewellery, Glass Jewellery, Arunachal Pradesh



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4. Indo-Jewish Embroidery: Analysis of A Dying Craft

Indo-Jewish embroidery is a distinctive style of embroidery, unique to the Cochin Jews, the oldest Jewish community in India. The craft reflects the distinctive amalgamation of orthodox Jewish, and bustling Kerala culture. The embroidery, which is native to a relatively small cluster in Kerala, shares similarities with numerous other embroidery styles worldwide, such as *Golabetoon*, *Zari-Zardosi*, and *Oya*.

This paper aims to document the traditional practices and designs of the Indo-Jewish embroidery with an emphasis on analyzing the influence of Cochin-Jewish heritage on its evolution. Secondary data from various articles and documentaries have been compiled and contrasted with primary data from locals, and Mr. Taha Ibrahim, the only artisan from Cochin, still working with authentic Jewish embroidery. The findings have been reviewed to create a reliable handbook of sorts detailing the various motifs, techniques, cultural significance, and existing products of the Indo-Jewish embroidery. The study offers a fresh perspective on how Indo-Jewish embroidery holds the story of not just the community itself, but also colonial India, and highlights why the craft needs to be preserved without losing its essence.

Keywords: Cochin Jews, Heritage, History, Embroidery Handbook, Stitch Types



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5. Musealization of *Ravana Chhaya* Shadow Puppetry of the *Bhatta* Community, Odisha; Museums Reviving Community Visual Narration and Preservation of the Hide Puppets

Museums today have transformed from being mere custodians of artefacts to becoming cultural spaces that exhibit and interpret the cultural heritage of society. A museum conserves, preserves, researches, interprets, exhibits, and educates about a community's cultural heritage. A community is generally defined as a large group of people residing in a particular geographical location for generations, sharing the same cultural heritage and practices. This paper presentation focuses on a field visit, craft documentation, and musealization of the shadow puppetry art form called *Ravana Chhaya*, practiced by the *Bhatta* community residing in rural parts of the state of Odisha. *Ravana Chhaya* is a storytelling art that uses leather or hide



puppets in front of a light source to create shadows that narrate stories. The narration style is ballad singing, accompanied by Indigenous musical instruments. The Bhattas who could sing or play musical instruments would organize Ravana Chhaya shows during festivals such as Durga Puja, Ram Navami, Janmashthami, and Deepavali. The number of puppeteers practicing this art form is declining every year; currently, *Ravana Chhaya* is performed by only 11 puppeteers. The paper presentation showcases the documentation of the craft, including musical instruments, puppet styles, narration style, reproduction of museum infographic panels, educational activities, preventive conservation of hide puppets, creation of social media handles for public awareness, and digital registration and scheduling forums to streamline the work of puppeteers. The researcher also presents work on designing museum souvenirs to generate sustainable livelihoods for the puppeteers, and supporting them during lean periods.

Keywords: Storytelling, Community Museum, Participation, Sustainability, Visual Narration, Informal Learning



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6. ***Parali* and Sustainable Craft Practices: Transforming Agricultural Waste into Eco-friendly Artisanal Solutions**

The burning of *Parali* (crop residue) is a major environmental issue in India, contributing significantly to air pollution, and ecological degradation. India generates approximately 500 million tonnes of crop residues annually, with 140 million tonnes remaining as surplus; of this, 92 million tonnes are burned each year, particularly in Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, intensifying environmental challenges. This paper



explores how traditional craft practices can provide a sustainable solution by repurposing *Parali* into eco-friendly artisanal products, aligning with principles of responsible consumption and production. Drawing on the Roots Foundations Project Parali in Jind, Haryana, an ongoing initiative focused on utilising crop residue for craft production, and supported by empirical data, the study examines innovative applications such as handmade paper, biodegradable packaging, woven mats, and basketry, employing traditional techniques like braiding, plaiting, and hand weaving. These practices demonstrate *Parali's* potential as a viable alternative raw material, promoting waste reduction, resource efficiency, and circular economy models, while addressing environmental and socio-economic concerns. The study further highlights eco-conscious design interventions, skill-building initiatives, and market access in fostering sustainable livelihoods for rural artisans. It identifies barriers to scaling, including material processing challenges, policy gaps, and limited consumer awareness, and proposes strategic collaborations to overcome them. Positioning *Parali* as a regenerative material, the paper advocates low-carbon craft economies, bridging artisanal heritage, ecological responsibility, and material innovation.

Keywords: Parali Repurposing, Sustainable Craft Practices, Circular Economy, Eco-conscious Design, Low-Carbon Livelihoods



Author: Ridhima Bahuguna, co-founder of Roots Foundation and Senior Advisor at Farlense Group, is a design and development specialist with 15+ years of experience. A NIFT and Central Saint Martins alumna, she blends grassroots empathy with business leadership, championing sustainable, artisan-driven models across development, design, and market ecosystems in India.

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Co-Author 1: Prashasti Yadav is a strategic communication, and branding professional with 4+ years of experience in the development sector. Skilled in crafting 360 degree communication strategies, stallholders engagement, and impact storytelling, she brings a nuanced understanding of measurable impact across NGOs, corporates, and industry association simplifying voices from the margins through strategic, empathetic narratives.



Co-Author 2: Nehal Rajvanshi is an independent content strategist, and writer with a deep interest in Indian art, history, and heritage. She has researched and written about traditional Indian crafts, monuments, and art. Nehal holds a Master's degree in Ancient Indian Culture, History, and Archaeology from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai.

7. From Divine Clay to Synthetic Decay: The Divine Art of Idol-Making

The Durga Puja festival of Bengal has evolved from a religious observance into a vibrant celebration of creativity, drawing artists—especially from art colleges—to conceptualize elaborate pandals and idols. The festival showcases diverse craft practices, from award-winning displays and public installations to large-scale art productions, uniting thousands across communities and faiths. Traditionally, the *Mritshilpis* (potter community) of Kumartuli craft idols using natural, biodegradable materials such as clay, straw, bamboo, and wood. These sustainable practices ensure minimal environmental impact, as the idols disintegrate naturally upon immersion, and materials like bamboo and wood are recycled, allowing for perennial recreation.

However, contemporary market pressures have led to the gradual replacement of traditional *Ekchala* idols. While traditional materials are eco-friendly, the increasing use of non-biodegradable materials like polystyrene and fiberglass in modern idols poses significant environmental challenges. These non-biodegradable materials pose serious environmental risks, including water pollution, ecosystem disruption, and increased carbon footprints due to energy-intensive production and disposal.

This paper examines Durga Puja as Kolkata's largest public art event, exploring the fluid boundaries between art, artist, and craft. Drawing on ethnographic field-notes, mapping, and visual documentation, it highlights the sustainability of traditional craft practices and

advocates for policies that protect cultural heritage while fostering an environmentally responsible, and cohesive festival experience.

Keywords: Durga Puja, Mritshilpis, Climate Resilience, Sustainability, Public Art, Craft Practices, Cultural Heritage



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8. ***Katkhuni* Architecture: A Climate Resilient Vernacular Practice for Sustainable Built Environments**

Traditional architectural practices, honed over centuries of environmental adaptation, provide critical insights for climate-resilient, and low-carbon construction. *Katkhuni* (or *Kath-Kuni*) architecture, an Indigenous Himalayan technique, exemplifies sustainable, earthquake-resistant, and thermally efficient design, making it highly relevant to contemporary climate action strategies. By minimising embodied energy, using renewable materials, and reducing reliance on high-carbon construction, *Katkhuni* aligns with global climate mitigation goals. This study examines *Katkhuni* as a climate-responsive alternative to energy-intensive modern construction. It highlights its thermal regulation properties, where wood and dry masonry offer natural insulation, reducing dependence on artificial heating, and cooling. The research also considers carbon sequestration potential, noting that sustainably harvested deodar timber contributes to carbon capture while preserving biodiversity. Its seismic resilience and longevity, further reduce disaster-related reconstruction emissions. Despite these advantages, *Katkhuni* is in



decline due to policy gaps, urbanisation, and the spread of concrete structures. This paper assesses barriers to adoption, including land-use changes, deforestation, and regulatory challenges, and explores adaptive conservation models integrating GIS mapping, parametric analysis, and digital documentation. Using a mixed-methods design—life-cycle assessment, thermal analysis, and stakeholder interviews—the study positions Katkhuni as a nature-based solution for climate mitigation, contributing to sustainable architecture, and policy frameworks that support vernacular resilience.

Keywords: Climate-Resilient, Architecture, Vernacular Building Techniques, Low-Carbon Construction, Traditional Knowledge



Author: Kriti Srivastava is an educator, researcher, and editor working at the intersection of craft, culture, and sustainability. She has lead the postgraduate program in Fashion Management at NIFT Kangra, where she mentors students on innovation, entrepreneurship, and social impact.

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9. Disrupting Tradition, Embracing Modernity: A Qualitative Study Tracing the Journey of Venkatagiri Sarees in Popular Culture

Handicrafts and handlooms have been the hallmark of human civilization. They have also played a vital role in making the craft communities self-sufficient and giving them their identities. Venkatagiri saree is a traditional handloom weave from Andhra Pradesh, India. These sarees have experienced a change in their raw material, and weaving technique and hence their visual identity has also been transformed while adjusting to contemporary needs. This paper attempts to explore the history of the sarees, analyzing its development from a provincial craft worn by royalty to a widely accepted representation of contemporary fashion and cultural heritage. The study was rooted in ethnography, and utilized qualitative methods for data collection. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. The research is aimed



at understanding how processes of globalization, mechanization, and changing dynamics of consumer interest have impacted conventional weaving practices. Apart from analyzing these socio-economic forces, the paper also explores the influence of modern design trends, material innovations, and the increasing focus on sustainability in fashion. This study main motive is to preserve the cultural integrity and authenticity of Venkatagiri craft while adapting to contemporary demands in contemporary markets. With the integration of traditional practices, market research, and sustainable handloom conservation, this research recognizes how the preservation of Venkatagiri sarees maintains the cultural heritage and the livelihoods of artisans. It looks into market-driven innovations that maintain traditional methods, allowing weavers to carry out their work without higher education or substantial capital, ensuring a secure future for this age-old tradition. The study aimed to bridge the gap between the specific needs of the artisan, owing to their peculiar socio-cultural conditions, and the government policies.

Keywords: Artisan empowerment, Cultural heritage, Skill development, Sustainability, Qualitative study, Venkatagiri Sarees



Author: Dr. Meeta Siddhu, Principal of Army Institute of Fashion Design, brings over 25 years of experience in research, mentoring, and design practice. A contributor to NCERT Vocational Courses, she specializes in teacher and women artisan training. Her research spans design education, sustainability, Indian textiles, handicrafts, handlooms, and design thinking. She has published several research papers and book chapters in reputed international and national journals.

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Co-Author 1: Padmasree Konduru Laasya has just completed her second year in Fashion Design at Symbiosis Institute Of Design. Her design practice is centred on creating innovative yet meaningful fashion that blend tradition with functionality. Through the Venkatagiri saree research project, she aims to explore new applications for handwoven textiles that can extend the life and market of the craft.



Co-Author 2: Samskruthi Mucherla is a second-year Fashion Design student at Symbiosis Institute Of Design, with a keen interest in the cultural, and historical contexts of Indian textiles. Her academic journey is deeply rooted in exploring traditional crafts and their evolution in modern times.



Co-Author 3: Ciya Treasa Tony is an undergraduate student currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Fashion Design at Symbiosis Institute of Design, having just completed her second year. With a growing interest in Indian textiles and sustainable design practices, she is currently engaged in a craft-based research project focused on Venkatagiri sarees.



Co-Author 4: Aiswarya Biju is a second-year Fashion Design student at Symbiosis Institute Of Design, who is passionate about visual storytelling and communication within craft-based narratives. With a growing interest in branding and fashion communication, her contribution to the Venkatagiri saree research project focuses on capturing the essence of the craft through photography, layout design, and curated narratives.

10. A Woven Story

In this fast-paced life, we adults have lost our connection with the idea of playfulness. Yet, our souls continue to long for those mysterious activities that evoke a sense of nostalgia. Taking this into consideration, A Woven Story, was designed as a 100-foot-long interactive tunnel. The weavers of Limbdi, Gujarat, are skilled in crafting Patola sarees. Using leftover fabric provided by local residents, they also create

doormats and *durries* (carpets). With this *kala* (skill + innovation) of weaving, and an approach rooted in sustainable living, a collaborative platform was developed between the designer, and the artisan. This creation served as a bridge connecting urban life's issues with the artisans' traditional skills. According to data collected from online sources, India generates about 62 million tonnes of solid waste each year, of which 31 million tonnes (50%) are dumped in landfill sites. Of the total, 41% is organic or biodegradable waste, while textiles constitute 4% of the 59% non-biodegradable portion. This interactive installation was part of the Abhivyakti Art Festival in 2018. With the help of these artisans, a 100' x 6' tunnel was designed using leftover vibrant fabrics. The span, enclosed space, colors, and elasticity of the fabric were key features enjoyed by both children and adults. The idea was to spark curiosity among viewers—demonstrating how everyday materials can create a temporary structure that allows people to express themselves within, and through it.

Keywords : Indian Craftsmen, Kala, Narratives, Sustainability, Textile Craft



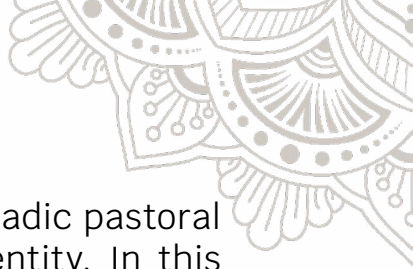
Author: Pallavi Jain is an architect with a Master's in Visual Arts, and has been teaching at Anant National University. She believes that the true essence of human experience is revealed through the materials we interact with, reflecting stories of identity, culture, and purpose.

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11. Weaving Narratives of the *Gaddi* Tribes: An Initiative in Preservation by Yoshita Crafts Studio

The rhythmic sounds of the shuttle and foot pedal of the loom in the sun filled studio witnesses the birth of another beautiful *Pattu* in the dramatic black and white check weave; this is woven by Sulochana, who is a senior weaver of the Yoshita Crafts Studio. Sulochana belongs to the *Gaddi* tribe of the Kangra region of Himachal Pradesh. The *Gaddi*





people practice natural wool weaving supported by a nomadic pastoral life. Their weaving is an integral component of their identity. In this paper, we study this form of sustainable weaving craft through the perspective of Yoshita Crafts Studio, a handloom and craft initiative in traditional weaving practices of Himachal Pradesh. The study will focus upon the current state of the *Gaddi* weaving practices, in relation to how this studio is attempting to keep the organic process of wool weaving in practice while at the same time, injecting fresh design ideas to revitalize the design language. This enterprise, also has a commitment towards investing in the local *Gaddi* women weavers, thereby, providing them with a valuable platform to express their skill-based knowledge in a contemporary format. Another focal point of the paper is to study how successful such inclusion of the women stakeholders of a community can be in preserving the social narrative within a skill-based life practice. Further, the state of the craft has been evaluated, comparative to contemporary weaves and the various threats natural handloom weaving is facing, and the support the studio is providing towards mitigating these threats by creating a practice around this craft.

Keywords: Weaving, Craft enterprise, Gaddi Women, Kangra, Indigenous Knowledge



Author: Madhabi Katoch, art historian and NIFT Kangra faculty, blends 25+ years of academic and grassroots experience. With degrees in Fine Arts and Art History, she explores traditional practices through teaching, research, and travel. Her academic contributions include papers on the Gaddi tribe, narrative art, and Kangra miniature painting, as well as a book on sculptor Lt. Ramesh Bishta's works.

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Co-Author 1: Aavani Pandya is the founder and creative head of Yoshita Crafts Studio in Himachal Pradesh, blending traditional Himachali textiles with contemporary design. A former corporate professional, she now empowers rural women through handloom and sustainable practices. Her work promotes local wool, ethical production, and cultural preservation, while fostering rural livelihoods and craft awareness.



Co-Author 2 : Advitiyaa Katoch is a Bachelor of Arts graduate in Anthropology and Sociology from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). She has interned at Yoshita Crafts Studio, and assisted Aavani Pandya at Bharat Tex 2024. Her academic interests lie at the intersection of social cultures, human behaviour, and the interdisciplinary applications of anthropological knowledge.

12. Bridging the Gap: How Rehwa Society Transforms the Lives of Maheshwar's Weavers Compared to Local Vendors

The paper explores the effects of Rehwa Society, a weavers' empowering organization based in Maheshwar, and its economic activities of local handloom weavers. It examines the organizational assistance provided to Rehwa Society, and contrasts it with the working conditions of weavers dealing with local vendors (independent dealers). The study addresses income generation, job security, working environment, career growth and market participation. The research focuses on the role of Rehwa Society, and collective organizations in the preservation of traditional crafts, showing how these organizations transform economic development into social development of the weavers. Moreover, the paper studies the role of craft conservation, and sociological marketing in the sustainable development of the handloom industry in Maheshwar. The results indicate that weavers under Rehwa Society work in better economic and social security conditions than those they depend on local vendors. This research provides evidence on the importance of organized support systems for development, and sustainability of rural weaving communities.

Keywords: Rehwa Society, Maheshwar Weavers, Handloom Industry, Weaver Empowerment, Craft Preservation



Author: Swati Vishwakarma is a PhD scholar in Fashion Design, researching gender and craft in India. Her current work, Bridging the Gap, explores how Rehwa Society transforms the lives of Maheshwara's weavers compared to local vendors, highlighting issues of empowerment, fair wages, and sustainable community development through traditional handloom practices.

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13. **Harnessing Traditional Craft as a Tool for Experiential Learning**

Craft, traditionally seen as a form of artistic expression, has increasingly become recognized as a powerful tool for experimental learning. This paper explores the potential of craft as a dynamic medium for fostering creativity, critical thinking, and hands-on problem-solving in educational contexts. Through the integration of diverse craft techniques of textile arts, learners engage in tactile and sensory experiences that promote deep learning and personal growth. The process-oriented nature of crafting allows students to experiment, fail, and innovate in a supportive environment, encouraging a growth mindset. Moreover, craft-based learning encourages interdisciplinary approaches, blending art, design, science, and culture, while providing opportunities for students to explore and express their identities. By examining case studies and theoretical frameworks, this paper demonstrates how craft such as Tie-Dye and Stencil Printing can be used as a pedagogical tool to cultivate practical skills, enhance emotional intelligence, and foster an inclusive, hands-on learning environment. The findings suggest that craft-based experimental learning not only enhances technical proficiency, but also nurtures reflective thinking and collaborative problem-solving, making it a valuable approach for 21st-century education.

Key Words : Traditional Craft, Tie-Dye, Stencil Printing, Skill Training





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Co-Author: Dr. Diviya Ojha is the co-author of this abstract.

14. Preserving the Past, Stitching the Future: A Craft Revival Study on the Lost Traditions of 'Dusuti Ki Kadai'

Cross-stitch embroidery, locally known as *Dusuti Ki Kadai*, is a traditional household craft, deeply embedded in the rural culture of Punjab. This technique, executed on even-weave fabric, primarily features floral motifs, and intricate geometric designs. While cross-stitch is widely recognized, the rich cultural and historical narratives associated with this craft remain largely untold. This study explores the origins and evolution of *Dusuti Ki Kadai* across multiple villages in Punjab, tracing its roots to women who practiced the craft to prepare *daaj* (dowry) for their daughters' weddings. As a counted-thread embroidery technique, cross-stitch enhances artisans' creative skills and mathematical precision, fostering confidence, and a sense of accomplishment. Historically, the craft has been an integral part of a bride's trousseau, embodying familial love, tradition, and cultural continuity. Despite the decline of traditional handcrafted textiles due to shifts in work culture, contemporary Indian brands and designers are reviving these age-old embroidery patterns, transforming them into timeless designs for modern markets. This revival provides economic empowerment to rural women while preserving invaluable cultural heritage. The research highlights the artistic dedication of Punjabi women, and their commitment to tradition. By illuminating their stories and craftsmanship, it emphasizes that simplicity in craft is often its greatest strength. When approached with devotion and innovation, cross-stitch embroidery holds immense potential for recognition beyond its local roots. This paper celebrates the resilience, artistry, and untold narratives of Punjab's women

embroiderers, advocating for the preservation, and sustainable growth of this exquisite craft within contemporary design landscapes.

Keywords: Dusuti ki Kadai, Cross Stitch, Embroidery, Craft



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Co-Author: Currently pursuing Bachelors in Textile Design from National Institute of Fashion Technology, Panchkula, **Isha Goyal** aims to promote rural livelihoods, and motivate contemporary generations to preserve their heritage. Her design ideas mainly revolves around the creative process amalgamating technical and aesthetics in textiles.

15. From Co-Creation to Cultural Calibration: An International *Phulkari-Qipao* Case Study in Contemporary Craft Design

This study examines how a culturally sensitive, process-oriented framework can ethically guide innovation in international craft collaborations. Focusing on a live exchange between Indian design students working with *Phulkari* and Chinese students engaging with the *Qipao*, it investigates ways to reinterpret traditional



textile systems in global fashion without compromising symbolic or cultural integrity. Drawing on Barthes, who situates fashion as a vehicle of ideology and identity, the research decodes these embedded meanings, and reframes them through contextually grounded design methods. The project addresses the persistent tension between superficial appropriation, and rigid preservation. Following Tyabji's assertion that "craft is not a museum piece," it asks how heritage can be innovatively reimaged while retaining cultural depth. Employing a research-through-design methodology, the study combines ethnography, and documents cross-cultural pedagogy between Pearl Academy (India) and BIFT (China), where students engaged immersive contextual exploration, motif analysis, and experimentation across diverse fashion categories from street-wear to avant-garde. The outcome is a Cultural Calibration Model, comprising context mapping, motif interpretation, ethical improvisation checkpoints, category articulation, and iterative stakeholder feedback. Positioned at the confluence of folklore, fashion pedagogy, and inter-cultural design ethics, this paper proposes a new grammar for cross-cultural craft innovation. The framework allows students to innovate responsibly, creating designs that are inventive yet culturally respectful. It offers a replicable model for international fashion pedagogy, demonstrating how ethical, culturally grounded strategies can foster innovation without appropriation or erasure.

Keywords: Cultural Calibration, Phulkari-Qipao, Inter-cultural Fashion Pedagogy, Sustainable Craft



Author: **Mehendi Sharma** is an Assistant Professor at Pearl Academy, Delhi. A design researcher, and folklorist whose work bridges craft, fashion, and cultural memory. Her practice-based research explores how material culture, symbolic motifs, and everyday life inform design pedagogy, cross-cultural collaboration, and sustainable heritage futures.

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16. Nfts and the Digital Renaissance of Traditional Crafts: Leveraging Blockchain for Cultural Preservation and Global Market Expansion

The intersection of Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs) and traditional craftsmanship represents a paradigm shift in the preservation, authentication, and commercialization of cultural heritage. As blockchain-based digital assets, NFTs provide verifiable provenance, secure ownership rights, and programmable royalty mechanisms, offering artisans long-term financial sustainability beyond initial sales. This paper explores the transformative potential of NFTs in revitalizing endangered crafts, facilitating global market access, and ensuring fair economic compensation for artisans. Through an analysis of case studies from India, including Pattachitra NFTs from Odisha, Jaipur Blue Pottery's blockchain authentication, and VR-enhanced storytelling in Madhubani art. This study examines how 3D modelling, augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) are being leveraged to digitize and promote traditional art forms. By embedding smart contracts within NFTs, artisans can retain intellectual property rights, and receive lifelong royalties from secondary sales, thereby, mitigating challenges posed by counterfeit reproduction and middlemen exploitation. Despite these advancements, technological, infrastructural, and ethical, challenges remain, including digital literacy barriers, environmental concerns related to blockchain transactions, and regulatory ambiguities. To address these issues, the paper proposes a policy-driven framework advocating for blockchain-registered Geographical Indication (GI) tagging, NFT-based Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) for crowd-funding, and skill development programs for artisans. By integrating NFTs with cultural heritage initiatives, this research posits that India's handicraft industry can transition into a sustainable, decentralized, and globally competitive digital economy, ensuring cultural preservation, artisan empowerment, and economic resilience in the digital era.

Keywords: NFTs, Blockchain, Traditional Crafts, Cultural Preservation, Digital Economy, Smart Contracts, AR/VR, Indian Handicrafts





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17. Interplay of Art and Technology: An Evolutionary Trend

Technological advances and innovations have forever been a constant in every field that demands human presence and interaction. The field of Art being the most human of such fields are no exception to receiving the fruits of tech innovations. Although technology has had multiple runs of evolution and innovation, it is only now that it commands our attention, wielding a kind of potential that could diametrically change things for both producers and consumers, or in this case art and the artists, altering the trends of the markets and impacting livelihoods of those who engage in the industry in a familial and traditional way. This paper seeks to propound and explore the bright and dark sides of excessive and rampant tech upgrades in the field of art and craft. With progress and downfall being the two sides of the same coin, the paper looks into each one of the major software, gadgets and concepts like AI, AR, VR even block chain and the impact of automation and mechanization on the craft traditions that are majorly handmade and labour intensive, and studying them for their role in predicting the future of art and human expression in order to analyse each side with equal, and thorough thought. The paper further delves into the impact of these technologies on the conventional art industry and market, to investigate if there is a

requirement for regulations and rules to be set up in order to thwart any possible risks that they may pose to the already shrunken horizon of the art industry.

Keywords: AR/VR, Technology, Art & Craft, Digital Transformation, Handicrafts, Market



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18. Reimagining Craft in A Digital Age: Tradition, Technology, and the Future of Making

Craft has long been a vessel for tradition, culture, and skill transmission, fostering deep-rooted connections to heritage and identity. However, as modernization accelerates, mass production and digital convenience have diminished the relevance of traditional craftsmanship, leading to a loss of personal connections, multi sensory experiences, and cultural continuity. This paper explores



a speculative future where craft has lost its existence, disrupting historical narratives and eroding the practice of hands-on making. Rather than perceiving this absence as mere loss, the paper sees it as an opportunity to rethink and redefine craft beyond rigid traditions. It advocates for the integration of modern technology, digital tools, AI, and virtual reality to establish a new craft culture, where making is democratized and accessible to all. This shift challenges conventional notions of preservation, and instead encourages an adaptive approach where tradition and technology coalesce to foster creativity and inclusivity. By exploring the role of technology in revitalizing craftsmanship, this paper highlights how collaborative, technology-driven craft practices can create sustainable and inclusive ecosystems. It examines how makers can merge traditional techniques with digital advancements to ensure the continuity of craft in innovative, and culturally meaningful ways. Ultimately, the paper advocates for a future, where craft remains an evolving practice—one that embraces both heritage and modernity to keep the spirit of making alive for generations to come.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Tradition, Technology, AI in Craft, Cultural Continuity, Virtual Craftsmanship



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19. Intertwining Tradition with Contemporary Influences: Rocking Dolls

Children's toys play a vital role in fostering play and supporting child development. However, modern toys, predominantly made of plastic, and powered by lithium-based batteries, pose significant environmental and health risks. These plastic toys can release toxic substances when chewed, especially by babies and toddlers, and their batteries contribute to pollution at every stage — from production to disposal. In contrast, traditional Indian toys, such as the *Thanjavur Gundu Satti Bommai* (round pot rocking doll) from Tamil Nadu, offer a sustainable alternative. This iconic toy, featuring a king and queen with a weighted clay base that enables a rocking motion, is crafted from eco-friendly materials like clay, natural starch, and recycled paper. The manufacturing process involves low-temperature firing, making it an environmentally sustainable practice that does not rely on batteries or harmful materials. In today's digital age, children are heavily influenced by global cartoon characters such as Mickey Mouse, Doraemon, and Minions. To bridge tradition with contemporary interests, it has been proposed that these rocking dolls be reimagined with modern designs. Using Tinker CAD, popular cartoon characters can be digitally modelled and converted into STL files for 3D printing through Fused Deposition Modelling (FDM) techniques. These 3D-printed models can then be used to create moulds for artisans, enabling them to craft traditional rocking dolls with modern character adaptations. Replacing the traditional king and queen figures with these cartoon characters is expected to increase the demand for traditional toys, thereby improving artisans' livelihoods. It is also anticipated to appeal to environmentally conscious parents. In this work, an eco-friendly Minions rocking doll has been developed as a proof of concept. This approach highlights the importance of preserving traditional craftsmanship, while adapting to modern preferences in a sustainable way.

Keywords: Sustainable Alternatives, Eco-friendly, Children's Toy, 3D Printing





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20. **Beyond Fashion: Adapting Digital Product Passports for Craft Preservation and Authenticity in India**

The global fashion industry is increasingly embracing Digital Product Passports (DPPs) to enhance transparency, sustainability, and consumer trust. These digital records trace a product's origin, materials, and lifecycle, aligning with circular economy principles, and enabling informed purchasing decisions. While DPPs have gained traction in mainstream fashion, their potential application to India's craft-based fashion economy remains largely unexplored. This study explores the feasibility of adopting DPPs for cultural and craft-based products, recognizing the technological, infrastructural, and socio-economic barriers posed by decentralized artisan production. Through consultations with artisans, policymakers, industry leaders,

and technology experts, the research assesses: (a) digital literacy among artisans, (b) integration with Geographical Indication (GI) tags, Artisan Cards, and national craft registries, (c) data security, blockchain, and authentication challenges, and (d) market access and consumer awareness of certified craft products. A key focus is leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop templates and automated processes for craft authentication, ensuring accessibility, efficiency, and scalability. The study aims to bridge the gap between technological advancement and grassroots craft economies, while exploring the potential for a scalable digital passport system across India's diverse craft sectors. Drawing insights from international case studies, industry reports, and academic literature, the research contributes to broader discussions on digital transformation, blockchain applications in craft, and AI-driven innovation that support both cultural preservation and economic empowerment.

Keywords: Digital Product Passport (DPP), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cultural Heritage Management, Technology Adoption, Geographic Indication (GI), Artisanal Identity, Digital Literacy



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21. Ethnographic Study of Sawai Madhopur Black Pottery Craft from the lens of Sustainability

The quaint city of Sawai Madhopur in Rajasthan, well known for the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, is also home to a beautiful black terracotta pottery tradition that is reflective of the culture and ecology of the region. Having applied for the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the government, this craft heritage is deeply intertwined with the local environment, culture, and economy. The craft practice has evolved over centuries, with the underlying sustainability at its core helping it survive and flourish. This study explores the sustainability parameters embedded in the practice of Sawai Madhopur Black Pottery. The methodology used is rapid ethnography, including participant observation and semi-structured interviews with artisans, to comprehensively examine the entire ecosystem of the craft. The research also evaluates the craft practice against the Holistic Sustainability Checklist framework provided by Rhizome to measure the embedded parameters of sustainability in the craft.

Keywords: Crafts, Pottery, Sustainability, Tradition, Indigenous



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22. From Craft to Care: Developing Sustainable Weighted Blanket for Stress Management and Well-being

Stress is a prevalent phenomenon that affects individuals across all age groups, arising from the various challenges and demands inherent in daily life. This paper explores the efficacy of weighted blankets as a non-pharmacological intervention for stress management, with a particular focus on individuals of all ages experiencing stress due to diverse causes. A comprehensive review reveals that weighted blankets offer substantial benefits, including improved quality of life and enhanced sleep quality, particularly among older individuals. Furthermore, the findings indicate a reduction in the use of medication, especially psychoactive drugs, highlighting the potential of weighted blankets as an effective tool for stress relief. Integrating these insights into clinical practice could significantly contribute to the overall health and well-being of people across age groups. Building upon these findings, this research proposes the development of a stress-relieving, sustainable, and multifunctional weighted blanket suitable for users of all ages. The design prioritizes sustainability by incorporating environmentally friendly filler materials, such as beans or other naturally available, biodegradable alternatives. Additionally, the outer cover will be made from fully sustainable fabric, aligning with the principles of both human health, and environmental responsibility. By advancing the understanding and application of weighted blankets for stress management, this research aims to promote holistic well-being across age demographics, while fostering sustainability, and environmental consciousness.

Keywords: Weighted Blankets, Stress Relief, Sustainable Materials, Non-Pharmacological, Craft Preservation



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23. Craft Tourism: A bibliometric Analysis of Trends, Themes & Future Directions

Craft tourism has emerged as a dynamic niche within the broader tourism sector, widely acknowledged for its potential to revitalise traditional craftsmanship, preserve cultural heritage, and foster local economic development. This study conducts a comprehensive analysis of scholarly works on craft tourism published in Scopus-indexed journals, aiming to uncover prevailing trends, thematic concentrations, and influential contributors in the field. Utilising bibliometric techniques alongside text analysis, the research identifies common characteristics, theoretical foundations, and inter-relations among studies in this domain. The findings conclude in the development of a conceptual framework that encapsulates the core practices and dimensions of craft tourism. The analysis spans the entire body of literature within the defined period, offering an in-depth understanding of the field's evolution. Key insights

reveal a growing scholarly emphasis on sustainable tourism practices, cultural preservation, and community-based participation. This study provides a valuable reference for academics and researchers exploring innovative directions in craft tourism, and delivers practical implications for stakeholders, including industry practitioners and policymakers, seeking to harness its socio-economic and cultural potential.

Keywords: Craft Tourism, Systematic Literature Review, Bibliometric Analysis, Cultural Tourism, Sustainable Tourism



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Co-Author 2: Basu Vansit is a highly experienced design professional with over 14 years of expertise in crafts, design education, and project development. He holds a PhD in Marketing in the Handicrafts Sector, with a focus on technology adoption in Rajasthan's metal craft industry.

24. ***Kathputli* Transformations: Cultural Heritage, Cultural Fluidity, and Tourism Imaginaries of the Indian Craft of Puppets**

Craft traditions go hand-in-hand with culture and cultural sustainability in India, and one of the most notable and recognizable crafts in the state of Rajasthan is known as *Kathputli* (wooden puppets). This time-honoured and multi-faceted cultural tradition involves several crafts including: wood-working, painting, textile adornment, music, singing, and storytelling. While the craft is broadly recognized and beloved by the Indian public, the social and cultural forms, functions, and contexts of *Kathputli* have changed over time, and this is readily apparent in the current era, where traditional forms of storytelling and entertainment have been largely displaced by contemporary forms such as streaming and social media on smart gadgets. Where does this leave craft traditions such as *Kathputli*, and the vast community of artisans, musicians, and storytellers, who have historically engaged in this craft? To better understand this question, our research draws on data collected in Jaipur, Rajasthan, from 2023–2025, and explores the intersecting phenomena of cultural heritage, cultural fluidity, and tourism re-imaginings as they relate to the complex transformations of the Indian craft of *Kathputli*. Our primary finding suggests that while *Kathputli* was once a central and vital source of culture, communication, and entertainment in towns and villages across Rajasthan, the tradition is now reimagined and realized primarily in the context of tourism(s). This craft tradition is relevant, and very much alive, but the contexts of the craft have significantly changed and morphed into cultural imaginaries, nostalgia, and even tourist commodities.

Keywords: Kathputli, Craft, Sustainability, Heritage



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25. AI in Craft Preservation: Varanasi's Soft Stone Jali Work & Mauritius' Ship Model Craft

Traditional crafts are of deep cultural and historical meaning, representing the artistic legacy of an area. The gradual modernization, and changing tastes of consumers threaten the survival of numerous historical arts because of their disappearance. This paper investigates the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) alongside digital tools in protecting two distinctive traditional crafts: Varanasi's Soft Stone Jali Work from India and Mauritius' Ship Model Craft. For several centuries, artisans in Varanasi have carved delicate stone lattices using Soft Stone Jali work. The Ship Model Craft of Mauritius stands as one of the island nation's signature heritage arts, due to its master artisans crafting outstanding wooden



re-creations of ocean vessels. Both crafts require exceptional accuracy and years of training, but now they are challenged by declining communities of artisans and restricted market access. The research demonstrates that AI with Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Blockchain technologies are essential in developing documentation systems, expanding markets, and skill transmission methods. AI-powered design tools can help artisans replicate complex designs, while AR/VR experiences can provide virtual workshops to bring learning within everyone's reach. Blockchain can give authenticity, fair trade standards, artisan recognition, and economic security. We can establish a sustainable future for these traditional crafts by combining technology and traditional craftsmanship. The paper argues that the future survival of these crafts requires a united effort between artisans and designers, who should work with technology experts.

Keywords : Craft Preservation, AI in Artisan-ship, Varanasi Soft Stone Jali Work, Mauritian Ship Models, Digital Heritage



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26. Crafting Decentralization: A Layered Framework for Bamboo-Based Livelihoods (Five Case Studies in Frugal Innovation, Pedagogy, and Production Ecosystems)

Bamboo is widely recognized for its sustainability, however, the systems supporting bamboo-based livelihoods remain fragmented and underdeveloped. Unlike mainstream material economies such as wood, metal, or textiles, bamboo lacks a mature value chain. Artisans manage every step—from sourcing and processing, to production and sales—without institutional support or shared infrastructure. This systemic gap restricts both the economic potential of bamboo, and the agency of the communities engaged with it. This paper proposes a layered framework to address these structural deficits by



designing decentralized craft ecosystems rooted in social innovation and frugal design. The first layer introduces the MCFC–SHG–CDC model, comprising Micro Common Facility Centres (MCFC) for material processing, Self-Help Groups (SHG) as distributed production units, and Common Development Centres (CDC) for design, training, and quality assurance. The second layer emphasizes frugal tools such as coiling jigs, molds, and strip sizers, supported by pedagogical systems including manuals, visual aids, and a *Bamboo Sakhi* training network to enable modular, inclusive, and quality-driven production. The third layer grounds the framework through case studies across Kerala, Gujarat, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra, highlighting initiatives such as rural–urban product lines, tribal revival, mold-based production, SHG-led flower-making, and institutional R&D at BRTC, Chandrapur. The study shifts the perspective from craft as a heritage activity to craft as a system—where infrastructure, tools, and pedagogy converge to enable sustainable livelihoods. It presents a replicable, human-centered model for policymakers, researchers, and institutions working at the intersection of tradition, technology, and social equity.

Keywords: Decentralized Infrastructure, Frugal Innovation, Craft Systems Design, Bamboo Livelihoods, Community-Based Production



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Posters

P1. Retrieving and Preserving the Coin as Jewelry

In Western culture, tossing a coin into a fountain is believed to grant wishes and bring good fortune. In India, offering something valuable—such as a coin—to a river or goddess symbolizes devotion, and invites blessings of wealth and prosperity. The ritual of tossing coins into the sacred Ganga River during the Kumbh Mela embodies gratitude and purification, while carrying a coin from the Ganga is thought to bring purity, blessings, and protection. This abstract explores the process of retrieving such coins and transforming them into meaningful jewellery. Retrieved coins often show signs of water exposure and corrosion, requiring gentle, non-abrasive cleaning to remove sediments while preserving integrity. Engraving symbols like *Om* or a *Trishul* enhance spiritual value. Protective coatings such as clear lacquer or natural resin prevent oxidation, and ensure durability. Integrating the coin into wearable art—pendants, bracelets, rings, or resin-encased pieces—turns it into a personal talisman that preserves both material and spiritual heritage. Using recycled jewellery materials provides significant economic and environmental benefits by reducing energy use, and generating employment in material recovery.

The study explored enamelling techniques, and identified *champlevé* as the most suitable method, as it applies enamel only to the background, preserving original motifs. Combining *Meenakari* with coin jewellery proved highly experimental, aiming to gauge user acceptance. While enamelling is effective on pure silver and gold coins, old Indian coins containing nickel or zinc require special consideration. Future work should focus on preserving antique coins, while enhancing their aesthetic and historical value through jewellery design.

Keywords: Old Coins, Spiritual Sustainability, Coin Preservation



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P2. Bridging Heritage & Modernity: Design Innovation and Sustainable Scalability in Copper Bell Craft from Zura, Bhuj

This research investigates the integration of design innovation and technology, to reimagine traditional craft, focusing on the copper bell craft from Zura village, Bhuj. It explores the potential for creating sustainable and scalable craft ecosystems by harmonizing cultural heritage with contemporary market demands. Through a collaborative design process, artisans and the designer developed innovative home decor products, demonstrating the viability of adapting traditional techniques with modern aesthetics. The study examines how novel bell designs, creative applications like bird and fish-shaped adornments, and functional items such as measuring bowls and pen stands can expand the market reach while preserving cultural authenticity. Notably, the integration of copper bells into hanging lamps showcases the potential for merging traditional craft with modern lighting solutions, creating unique and marketable products. The findings highlight the importance of understanding artisan capabilities, experimenting with materials, and fostering collaborative design to achieve a balance between heritage preservation and market innovation. This research contributes to the discourse on sustainable craft development, demonstrating that strategic design and material innovation are crucial for revitalizing traditional crafts, and ensuring their relevance in the future industry landscape.

Keywords: Copper Bell Craft, Design Innovation, Sustainable Craft Development, Heritage Preservation, Market Adaptation



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P3. *Panchkala*: Nirona's Inter-connected Craft Traditions

Nirona, a rural village in Kachchh, Gujarat, is home to five distinct crafts – Rogan painting, metal bell craft, lacquer work, leather craft, and weaving. Each carries its own history, skill, and cultural significance. This study envisions Nirona as a *Panchkala* hub, presenting a holistic representation of all five crafts through a dedicated digital platform that functions as a living museum. Building upon an ecosystem study, the research introduces a systemic design approach that goes beyond traditional documentation. Our methodology integrates systems thinking to understand the relationships between crafts, artisans, and the cultural landscapes. By mapping interdependencies, flow of resources, and skills, we aim to create a dynamic representation of Nirona's craft ecosystem. The archive will document not only the crafts but also the communities and landscapes that sustain them. This initiative uses storytelling to enhance engagement, build appreciation, and learning. By adding to Nirona's identity as a craft-specific destination, the initiative highlights its interconnected cultural ecosystem, ensuring equitable visibility, and opportunities for all artisans. The *Panchkala* concept hopes to create a shared narrative, celebrating the heritage and craftsmanship that define the village. Through systems analysis and digital storytelling, we seek to explore how traditional craft ecosystems are understood, documented, and sustained, so that Nirona's story stays for generations to come.

Keywords: Craft ecosystem, Storytelling, Traditional Craft, Heritage Preservation



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Co-Author 3: Kruti Dholakia, presently serving as an Associate Professor at National Institute of Fashion Technology, Gandhinagar, possesses nearly two decades of experience in the area of formal and informal education in craft and design with publications, presentations and projects nationally and internationally. She is also serving as a Course Coordinator of the M.Des program at the Institute. Her teaching, research, mentoring experiences, and works emphasizes sustainability, craft practices, and traditional knowledge.



P4. Sustainable Product Development from Farm Waste: Transforming Rice Husk into Eco-Friendly Packaging and Paper Solutions

This research addresses the critical need for sustainable material alternatives by exploring the valorization of agricultural waste, specifically rice and wheat husks, into functional and eco-friendly products. The primary aim was to develop innovative processes for converting these abundant farm by-products into sustainable paper, packaging containers, and desk accessories, significantly reducing industrial carbon footprint, and promoting circular economy principles. Environmental concerns from conventional material production and waste disposal, necessitate novel resource utilization.

The research was systematically conducted, beginning with an extensive literature review on husk properties and existing utilization methods. This informed the development and optimization of a multi-stage material processing methodology. Husks underwent mechanical grinding, chemical pulping (using environmentally benign reagents), and subsequent fiber separation. The extracted cellulose fibers were then subjected to various binding and molding techniques to fabricate handmade papers, prototypes of packaging containers, and a range of desk accessories. Rigorous testing assessed mechanical strength, durability, water resistance, and overall performance, comparing them against conventional counterparts. Key findings indicate that both rice and wheat husks yield viable cellulose fibers suitable for paper and packaging applications. The optimized pulping process efficiently separated high-quality fibers, demonstrating excellent tensile strength, and fold endurance in the resulting handmade papers. The packaging prototypes exhibited promising structural integrity and protective qualities, suggesting their potential as sustainable alternatives to plastic and virgin wood pulp-based materials. Furthermore, the desk accessories showcased aesthetic appeal and functionality, validating the versatility of these waste materials.

This study successfully demonstrates a viable pathway for transforming agricultural waste into valuable, marketable products, offering a tangible solution for waste reduction, and carbon footprint mitigation in the manufacturing sector.

Keywords: Agricultural Waste, Rice Husk, Wheat Husk, Sustainable Packaging, Handmade Paper



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P5. *Aaraish*: A Timeless Craft for A Healthier, Eco-friendly Future in Interior Design

Aaraish, a centuries-old building craft, originating in the forts and havelis of Rajasthan, exemplifies a sustainable and health-conscious approach to interior wall treatments. Derived from the Sanskrit word for the first ray of the sun, *Aaraish* symbolizes purity and wellness, reflected in its natural composition, and positive impact on indoor air quality. Historically celebrated in iconic structures like the forts of Amer, Jaigarh, and Nahargarh, *Aaraish* now faces extinction due to the advent of modern, and time-efficient materials. This research aims to preserve the authentic process of *Aaraish*, while adapting it to meet contemporary design needs, creating a bridge between traditional craftsmanship, and modern architectural trends. The study explores the historical significance of *Aaraish* in the architectural heritage of Jaipur and Amer, thoroughly documenting its materials, techniques, and applications. It also investigates the health benefits of *Aaraish*, particularly in enhancing indoor air quality. Despite its labour-intensive nature, the craft offers numerous advantages for interior design, prompting a need for innovation to preserve it. The research proposes the development of pre-fabricated *Aaraish* panels, offering a quicker, and more efficient installation, while retaining the craft's aesthetic and health benefits. The study examines the application of plant-based primers, and organic protective layers to enhance the durability and sustainability of *Aaraish*, ensuring its alignment with contemporary environmental standards. By merging traditional craftsmanship with modern technology, this research seeks to revitalise



Aaraish as a sustainable, and visually striking solution for contemporary interiors. Ultimately, it advocates for preserving this cultural heritage, and integrating eco-friendly materials into modern architecture, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable built environment.

Keywords: Traditional Craft, Aaraish, Sustainable Innovation, Craft Preservation, Healthy Interiors



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P6. Role of Mahakumbh Mela 2025 in the Promotion of Indian Handicrafts

Indian arts and crafts are diverse, and deeply rooted in the country's history, culture, and religion. Craft is the process of transforming materials into something valuable, both useful, and decorative. The materials used may be natural, industrially processed, or recycled. Depending on the model, products can be old, new, conventional, or fashionable. The practice of handicrafts ensures the transmission and preservation of traditions across generations. Artists often carry forward ideas, forms, materials, and working methods from their cultural heritage—reflecting values, philosophies, fashion, and self-identity in their creations. The Indian government plays a crucial role in promoting and preserving craft culture through various schemes, policies, and initiatives that support artisans, encourage marketing, and foster sectoral growth. Nodal agencies such as the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles, Ministry of Culture, and Ministry of MSME work towards development, marketing, and export of handicrafts through financial and technical assistance,

online platforms, skill development programs, trade fairs, exhibitions, and cultural festivals. In this series, the state of Uttar Pradesh has provided a significant platform during the *Mahakumbh Mela* of 2025 for showcasing and promoting Indian handicrafts through various nodal agencies. These platforms appeared under names such as Kalagram, Kalakumbh, ODOP Exhibition, Rashtriya Shilp Mela, Darshan Mandapam, and Khadi Shilp Mela. Alongside these, many craft entrepreneurs, designers, and artisans from across India displayed their creativity. This paper entitled is a case study, presenting the showcasing, promotion, and marketing of Indian handicrafts at the *Mahakumbh Mela*.

Keywords : Craft, Mahakumbh, Promotion, Exhibition, Prayagraj



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P7. Threads and Traditions

A visual story called *Thread and Traditions* examines the cultural heritage of textile crafts. The comic revives lost customs, generational knowledge, and symbolic meanings woven into threads through the journey of a young artisan, demonstrating how traditional crafts connect identity, memory, and community over time.

Keywords: Cultural Reinterpretation, Kasuti Embroidery, Women's Empowerment, Tradition, Modernity, Visual Storytelling





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P8. Beyond the Studio: Experiential Learning through Craft Collaborations

This paper explores best practices in project-based learning for sustainable approaches in clothing, textiles, and fashion. Using the Craft Project at the Indian Institute of Art & Design as a case study, it highlights immersive learning experiences that integrate grassroots craft traditions with technological advancements. By fostering dialogue among stakeholders, communities, and collectives, design education can become more inclusive and culturally grounded. The space of design pedagogy serves as fertile ground for discussions on regionality, diversity, and inclusivity in Indian crafts—especially for urban students—by bringing regional textile traditions into contemporary learning environments. It advocates the idea of the “Designer-as-Social Scientist,” equipping students with tools for coexistence, collaboration, and community well-being. Past collaborations include the North-Eastern Network with *Chizami* weavers (Nagaland), *Shershahbadi* women (*Kheta* embroidery), and *Mundra Batik* artisans (with Khamir). The current cohort is working with *Khasi* artisans in Meghalaya. The ongoing project focuses on Eri silk weaving and *Kheng* embroidery in the Umden and Mustoh clusters, where around 260 households practice traditional weaving on floor looms using natural dyes. *Kheng* embroidery draws inspiration from traditional off-loom motifs. Following a qualitative, case-based approach, the study emphasizes immersive fieldwork and participatory engagement. Students live and learn with artisans, observing and practicing crafts, while documenting cultural narratives, and

processes. This experiential learning enables them to reinterpret and design within the craft ethos, strengthening the connection between education, sustainability, and community-based creative practices.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Community-Driven Design Pedagogy, Khasi Community, Eri Silk, Khneng Embroidery



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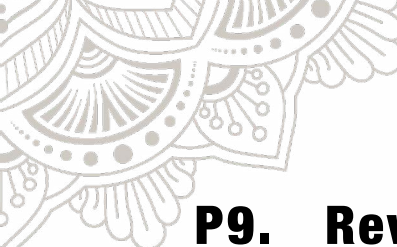
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Co-Author 2: Shipra Kukreja is a sustainable fashion advocate and strategic designer known for ethical practices. A Charles Wallace India, Trust awardee, she founded Ethical Fashion Forum monthly socials in India and was part of IIT Delhi WEE program. With global industry experience, she has led design teams, and consulted on numerous eco-conscious projects.



P9. Reviving Kullu Shawl Weaving: A Fusion of Tradition and Modern Street Wear for Sustainable Livelihoods

The revival of traditional Kullu shawl weaving presents an innovative opportunity to blend cultural heritage with contemporary fashion. Kullu shawls, renowned for their intricate patterns and rich history, have been woven for generations by skilled artisans in the Kullu Valley of Himachal Pradesh. However, due to changing market dynamics and demand, the traditional craft has struggled to find a sustainable income for artisans. This project aims to address this challenge by transforming Kullu shawl weaving into modern, western-inspired, smart, street wear for both men and women. By adapting the shawls' distinct weaving techniques and designs into every day, wearable fashion pieces, this initiative introduces the rich cultural heritage of Kullu shawls to a broader, global market. The garments are designed to blend seamlessly into urban street wear trends, allowing them to appeal to younger, fashion-conscious consumers while preserving the authenticity of the weaving tradition. The end products include stylish tailored fit jackets, cropped tops and loose fitted trousers; all created using the original Kullu shawl weaving techniques.

The primary goal is to provide artisans with a sustainable livelihood by opening up new markets for their craft. By turning traditional textiles into fashionable, marketable products, artisans can reach a larger audience, leading to improved sales and financial stability. The project not only creates a fusion of culture and fashion but also empowers the artisans by enhancing their visibility in the global fashion industry. Garment samples have been created to demonstrate the potential of these products, illustrating how the unique designs of Kullu shawls can be reimagined into modern, stylish outfits. Through this initiative, the rich tradition of Kullu shawl weaving is revitalized, ensuring its survival while providing artisans with valuable economic opportunities.

Keywords: Revival, Kullu Shawl Weaving, Artisans, Street Wear, Livelihood, Survival



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Co-Author 2: Rohini S. Yaduvanshi, Assistant Professor, has been working with Jagannath University, Bahadurgarh, Haryana, for the past 13 years in the Fashion Design department. She has successfully devoted herself to academics, and sees herself growing with upcoming generations. She is driven by creativity, passion, and innovation.

P10. Mandala Art: Ancient Symbolism in A Modern World

Mandalas from Hindu and Buddhist traditions have been revered as holy depictions of the world, spiritual illumination, and cosmic order. But in recent years, mandalas have experienced notable cultural change from ceremonial and meditative symbols to commercialized aesthetic ideas



in fashion, tattoo culture, health businesses, and digital art. This paper uses a qualitative and chronological method to investigate the historical development, creative adaption, and worldwide commercialization of Mandalas. By following their path from ancient sacred settings to modern commercial marketplaces, this study emphasizes the intersections between cultural appreciation and appropriation. Key areas of Mandala adaptation include their application in holy architecture, body art, mindfulness techniques, and corporate branding, which are investigated in this paper. Often separating Mandalas from their spiritual meaning, it critically examines how western tattoo culture, fashion businesses, and digital media have helped to mass produce and commodify Mandalas. The paper also covers the ethical issues related to cultural appropriation and distortion, stressing the importance of careful interaction with revered symbols. Although mandalas are still venerated in many spiritual traditions, their extensive commercialization has resulted in both worldwide awareness and worries about cultural erasure. This study emphasizes the need of cultural sensitivity and ethical artistic practices, supporting a balanced approach that honours the holy beginnings of Mandalas, and recognizes their changing function in modern society.

Keywords: Mandalas, Cultural Appropriation, Commercialization, Sacred Geometry, Tattoo Art, Artistic Adaptation



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P11. Rejuvenation of Parsi Embroidery

Parsi *Gara* embroidery is a style of embroidery that originated in Persia , and was brought to India by the Parsi community. This community of Zoroastrian Persians, settled in India in the 8th century, and brought with them a rich cultural heritage, including the art of embroidery. The

embroidery depicts nature in woven form — from peonies, lotus, lilies, bamboo, cherry blossoms, and other trees and flowers to beautiful birds, pagodas, huts, and human figurines — Parsi work encompasses the world in its entirety. In the present scenario, there was a phase when this exquisite and elegant handicraft began losing its sheen and popularity, gradually fading away. The introduction of mass production and the availability of easier and cheaper alternatives, led to the decline of Parsi work, further affected by the diminishing Parsi community. This project focuses on reviving Parsi embroidery by developing fashion accessories such as bags and stylish jewellery, incorporating traditional motifs and authentic hand stitches like satin stitch, chain stitch, French knot, and the running stitch. The aim is to promote and provide a new dimension to this diminishing craft by blending heritage craftsmanship with modern style. Reviving this art form ensures the preservation of an essential part of India's rich textile heritage and cultural diversity. By adapting intricate embroidery motifs into everyday fashion accessories, the project seeks to showcase the richness of Parsi embroidery globally, and attract people of all age groups. The goal is to rejuvenate Parsi embroidery and its artisans, while providing sustainable livelihoods for the crafters.

Keywords: Rejuvenation, Parsi, Gara Embroidery, Accessories, Livelihood



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P12. Quilting Textile Traditions of Kalbelia : Documenting and Preserving the Languishing Craft *Gudri* for Global Markets

The *Kalbelia*, also called the *Sapera* community, is one of the largest nomadic communities in Rajasthan. Their rich traditions of dance and music, have represented Rajasthan's cultural traditions for decades. The *Kalbelia* quilt *Gudri* made by the women is a fascinating multilayered textile, traditionally crafted using two or more layers of recycled pieces of fabric joined together with a stitch called *Doda Taga*. It is adorned with intricate embroidery, and mesmerizing mirror work. Their quilts reflect their distinct practices and professions, setting them apart from other quilting traditions in India. Now a languishing craft, this textile craft is practiced by only a handful of artisans in India.

Keywords: Quilts, Textile Craft, Product Diversification, Kalbelia Community, Languishing Craft



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P13. Machines in Craft: A Contemporary Approach AI to Resist-Dyeing and Design Innovation

This paper presents an evolving resist-dyeing technique that integrates traditional *Shibori*-inspired processes with modern technology and infrastructure to create a scalable, sustainable model for contemporary craft. Rooted in Indian textile traditions, the technique involves machine-stitched resist embroidery on multiple fabric layers, followed by the hand opening of stitches post-dyeing—a fusion that maintains the spirit of craft while addressing the demands of precision and production. Using traditional Indian fabrics such as Chanderi silk, Bangalore silk, and mulberry silk, the process combines hand folding with digitally planned resist patterns created using Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop. These digital designs are transferred onto tracing sheets, and converted into stencils for embroidery. The embroidery machine, custom-modified to handle thick layers, enables controlled resistance without compromising fabric integrity. This hybrid model ensures repeatability, experimentation, and artistic depth. To address sustainability, the practice employs both natural and synthetic dyes, balancing ecological concerns with commercial viability. A water recycling system repurposes dyed water for a studio garden, and a growing digital library of color palettes, motifs, and fabric responses supports long-term resource planning. The paper also discusses the potential for scaling this practice into a craft cluster. A vision for shared infrastructure, digital learning tools, and AI-supported design generation is proposed. However, challenges remain in training manpower, particularly in digitally teaching nuanced resist-dyeing techniques, where fabric weight and dye behaviour vary significantly. This model exemplifies how tradition, innovation, and sustainable infrastructure



can coexist, offering a path forward for craftspeople and institutions aiming to bridge handmade aesthetics with future-forward design.

Keywords: Hybrid Craft Techniques, Shibori, Sustainable Craft Practices, Craft and Technology Integration, Machine-Assisted Design



Author : Pallav Choudhary, with over a decade of experience, is a textile artist specializing in *Shibori*, blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary expression. Recognized with three international awards and an academic honour, he conducts workshops and artisan training, emphasizing design thinking and skill development. Showcased globally, his work fosters creativity, preserves cultural knowledge, and advances the field of textile innovation, and design education.

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P14. AI and the Loom: Balancing Innovation and Tradition in Maheshwari Saree Weaving

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in traditional Indian crafts presents both transformative opportunities and ethical dilemmas. This research explores the intersection of AI and Maheshwari saree weaving, an age-old handloom tradition of Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh. With the rise of AI-driven design tools, the potential for efficiency, innovation, and market expansion is significant. However, concerns about cultural appropriation, loss of artisan identity, and the dilution of handmade authenticity raise critical ethical challenges. This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, employing qualitative and quantitative analysis. Structured surveys and in-depth interviews were conducted with artisans, designers, consumers, and government officials involved in the Maheshwari saree ecosystem. The research aims to: (1) Assess AI's impact on traditional design processes, (2) Understand artisans' perspectives on AI-driven interventions, (3) Analyze consumer perception towards AI-influenced handloom products, and (4) Evaluate policy-level responses and regulatory frameworks. Findings indicate a divided stance among artisans—while some view AI as a tool for assisting design replication and trend forecasting, others fear job

displacement, and loss of human touch in weaving. Designers leverage AI for pattern innovation and predictive analysis, but emphasize the need for human oversight. Consumers show mixed opinions: they value handcrafted authenticity, though AI-assisted personalization appeals to younger buyers. Government officials recognize AI's role in market expansion, but stress safeguarding artisans' livelihoods through ethical adoption policies. This study underscores the need for a balanced AI-integration model, where technology augments rather than replaces artisanship. Recommendations include collaborative AI-artisan models, ethical design guidelines, and government-led policy frameworks to protect cultural heritage, while embracing AI-driven progress in India's craft-based fashion sector.

Keywords : AI in Fashion, Maheshwari Sarees, Ethical AI, Craft Preservation, Artisan Empowerment, Handloom Technology

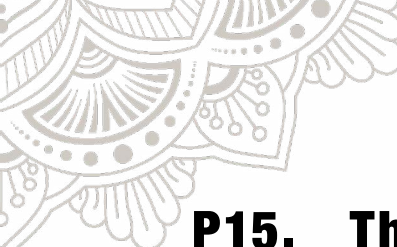


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P15. Threads of Time: Blockchain as the Cryptographic Loom of Heritage Preservation and Artisan Trust

Traditional craftsmanship and cultural heritage sites together build the identity of communities while narrating their histories. Cultural heritage often faces counterfeiting, ownership conflicts, and poor documentation. Additionally, deficits in transparency further exacerbate these challenges. Blockchain provides viable solutions by leveraging decentralized registries, cryptographic hash functions, and geospatial blockchain systems, thereby ensuring authenticity and transparency across diverse cultural assets. Authentication of crafts is done using unique digital fingerprints created from annotated metadata, taking into account their physical characteristics, creation techniques, and provenance. For heritage sites, the framework incorporates a geospatial blockchain system for storing geographic locations, 3D LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) scans, historical records of modifications, and updates on conservation status through IoT (Internet of Things) sensors. A comprehensive metadata schema provides a full structural, historical, cultural, and legal set of parameters while ensuring distributed verification via a multi-stakeholder consensus model, including local stakeholders, academic institutions, governmental agencies, and international organizations. The system architecture includes innovative features such as a satellite imagery-based geospatial validation layer, NFT (Non-Fungible Token)-driven visitor authentication schemes, and conservation funding models based on DAOs (Decentralized Autonomous Organizations). IPFS (Inter Planetary File System) clusters, Layer-2 blockchain infrastructure, and solar nodes address large data processing and energy efficiency challenges. This blockchain framework aligns with Sustainable Development Goals 9 (Industry and Innovation), 11 (Sustainable Cities), and 16 (Peace and Justice), offering scalable solutions for cultural heritage preservation. By bridging technology with cultural conservation, it provides actionable insights for artisans, policymakers, researchers, and cultural institutions while promoting sustainable practices in heritage management.

Keywords: Blockchain, Cultural Heritage Preservation, Digital Fingerprint, Decentralised Registries, Geospatial Blockchain System



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P16. Restoration of Dhokra: The Traditional Jute Mat Weaving of Bengal - A Case Study

Dhokra, a traditional handwoven jute mat from Bengal, has been an integral part of the cultural heritage in the *Uttar* and *Dakshin* Dinajpur districts. Historically crafted by Indigenous communities such as the *Rajbanshis* and the *Polis*, Dhokra mat weaving utilizes locally sourced jute, known as the *Golden Fibre*, on home-based, backstrap looms. This paper focuses on how this craft has provided livelihood opportunities for numerous households in the region. To examine this, a mixed-methodology approach has been adopted. Additionally, this paper highlights challenges such as corporatization, changing consumer preferences, and the decline in skilled artisans, all of which have threatened the continuity of this traditional craft. In response, organizations like 'Banglanatak Dot Com,' based in Kolkata, have initiated efforts to revitalize Dhokra weaving. By implementing skill development programs, facilitating market linkages, and promoting community engagement, these initiatives aim to rejuvenate the



craft and improve the socio-economic conditions of the artisans. Through a detailed case study, this paper examines the impact of such interventions on the sustainability of Dhokra weaving. The findings suggest that a combination of heritage-based tourism, design innovation, and digital marketing can significantly contribute to the preservation, and promotion of traditional crafts like Dhokra. The study emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts in safeguarding India's rich artisanal traditions for future generations.

Key Words: Dhokra Weaving, Jute Mat, Bengal Handicrafts, Traditional Craft Revival, Artisan Livelihood, Cultural Heritage, Sustainable Craftsmanship, Heritage-Based Tourism, Craft Preservation



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P17. Bargaon Weaves: A Case Study of Revitalizing Rural Economy in Barabanki with Craft-Based Employment in Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals

Baragaon Weaves LLP is a for-profit social enterprise addressing the challenges of traditional handloom weavers by ensuring dignified, and sustainable livelihoods. Over eight years, three core focus areas have emerged: Market, Weaver, and Craft. Initially, weavers produced men's scarves for Middle Eastern markets with no unique identity. Design interventions aimed at creating more marketable products expanded the range to saris, stoles, and fabrics, incorporating Zardozi embroidery and Chikankari for added value. Meaningful market interactions led to B2B partnerships with brands like Fabindia, Jaypore, and Itokri. Consumer sensitization remains a challenge

in B2C sales and is addressed through social media and direct engagement at fairs. Barabanki handlooms, once undervalued and competing with machine-made goods, are now gaining recognition and finding their own niche. Weavers, often uneducated beyond primary school, remain vulnerable to exploitation. Middlemen, prioritizing profit over craftsmanship, imposed unrealistic quality standards, leading to high rejection rates and financial distress. Connecting weavers with civil society organizations such as AIACA, NIFT, and HCL Foundation has provided exposure, thereby, fostering a sense of dignity. Beyond economic relief, Baragaon Weaves has reignited interest in Barabanki's weaving heritage, previously overshadowed by neighbouring Banarasi brocades, and Lucknowi embroideries. This shift has begun reversing the decline of the craft, inspiring pride among artisans. This case study highlights the transformative potential of ethical business models in reviving traditional crafts while ensuring fair wages, and recognition for artisans.

Key Words: Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Livelihood, Handloom



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P18. Wrapping with Purpose: A Sustainable and Artistic Alternative to Disposable Gift Wraps

In India, gift-giving is an integral part of festivals, weddings, and celebrations, symbolizing love, respect, and goodwill. However, this tradition leads to a growing environmental problem. Millions of gift-wrapping papers, and envelopes are discarded after a single use, creating significant waste and pollution. To tackle this issue, this research proposes a sustainable alternative: reusable gift-wrapping cloth and



envelopes. These eco-friendly wraps offer a way to reduce waste while maintaining the joy of gifting. The initiative goes beyond sustainability by incorporating traditional Indian folk art, both printed and hand-painted, on the wraps. This not only offers a creative, artistic touch to each gift, but also serves as a way to preserve, and promote India's rich cultural heritage. The vibrant designs educate the younger generation about the beauty of Indian art, fostering cultural appreciation and pride. Additionally, the project supports local artisans by providing them with opportunities to showcase their work, creating a sustainable source of income. By adopting these reusable, art-infused gift wraps, we can reduce waste, protect the environment, and celebrate Indian cultural while supporting artisans. This initiative redefines gift-wrapping into a meaningful, sustainable practice that enhances the gifting experience.

Key Words: Eco-Conscious Gifting, Reusable Gift Wraps, Indian Folk Art, Waste Reduction, Eco-Friendly Alternatives.



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P19. Everything Sustainable: How Sustainability and its Varying Interpretations Converge through Design

Immersing in the domain of omnipresent notions and widely used buzzwords, the research analyses the concept of sustainability amidst its frequent appearances in various fields of study, in public conscious, and consumer culture. Its connotations within the fields make it challenging to understand the transformations of its meaning over time. While the concept has gained traction, the real-world practices, and systemic changes necessary to address the looming crises of climate change remain largely unchanged. The aspect of reoccurrence highlights its widespread misinterpretations, each

marked by the rhetoric that in some way underscores the complexity of its meanings. Considering these facets, the research sets out by exploring the contested notion of sustainability : its historical semantics, contextual meanings, and the adaptation/application in the form of tangible products. The pursuit of sustainability through product development often remains confined within the boundaries of surface-level efforts when the ample usage of plastic is argued. The research, therefore, aims to explore the possible motivations behind the creation of industrially designed products, particularly when juxtaposed against the practice of their obsolescence. Under the framework of this study, several of these products are bound within limits of design at the *Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm* from the design discourses, and are discussed through the lens of sustainable design in the context of the scrutiny of the concept.

The research, thus, investigates how the established discourses reflect through products that bring design and most importantly, the act of design into the discussion of sustainability. The narrative then bridges sustainability through design by looking away from the professional design discourses towards everyday practices that add meaning, and look beyond their intended life.

Keywords: Sustainability, Design, Consumer Culture, Obsolescence



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