



SOMAIYA KALA VIDYA: Class of 2018 Completes Course Work

"I'm usually in my workshop; I don't see the world. I came to SKV for exposure. The first two courses, Colour and Basic Design were difficult. After that, everything was easy!"
~ Vasim Abbas Khatri, SKV Class of 2018

PROJECT REPORT 15 June- 12 September 2018



Somaiya Kala Vidya is an institution for traditional artisans of Kutch, India. Combining over fifty years' experience of Somaiya Vidyavihar with ten years of design education for artisans, it offers sustained, coherent programs in design and business to provide effective, relevant and practical education. SKV honors and incorporates existing traditions. Its advisors are Master Artisans. Its faculty includes national and international educators. SKV offers workshops to the world and courses in craft traditions taught by artisan designers. Artisan-to-Artisan Outreach programs and Co-Design Collaborations demonstrate the importance of education for artisans, and generate awareness and motivation to build a movement of Design Craft.



EDUCATION FOR ARTISANS DESIGN FOR ARTISANS COURSE 2018

Education for artisans is SKV's reason for being. The class of 2018 began their design education journey on 15 January 2018. By now, we have completed all six courses, and the professional final jury for the year.

Course 2018-5 M- Finishing, Collection Development- 16-28 June 2018

Lokesh Ghai, design educator extraordinaire, taught the fifth course, Finishing, Collection Development. In this course, students learn to take their concepts to collections. The course begins with finishing- the quiet key to quality. Using local resources to teach hand and machine finishing, the course demonstrates a range of ways in which students can finish their products. This course also provides a practical experience of co-design. Participants from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda team with SKV students to develop collections. The caveat is that products must all be sustainable and production friendly, a constraint that encourages creativity. Students made layouts in full size to understand proportion and scale, and for homework they produce their collections.

Anas- *"I learned to think of finishing in terms of my concept."*

Sahid- *"I liked printing actual size on paper."*

Vasim- *"From the full size layout, I understood how to make a sari."*



Course 2018-3 W- Finishing, Collection Development- 23 July- 4 August 2018

Also taught by Visiting Faculty Lokesh Ghai, the SKV women's class learned hand and machine finishing, actual size layouts, and co-design methods. Lokesh had them push their boundaries, which in the end they realized took them to new levels. The MSU participants also learn from their experience. Nikita- "This was an experience other than that of industry." Krishna- "We never had such practical experience in college!"

Hadika- *"I understood composition from the actual size layout."*

Krishna- *"I learned to make a collection, which motif goes with what."*

Muskan- *"I learned to work with a free mind."*

Taina- *"I had to work to distinguish myself from my father."*



Course 2018-6 M- Merchandising, Presentation- 6-18 August 2018

The final course of the year, Merchandising, Presentation, brings all learning of the year together. Guided by Shwetha Shettar, veteran Visiting Faculty, the students learned to create an identity, style and photograph their collections, and present visually and verbally. For the final presentation, family members as well as alumni came and shared feedback and experiences. Everyone was happy and proud with the results of a year of new experiences and hard work.

Darshan's father- *"He has done designs I did not do in 25 years!"*

Ashwin's brother- *"Now he knows what weaving is; the value."*

Prashant's brother- *"The teaching here is relevant. It's step by step and makes sense."*



Course 2018-4 W- Merchandising, Presentation- 27 August- 5 September 2018

Guided by Visiting Faculty Nita Thakore, the women also reviewed their year, learning to make brand identities, and style and photograph their collections. The difference was that they were also eager to

model! Practicing to perfection, they also presented to a robust group of family and design graduates. Proud family members brought a few performances to tears of joy.

Krishna- *"My USP is that I like to take up challenges."*

Muskan- *"I was happy to be able to make in bandhani what I did in layouts."*

Hadika- *"The course broadened my horizons. I did what I thought wasn't possible. I learned to value my tradition: bandhani."*



FINAL JURY

Following the women's course, SKV held its final professional jury at Quality Inn Palms, Adipur. This year's panel included Asaf Ali, Co-Founder of Kashmir Loom Company; Deepa Krishnan, Founder, Mumbai Magic and member of National Task Force for Handlooms; Swasti Singh Ghai, Senior Faculty National Institute of Design; and Devayani Vaish, Design Manager, Textiles, Fabindia. The jury provided invaluable feedback that students will now implement before producing their collections for their Ahmedabad exhibition.



SKV Artisan Designer Seminar

The evening of the first jury day, SKV held its annual seminar. The seminar is an opportunity for artisan designers to openly discuss among themselves and with the jury issues they face. This year, the topic was, "Who Are the Workers?" With the push for scaled up production in the craft world, the egalitarian structure of artisan societies is challenged. As artisans transform from job workers to artisan designers and entrepreneurs through the SKV education program, they need people to work for them. Assuming that few people prefer to do job work, who then are the workers? The program began with a creative drama by a group of artisan designers. A lively discussion covered issues of growth, relations with workers- and among themselves, and much more. Surely craft is about so much more than money.

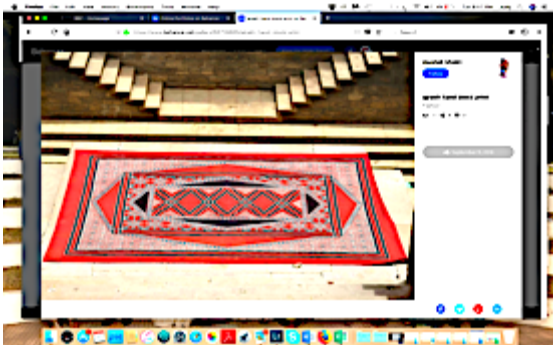




OUTREACH -BHUJODI TO BAGALKOT/ KUTCH TO KUMAON

Somaiya Kala Vidya Artisan-to-Artisan outreach programs share the benefits of artisan education. Artisan Designer graduates work with artisans in less exposed areas- as a kick-start to demonstrate that innovation in traditions, and design education are beneficial. Our flagship project with weavers in Bagalkot, Karnataka, Bhujodi to Bagalkot, completed its fifth year, and we excitedly began a new project with women weavers in Kumaon, Uttarakhand this year.

Both groups, with their Bhujodi weaver designer mentors took their new collections to Chennai for an exhibition from 6-8 September 2018. For the second year, the show was held at Amethyst's Folly hall. The Bagalkot weavers formally launched their **Jeevadara** label, and all artisans presented their collections in daily programs. Despite competition with another popular show during the same period, sales were good. Having learned from last year, the Bhujodi weaver designers put special effort into developing new collections based on their experiences. One objective of the program is to provide opportunities that insure that artisan designer continue to create new work. It paid in dividends, as the new work was very well received. The biggest learnings are the need to focus on using colour stories well, and that stoles are less popular than dupattas in an exhibition of predominantly saris.



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CO-DESIGN

SKV makes an effort to develop the artisan designer community. Periodically we offer workshops to insure that artisan designers continue to grow. On 22 July and 5 August, SKV offered a two-part portfolio development workshop, taught by Lokesh Ghai. Seven participants learned the basics of online portfolios. In two weeks they each put together a new collection, and had it professionally photographed. In part two, they uploaded portfolios on the website Behance. This is the beginning of more professional sharing of work.

Opportunities are key; that was one point that emerged from our seminar on scale. SKV was happy to receive two opportunities in this quarter, a project on upcycling and sustainability with Pearl Academy Mumbai, and the fourth round of Co-Design with University of Wisconsin Madison. The robust response for participants proves our point. We selected sixteen artisan designers to begin the upcycling project. Pearl Faculty Amala Chettiar came to Kutch to kick off the project. Initially the brief was to use recycled plastic in craft. Mr. Chettiar was surprised, and then delighted that the group firmly refused. "Plastic would devalue our work," Tulsiben told him. Digging a bit more, he realized that upcycling is

not a new concept in craft at all; it is a way of life. Each of the participants had ample examples of how he or she always finds a creative way to use damaged pieces -because they value their materials and work. So this should be a two-way learning experience.

SKV is happy to be at the forefront in developing co-design, a concept gaining interest in mainstream design institutes. The fourth co-design project with University of Wisconsin Madison will begin on 29 October. SKV Founder Director Judy Frater and UWM Professor Jennifer Angus co-designed a project that should improve on last year's. Ten UWM students are enrolled. Twenty-five artisan designers applied from SKV. The Selection Committee will now select from the list.



SKV WORKSHOPS, COURSES, --AND NOW OPEN STUDIO TOURS TO THE WORLD

Since its inception, SKV has been raising awareness and value for artisans' traditional knowledge and skills by conducting workshops and courses taught by artisan designer faculty.

In November SKV launched Open Studio Tours in Bhujodi and Ajrakhpur.

Though Open Studio Tours have finished for the season, we had a special request from an international project to learn about Kutch textile traditions. On 19-20 August, we took the Russian-German-French and Indian team to visit studios in Ajrakhpur and Bhujodi. The artisan designer team is now seasoned and gave an excellent tour, which was videoed for the project. As a bonus, Dr. Ismailbhai Khatri took us all to Nani Banni to visit the original maldhari Ajrakh clients. Sadly, not one was wearing Ajrakh! Sobering signs of the times.

Our next Open Studio Tour season will begin on 27 October. Workshops are arranged on demand. Proceeds from both workshops and Open Studio tours support SKV programs, insuring financial as well as cultural sustainability. For more information contact pallavi.kalavidya@somaiya.org.



STAFF AND ALUMNI NEWS

From 13-15 July, Artisan Designer Abdulaziz Alimamad Khatri participated for the fourth time in the International Folk Art Market| Santa Fe. His excellent bandhani is very well received, and for the second time he got an order from Donna Karan. On 10 June, Adilbhai and Purshottambhai were both invited to present their life stories as inspiration for Josh Talks. Purshottambhai's talk was uploaded on YouTube on 2 August. It has already received thousands of views!

On 9 August, Founder Director Judy Frater presented SKV's work at the launch of Social Venture Partners in Ahmedabad. We hope to be able to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with SVP.

SKV IN PRINT, OUTLOUD AND ONLINE

Browse the SKV [website](#).

Learn more about our work on our [facebook](#) page.

For a discussion on issues of art and artisan, follow Judy Frater's [blog](#)

Find SKV on [Instagram](#)!

And on 6 July 2018, SKV began a [YouTube channel](#).

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnxbdYle8v36eDHqmdEiFsg/featured?view_as=subscriber

We edited excerpts from our 2016 seminar on a decade of education for artisans, and uploaded three clips to date.

On 21 June 2018, SKV's workshops and Open Studio Tours were featured at [ClothRoads](#).

<https://www.clothroads.com/indian-artisans-and-design-education/>

We were also fortunate to have articles on our event in Chennai written in three newspapers:

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-metroplus/threads-of-life/article24868615.ece>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/When-mlange-of-artisan-designers-weaves-magic/articleshow/65693413.cms?from=mdr>

<http://www.indulgexpress.com/fashion/trends/2018/sep/07/the-fifth-edition-of-skvs-bhujodi-to-bagalkot-will-feature-the-works-of-weavers-from-kutch-bagalko-9988.htm>



DESIGN CRAFT

The Somaiya Agencies' innovative business to complement SKV's educational programs, **Design Craft**, offers a juried selection of artisan designed and created textiles, bringing the best in contemporary craft to one platform. It provides artisan designers with a great opportunity to present their brands, under their own labels, and it will fund SKV's education for traditional artisans with the profits from sales. Currently, 69 artisan designers are represented.

You can meet the Design Craft artisans on the SKV website. We welcome you to log onto **www.somaiya-kalavidya.org**. Under Design Craft you will find a map, and a link to profiles of each artisan designer. A work of art in itself, the map with artisan designer logos is also available in hard copy.

Design Craft's flagship shop is located in Somaiya Bhavan, 45-47, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Post Box No.384, Fort, Mumbai. Phone: +91-22 61702273.

2018 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

27 October 2018- SKV Open Studio Tours begin- Contact SKV for detail

1-4 November 2018- SKV Design Class 2018 collections exhibition, Ahmedabad

8 December 2018- Kala Umang! 2018- Convocation and Fashion show, Kutch



SKV GOVERNING COUNCIL AND ADVISORS

SKV's Governing Council includes Shri Samir Somaiya, Amritaben Somaiya, V. Ranganathan, Mitenbhai Sachade, Judy Frater, Anjana Somany, Lokesh Ghai, and Irfan Anwar Khatri.

The institute is also advised by a team of visionary Master Artisans, who guide us in honouring and nurturing textile traditions: Gulam Hussain Umar -bandhani artist, Bhuj; Dr. Ismail Mohammed Khatri - block printer, Ajrakhpur; Shyamji Vishramji Siju- weaver, Bhujodi; Umar Farouk Khatri- bandhani artist, Bhadli; and Ali Mohammed Isha -bandhani artist, Bhuj.



THANKS TO GLOBAL GIVING!

On **13 March 2017** SKV posted a project on **Global Giving**. Global Giving makes donation easy. To kick off our project, in March 2017 we met a challenge by raising US\$ 6,563 from 43 donors. Today, 76 donors have raised \$11,735—enough to fund an entire class of our sincere and talented artisan students. This greatly encourages Somaiya Kala Vidya and increases our visibility immensely.

On Global Giving's 18 July 2018, Matching Day we raised \$ 1,900. Our Global Giving account was set up in 2016 by Claire Gohorel, who interned with SKV before doing a Craft Traditions Course. This August, Claire married her sweetheart and asked friends and family to donate to SKV in lieu of wedding gifts. We received over USD 600!

Thank you Global Giving, and thank you, Claire!



LOOKING AHEAD

The class of 2018 has completed an arduous and fruitful year of design education. This weekend they will attend a workshop on production management, and produce their final collections for an exhibition/sale in Ahmedabad in November. We are sure that they are well on their way to being successful artisan designers.

Design education makes a difference. As our cadre of Artisan Designers grows, SKV looks to insuring that there will be an appropriate opportunities for them, and a market to value small production quality craft. Together we can insure a sustainable future for craft traditions.

“Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” ~ Mahatma Gandhi