

OUTLOOK

— INSIGHTS

MEGHWAL LEATHER CRAFT IS AN OLD TRADITIONAL HANDCRAFT FROM THE REGION OF KUTCH, GUJRAT IN INDIA. TRADITIONALLY THE ARTISANS PROCESSED THEIR OWN LEATHER FROM THE CATTLE AROUND THE VILLAGES AND MADE PRODUCTS FOR DAILY USE. WITH THE NEW AGE ALTERNATIVE MASS PRODUCED PRODUCTS TOOK THE PLACE OF HANDCRAFTED DAILY ITEMS. THE ARTISANS STOPPED PROCESSING THEIR OWN LEATHER AND SOME INNOVATIVE CRAFTSMEN STARTED PRODUCING LIFESTYLE ACCESSORIES WITH THE TOOLS AND THE KNOWLEDGE AVAILABLE TO THEM. THEY EXTENSIVELY USED THEIR STYLE OF PUNCING AND LEATHER EMBROIDERY TO PRODUCE BEAUTIFUL MODERN DAY ACCESSORIES. BUT NOW THE LEATHER THEY SOURCE FROM THE MARKETS IS EXPENSIVE AND THE CRAFT TIME CONSUMING. THESE THINGS HAVE FORCED A LOT OF THEM TO LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF INCOME.

— THOUGHTS ON A POSSIBLE FUTURE OF THE PROJECT

CREATING AWARENESS ABOUT THE CRAFT AND MAKING IT AVAILABLE TO A WIDER AUDIENCE THROUGH DIFFERENT MEDIUMS LIKE WORKSHOPS, LIVE DEMOS AND CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTS. BRING DESIGNERS AND CRAFTSMEN TOGETHER TO CO-CREATE A NEW RANGE OF PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS AROUND THE TRADITION OF LEATHER CRAFT AND OPEN NEW PATHWAYS FOR THE ARTISANS.

— REFLECTION ON ENCOUNTERED CHALLENGES

LEATHER AS A MATERIAL WAS NEW TO ALL OF US. IT TOOK US A LITTLE WHILE TO FIGURE OUT THE DYNAMICS OF LEATHER AND THE TOOLS USED TO ALTER IT. THE ARTISANS COME FROM A RICH HERITAGE AND POSSESS A LOT OF KNOW HOW ABOUT LEATHER, THE PRODUCTS AND THE MARKET. THEY ALSO HAVE AN IDENTITY OF THEIR OWN IN THE PRODUCTS THEY MAKE. IT WAS A CHALLENGE TO THINK WITH ALL OF THESE THINGS IN MIND.



INITIALLY WE THOUGHT OF USING THE WASTE LEATHER PEICES, THE PUNCHED OUT PARTS IN A WAY THAT COULD BE APPEALING AFTER THE DESIGN BRIEF AND RESEARCH WE HAD TO DEFINE OUR DIRECTION. OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE WAS TO USE LEATHER IN AN ECONOMIC AND FUNCTIONAL WAY. CONSUMING LESSER MATERIAL BY COMBINING IT WITH FABRIC, REDUCING THE PRODUCTION TIME BY INTRODUCING SIMPLER PRODUCT PROFILES, LOOKING AT ADDING MORE UTILITY TO THE LIFESTYLE PRODUCTS AND MAKING IT APPEAL TO A WIDER MARKET WERE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WE TRIED TO ADDRESS THROUGH OUR PRODUCTS. WE CHOSE BAGS AND WALLET AS OUR TARGET PRODUCTS AND WORKED ON OPTIMIZING THEM BY USING LESS LEATHER. WE ALSO LOOKED AT THE PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF LEATHER AND TRIED INCORPORATING IT AS A PHYSICAL ELEMENT IN OUR PRODUCTS RATHER THEN JUST HAVING IT AS AN AESTHETIC ELEMENT. AFTER INITIAL MODELS WE REALISED THAT FABRIC COMBINATION CAN BE QUITE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE FOR INEXPERIENCED PEOPLE LIKE US AND TRIED OUR BEST TO MAKE PRODUCTS THAT COMPLEMENT OUR DESIGN BRIEF.

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INTERNATIONAL DESIGN STUDIO

02.—13.02 2015

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JIANGNAN UNIVERSITY

— WUXHI, JIANGSU

ZURICH UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

— ZURICH

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MEGHWAL LEATHER CRAFT
PALAK KHARE
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“DEVELOPING A RANGE OF PRODUCTS WHICH ARE INNOVATIVE, COST EFFECTIVE, UTILITARIAN AND CATER TO DIFFERENT CONSUMER GROUPS WHILE MAINTAINING THE MEHWAL LEATHER CRAFT IDENTITY.”

AFTER AN ENGAGING DIALOGUE WITH THE ARTISANS WE TRIED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE PROBLEM AREAS COULD BE AND DOCUMENTED IT IN A MIND MAP FOR AN OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION.

THE PROBLEM AREAS THAT WE THOUGHT WE COULD WORK IN WERE:

1. MANAGEMENT: AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ANY KIND OF PRODUCTION, MANAGEMENT ENCOMPASSES TIME, PEOPLE, WORK DISTRIBUTION, USAGE OF TOOLS AND ALSO THE WASTE GENERATED. WE STUDIED THE WAY THE ARTISANS MANAGE THEIR TIME AND LOOKED AT AREAS WHERE THEY COULD OPTIMIZE THE TIME THEY HAVE.

OUR MAIN GOALS.

ITTY IN A CONTEMPORARY WAY WAS ONE OF ALL THEIR PRODUCTS. MAINTAINING THEIR IDENTIFY IN A CONTEMPORARY WAY WAS ONE OF OUR MAIN GOALS.

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THEIR CRAFT. THE USE OF PUNCHED OUT MOTIFS, COLOURFUL EMBROIDERY, USE OF COL-OURFUL CLOTH LINING IS FOUND IN ALMOST ALL THEIR PRODUCTS. MAINTAINING THEIR IDENTIFY IN A CONTEMPORARY WAY WAS ONE OF OUR MAIN GOALS.

2. COSTING: COSTING IS A DECISIVE FACTOR IN TERMS OF PRODUCTS. IN CASE OF THE MEGHWAL LEATHER CRAFT THE COST OF THE LEATHER AND THE HANDWORK ARE THE MAJOR COST CONTRIBUTORS. THE TIME REQUIRED TO CRAFT A PRODUCT IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT. OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO MAKE THE PRODUCTION, COST EFFECTIVE.

3. IDENTITY: THE RICH HERITAGE THE ARTISANS COME FROM, GIVES AN INTERESTING IDENTITY TO THEIR CRAFT. THE USE OF PUNCHED OUT MOTIFS, COLOURFUL EMBROIDERY, USE OF COL-OURFUL CLOTH LINING IS FOUND IN ALMOST ALL THEIR PRODUCTS. MAINTAINING THEIR IDENTIFY IN A CONTEMPORARY WAY WAS ONE OF OUR MAIN GOALS.

DESIGN BRIEF

DESIGN TRANSFER

