



KALA RAKSHA
Preservation of Traditional Arts



KALA RAKSHA VIDHYALAYA



CELEBRATES 7TH CONVOCATION



PROJECT REPORT **30 OCTOBER-24 DECEMBER 2012**

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THE SEVENTH ANNUAL KALA RAKHA VIDHYALAYA CONVOCATION MELA

The Convocation is always a time to look back and see what we all have achieved in the year, to appreciate, and to give thanks. This was the Year of Emergence of The Artisan Designer.



After seven years of KRV we have begun to see the blossoming of Artisan Designers. KARVADA members impressed an international audience at the "Make it New Again" Symposium held at NID in November; they had fresh work, and they could talk about it. Women graduates *initiated* and created collections for this year's fashion show. Graduates who had gone back to production work, for several years, began to show new collections. They had gathered all that they had learned and made it their own, and they started making new designs.

It reminds us that things take time.

There is a movement in the world today called **Slow Cloth**. The idea comes from Slow Food- a response to the realization that satisfaction is missing in fast food. Slow cloth values quality, meaning, beauty and the time it takes-- the human dimension of craft. Craft is essentially human- and that is the part we love. Machines are needed to make many things faster, cheaper, more standard. **But craft is different. It is about the hand, the mind and the heart.**



Craft is also about the **uniqueness** of each crafts person. This year, we realized that in educating artisans you begin to see each person as unique-- not as an example of a group. At KRV we strive to nurture the special quality of each individual.

November 30- December 2nd marked this year's KRV Convocation Mela. The event, generously sponsored by Adani Foundation, CGPL-Tata Power, and Somaiya Group, began with a final jury conducted by experts in craft and design, including Radhi Parekh- founder of Artisans Gallery, Subrata Bhowmick- internationally renowned designer, Sonal Chitranshi, designer for Fabindia, Sangita Shroff, designer and former Director, Indian Institute of Craft and Design, and Lesley Mitchison- faculty Manchester Metropolitan University (UK).



The jury culminated in the always popular fashion show, choreographed by Utsav Dholakia Compered by Shweta Dhariwal, and styled by LOkesh Ghai. This year's fashion show was inaugurated by our generous sponsors and our Special Guest, the vivacious and avante garde Australian designer, Rebecca Paterson.





This year's graduates presented collections of contemporary styled traditions, ranging from the bold to the beautiful. The garments were designed in collaboration with students from Pearl Academy, Delhi, and M.S. University Baroda.



As ever, our KRV alumni made us proud with their sophisticated Artisan Designs. The grand finale was Rebecca modeling Parmaben's wedding collection stole.



The following day, Kala Raksha proudly received Professor Pradyumna Vyas, Director of the National Institute of Design, as our Chief Guest. Mr. Vyas delivered the keynote speech, affirming that design education for artisans was an important step for the invigoration of both traditions and contemporary design. Graduates Lakshmben Kalyanji Puvar and Hiteshbhai Dayalal Vankar spoke eloquently and sincerely about the

importance of design education in their lives, embodying the confidence and poise that education builds.



This year's jury awarded best collection to Hansuben Mohan Rabari and Soyabbhai A. Karim Khatri.



The convocation inaugurated a public Mela, which drew visitors from UK, Australia, Scotland, USA, and all over India. A number of people planned their visit to India around the KRV Mela. Artisans met and exchanged news and ideas. Visitors purchased fresh artisan designs. Many graduates recovered their annual fees in a few hours-- incontrovertible proof that their year of hard work was worthwhile. Everyone enjoyed Kutchi folk music, food and hands-on craft demonstrations.



Finally, artisans, graduates and the public joined in our traditional sanedo jam session-- the grand finale of a wonderful celebration of the flourishing culture of Kutch, and the welcoming of our newest Artisan Designers.



As we look forward to another year, a lasting image of this year's Mela is Jivaben walking the fashion show ramp. Her 1,000 watt smile makes her seem 20 years younger. She is the ambassador of Artisan Design. The message is this: do not compete with machines. Do what the human artist can do- **take time** to think, to play. What the artisans, young and old, have learned at KRV is a seed. It will grow and bear fruit. And together all of the individual Artisan Designers will create a **Movement of Slow Craft-- Artisan Design!**



ARTISAN DESIGN

Kala Raksha women Artisan Designers showcased their collaborations with Indian Fashion designer Anju Modi, and the suf group inaugurated one of a kind dupattas. These collections were tested in Mumbai at Artisans Gallery, and the public voted yes.



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Kala Raksha continues to focus on building links through which KRV graduates can develop their capacity as designers and find new and better markets. In December 2012, Kala Raksha and the Vidhyalaya hosted the seventh workshop of this year, with faculty from Kansas State University. These workshops foster exchange, and appreciation of artisan capacity, and we hope to build long term relationships between institutions.

Participants in workshops since January 2011 have included international design students and faculty from Colorado State University, Missouri State University and Kansas State University, students from Oregon State University, who earned college credits in the USA, students from the University of New South Wales Australia, and the National Institute of Design, art and design professionals from UK studying the 'Cotton Story,' and many interested travellers.

ALUMNI AND OUTREACH

KARVADA members held a group show in Artisans Gallery in Mumbai, a landmark in visibility. KARVADA and KRV women graduates are all working together toward a major event in Delhi.

KRV online

In September 2012, Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya enjoyed a feature by Jessica Marati "Teaching Design," in Hand/Eye magazine.

In October 2011, Annie Waterman published "[Empowering the Artisans](#)" an article about KRV in **Hand/Eye**. Articles on Artisan Design have also been published in three important online craft journals: **Hand/Eye** www.handeyemagazine.com 3 February 2010; **Craft Unbound** www.craftunbound.net 27 January 2011, and the **Craft Revival Trust Newsletter** www.craftrevival.org vol 110, issue 2 Winter-Spring 2011.

Kala Raksha is now on [Facebook](#).

THANKS TO GLOBAL GIVING!

The Indian financial year spans between April 2012 and March 2013. Our seventh year of classes is completed. KRV relies entirely on donations. This year, we have the challenge of raising over \$75,000 to operate our program. We are happy to announce that KRV has raised \$53,354 to cover the academic year of 2012, with another pledge of \$21,000. Of this, 11% was earned through the sustainability program, and 9% was raised through individual donations, primarily Global Giving! This is the equivalent of five and a half scholarships.

Kala Raksha is very close to achieving this year's goal. As we come to the end of the year, we thank Global Giving and hope that our supporters will think about making a [tax deductible gift!](#)

Your generous contribution can help! You can make a difference in the lives of our very creative constituency!!



THE NEXT PHASE

As KRV has focused on becoming more self-sustaining, opportunities are coming our way. In this year we will institute the sale of educational materials to raise funds, in addition to workshops for which we steadily receive clients. We also hope to raise funds through our major event at the end of the financial year. Financial sustainability is always a huge challenge for an educational institution. We welcome any entrepreneurial ideas – and ideas for increasing visibility-from our supporters. In the next year we envision significant and positive growth for KRV.

Again we thank you, our supporters. With your support, KRV will realize its mission of relevant, genuine education for traditional artisans!