



# Somaiya Kala Vidya Class of 2021

## PROJECT REPORT

January – 2021

***“It is my father’s dream of doing natural dyeing that I want to carry forward” Sohail Junas Khatri Class of 2020***

### A Note on Names

A key goal of Somaiya Kala Vidya’s education for artisans’ programs is to bring visibility to unrecognized artisans. Our students and graduates, faculty and workshop participants are proud and happy to be recognized and have consented to have their names shared.



A division of K.J. Somaiya (Gujarat) Trust, Reg. E-7405  
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Somaiya Kala Vidya is an institution for traditional artisans of Kutch, India. Combining over fifty years' experience of Somaiya Vidyavihar University with fourteen 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 are professional 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 motivation to build a movement of Design Craft.

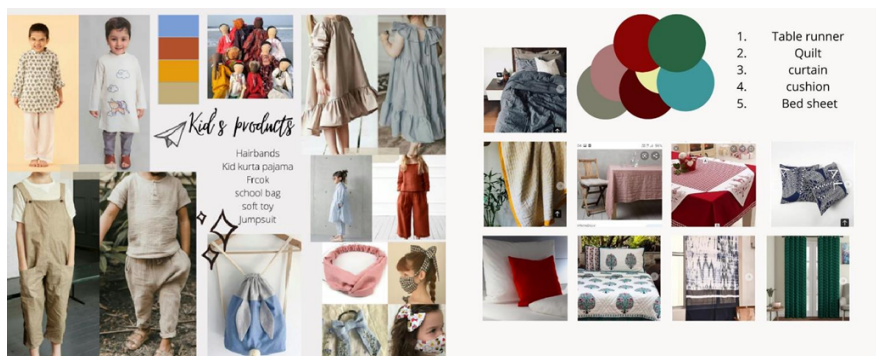
## EDUCATION FOR ARTISANS

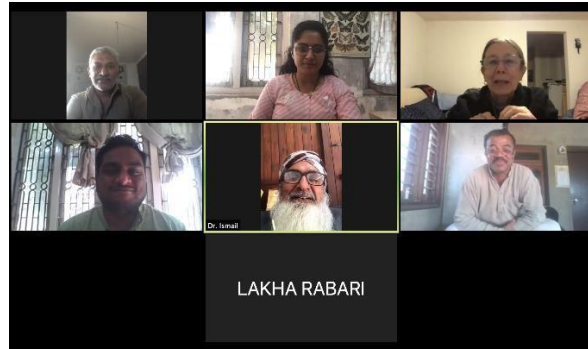
### DESIGN FOR ARTISANS COURSE 2019

Education for artisans is SKV's reason for being. This academic year started with two classes for the design course running simultaneously. The men's class has ten students and the women's class has seven students. The classes of 2020 began their design education journey with orientation workshops on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of December respectively.

### Assignments – Keeping the Momentum Up

Considering the current pandemic situation, and the constraint that a design course could not be taught via online media. We decided this would be the apt time to motivate the students and introduce them to a new set of assignments that would lead to a final online exhibition for sales. The assignments were taken by Anahita Ginwala and Shwetha Shettar for the women's class and Lokesh Ghai for the Men's class. Two of the three faculty have already taken physical classes with the students making it easier for them to interact and receive feedback. The assignments were organized in the months of January – April. Our students were also affected by the second wave of pandemic that hit the country. We are slowly trying to restart the work and hope to host the exhibition soon.





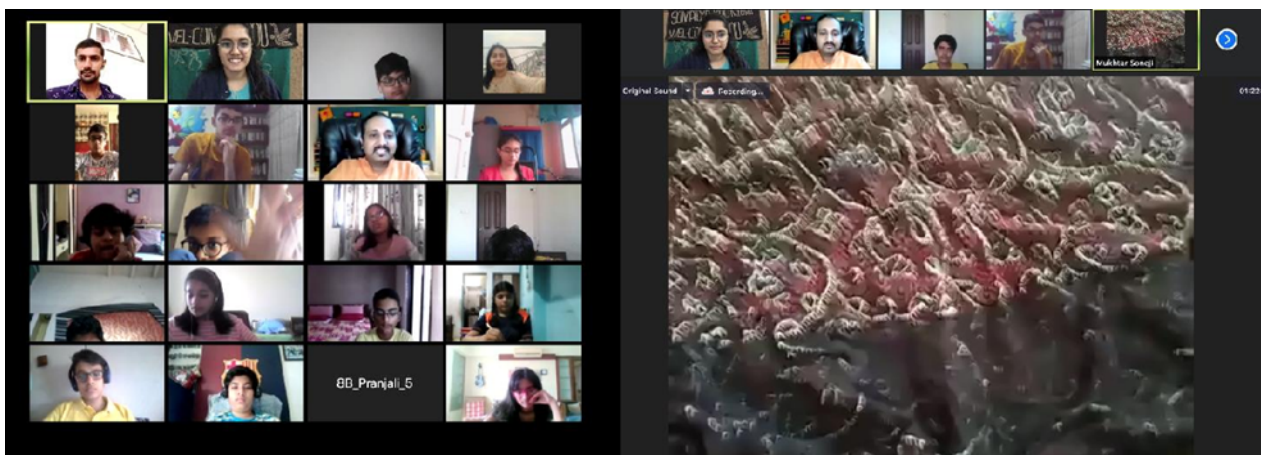
SKV Advisors are eminent master artisans from each individual craft that is represented at SKV. We held an online Zoom meeting to update, take feedback/suggestions for the ongoing class. In the meeting it was decided to conceive another younger body of graduate advisors to assist in the functioning of the institute. These graduate advisors will also be trained to take up the role of advisors at a later stage as and when required.

### **SKV Graduate Advisors Meeting**

SKV Graduate Advisors are graduates of the Somaiya Kala Vidya and are well versed with their own traditions and the nuances of design and the terminology used. The body was formed to assist the staff at SKV to advise on the course, admissions and on the current needs of the graduates. We held our first meeting amidst the second wave that hit the country to understand how the institute could help the graduates in any way possible. We hope that this body would grow and evolve to be a pillar of support for our future endeavors.

### **SKV – The Somaiya School Collaboration**

SKV organized introduction to Bandhani workshops for the students of The Somaiya School. We did three workshops with an average class size of twenty each on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of December. The workshops were well received and our permanent local faculty Mukhtarbhai really enjoyed them. We are working on building more such workshops for the students in other crafts. SKV administration is working on building a curriculum to offer as a source of sustainability for the organization, to generate revenue and help the graduates promote their work and generate income.

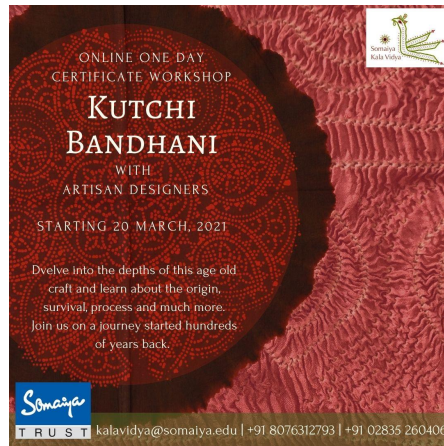




## **SKV Online Workshops**

Somaiya Kala Vidya, an institute of education for artisans in the desert region of Kutch, India, offers One Day Workshops in various traditional crafts, focusing on the traditional essence and individual innovations of contemporary craft traditions of Kutch, for design and textile enthusiasts. The studios are all independently operated by master traditional artisans who have graduated from the design course. Due to COVID-19, we piloted the workshop online where we tried to cultivate a similar hand-on-experience for the participants. The workshops held scope for getting in-depth knowledge of Bandhani and Batik and covered various aspects like origin, community, survival, markets, and others.

The participants were provided with a list of materials that they sourced to try out Bandhani under the online guidance of the artisan designers. The workshop included 16 participants from around the country. After the success with the Pilot, we are hoping to do more such workshops with people across the world.



## **SKV – Internships and Volunteers**

Somaiya kala Vidya opened to interns and volunteers this year. We hosted one intern from The Naropa Fellowship. Due to the pandemic situation the three-month internship happened remotely. Kinley Choden worked on two verticals, one was on how to build a better English-speaking curriculum for the artisans. She interacted with the current students and local faculty to understand the current challenges. The second vertical was to build a marketing plan for the sustainability courses offered by SKV. Kinley also shared our vision with the Royal Textile Museum in Bhutan. Post Pandemic we will be working on a collaboration for an outreach program with them in Bhutan.

SKV in the month of June launched a remote volunteering opportunity for students and interested participants to gain insights into the working of SKV. We got close to 12 applications out of whom we selected three applicants to work with. Through the volunteers we will be collating data around the current needs of the graduates and assist in any way possible.

## INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The construction of our new campus which began on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2020 is taking shape. The first phase of the same is expected to complete in Mid-August 2021. The rest of the course for this class will restart in the new campus.



## STAFF AND ALUMNI NEWS

SKV in association with Connect India – HongKong is organizing an online exhibition in the month of October – November. Thirteen of our Alumni participated in the collaboration making a sale of products worth Adilbhai Khatri won the Next Gen Entrepreneur Award from AIACA New Delhi. Adilbhai Khatri and Pachanbhai Vankar will also be exhibiting in the upcoming International Folk Art Market from 7<sup>th</sup> of July to 11<sup>th</sup> of July in Santa Fe.



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 2017 SKV launched Open Studio Tours in Bhujodi and Ajrakhpur. Proceeds from both workshops and Open Studio tours support SKV programs, ensuring financial as well as cultural sustainability. The workshops, courses and open studio tours are cancelled/postponed until further notice amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. The Online One Day Workshops are still running.

For more information contact [kalavidya@somaiya.org](mailto:kalavidya@somaiya.org).

### **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](#)!

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

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnbdYle8v36eDHqmdEiFsg/featured?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnbdYle8v36eDHqmdEiFsg/featured?view_as=subscriber)

We have 9 videos on our channel, all providing important insights on craft in Kutch today. Please do look for updates on our convocation here.

SKV is on [Trip Advisor](#), and our Open Studio Tours are the first and only [Airbnb Experience](#) in Kutch!

### **DESIGN CRAFT Association**

Design Craft Association was formed to foster a community of artisan designers and offer them a presence and a platform. It provides artisan designers with a great opportunity to present their brands, under their own labels.

SKV is working with Design Craft to build an online space for exhibition and sales for the graduates. This would assist them during the current pandemic as the avenues for sales has dwindled.

You can meet Design Craft artisans on the SKV website. We welcome you to log onto [www.somaiya-kalavidya.org](http://www.somaiya-kalavidya.org). Under Design Craft you will find a map, and a link **Design Craft Members** that will take you to profiles of each artisan designer. We password-protected the profiles. You will have to register to view them, but it is an easy procedure.

### **SKV GOVERNING COUNCIL AND ADVISORS**

SKV's Governing Council includes Shri Samir Somaiya, Amritaben Somaiya, Lt. Gen Jagbir Singh, 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; Ali Mohammed Isha -bandhani artist, Bhuj; Umar Farouk Khatri- bandhani artist, Bhadli; Dr. Ismail Mohammed Khatri – Ajrakh artist, Ajrakhpur; and Shyamji Vishramji Siju- weaver, Bhujodi.

### **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, 116 donors have

raised \$18,065—more than enough to fund an entire class of our sincere and talented artisan students. This greatly encourages Somaiya Kala Vidya and increases our visibility immensely.

Thank you, Global Giving.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The classes of 2020-2021 will be resumed as soon as the situation eases down. We are planning to follow all safety protocols for as and when the institute resumes operations. Amidst the ongoing Pandemic, the artisan designers have shown great courage, grit, and determination, they have made us realize that the true test of an education is in times like this. During the second wave the artisan communities formed local action teams and pooled in resources to help each other out. The pandemic had been tough and a few of us lost someone very close to us. We hope to come out stronger together and provide an even better platform to educate artisans in the context that is necessary for them.

Keeping that in mind, the team at SKV is also planning a few workshops both for the alumni and the students, that would make them better prepared for situations in which we currently find us in. We hope for a better future but at the same time are preparing, planning for whatever the future has to offer.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead*