

Academic Year Begins! 2020



PROJECT REPORT 18 December 2019- 16 March 2020

“The only dream I have is to promote the art of weaving” ~Ramesh Parbhat Mangariya, SKV 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.



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 26th and 27th of December respectively. Orientation practically lets the students know that this is not a school like those they have known and breaks the ice so that they can comfortably begin with the content of the course. Program Coordinator Arun Singh along with the Director in training Nishit Sangomla and local faculty Mukhtar Khatri led the students through games that taught teamwork, time management, values, and speaking up. The learnings for both the classes were unique to the diverse group that had been selected. Common learnings were around leadership, respecting and valuing each other and their work and listening before acting.



Course – 1 Colour Sourcing from nature and heritage

Course 1, taught by Sanjukta Roy, for both the classes, was held from 30th December 2019 - 11th January 2020 and 13th – 25th January for men and women respectively. The students learned to sketch, paint,

mix colours, create and understand a colour wheel. The learnings were put into practical's through dyeing fabric and yarns in the colour wheel colours. They learned about heritage from our master artisan Advisors and sketched and painted on the Dhrabudi beach.



Course 2- Basic Design: Sourcing from Heritage and Nature

Course 2 was taught by veteran teacher Nita Thakore for the men's class from 27th January – 8th February and by Koral Adenwala, an artist, for the women's class from 10th – 22nd February. The students were introduced to elements of design, from dot to line to texture, learning by observing and drawing every morning, rubbing existing textures, and creating their own visual and tactile variations. The learnings were put into practicals right away giving them a better understanding of the relevance of design in their traditional textiles. The final presentations were a testimonial to the different perspectives that were built from the same teachings.



Course 3- Market Orientation

Course 3 for men was taught by SKV Visiting Faculty LOkesh Ghai, from 24th February – 7th March. Anahita Ginwala began her course for the women's class on 9th March and will continue until 21st March. After learning how they can vary their work, the students learned why? For whom? The centerpiece of the course is a three-day field trip to Ahmedabad city to visit a range of shops and craft lovers' homes. They students then learn to analyze their observations and think about cost and perceived value. To orient the class, the respective faculty had students cook lunch for themselves, and the staff. They then had to cost the meal- including the huge number of leftovers. Thinking of planning and costing for other than their livelihood work enabled them to easily understand how they might have streamlined the task. The men did role plays of shops and customers in preparation for their field trip.



The men's class visited different marketplaces during their field trip to Ahmedabad. They visited houses of potential customers, showed their work and understood the tastes and interests of their final customer. The final presentation was an enriching session, each student shared his story, his understanding of the market and where he would like his designs to be exhibited for sale.



Fibers and Structures Workshop

A workshop on fibers and structure was conducted by MS University Baroda, faculty member Parthraj Puranik on the 7th of March. The workshop gave the students a brief idea on the difference between fibers and how to identify them using a microscope and burn test. For most of them it was the first time to look through a microscope and see the fibers they work with every day close up. Sohailbhai even got the opportunity to set the microscope himself and he did a commendable job as no readjustment was done.

OUTREACH -KUTCH TO KUMAON AND BHUJODI TO BAGALKOT

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.

The second phase of our Outreach project Kutch to Kumaon with our partner NGO Avani began on 12th of March 2020 and will end on 20th March 2020. This would be the first course in a design program for the artisan students of Avani. Rajeshbhai and Pachanbhai are the artisan designer mentors and LOKesh Ghai is the faculty moderating and assisting the group. We are happy to share that four of the women artisans who began the project in 2018 along with two new participants are taking the first course this year. Building on what we were able to achieve, the response the designs developed received from the market, we hope to have a great learning session for everyone involved with the project.

The planning for our flagship Outreach project Bhujodi to Bagalkot is underway. 15th – 20th April are the dates decided for the workshop which will focus on Organizational structuring and sustainability, in addition to developing a collection. The designs from both the projects will be exhibited in the month of September; the location is yet to be decided.



INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT & CO-DESIGN

Somaiya Kala Vidya is happy to connect with and develop other efforts in design education for artisans. We are especially happy to be at the forefront in developing co-design, a concept gaining interest in mainstream design institutes.

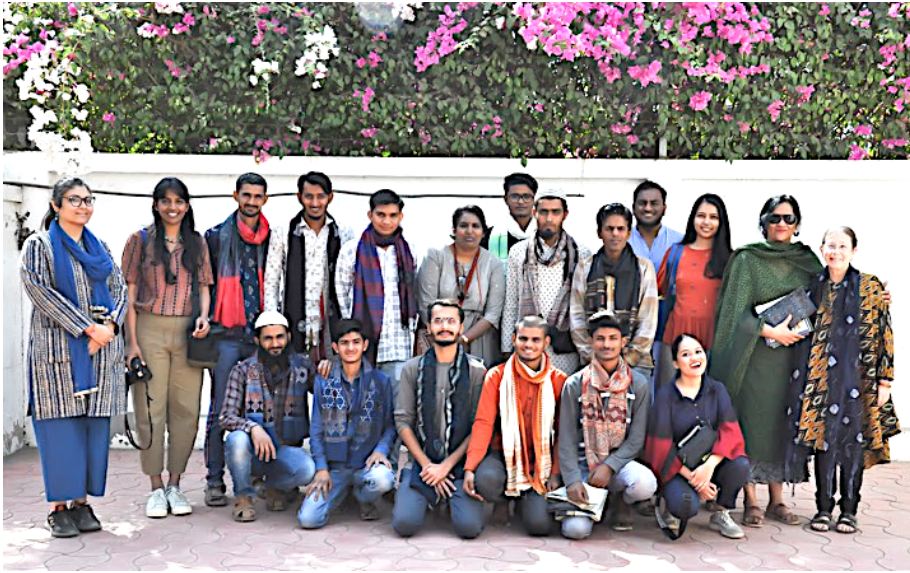
In our flagship Co-Design program with the University of Wisconsin Madison, a group of 10 artisan designers embarked on the fifth collaboration with UWM design students on 31 October. The project ended on 25th of January 2020 with the designed products being sent to UWM on 26th February 2020.

The Co-Design project with the Instituto Italiano Disegno of Italy, with 7 artisan designers is ongoing. The Italian students will design garments and SKV artisan designers will complete the ensembles.

We are sure that education for artisans has a tremendous positive impact. But proving it to the world requires data. On 31 October we initiated a value-based impact assessment, conducted by cultural economist Dr. Priyatej Kotipalli. Dr. Kotipalli and team interviewed 25 graduates over seventeen days, with videography. The impact assessment is an ongoing project and we will share the same on our Youtube channel as and when the assessment report is out.

We have planned a Business and Management for Artisans workshop for the graduates of the design course from the 7th – 11th of April 2020. BMA is also a year-long post graduate course offering from Somaiya Kala Vidya. The workshop will be taken by Nilesh Priyadarshi and the current Director in training Nishit Sangomla. We are also working with Design Craft Association members to officially register the group in order to be able to operate a business. Meetings were held in respective villages and then at the SKV Permanent Faculty's home on the 22nd February 2020. The final meeting will take place on 23rd March 2020, in which the membership fees will be taken, an official body created along with terms and conditions for the operations of the association.

We are delighted to share that the construction of our new campus started on 3rd February 2020. The first phase of the construction should finish by the end of next financial year.



STAFF AND ALUMNI NEWS

Nishit Sangomla, joined as Director in training on 30th November 2019. Nishit is deeply interested in education for artisans and has worked with rural artisans at Barefoot College in Tilonia Rajasthan, Himalayan Blooms in Uttarakhand, and Naropa Fellowship in Ladakh. We welcome Nishitbhai and look forward to continued growth under his dynamic leadership.

On 31st January 2020 Arun Singh resigned from his job and on 2nd March 2020 Divyashree Dubey joined SKV as the new program coordinator. Divyashree also cares deeply about craft and wants to contribute to its sustainable growth. We look forward to an interesting journey together.

The class of 2019 participated in the Dastkar design fair, Delhi from the 9th – 20th of January 2020. They presented their collections for sale and got a good response from the market. Two of our Alumni got married this year. Dilipbhai, a weaver designer, who graduated in 2017 and Tulsiben, an embroidery designer, who graduated in 2014 from the BMA course got married on 30th January and 10th February respectively.



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. This quarter we had three single day workshops with different artisan designers. On 23rd December Zoe Coughlan from Earthen experiences along with her mother did a workshop on Ajrakh. Preeti Parikh took an Ajrakh workshop on the 29th December. The first thing they learned was the complexity and sophistication of a craft tradition. After that came washing, mixing materials, printing, washing, printing. Fiona Wright from the Creative Arts Safaris brought thirteen women from Australia who learned applique from three master embroiders Sajnuben, Tulsiben and Taraben in the traditional way- by experience, with expert guidance.



In November 2017 SKV launched Open Studio Tours in Bhujodi and Ajrakhpur. We did 14 open studio tours this season with representation from USA, Singapore, Australia, England, Austria and India. Workshops are scheduled on demand. Special Open Studio Tours can also be organized. Proceeds from both workshops and Open Studio tours support SKV programs, insuring financial as well as cultural sustainability. For more information contact kalavidya@somaiya.org.

SKV IN PRINT, OUTLOUD AND ONLINE

SKV Convocation was covered by Divya Bhaskar Ahmedabad, the article was published on 15th December 2019. Our Founder – Director, Judy Frater was covered by the Kutch Mitra, a daily newspaper for the Kutch region. The article was published on 18th December 2019.

Browse the SKV [website](http://www.somaiya-kalavidya.org).

Learn more about our work on our [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/skv.institute) page.

For a discussion on issues of art and artisan, follow Judy Frater's [blog](https://www.blogger.com/blog)

Find SKV on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/skv.institute)!

On 6 July 2018, SKV began a [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnbxdYle8v36eDHqmdEiFsg).

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnbxdYle8v36eDHqmdEiFsg/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](https://www.tripadvisor.com), and our Open Studio Tours are the first and only [Airbnb Experience](https://www.airbnb.com/experiences/skv) in Kutch! We did one tour on 6th February 2020 through AirBNB and got five-star review. There have been five enquires so far and forty – eight-page visits. We believe the bookings will pick up and are looking forward to the next season.

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.

You can meet 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 **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.

2020 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

10-12 September SKV Outreach Exhibition, Artisan-to-Artisan Design 2020

15-17 October SKV Design Student Exhibition 2020, Ahmedabad

5 December Kala Umang! 2020

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 \$17,435—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. During the period December 2019 – March 2020, our project raised \$1720- enough for us to support scholarships for two students.

Thank you, Global Giving!



LOOKING AHEAD

The classes of 2020 look promising. We are now halfway through the third of six courses for the class of 2020.

As awareness and concern make sustainability and co-design household words, each year more opportunities come to our growing cadre of artisan designers. Their capacity is increasing, and increasingly they are recognized. It is indisputable that design education makes a difference. Amidst the tides of change, we look forward to a great year of learning and exploration.

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