



Whizomes

8-14 July 2024



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A praxis for social change

In 2009, during a BFA Solo Exhibition Project, the late Bhadra Man Tuladhar, a founder and then Registrar of Kathmandu University (KU), publicly announced that the Department of Art and Design (KU Art+Design) was ready to offer a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) programme the following year. He had closely observed the department since its inception and was thrilled to see how the annual BFA Solo Exhibitions were shifting the paradigm of Nepali art and art education. His assertion that the team could successfully implement a graduate programme was based on the department's remarkable growth in such a short time. The trust he placed in the department motivated the team to prepare for this endeavour.

Within the realm of art and design education, KU Art+Design's meticulously crafted Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) programme stands tall. This comprehensive programme has been periodically updated to provide aspiring designers and artists with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary for their creative pursuits. The unwavering dedication to excellence showcased by the faculty, staff, and students alike is evident in the outcomes of each BFA Exhibition Project. A testament of their commitment, the programme's success is not limited to its exhibitions but extends to the significant contributions its graduates have made to Nepali art and industry.

Despite the urgency expressed by the department for an MFA programme in Nepal, the team's focus remained on solidifying the bachelor's programme as a benchmark. In 2011, Tribhuvan University launched an MFA programme, attracting many aspiring graduates including our own students. This development provided a window of opportunity for KU Art+Design to observe and assess the need to offer its own MFA programme. Recognising that another higher education institution was offering an MFA, the KU Art+Design team invested time to reflect on the distinctiveness of its prospective MFA programme. This introspection paved the way for the groundwork necessary for the programme, establishing new liaisons with individuals and institutions beyond departmental boundaries.

The BFA programme is designed to provide students with fundamental knowledge and prepare them to pursue careers as artists, designers, and illustrators. Its open-ended structure grants students the flexibility to select electives and design personalised projects, empowering them to explore diverse creative fields and apply their skills to other disciplines if they so choose in the future. Over time, however, we recognised the need to foster research-based practices that encouraged artists to become lifelong learners dedicated to generating knowledge and stimulating cross-disciplinary discourses. While we could instil this notion into our BFA students, the bachelor-level programme has various limitations that prevent the rigour of such an approach. Consequently, an MFA programme was deemed essential to promote creative practices informed by research and critical engagement. This advanced degree would allow for a deeper exploration of the concerns that shape society, promote intellectual growth and empathy, and enable artists to develop a praxis that can genuinely bring about social change. An MFA represents the highest academic level in fine arts and therefore requires a commitment to an informed integration of art production and thorough research.

As a response to this need, the MFA programme at KU Art+Design was launched in 2022, offering specialisations in Art in Education, Curatorial Practice, Design, and Studio Art. The programme was designed with an open-ended approach to emphasise lifelong self-directed learning, advance non-linear methodologies, cultivate critical thinking, embrace diversity, and encourage experimentation. To guide the new cohort of students coming from

various backgrounds, a team of experts and practitioners from Nepal and abroad were invited to mentor, supervise, and facilitate their educational journey.

To encourage inclusivity and interdisciplinary knowledge, the MFA program at KU Art+Design welcomes applicants with backgrounds beyond fine arts, valuing them for the experiences and perspectives they can bring to the programme. The MFA at KU Art+Design is unique for this approach, which acknowledges that many talented and qualified individuals engage in creative practices without a traditional undergraduate degree in the fine arts, often due to limited access to adequate and timely guidance and consultation. Admitting these candidates into the programme validates their previously acquired degrees as formative knowledge while leveraging their prior experiential learning as a foundation for their MFA journey. In a country like Nepal where support for the arts has been so limited, the programme considers this flexibility to be of utmost importance. The opportunity to earn a terminal degree allows these candidates to refine their craft at a deeper and broader level.

At the core of this program is a reciprocal relationship between research and practice. The MFA placed a special focus on research to explore various paradigms that would inform the artistic practices of the students. The underlying objective was to encourage students to invest in the act of creating that is powerfully driven by inquiry and methodological awareness. The MFA Seminars invited experts from various disciplines to share their insights and engage with students. This made for a rich and holistic learning environment. The final MFA Seminar III 'Being Contemporary' was structured as a reading seminar that provided an overview of pressing contemporary issues and artistic responses to them. The format of the seminar pushed the students to see their projects in light of broader theoretical as well as social challenges.

To foster rhizomatic knowledge acquisition, a series of electives was planned across four semesters. These electives included 'Social Ecology', 'Visual Anthropology', 'Art and Law', 'Filmmaking', 'Creative Entrepreneurship', 'Analysing Graphic Novels', and 'Writing Workshop and Support'. 'Social Ecology' embraced a creative approach, examining various contexts related to ways of seeing, observing, and creating. It aimed to stimulate interest and imagination about the natural world, challenge human-centric

perspectives, and cultivate ecological awareness. The 'Visual Anthropology' course established theoretical and methodological connections among students' perception, imagination, and expression. It enabled them to actively engage in the politics of representation and apply this knowledge in their projects. 'Art and Law' provided essential legal and regulatory knowledge, ensuring a smooth transition from student to professional practitioner. An introductory filmmaking course introduced students to the fundamentals of filmmaking, where they had a chance to experiment with a wide range of creative processes involved in film production. 'Creative Entrepreneurship' illuminated key components necessary for success in the creative industries. 'Writing Workshop and Support' aimed to deconstruct the myth of writing as an inherently difficult task, immersing students in a supportive writing environment. Lastly, the 'Analysing Graphic Novels' seminar examined various forms of graphic novels and explored how this narrative medium employs innovative storytelling strategies that resonate with readers across diverse cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the coursework, a series of practical workshops were also offered to provide students with invaluable hands-on experience. These workshops complemented the students' creative practice and ensured the practical application of various tools, techniques, materials, and methods. Students were also encouraged to participate in various exchange programmes, on-the-job training opportunities, fellowships, and residencies. Many MFA students had the opportunity to be part of the project 'Urban Transformation and Placemaking: Learning from South Asia and Germany (2020-23)' through The Centre for Transcultural Studies at Heidelberg University, Germany. Some participated in the summer school at the School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi, India. Supported by the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD, these exchange programmes were designed 'to train young generations of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences as well as Art and Design, to shape socially responsible and sustainable career paths employing future-oriented questions and methodological challenges related to the 'Urban Age.' This transdisciplinary approach allowed MFA participants to focus on 'cultural heritage, community, and memory as resources for urban sustainability', and to rethink the creative industry as a socially responsible and responsive practice.

Independent projects were the cornerstone of the MFA through which students worked on their individual research and art practices based on proposals they submitted to the programme. Mentored by a pool of faculty members, these projects were designed in a way that required students to take personal responsibility for the learning process and set their goals within a collaborative learning environment. Through these independent projects, students engaged in purposeful explorations and experimentations, while integrating insights gained from the courses. Students explored a remarkably diverse range of themes. These themes encompassed personal reflections, reconsiderations of conventional pedagogies, the recovery of indigenous histories, and the development of technology applications that benefit society. The intention of these independent projects have not been to produce exhibition-ready outcomes but rather to exercise sustained inquiries and enrich artistic practice.

The two years of this programme have been a dynamic and transformative experience for the students and faculty alike. The entire programme was marked by an intensive process of learning and unlearning, as well as active sharing and negotiation, thus cultivating a collaborative learning atmosphere. Despite the programme's robust structure, we have identified many areas for improvement. The first cohort's remarkable perseverance and commitment remained a driving force for the success of this programme. Their works are ongoing processes, and the outcomes displayed in 'Rhizomes: MFA Thesis Show 2024' offer just an insight into their creative pursuits. The accompanying 'Line of Thought' conference serves as a platform for these artists to share their expertise with the broader community, showcasing the depth of knowledge they have amassed in their chosen areas of interest. Today, the university proudly presents the first cohort of MFA graduates, whose outstanding works explore profound and meaningful questions.


- Sujan Chitrakar and the MFA Faculty



Curatorial Statement

This exhibition is the culmination of two years of both academic and creative work. The range of works on display are diverse and reflect the unique positions and interests of the individual artists. The differences in terms of the forms and content hide a much richer interconnection of practices, skills, process and ideas. They are entangled and enmeshed in webs of our making. As a result, the knowledge being displayed ranges from the affective, experiential, and emotional to the scholarly and systematic structures of academia. All of this serves the purpose of expression, creation and exploration. The attempt here is to produce knowledge and reconnect it in the service of better approaches, better sensorial experiences and better conceptions that can help shape our world.

Unlike the more academically oriented Master of Arts programs, a Master of Fine Arts is centred on individual artistic practices in addition to scholarly pursuits within a field of interest. This show thus caters to both - exhibitions of the various ways that we have materialised what was in us and conversations on the various thoughts that have animated and directed the materialisation.



With that we leave you to find your way with this poem
from the Dao De Jing:

The uses of not
Thirty spokes
meet in the hub.
Where the wheel isn't
is where it's useful.

Hollowed out,
clay makes a pot.
Where the pot's not
is where it's useful.

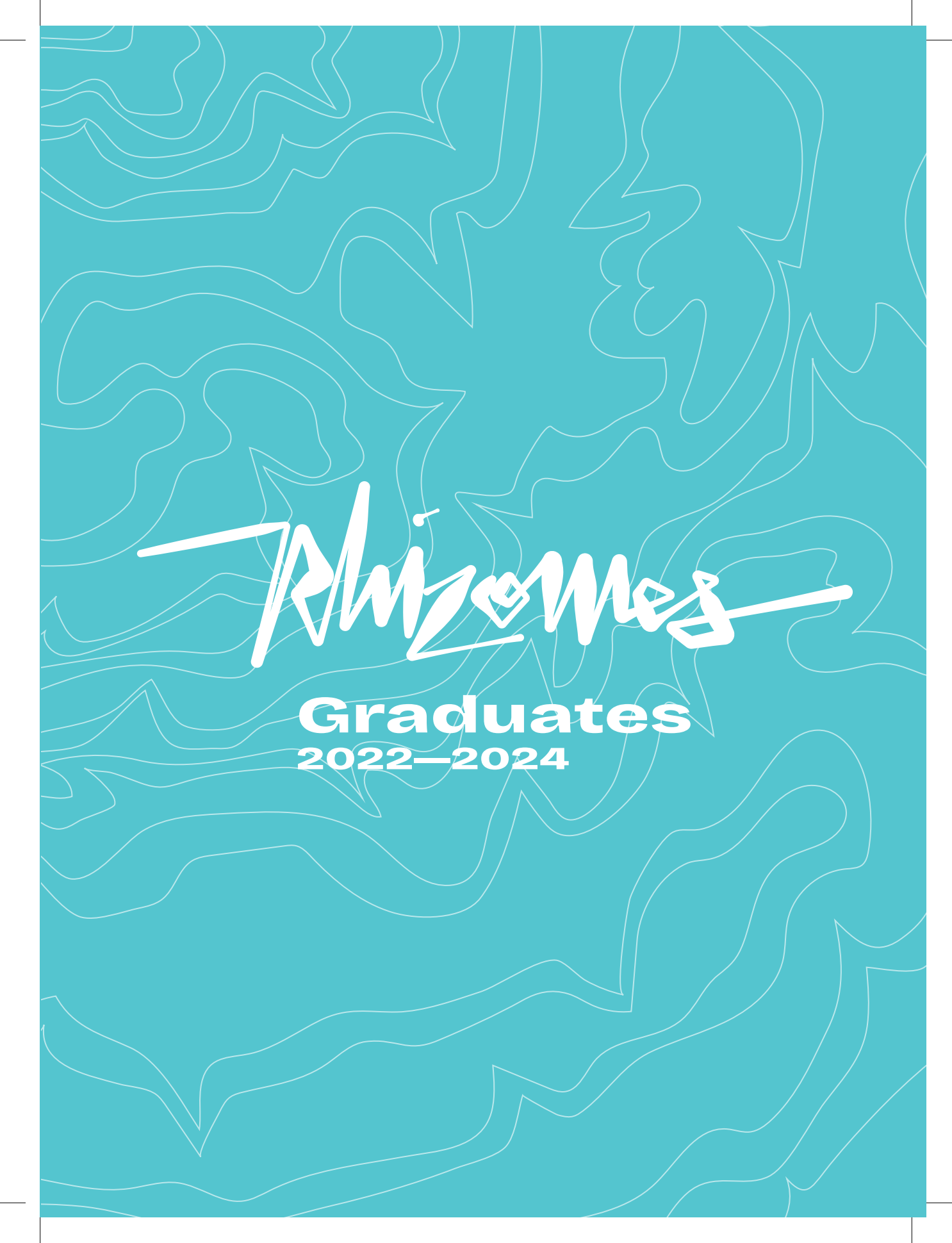
Cut doors and windows
to make a room.
Where the room isn't,
there's room for you.

So the profit in what is
is in the use of what isn't.

From: Laozi. (1997). Tao te ching: A book about the way and the power of
the way (U. K. Le Guin, Trans.; First edition). Shambhala.

- The Curatorial Team





Whizomes

**Graduates
2022—2024**



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Objects crafted by our ancestors were sustainable and in harmony with nature, born from a deep understanding of tools, materials, and techniques. However, as time passed, this invaluable knowledge had gradually faded away. Our education systems, instead of preserving and perpetuating the wisdoms of our ancestors, often obscure them. Moreover, by adhering to established norms, these systems stifle creativity and exploration.

Despite differing values in teaching methods, knowledge transmission persists through repetition. The distinction, in my opinion, lies in intent. With the right intentions and efforts, I believe we can still unearth the practical skills, cultural insights, and unrecognized intellects that were key to the sustenance of the environment.

Through my artistic intervention, I aim to explore the knowledge that originated within our valley and flowed in harmony with nature. I seek to perceive and pursue those lessons of my ancestors that have been obscured by the dominant education system imposed by outsiders and those in control. I question why the price of becoming a conscious inheritor of knowledge, aware of the system's influence on one's identity, is so burdensome.

Unearthing Ancestral Forms Amidst Modern Educational Constraints



Installation image - 1



Installation image - 2



Installation image - 3



Installation image - 4



Installation image - 5



Installation image - 6



Images of working process.



Anjan Shrestha

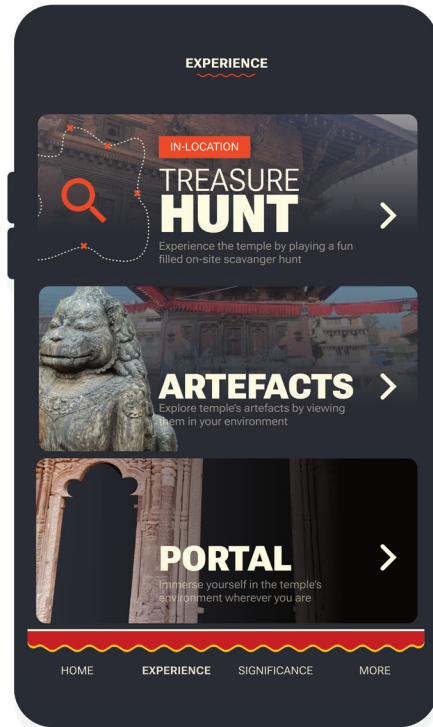
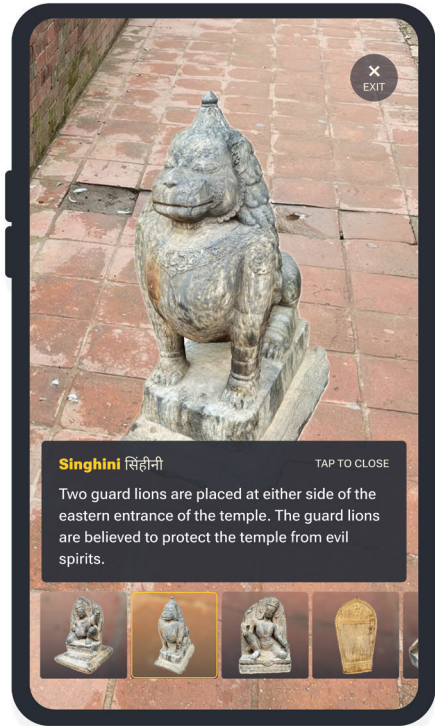
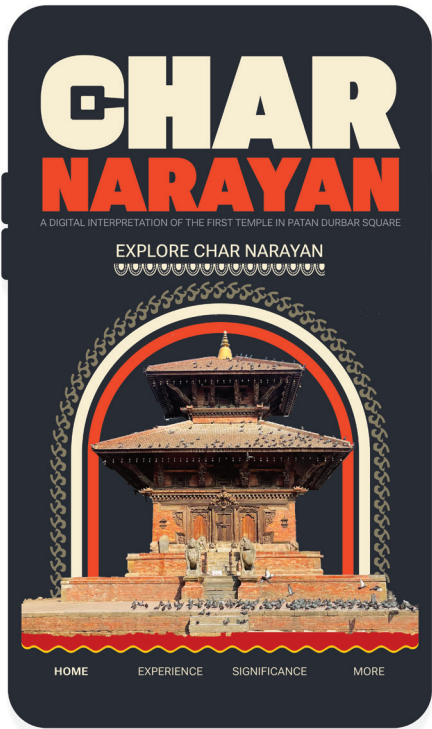
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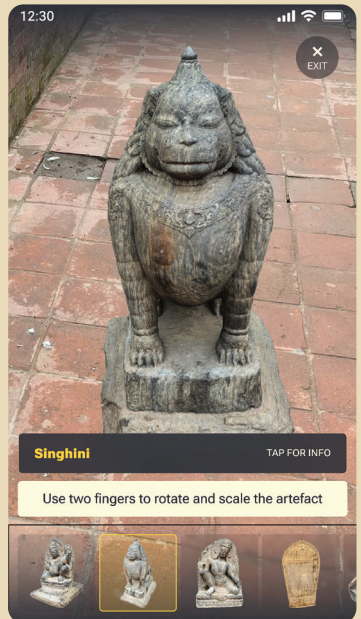
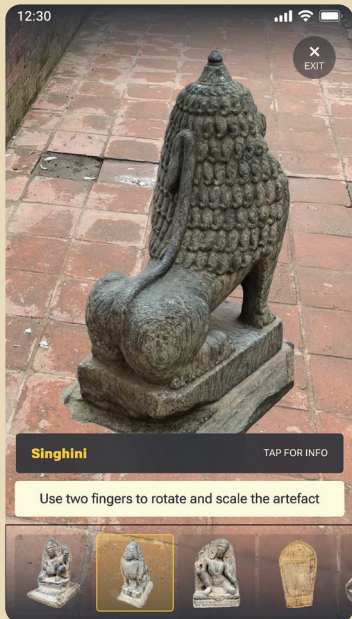
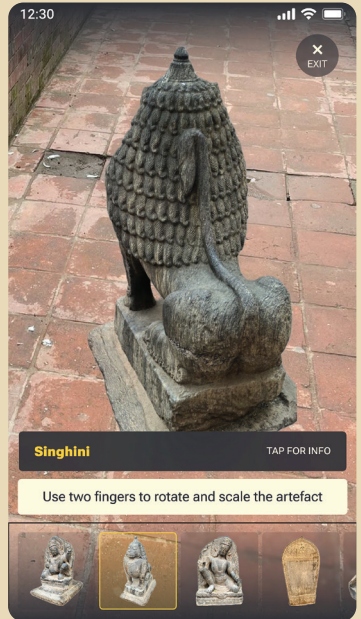
I am a User Interface and User eXperience (UI/UX) designer and have been in the profession for the last 18 years. All through my professional life, I have aimed to make things easier and more enjoyable for people. I have approached this current project with the same philosophy. However, unlike my previous work that focused on two-dimensional interfaces, I am venturing into three-dimensional creation, incorporating the added dimension of space.

My project aims to make heritage accessible and engaging through an augmented reality mobile application. It is an interpretation of the Char Narayan temple, the first temple in Patan Durbar Square dating back to 1566 CE. Through the app, users can engage in various immersive experiences. From the comfort of their homes, they can explore the temple's beautifully sculpted artefacts in three-dimensional detail. Additionally, they can embark on a virtual tour of the temple's interior, as well as play an augmented scavenger hunt game on-site to learn about its artefacts.

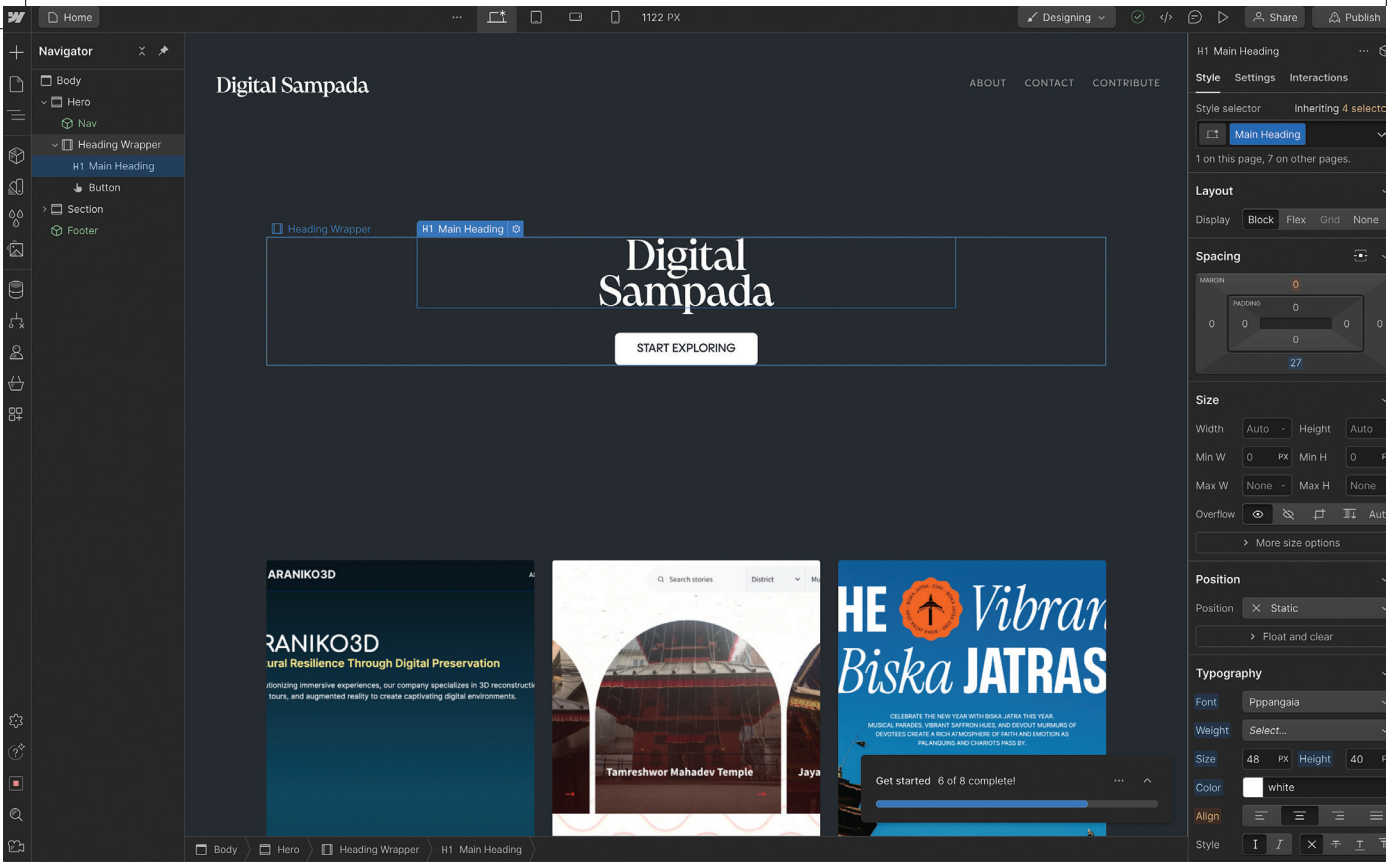
Through this project, I hope to set a benchmark for digital interpretation of heritage sites. I aim to demonstrate the potential of user experience design and augmented reality in heritage interpretation. This project embodies the intersection of design, technology, and cultural preservation, highlighting the importance of technology in understanding heritage sites.

Digital Interpretation of Char Narayan



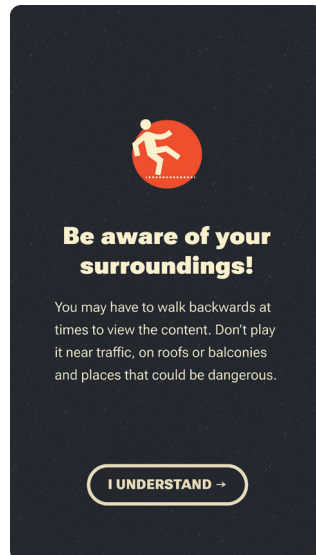
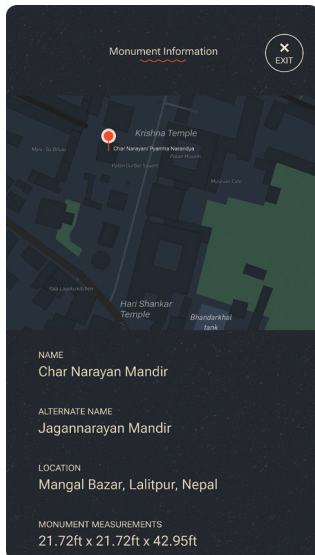


Screen shots of 3D model augmentation of an artefact in the Char Narayan mobile application



Screenshot of Digital Sampada website, developed as part of the research of the Char Narayan mobile application project

Few screenshots of Char Narayan mobile application





Working in the project in the Char Narayan mobile application



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Travel fuels my work. Each journey is a unique adventure that awakens my senses and leads to new discoveries. These discoveries and experiences shape narratives and provide direction for my jewellery creations. My jewellery serves as a vessel for my memories, capturing fragments of time and emotions through diverse materials and techniques encountered in various places.

This collection, 'पोखैर' reflects my experiences of Janakpur, a vibrant city, full of life, colour, chaos, and noise. Amidst the bustling streets, I found solace and inspiration by the corner of a pond. There, the sense of serenity served as a perfect counterpoint to the city's energy. In my designs, I borrow the materials and techniques of artisans in order to give form to my experience of the place.

This project explores jewellery design as a storytelling medium by delving into the intersections of personal experience, place memory, and materiality. My primary intention is to create an inclusive space where we can witness and appreciate diverse stories, materials, and techniques in jewellery making.

However, working with new places can be complicated. The bombardment of sights, sounds, and cultural nuances poses challenges, especially for creators with limited exposure or a short amount of time. Misrepresentation, stereotyping, and cultural appropriation are common concerns that arise. To avoid these pitfalls, I refrain from direct representations or motifs tied to a specific culture. I also avoid imposing preconceived notions onto the materials I work with. Instead, I draw inspiration from personal experiences, encounters, and thorough research.

Jewellery from Each Journey



Bringing colours to jewellery using recycled glass



Pieces inspired by gulmohar and ponds of Janakpur.



In the making



Images of working process



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Jewellery design is not just about crafting beautiful adornments. It serves as a bridge to my heritage, a means to share the cultural values instilled in me by my family. Beyond their physical beauty, jewellery pieces amplify our connection to the stories and traditions that shape our identities. They are not just ornaments, but conversation starters, sparking curiosity and carrying the narratives of generations forward. My work ensures that these cherished aspects of jewellery not only survive but also thrive as vibrant elements of our collective future.

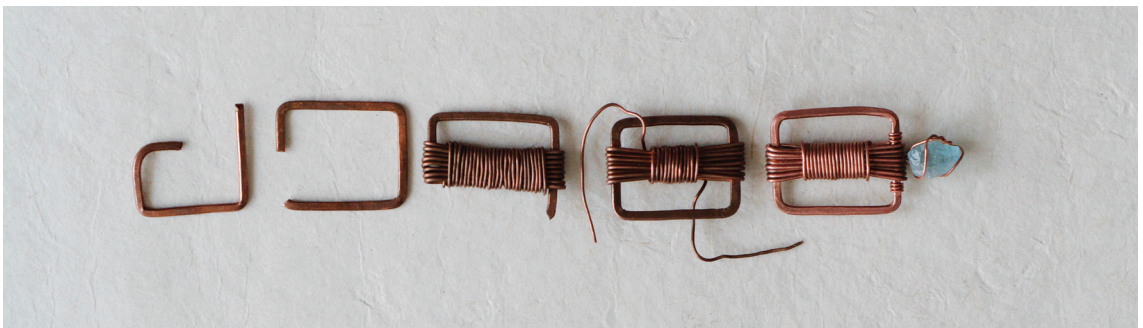
Inspired by the festival of Rato Machhindranath Jatra, my 'Playful Piety' collection explores the chariot-making process of the deity. The wire wrapping technique reflects the chariot's bamboo work, while the copper with gemstones mirrors the decorations. This collection embodies Karunamaya's quote: 'Anna, Ratna, Bharipurna,' signifying curiosity, discovery, and fulfilment in our cultural journeys.

Each piece of conceptual jewellery I create captures the very soul of our culture, each one a wearable narrative. They serve as whispers of hope, open to individual interpretation and designed to serve as talismans that support emotional well-being. The medium and materials I choose are intricately linked to the project's theme, fostering a unique and special connection between the technique and the story each piece tells.

Through this work, I invite viewers to embark on a journey of personal discovery, celebrating the tradition and the playful reverence that binds us.

A Playful Piety: Adornments & Cultural Practices







Tools and working process



Rato Machchhendranath's vine weaving by Yangwal Guthi.



Dhiraj Manandhar

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I feel an irresistible urge to create. I feel it not as a whim, but as a necessity woven into the very essence of who I am. This relentless drive was imparted to me by my grandmother, a resourceful craftswoman from Bhaktapur. Her remarkable ability to transform necessity into beauty—from hand-woven garments to makeshift kerosene lamps—left a lasting impression on me, instilling in me a deep appreciation for the power of creation.

From a young age, my passion for building and transforming has led me to experiment with diverse materials. The rich heritage of Bhaktapur further kindled my creative spark, leading me to explore various mediums such as community projects, films, photographs, and tangible objects.

My current focus is KaaBhō, a paper cellulose and fibre composite inspired by Bhaktapur's mask-making tradition. Originally conceived as paperclay with religious significance, KaaBhō has remarkably evolved into an innovative and versatile material. Translucent, strong, and fire-resistant, KaaBhō pushes creative boundaries.

As I reflect on my journey, a sense of fulfillment washes over me. From experimenting with my grandmother's sewing machine to stitching on KaaBhō, the creative urge remains constant. My approach challenges the traditional divide between designer and maker.

In the spirit of wabi-sabi, I embrace the beauty inherent in imperfection and handmade objects. I value the process of creation as much as the final product. I craft light sculptures using KaaBhō, meticulously involved in every stage, from material creation and design to stitching, brass work, and electrical installation.

Meaning of Making and the Material: **KaaBhō**





Kaabhō light sculptures

Kaabhō

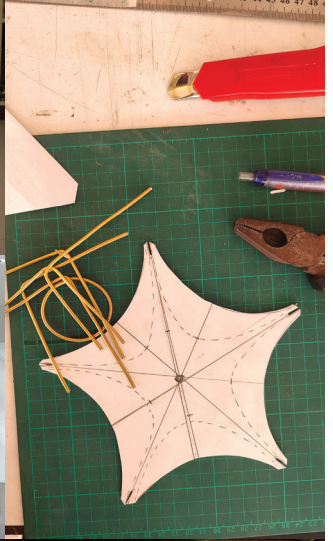
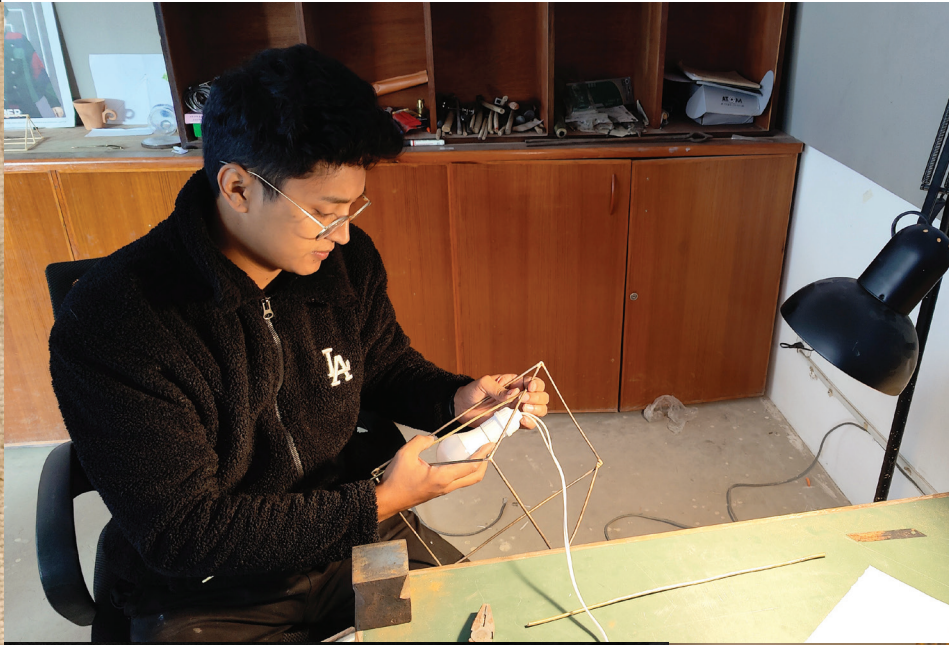
का + भों = काभों

Cloth / Fiber

Paper

Paper-Cloth

Kaabhō



Images of working process



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As a graphic designer and educator, I recognise the need for an archive dedicated to Nepali graphic design. Such a resource would offer insights into the development of the graphic design industry and fill a crucial gap in the curriculum. However, the question arises: who would the archive serve? Are the materials that are collected and archived to serve only future graphic designers? Or are they also for researchers looking to understand the contexts, processes, and aesthetics that shaped various designs? If archiving graphic design developments is important for different kinds of audiences, what kind of archive should be created? And what steps are necessary to bring it into existence and ensure its sustainability?

The first aspect of my project centres around formulating the archive's organisational structure, ensuring its longevity and sustainability. This includes defining its appraisal, accession, dissemination, and engagement functions, as well as identifying partnerships and efficient resource management strategies. Secondly, the project introduces an archiving toolkit to support the archiving process. This toolkit helps contributors in populating the archive, organising collected materials and data, disseminating knowledge, and engaging audiences through various activities.

Lastly, the project addresses the need for easy and independent access to the archive through a website wireframe. While the development of a finished website is a future goal, the wireframe is crucial for designing a system that empowers different users with multiple entry points and independent navigation capabilities.

This exhibition aims to share with its audience the factors contributing to the formation of the archive and how they have influenced its various components and aspects.

Archive of Nepali Graphic Design:
Functional Organisational Structures, a Website
Wireframe, and an Archiving Toolkit

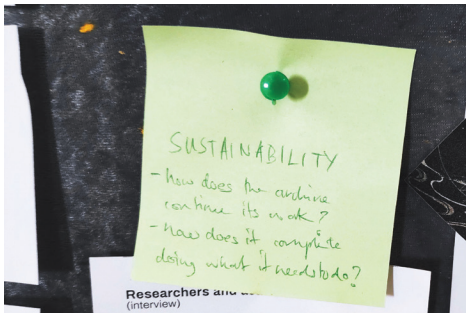


Consultations with Subodh Bhandari, Sujan Chitrakar, Sabitri Lama, Priyanjana Bhattarai, and Prasiit Sthapit about documentation processes. Part of the process was supported by RDI, School of Arts, KU.



Visits and interviews with Nepal Picture Library, Nepal Architecture Archive, Nepal Music Archive, Asa Safu Kuthi and Kala Kulo.

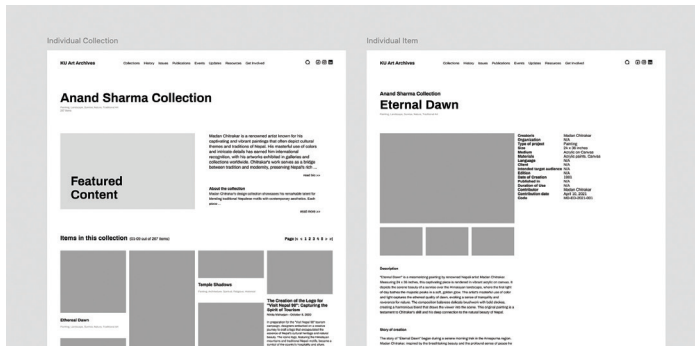
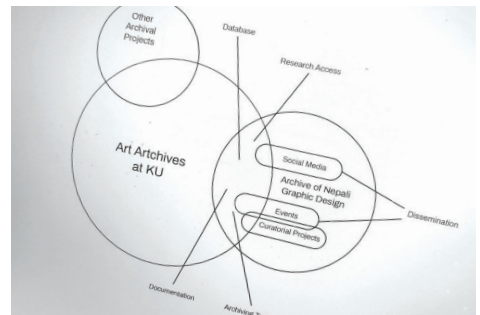
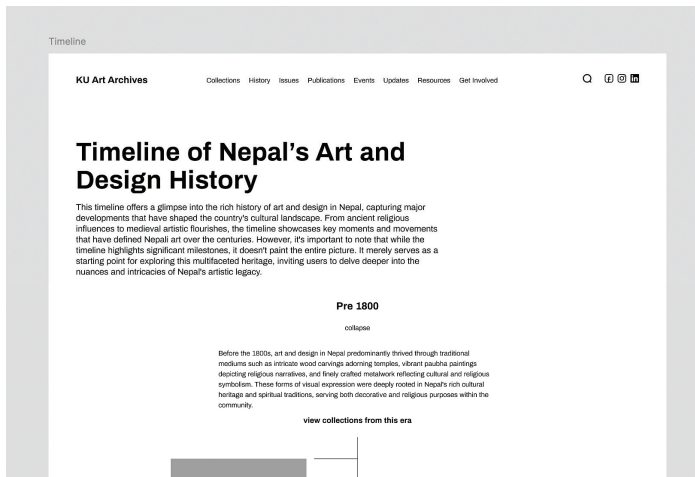
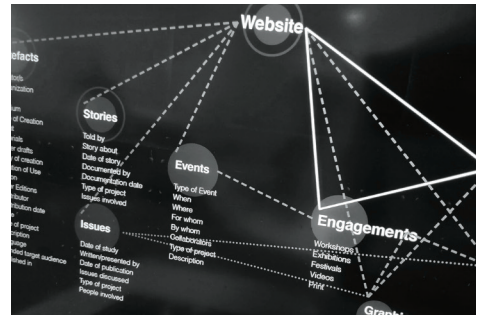
Trial of documentation processes with Ashok Man Singh.



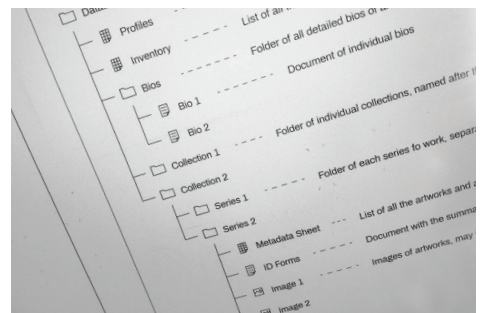
Study of online graphic design archives, and subsequent inquiries.



category page allows viewers to see the full list of topics and subtopics or tags that have been populated instead of trying it in folders



Development of website wireframes.



Structuring of the archiving system and its database.



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'Sweta: Mourning the Undead' is a deeply personal project inspired by my experiences with the loss of a parent and the bond shared with my siblings. Through this project, I explore the complexities of mourning a sudden loss, the feelings of guilt, and the challenges of stepping up to protect those who remain during times of hardship.

My creative journey has been a winding road. I began as a BSc. CSIT student, transitioned to fiction writing, and eventually joined the MFA programme to explore alternative mediums for storytelling. My explorations have led me to the medium of visual novel games. These narrative games use text, still images, and sound to convey stories through choice-based engagements.

As a game designer, I am drawn to visual novels because they offer immersive storytelling environments that invite players to reflect on their decisions. I recall playing 'Deus Ex: Human Revolution', a cyberpunk first-person shooter game with multiple endings. The choices I made in that game made me question my own beliefs and values. I was fascinated by the game's device of making the players' moral choices determine the outcome, and I saw similar possibilities in visual novels.

'Sweta: Mourning the Undead' is set in 2024, amid a zombie outbreak, as the world slowly becomes desolate. This heart-wrenching horror visual novel combines a compelling narrative with choice-based gameplay, allowing players to shape the fate of the main character, Sweta, a Nepali high-school girl, and her protective older brother, Rudra, a college student.

Choices and Introspection

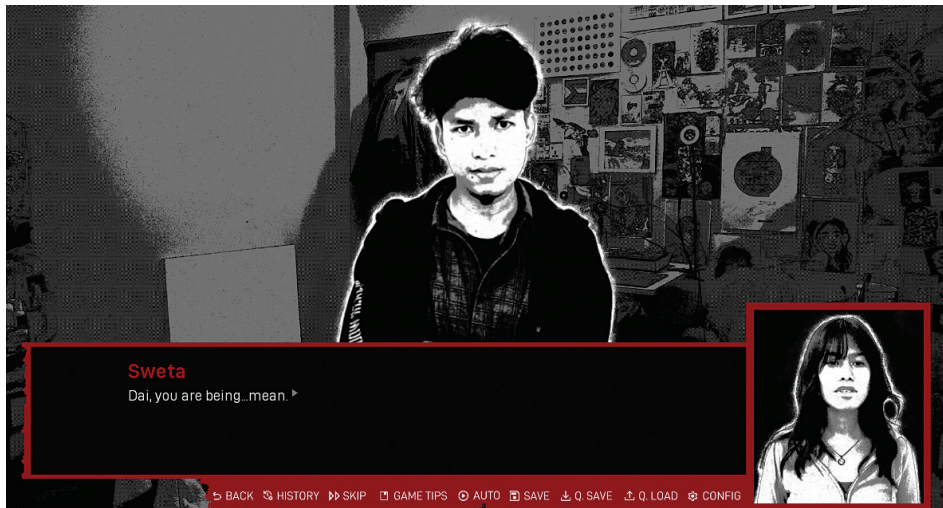


Title screen

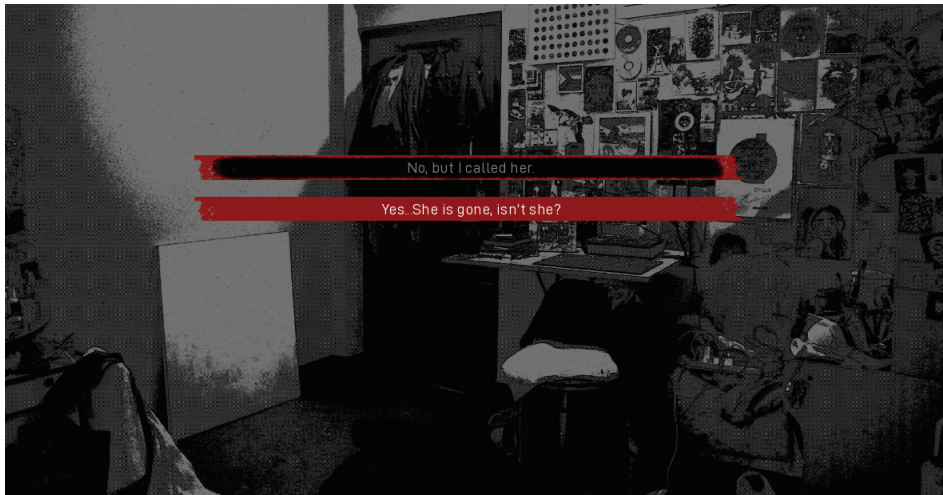


Main menu screen

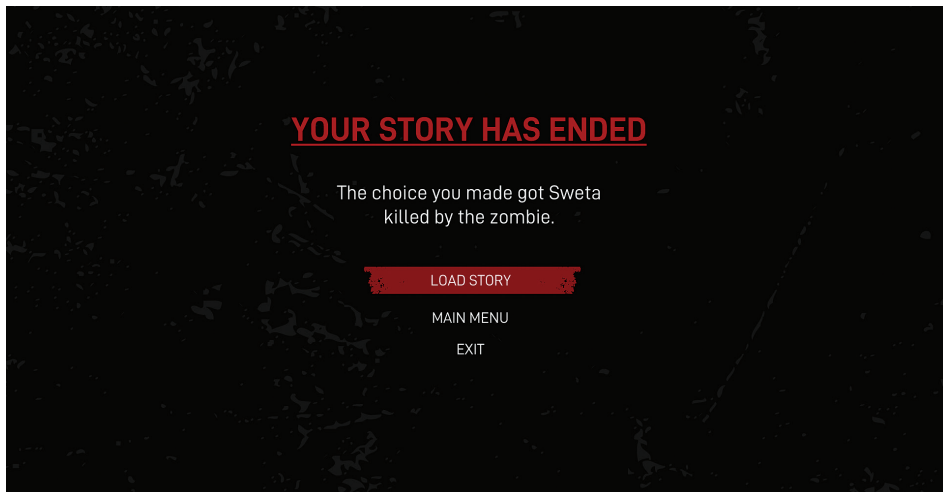




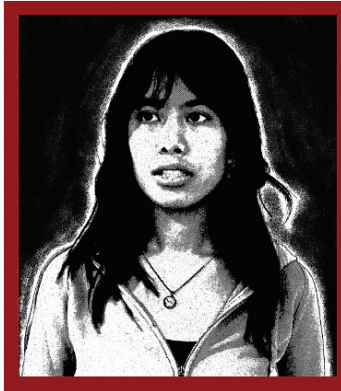
In-game screen



Choice screen



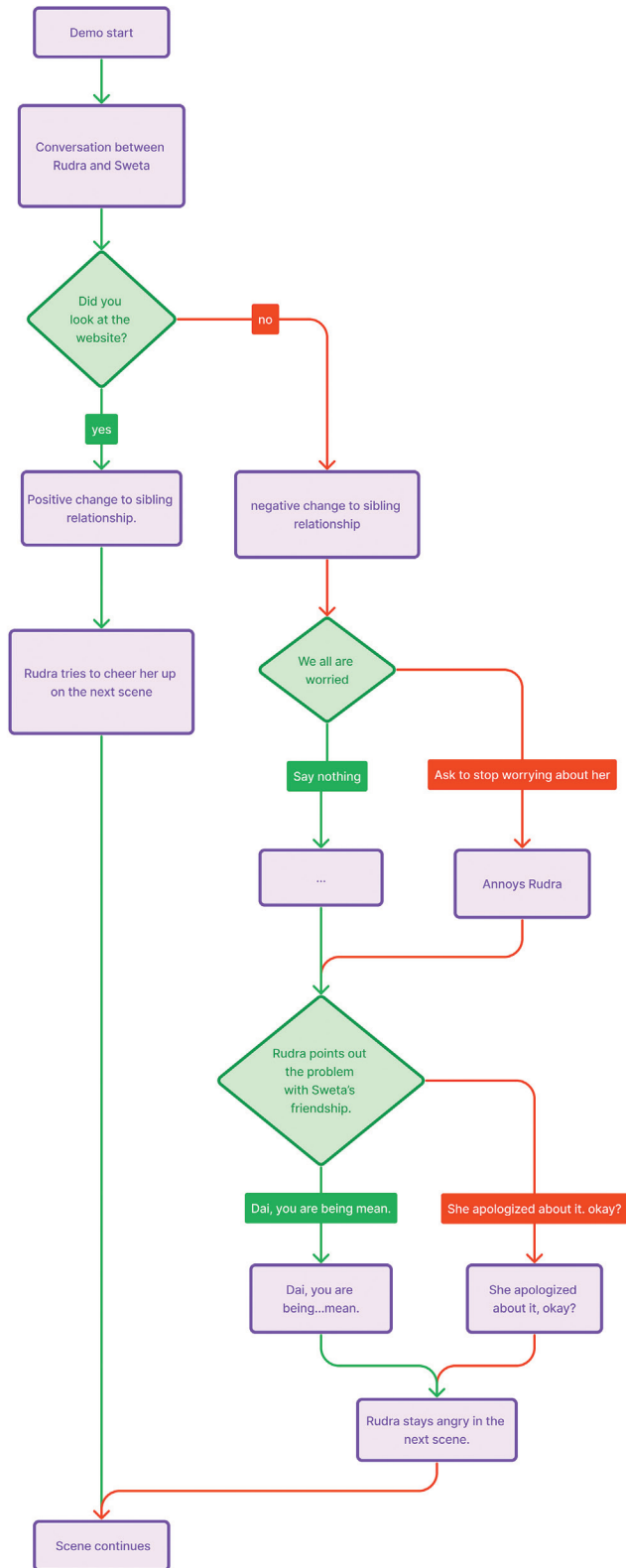
Bad ending screen



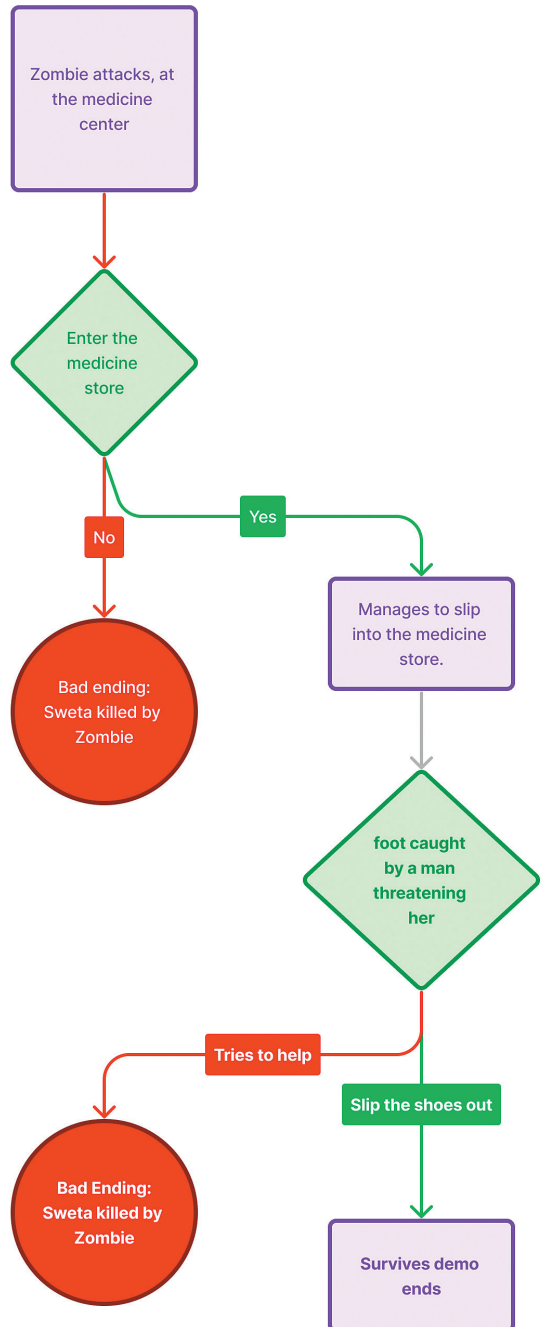
Main character Sweta. Photo credit: Spriha Shrestha

Secondary characters





Demo minor choice design



Demo major choice design



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In Nepal, the traditional art of crafting statues through metal casting and the techniques of chasing and repoussé on sheet metal have been passed down through generations. My journey in this field began within my family, where I had the opportunity to hone my skills under my father's guidance. Formal training from TPC and SBPP further refined my understanding and encouraged me to explore the potential of traditional craftsmanship using available resources. From these experiences, I realised the need for innovation in design while practising traditional skills.

Challenges, such as inefficiency, competitiveness, quality, and resource scarcity, coupled with opportunities like market expansion and knowledge enhancement, require critical thinking and design innovation. By integrating traditional and modern knowledge and practices, artisans can enhance their efficiency, quality, and market accessibility, ensuring the sustainability of their craft and future of their craft.

My vision is to preserve, extend, and improve the art, craft, and design sector by institutionalising education that blends traditional practices with contemporary values, in cooperation with other sectors. This approach aligns with the Eastern school of thought, emphasising ethical conduct, concentration, and wisdom. Such a framework will instill ethical practices, social responsibility, and respect for cultural heritage while promoting creativity, critical thinking, and sustainability.

By focusing on design education to encourage innovation and strategic market planning, we can create a prosperous industry that respects its roots and embraces the future. This exhibition embodies this vision, showcasing the potential for Nepali art, craft, and design to thrive for generations to come.

Tradition and Modernity in Nepali Art, Craft, and Design



Modeling the idea.



Scaling the prototype.



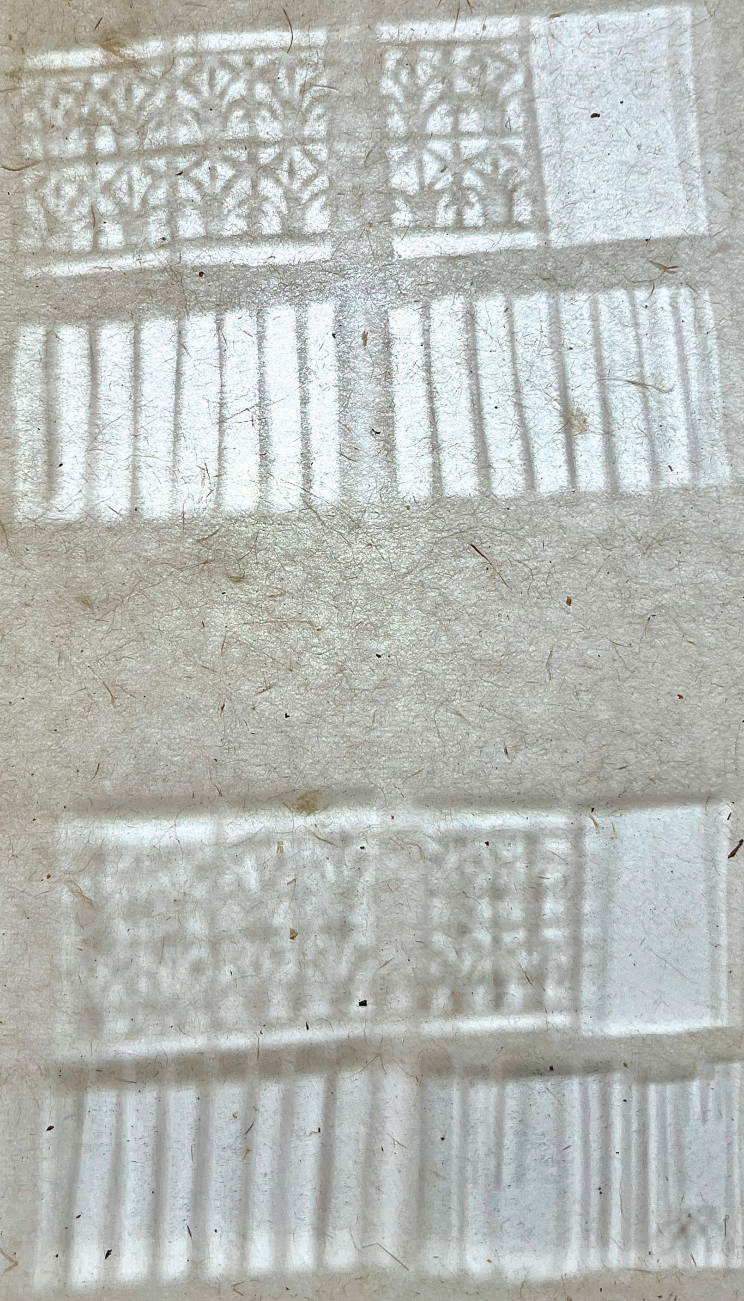
Kripa Tuladhar

+977 9869290094
kreepatula@gmail.com
Instagram: kripa_tula

*The shifting always feels real
Stuffing our belongings in the empty suitcases
Packing all the memories in objects
To make a home for ourselves in unknown places
"Where is my home?" I wonder
Searching for the answer
In the place of my ancestors
Those mundane marks could be theirs
Was I their mark too?
When your fickle stories of the past echo through the objects of
their belonging
These memories....
It is embodied, it remembers
These objects, I want to protect with the patterns of the women I
adore
Like they cover the furniture of home from the dust
The covering still holds the conversation of the side tables
Conversations of yesterdays
And of us
These subtle changes and choices have led
here
I miss those moments that I have not even lived
So I walked, the facade became the witness
And I realised the space missed me too*

Through the place-based research in Ason, I explore my family history and unearth stories and memories sedimented in my family homes. I unpacked all the possessions and stored belongings, including photos and memorabilia of my loved ones. I looked at them and felt their presence, interrogating my identity through them. I have used a variety of mediums that came my way during the process to evoke my experiences of revisiting the past and walking frequently in Ason.

Remembrance of Shadows





Family photographs





Images of working process





Mrigaja Bajracharya

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All socials: mrigajab

Growing up in our hyper-connected chaotic times, I found solace in pop culture and new media. Anime, manga, memes, and the like have been my coping mechanisms. These interests led me to create this webcomic *V-Moksha* through which I channel my frustrations about the current state of the world and its likely future.

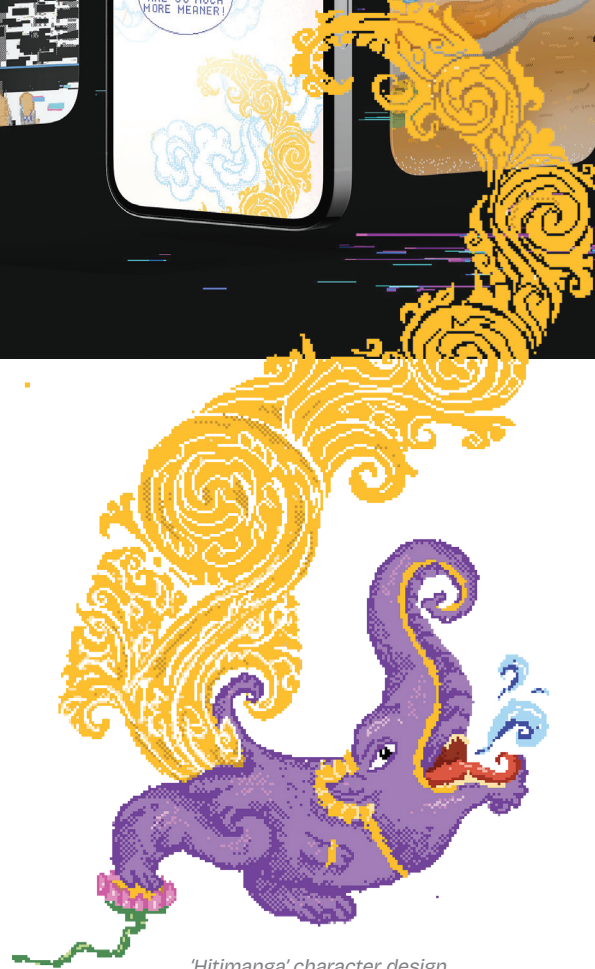
V-Moksha explores themes of lost hope, capitalism, consumerism, and cultural transformation. Nepali folktales, Patan's architecture, and Newari culture are juxtaposed against modern consumerist and digital cultures. Set in a dystopian Patan, the story follows Eenakshi, a recluse from 1220 (Nepal Sambat) or 2100 AD. Addicted to a virtual world created by V-Moksha PVT LTD, Eenakshi's desperation to escape reality intensifies following her grandmother's death. This results in a fragmented existence, oscillating between the real world and a glitch-filled mythical realm.

V-Moksha examines our dystopian reality, trapped in content farms, doom scrolling, and incessant consumption. The visual style is divided into two aesthetics: a pixelated, colourful, and cheerful style for the virtual world, and a dark, stark contrast for the real world. This contrast highlights the disparity between the two realms. The pixelated style reflects the romanticisation of an unachieved future and the gamification of life, creating a nostalgic lure that keeps people in the virtual world instead of facing the bleak reality. Ultimately, *V-Moksha* is a reflection on identity, escapism, and relentless progress.

V-Moksha: Between Worlds



Webcomic mockup



'Hitimanga' character design



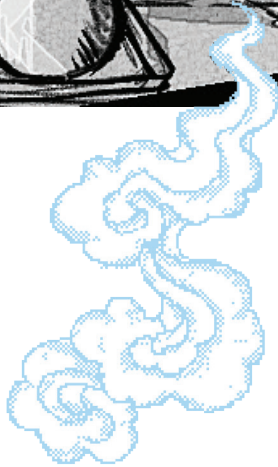
Virtual world location design

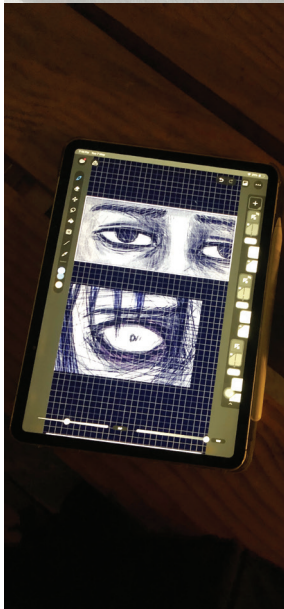
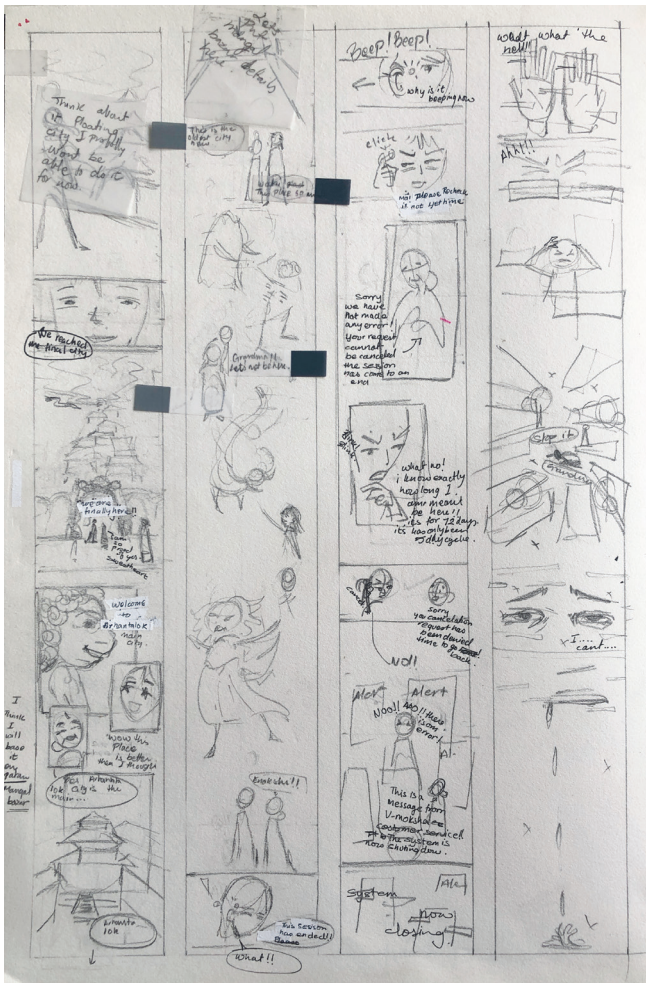


'Eenakshi' character design.



Panel design in real world style





Images of the working process



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instagram: haffarineda

When facing pivotal moments in life, a series of crucial steps must be taken. The first and most crucial step is to acknowledge and accept the situation that has turned one's life upside down. This is a monumental step—an elephant step. From that moment onward, perseverance is vital. The key is to keep fighting, even when the path forward seems nonexistent. Hope, an intrinsic part of our human nature, serves as a guiding light.

This curated exhibition aims to share the profound importance of hope. The collective message that comes across from the works of featured visual artists is that until death, it is all life.

Exploring the realities of cancer patients, the exhibition delves into the depths of darkness and anxiety that follow the initial shock. But it also reveals that embracing this darkness as an integral part of life is analogous to appreciating a profound work of art. The exhibition also sheds light on the community-building and daily lives of cancer patients to highlight their resilience and determination to move forward and fight. Visitors are invited to reflect on their own thoughts on the matter through interactive artwork.

This exhibition seeks to engage the audience in a broader concept of healing, starting from the moment they face any conflict in life. We only live once, and while the length of our lives is beyond our control, we can strive to expand its breadth.

Curated by **Neda Haffari**

Artists: **Jupiter Pradhan, Prakrit Thapa, Sunil Sigdel, Uma Bista**

Until Death, It Is All Life

Until Death, It Is All Life

CURATED BY NEDA HAFFARI

ARTISTS:

Jupiter Pradhan

Prakrit Thapa

Sunil Sigdel

Uma Bista

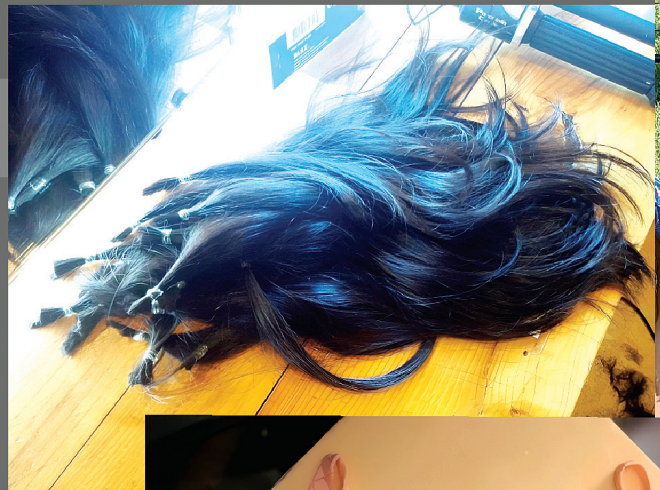
VENUE:

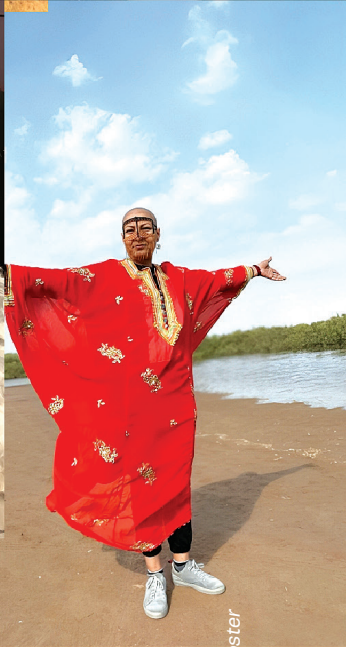
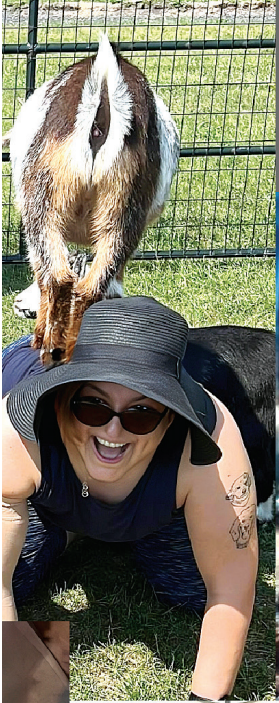
Mcube Gallery

Chakupat, Lalitpur

DATE:

23-28 August 2024







Nija Maharjan

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maharjan.nija@gmail.com
Instagram: nijamaharjan

In this culinary memoir, I embark on a journey guided by the flavors that have defined my life. Each dish serves as a compass, transporting me back to specific times, places, and the people who have shaped me. It is a genealogy of tastes, tracing my lineage and connecting me to my cultural heritage.

My work is rooted in the vibrant Newari culture, where knowledge was primarily passed down orally rather than through writing. In creating this book, I interrogate how various forms of memory are preserved and authenticated. I combine writing, drawing, and the compilation of food-related stories to explore the nature of archives and legitimacy.

By describing dishes, cataloging recipes, and recounting food narratives, I uncover the profound connections between food, memory, and identity. I give evidence of the powerful emotional resonance and storytelling capabilities of food. Documenting these memories is akin to simmering a pot of forgotten stories, their essence rising like delicate clouds of steam.

This project is more than a personal record; it also anticipates a broader open collective archive that holds the potential to foster authentic connection and unity. My memoir stands as a testament to the power of food to bridge divides, not only across tables but across generations and cultures. It gives credence to the stories we hold dear.

When the Laimsū Blooms

A food memoir of family and heritage



'When the Laimšu Blooms' book mockup



'When the Lairsu Blooms' book mockup



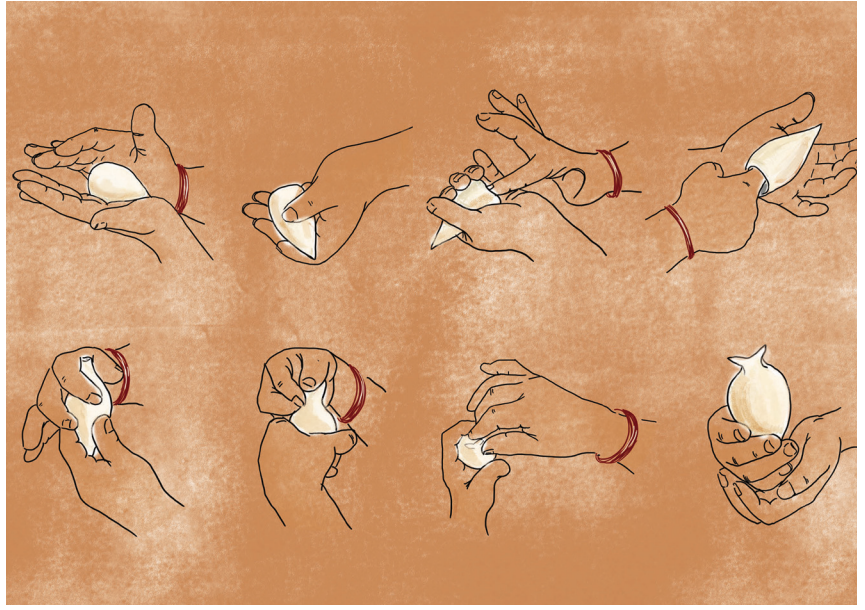


Image from the chapter "The Melody in making Yakhma".



Image from the chapter "The Melody in making Yakhma".



Pooja Shrestha

+977 9851125363
pooja@kuart.edu.np
LinkedIn: poojashrestha

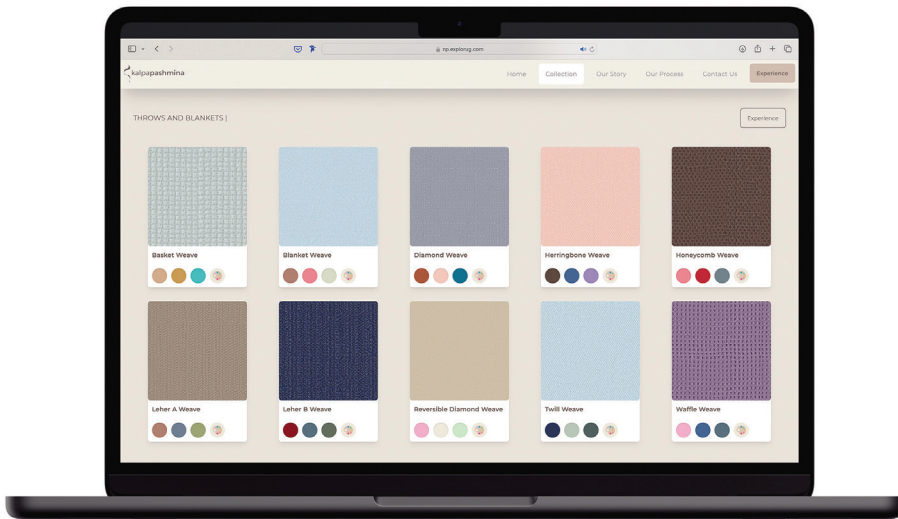
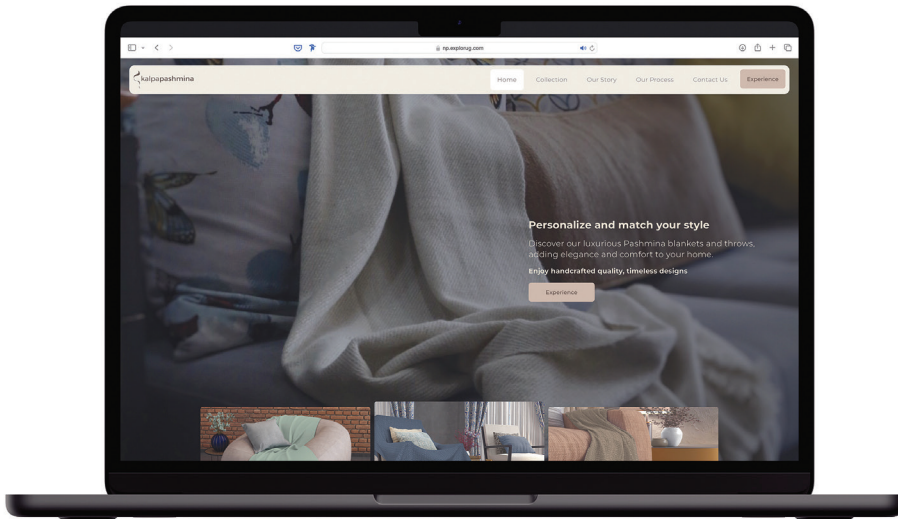
As a digital textile designer, my primary focus lies in integrating traditional craft practices into modern product designs. Over the last decade, I have been designing handmade rugs using the Galaincha software. For my MFA project, I am working on developing software technology for incorporation into the process of pashmina production.

Known as the “soft gold,” pashmina is a natural fibre that originates from Changthangi goats and is a major export commodity. In the past, creating custom pashmina throws and blankets was a lengthy process plagued by several obstacles in communication. As a potential solution to these problems, I have proposed the concept of KalpaPashmina, an online marketplace aimed at promoting collaborative relationships between producers and buyers. The platform enables users to visualise construction, colour variations, and sizes of the products along with detailed images, empowering them to make informed choices from the available options. The integration of advanced technology in handmade products provides an opportunity for users to preview designs and patterns from KalpaPashmina before making purchases. Among other things, this approach helps cut down on wastage, particularly when working with precious materials like pashmina.

A core focus of my practice has been to prioritise user-friendliness, ensuring that the technological features are easily accessible and comprehensible to users with minimal technical knowledge.

KalpaPashmina

An online platform for personalized Pashmina:
Minimising waste and Building trust



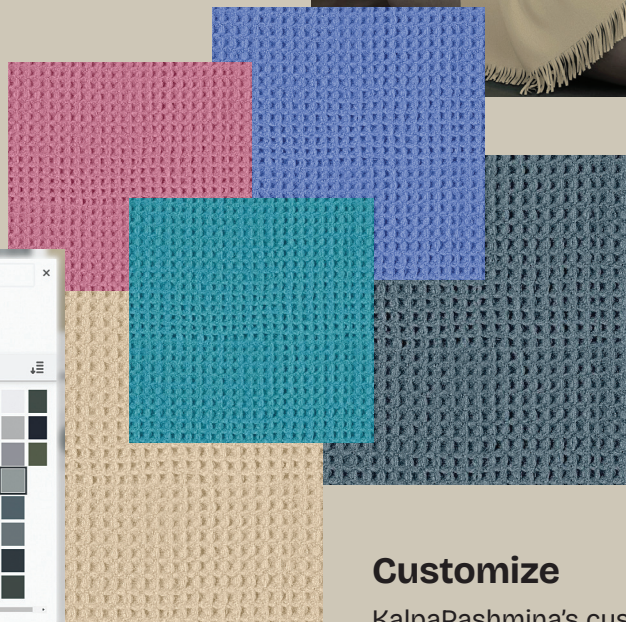
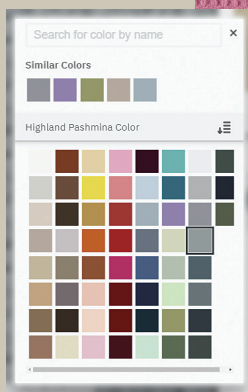
Mockups of the website 'kalpapashmina'



Cores

Conceptualize

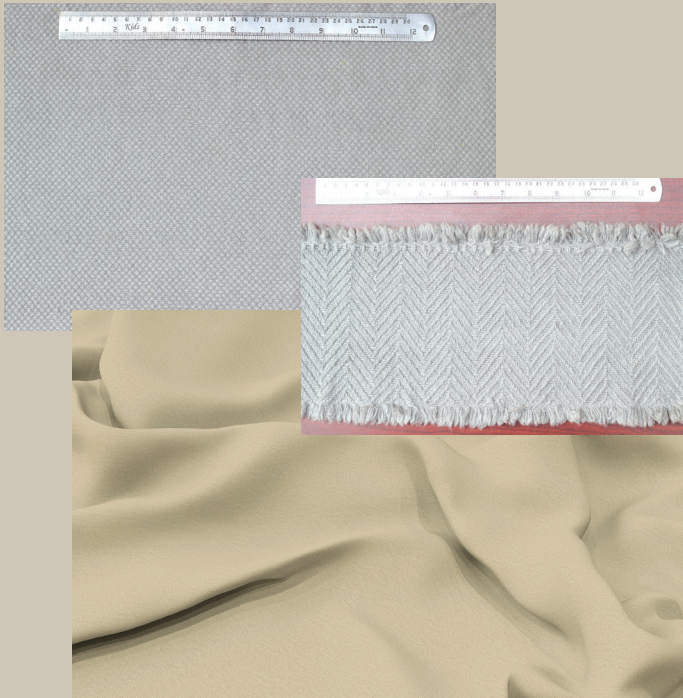
KalpaPashmina lets customers customize and preview their pashmina throws and blankets in real-time. This feature boosts customer confidence and control, ensuring the final product meets their expectations. It also improves decision-making and production efficiency



Customize

KalpaPashmina's customization feature provides a diverse selection of weaving constructions and an extensive color palette, enabling users to carefully choose and finalize their preferences. Customers are allowed to be ensured in every detail, from the weave pattern to the exact shade, meets their specifications before the production process begins.





Communicate

A detailed design plate and order sheet enable users to communicate their exact requirements to the makers, clearing up any confusion before the custom production of precious materials like pashmina begins. This ensures that all specifications are clearly understood and met, resulting in a final product that matches the customer's vision perfectly.

Continue...

This ensures that all details are clearly communicated and minimizes errors during production. The virtual representation of the product often eliminates the need for physical samples, reducing material waste. This sustainable practice aligns with the principle of producing only what is needed, promoting efficiency and environmental responsibility.

Basket Weave HP102

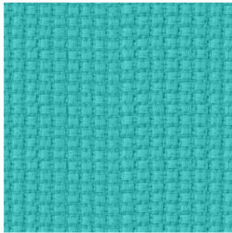
WIDTH
1'

LENGHT
1'

CUSTOMER NAME
Pooja Shrestha

QUANTITY
Superfine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
With extra long fringes and Stitches



1

HP102
Basket Weave

Your Name *

Your email address *

Your phone number

Notes

[Send Email](#)



Prakash Ranjit

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Instagram: prakashranjit

I am fascinated by social performances and their impacts on our interpersonal relationships. My graphic novel 'Better Half' explores notions of performativity through a fictional story that deals with the fear of abandonment and its complex intertwining with anxiety and depression. The protagonist, Tapas, embodies the constant struggle with anxiety, while a shadowy anthropomorphic creature represents his intrusive thoughts and fears. Through his story, I put the spotlight on the masks we wear to maintain relationships with family and friends.

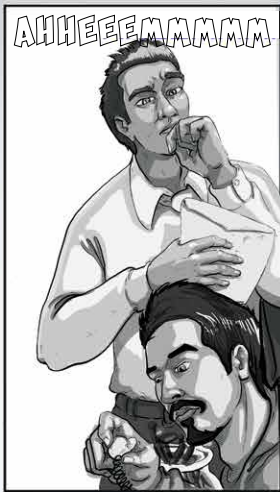
This is a story inspired by my own fear of abandonment and my overwhelming worry of alienating loved ones because of my anxiety, despair, angry outbursts, and self-harm. I wanted to express the turmoil within me and how it put my closest relationships at risk. Self-reflection has served as my compass for this project, allowing me to step back and view myself objectively.

I believe that by using the power of storytelling and a touch of surrealism to create meaning, we can open up discussions that might otherwise remain shrouded in fear and plagued by hesitation. 'Better Half' is a bridge that we can all cross, transcending the struggles of a single character. By sharing this work, I hope to help people recognise their own inner conflicts.

Recovery is not a fantasy. It involves continuous perspective shifts, steadfast attention, and continuous care. My graphic novel illustrates how introspection and self-compassion can change a person and lead to recovery. It is a call to shed the masks we wear and build relationships based on sincerity and understanding.

Better Half

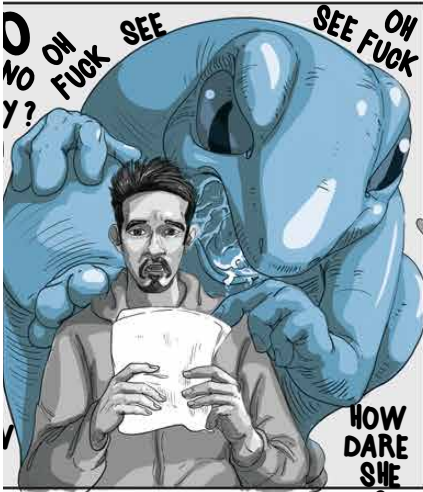
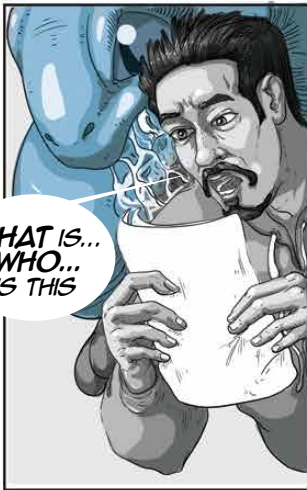
A graphic novel





SHE MET SOME ONE ELSE?





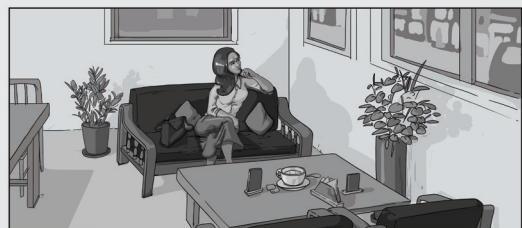
'Better half' chapter 1, page 2



'Better half' chapter 1, page 6, cropped.



'Better half' chapter 2, page 4



'Better half' chapter 1, page 9



Pranab Man Singh

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www.qcbookshop.com

My MFA exhibition and thesis both explore the ways our understanding of Nepali art and society have been framed by discourses on modernity. It takes a critical look at the way this discourse has operated and was instrumentalised in Nepal from the 1950s to the 1980s, a time period that is closely identified with the formation of the modern Nepali state. I do this through a close examination of the life and times of the Nepali artist Ramananda Joshi (1938-1988) from multiple vantage points: the artist's personal experiences, creative responses, and activities; his educational and intellectual journey; and the institutional and bureaucratic frameworks within which he operated.

My work builds on the archival research I have been conducting since early 2023 at the RN Joshi Museum, situated in the artist's former residence. Through this work, I examine the complex interplay between art, society, and modernity in Nepal during its most transformative period.

Imbricated:
RN Joshi and 'Art' in Modern Nepal



A young RN Joshi while studying at JJ School of Arts, Bombay, India.



RN Joshi (first from left) with the founding members of the Nepal Association of Fine Arts (NAFA) along with King Mahendra (seated first left) and his second wife Queen Ratna (seated right) along with Crown Prince Birendra (seated middle).



Carpet Makers by RN Joshi, from his 'My Land and My People' series.



Watercolour by RN Joshi from his 'My Land and My People' series.



Watercolour by RN Joshi from his 'My Land and My People' series.



The Tree of Modern Civilization by RN Joshi from his Tantric painting series.



Reejun Pradhan

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Impressionbyreejun
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From a young age, I've been captivated by the layered artistry of traditional fashion. Beyond its practical purpose, clothing is a vibrant language that quietly communicates my personality and emotions. Each layer becomes an extension of my being, like a silent symphony that tells my story without words.

In my current collection, I have delved into the rich heritage of Newari dress, reimagining traditional design elements such as drapes, pleats, putula, janni, and floral prints. By seamlessly integrating these elements into comfortable and modern garments crafted from breathable fabrics, I have breathed new life into this traditional attire. This approach allows for the preservation of cultural heritage while adapting it to contemporary lifestyles and preferences.

Draping and pleating, once fundamental construction techniques, transcend functionality in my work. They become tools for artistic expression, as I add volume, texture, and a unique aesthetic to each piece.

This collection specifically caters to new mothers. By incorporating functional elements into classic designs and utilising prints inspired by the vibrant poinsettia (lalupate in Nepali), I have aimed to create a line of comfortable, modern, smart-casual wear that empowers new moms to confidently express themselves.

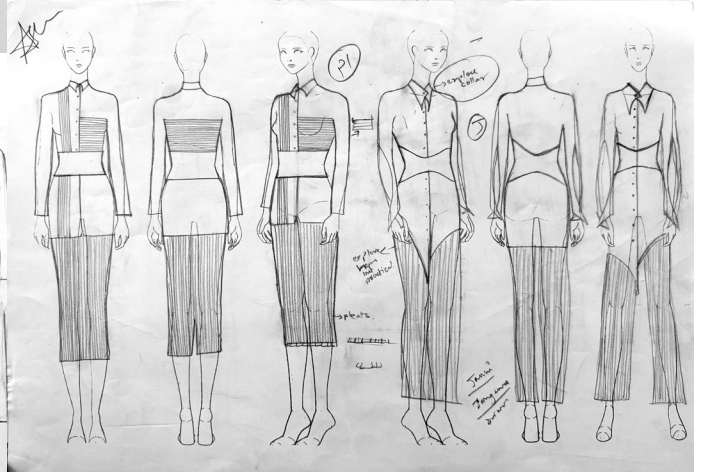
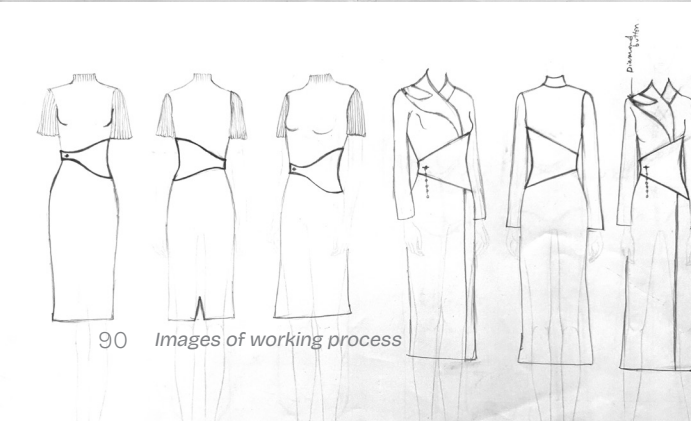
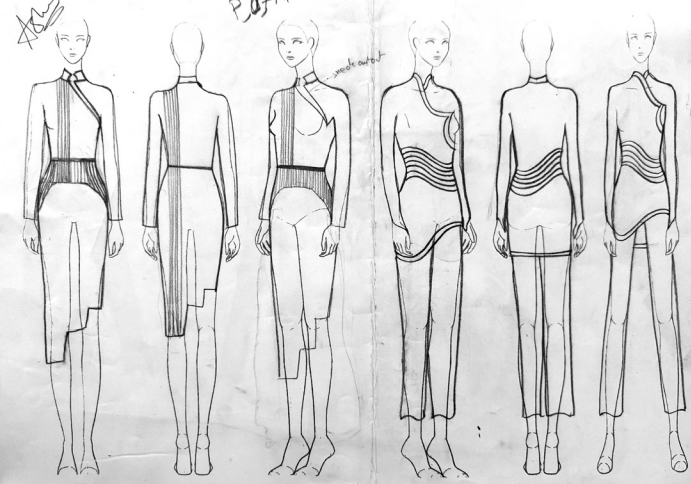
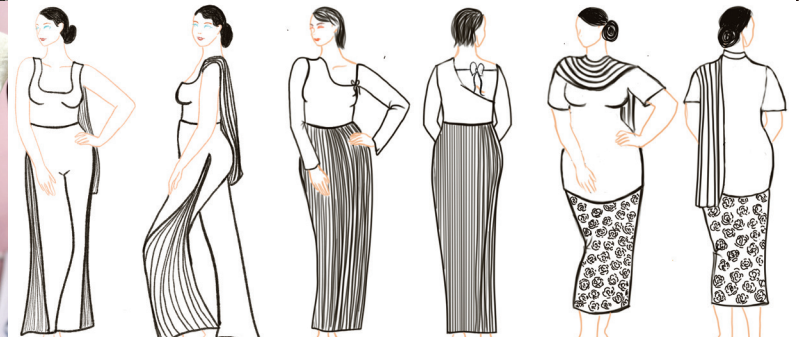
Buki:
Timeless Bloom, Woven Anew



Putula inspired tops with pleated skirt.



Baby cover for Nursing/ breast feeding.





Lalupate inspired motifs made for printing on the designs.



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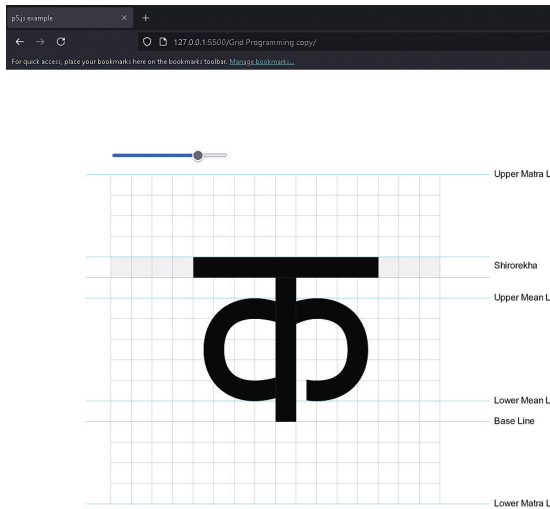
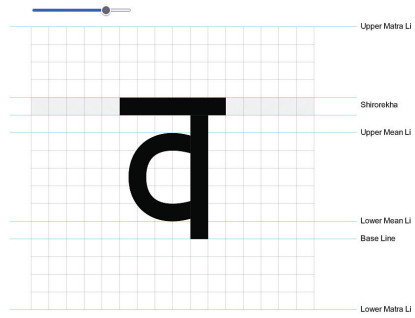
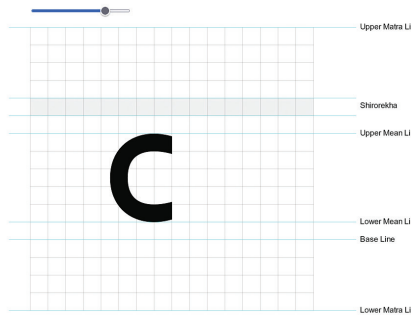
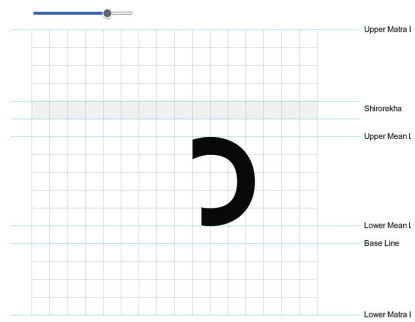
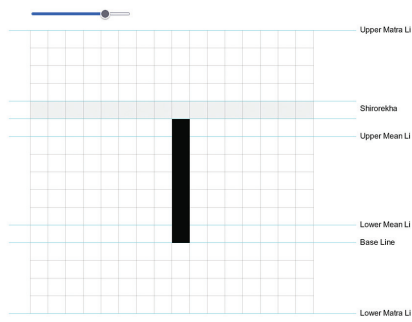
Instagram: devdotnagari

In Nepal, the creation of Devanāgarī fonts has been very limited due to its challenging and time-consuming nature. A comprehensive Devanāgarī font requires more than 200 characters, demanding specialised technical expertise and labour-intensive process. Performing the task manually significantly increases the likelihood of errors and inconsistencies,

Computer programming offers a solution to reduce tedious and repetitive tasks. It has simplified the process of calculation, improved accuracy, automated complex processes, and increased efficiency across various fields. Therefore, it is worth exploring the potential of programming to streamline the laborious process of manual font creation.

My work 'dev.nāgarī' uses the JavaScript programming language to define the shape of Devanāgarī characters. This program enables the users to effortlessly modify characters based on shape, style, size, and thickness. By substituting the manual drawing process with programmed characters, my work aims to reinvent the Devanāgarī font creation process. It will significantly reduce the time consuming aspects while ensuring consistency throughout the entire font.

dev.nāgarī
Programmatic Approach to
Devanagari Font Creation

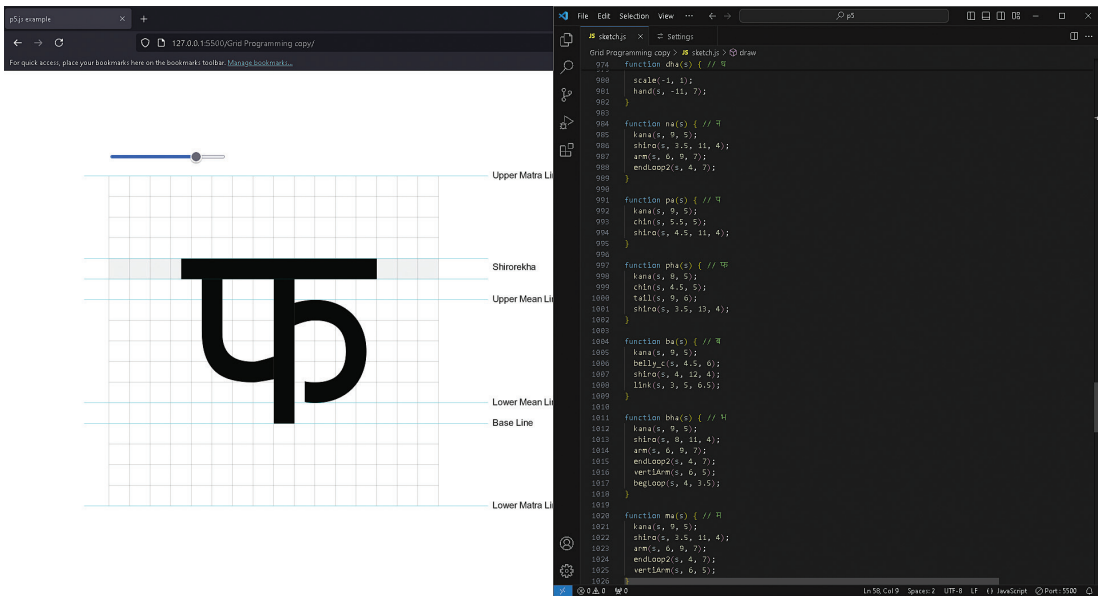
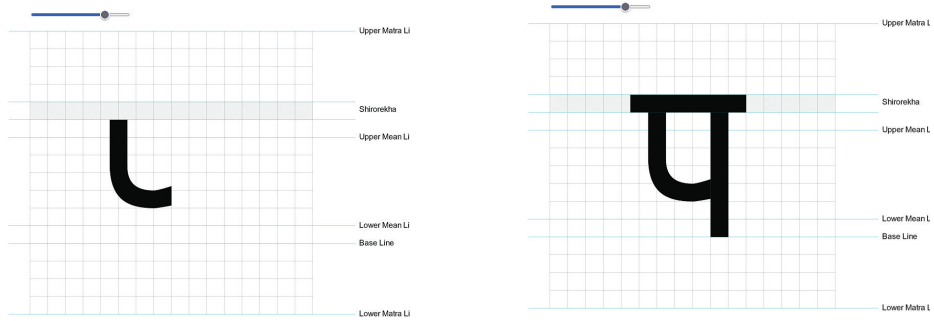


```

Grid Programming copy > # sketchjs > ka_c
828 function makeKa(x, y) {
829   vertex(x + inc, (y + inc)); // anchor point 1
830   bezierVertex(x + inc, (y + inc), (x + 1) * inc, (y) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y) * inc); //GA cluster
831   bezierVertex((x + 2.5) * inc, (y) * inc, (x + 6) * inc, (y + 1.75) * inc, (x + 4.3) * inc, (y + 2) * inc);
832   bezierVertex(x + 4.3 * inc, (y + 2) * inc, (x + 3) * inc, (y + 2) * inc, (x + 3) * inc, (y + 2) * inc);
833   bezierVertex(x + 3 * inc, (y + 1.95) * inc, (x + 2) * inc, (y + 1) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc);
834   bezierVertex((x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc);
835   bezierVertex((x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc, (x + 1) * inc, (y + 1) * inc); // GA
836   endShape(CLOSE);
837 }
838
839 // Character functions
840 function ka_c(s) { // ☞
841   kana(s, 6, 5);
842   belly_c(s, 3, 5, 6);
843   shiro(s, 4, 13, 4);
844   tail(s, 0, 6);
845 }
846
847 > function kha(s) { // ☞
848 }
849
850 > function ga(s) { // ☞
851 }
852
853 > function gha(s) { // ☞
854 }
855
856 > function nga(s) { // ☞
857 }
858
859 > function cha(s) { // ☞
860 }
861
862 > function chha(s) { // ☞
863   kana(s, 12, 5);
864   shiro(s, 3, 16, 4);
865 }
866
867 > function ja(s) { // ☞
868 }
869
870 > function jha(s) { // ☞
871 }
872
873 > function mha(s) { // ☞
874   kana(s, 12, 5);
875   shiro(s, 3, 16, 4);
876 }

```

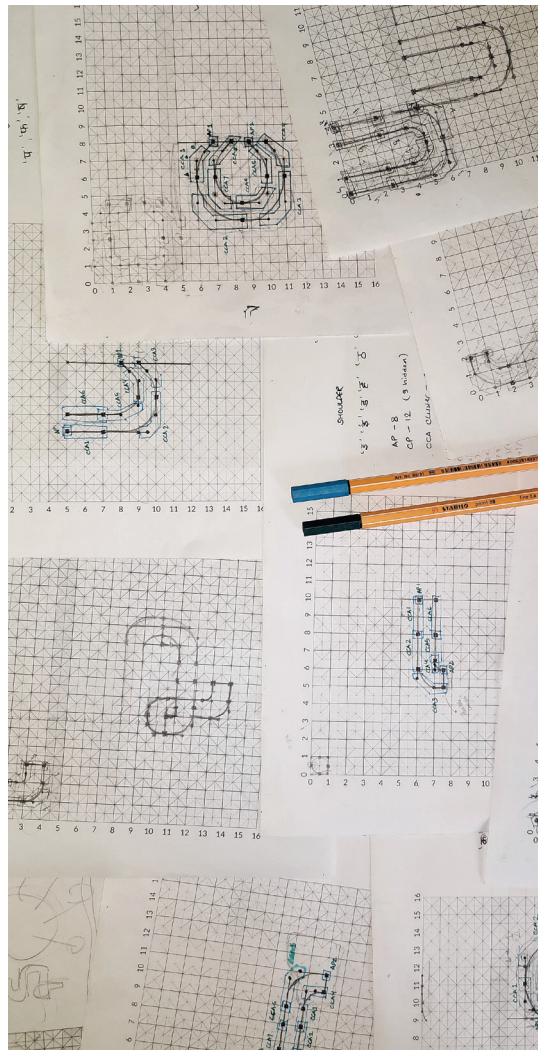
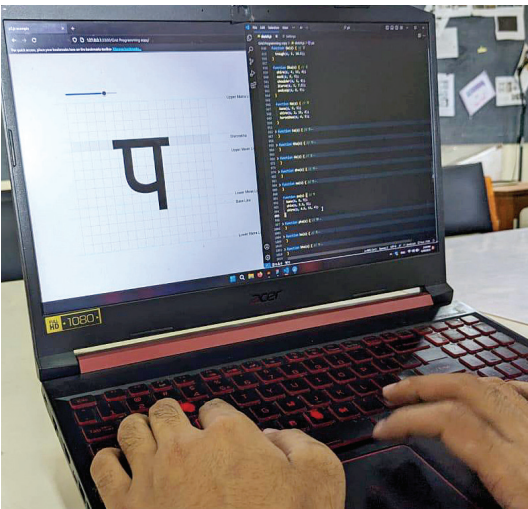
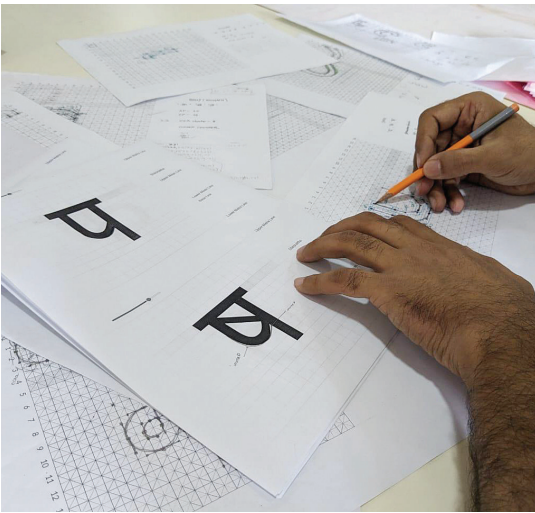
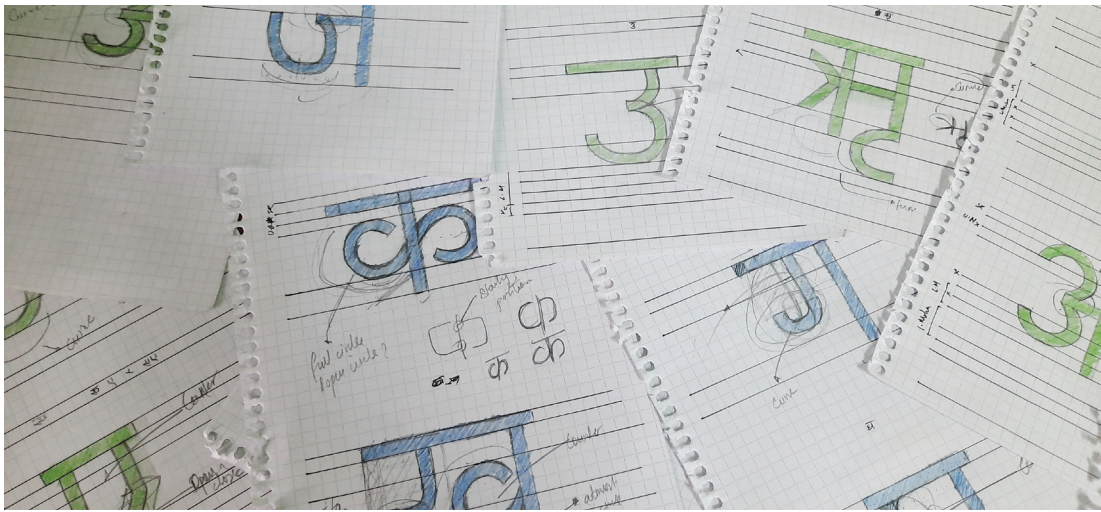
Screenshots of the programming elements and characters.



Screenshots of the programming elements and characters.

```

Grid Programming copy | sketch.js > draw
function grid(s) {
  88  function grid(s) {
  89    yMax = sMax;
  90    const n = 17; //value for number of lines to repeat vertically and horizontally
  91    //Increment value for the loop
  92    let inc = s * 4.5;
  93
  94    //margin value
  95    let margin = (3 * sMax) / 10; //total margin values on horizontal and vertical plane
  96    noFill();
  97    stroke(0, 80);
  98    strokeWeight(0.5);
  99
  100    // x - axis (horizontal lines)
  101    for (l = 0; l < n; l++) {
  102      line(xMin, yMin, xMax, yMin);
  103      yMin += inc;
  104    }
  105    yMin = 0; // resetting the value of yMin to 0.
  106
  107    // y - axis (vertical lines)
  108    for (l = 0; l < n; l++) {
  109      line(xMin, yMin, xMin, yMax);
  110      xMin += inc;
  111    }
  112    xMin = 0; //resetting the value of xMin to 0.
  113
  114    //adding anatomical lines
  115    stroke(0, 255, 255);
  116
  117    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin, xMax + (margin / 2), yMin); //Upper Matra Line
  118    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (4 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (4 * inc)); // Shirorepha top
  119    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (5 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (5 * inc)); // Shirorepha bottom
  120    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (6 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (6 * inc)); // Upper Mean line
  121    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (11 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (11 * inc)); // Lower Mean line
  122    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (12 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (12 * inc)); // Base line
  123    line(xMin - (margin / 4), yMin + (16 * inc), xMax + (margin / 2), yMin + (16 * inc)); // Lower Mean line
  124
  125    fill(50, 20);
  126    noStroke();
  127    rect(xMin, yMin + (4 * inc), xMax, inc); //rectangle to highlight shirorepha
  128
  129    // text label for anatomical lines-
  130    textSize(12);
  131    fill(20);
  132    noStroke();
  133
  134    text("Upper Matra Line", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + (0.5 * s)));
  135    text("Shirorepha", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + ((5 * s) / 2) + (4 * inc)));
  136    text("Upper Mean Line", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + (0.5 * s) + (6 * inc)));
  137    text("Lower Mean Line", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + (0.5 * s) + (11 * inc)));
  138    text("Base Line", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + (0.5 * s) + (12 * inc)));
  139    text("Lower Matra Line", xMax + s + (margin / 2), (yMin + (0.5 * s) + (16 * inc)));
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Images of the working process



Shuvechchhya Pradhan

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Instagram: suvpradhan

'Remnants of a Spirit' is a documentation of the Newar Aylā and its associated knowledge, which face growing threats from modern consumerism and unjust state regulations governing local brewing practices.

Growing up in a Newar household, this distilled liquor was a constant presence, from offering it to deities and ancestors in rituals to seeing my mother enjoy a peg or two with my grandparents. Yet, every year, I would find my grandmother hoarding bottles out of fear of not finding a good quality of Aylā in the future.

In contrast to the past, when Aylā was commonly prepared in Kathmandu Valley homes, it is no longer brewed openly and freely. My exhibition highlights how the Nepali State and its current legal structures disfavour Indigenous brewing practices and instate a culture of confusion and fear among the brewers. As a result, Aylā-making and its associated knowledge are not being passed down to younger generations as they were before.

The exhibition also emphasises the cultural importance of Aylā in the Newar community of Kathmandu Valley and the crafts associated with it. The crafted works showcased in the exhibition are primarily designed for the brewing and consumption of Aylā. 'Remnants of a Spirit' underscores the potential loss of this tradition and craft practice, accentuating the task of preservation to keep Aylā from disappearing.

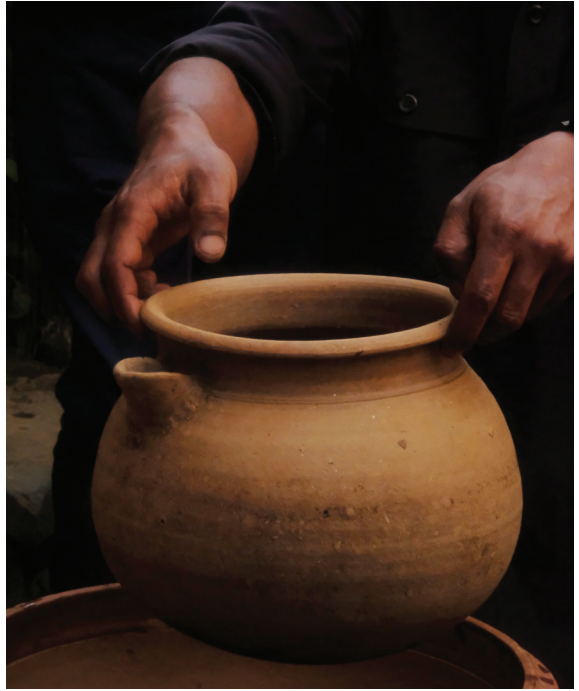
Remnants of a Spirit



Many Newar families of Kathmandu also use Aylā and Thwo for puja rituals where the drinks are also worshiped with other elements and deities. Photo credit: Sudip Pradhan



During the research period for the project, I took part in many Aylā making processes in many communities where I learnt how to brew the drink first hand." Photo credit: Arugna Adhikari



Aylā doesn't only mean drinking, it also means unique crafts associated with it, like Gullu which is kept inside a Haasi to collect the alcohol after the distillation process." Photo credit: Arugna Adhikari



Unlike the modern times when everyone uses plastics, traditional materials of clay for consuming Aylā known as salicha are more sustainable to the environment. Photo credit: Shuvechchhya Pradhan



In Newar Community, locally brewed drinks like Aylā and Tho (left and right) accompany samay baji during festivals and rituals. Photo credit: Arugna Adhikari





Thyabhu, a special dish prepared during wedding ceremonies of Newars, consists of various delicacies, including Aylā for the bride and groom to taste. Photo credit: Photo Xpose



Spriha Shrestha

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As I reflect back, I realise my life is a mosaic of experiences—the good ones, the bad ones, the fun ones, and the angry ones. Each memory has shaped the person I have become. Every situation and struggle has led me to where I am now. There was a phase when self-loathing and negative thinking consumed me so much that I could not envision a future for myself. Today, however, my perspective has changed. I used to run away from my emotions. But now I acknowledge them, feel them, and confront them.

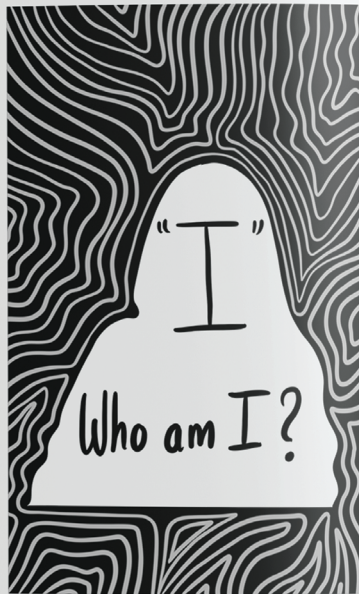
Understanding the importance of self-reflection has taken me a lot of time. Along the way, I discovered art as a medium to express myself—combining photography, visual storytelling, and illustration. The way pictures speak for themselves and capture memories inspired me to document my journey. Recently, I have also embraced writing to give voice to the thoughts I kept hidden from the world. The culmination of these artistic practices is my artist's book 'Unfolding Layers,' a collection of visual stories chronicling my lived experiences.

My book reflects my evolution from viewing myself through the eyes of others to finally claiming the power to define my own identity. 'Unfolding Layers' also pays tribute to the people, stories, movies, and poems that provided company and strength during difficult times. It embraces the journey of self-discovery—a journey that, like life itself, unfolds in a continuous but unpredictable way.

Unfolding Layers: A Journey Through Self



The collection of passport size photos throughout my life



Who am I?
I asked myself.
I have my name.
I have my caste.
I have my gender.
I have my religion.
I have everything
that defined me.
Yet, I was unknown.

I didn't have an
identity of my own
That was different
from these
That made me, me.

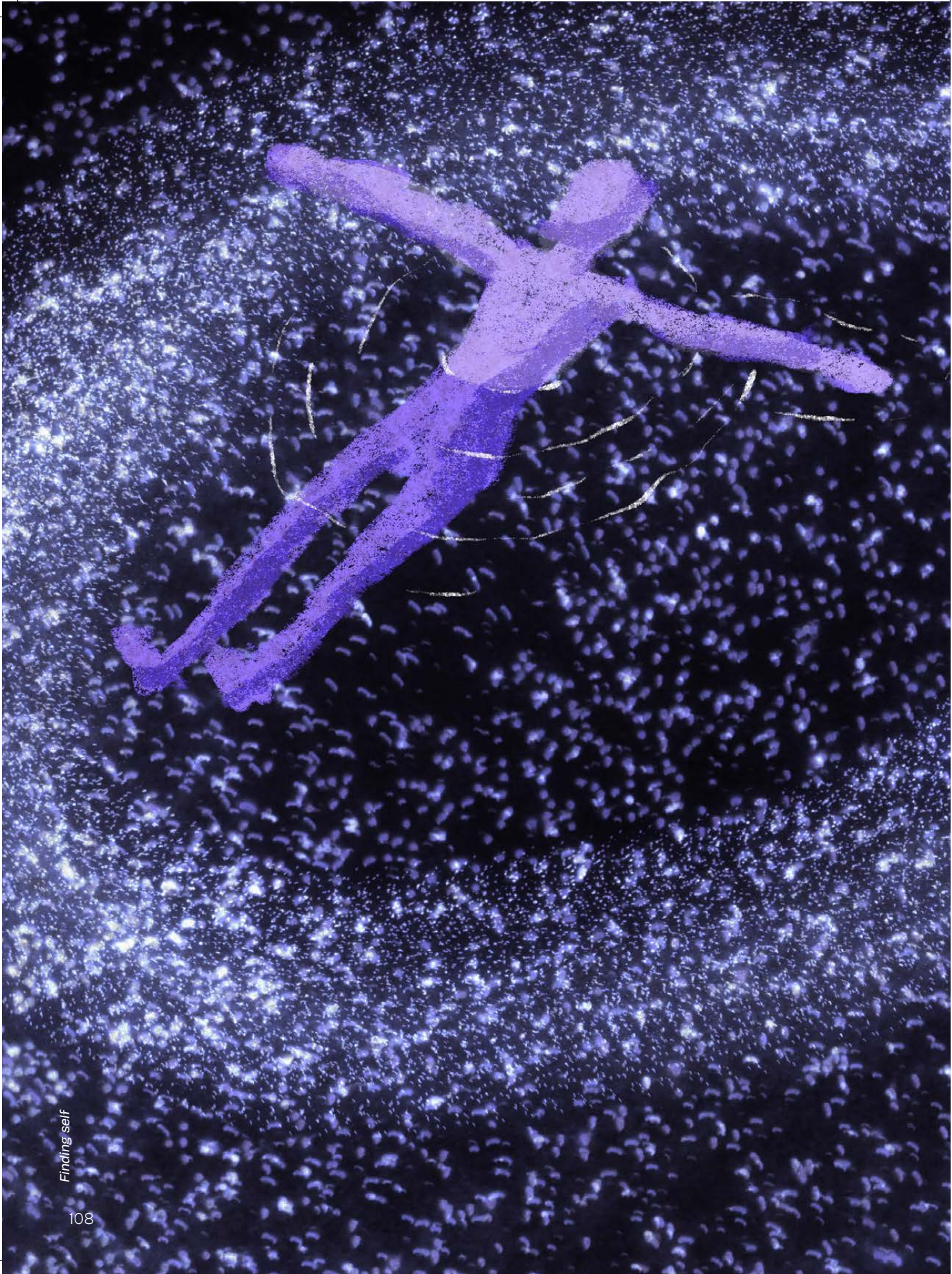
Some know me as a
girl with long hair
Some know me as a
girl with big glasses
Some know me as a girl with
a mouse on her shoulder.

Is that who I am?
Is that it?

Who am I? I asked myself.
I have everything within me,
yet I have nothing at all.

The identity that I crave,
The identity that
I want to weave,
The strong desire to
be known by my own.

Who am I?





'House' a photo series



Sumana Shakya

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This artwork explores the way daily rituals connect us with the living beings around us. Every morning, I perform a puja to the Sun God, lighting incense, applying a red smear, and offering water and rice grains to his idol. Through this routine practice, I became familiar with the birds, and they became familiar with me. They would gather at the sound of the door opening, anticipating the rice grains I offered. This familiarity deepened with each passing day.

I have always been drawn to constant and repetitive practices, which I believe is the reason I was drawn to the art of paubha painting. I have immersed myself in the vastness of this traditional art form, exploring its deep iconographies and intricate motifs that bring Kathmandu Valley's myths to life. The practice of paubha shares similarities with everyday rituals in terms of their requirement for routine enactment and the necessity of presence. Both have contributed to and enhanced my thought patterns. In my artwork, I make use of the paubha tradition to examine the constancy of practicing puja and the unexpected connection it fostered between me and the birds.

Nitya ko Nriya (The Dance of Everyday)



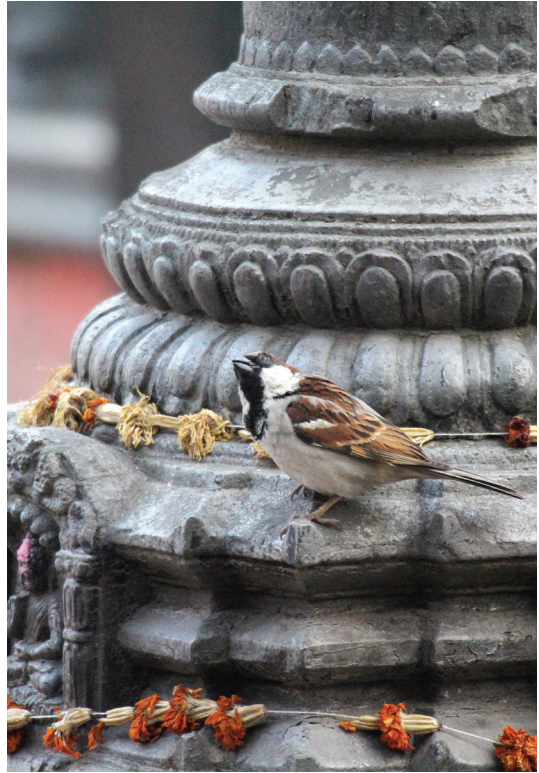
Blooms, (25 x 5) inches, Poster Color on Cotton Canvas, 2024



Afloat, (25.4 x 5) inches, Poster Color on Cotton Canvas, 2024



Likeness II, (23 x 11.7) inches, Poster, Color on Cotton Canvas, 2024



Work in Progress for 'Nitya ko Nritya'



Mandala spotting around Kathmandu Valley



Suvani Singh Shrestha

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Instagram/Facebook: qcbookshop

In the last decade, the prevailing publishing practices and trends in the region have made me question how I wanted to publish books. I have increasingly found myself veering towards practices that are considered antithetical to the business of publishing. The publishers embracing slower and more artisanal approaches resonate with me as they are producing books that are impactful and meaningful. Their work has given me reason to refine the editorial processes that I want to follow and focus on collaborations to create opportunities for alternative publishing practices.

My interest in artistic practices that use the printed book as a medium stems from my experience that publishing a book is akin to creating art. The tactile nature of the book allows for new experiences of engaging with art—this intrigues me as both a publisher and a reader. It inspires me to collaborate with artists, writers, curators, and institutions to develop a community around publishing as an artistic practice.

For my project, I will curate conversations on art book publishing in Nepal. Through these conversations, I want to highlight the work of artists who engage with the book as a medium for their practice, examine the contexts of art writing in Nepal and initiate institutional collaborations to publish artist books.

The Book is Art

THE IDEAL ART PUBLISHING SCENARIO



Collaboration that brings together institutions and publishers to support artists on publishing projects.



Funds for the development and production phase.

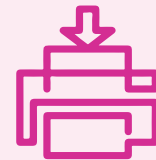


Distribution channels that help the books reach new audiences.

THE BOOK IS ART



Conversations that support the artist to conceptualize and create ideas.



Printing and material options that allow for experimentation on the output.



ON PUBLISHING PRACTICES

11 AM, 11TH JULY, 2024

The publishing practices of institutions have laid the foundations for exploring art publishing in Nepal. Learning from the challenges that have been faced and tackled, a clearer understanding of resources and opportunities available to the artist community for publishing opportunities will be outlined through this conversation.

Speakers: Ashmina Ranjit, Bidur Dangol, Navindra Man Rajbhandari, Sangeeta Thapa

Commentator: Devendra Thumkeli

LINE OF THOUGHT

PANEL DISCUSSIONS
Moderated by Suvani Singh

11-13 JULY, 2024

ON THE BOOK AS A MEDIUM FOR ARTISTIC PRACTICE

11 AM, 13TH JULY, 2024

Art books vs. Artist books. How have artists explored publishing? Artists who have experimented with producing books, talk about their experience of using the book as a medium to exhibit their art work.

Speakers: Kanchan Burathoki, Krisha Tamrakar, Robin Kapali, Shraddha Shrestha

ON ART WRITING PRACTICES

11 AM, 12TH JULY, 2024

While the arts and culture beat in the newsroom is where aspiring writers encounter art writing, writing on the arts continues to wane. This conversation will bring together writers to discuss their experiences of covering the arts to identify opportunities for creative partnerships between artists and writers.

Speakers: Aashish Mishra, Sabina Shrestha, Srizu Bajracharya

Faculty Profiles



Alston D'Silva

Alston D'Silva is a researcher, editor and educator based in Kathmandu. He earned a MS in the Art of Teaching Program from Sarah Lawrence College and pursued post-graduate study in Science, Technology and Society at the University of California-Santa Barbara's Film and Media Studies Doctoral Program.

Amina Singh, PhD

Amina works as a researcher in the field of education, community development, adult learning and social transformation, community development, adult learning and social transformation. She is an adjunct faculty at Kathmandu University. She is also a member of the University of Nepal Development Board, an initiative to establish a new Liberal Arts and Sciences based University in Nepal.



Ashmina Ranjit

Ashmina Ranjit, is a leading conceptual artist and pivotal figure in the activism (art + activism) movement. As an 'Activist,' she challenges the status quo, focusing on caste, gender, sexuality, and human rights. Currently, she is a faculty member of Just Futures Pahal, advancing creative engagements with visual narratives on caste, gender, and sexuality, and designing curricula on these critical issues. A two-time Fulbright Scholar and an Australia Awardee, Ashmina has earned numerous international accolades. She received her MFA from Columbia University and her BFA from the University of Tasmania and Tribhuvan University. In 2018, The Kathmandu Post named her one of the 25 individuals who shaped Nepal.



Ayushma Regmi

Ayushma is a writer and educator based in Kathmandu. They work at the intersection of gender, education, ecology and the arts, and have been experimenting with the improvisational possibilities within movement and writing in formal and informal learning spaces. Her approach to workshops foregrounds the therapeutic and community building possibilities in both forms. Over the last four years, she has also worked as a writing mentor for photographers and visual artists.



Prof Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD

Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD is an educator and a researcher in mathematics education and is currently the Dean of the School of Education at Kathmandu University.



Birat Prasad Shrestha

Birat Prasad Shrestha, MBA KU-SoM, leads Access Universe Pvt. Ltd., a business consulting firm specializing in entrepreneurial strategy. He trains professionals in sales, advertising, and marketing, and teaches at academic institutions. His expertise includes Strategic Marketing Management, Sales, Advertising & Promotion, Brand Management, and Business Plan Development.



Bishesta Dhakhwa

Bishesta Dhakhwa is a bespoke jewellery designer and design educator, currently based in Kathmandu. She embarked on her academic journey by completing her Bachelor's degree at Kathmandu University, School of Arts, where she cultivated a solid foundation in the arts, particularly in Graphic Communication. Building on this strong base, she pursued further studies and earned her Master's degree at the prestigious National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad, India where she majored in Lifestyle Accessory Design.



Diwas Raja Kc

Diwas Raja Kc is a curator, archivist, and historian with post-graduate education from Sarah Lawrence College and University of Michigan. He is currently the Head of Research & Archives at Nepal Picture Library where he has spearheaded a research-based approach to art, archival, and curatorial practice. His notable works include the award-winning co-curated project 'The Public Life of Women' (2023), as well as the exhibition 'The Skin of Chitwan' (2020) and photobook Dalit: A Quest for Dignity (2018).



Fidel Devkota, PhD

Fidel Devkota is a filmmaker and visual anthropologist from Nepal who has been active as a filmmaker, anthropologist, photographer, and lecturer for the past decade. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Film Studies, MA, and PhD in Visual and Media Anthropology. His films, photography, publications, and research works are mainly focused on human-environmental relationships, addressing the themes of spiritual, social, and economic transformation in a time of environmental and political change in the Himalayas. His broader interests and research area include environmental, visual, and applied anthropology, Himalayan art and anthropology, Heritage studies, Tibetan studies, film and media studies, and filmmaking.



Nandini Velho, PhD

Dr. Nandini Velho is currently an Omega Resilience Award Fellow and a wildlife researcher with over a decade of field-based experience in northeast India. She obtained her PhD from James Cook University in Australia, focusing on tropical ecology. Nandini's collaborative work with artists, researchers, and scientists exemplifies her ability to bridge gaps across different domains.



Niroj Dahal

Niroj Dahal is a lecturer at Kathmandu University, School of Education, specialising in STEAM Education. His research interests encompass ICT in education, qualitative research, mathematics education, and transformative research.

Prina Bajracharya

Prina Bajracharya, a Computer Engineer turned Human-Centric Designer, is passionate about understanding people and their needs. She believes that good design can create meaningful experiences by solving problems, bridging ideas and reality, and enhancing interactions between users and products.



Priyanajana Bhattarai

Priyanajana Bhattarai is an Intellectual Property and Artists Lawyer based in Nepal. She graduated from Amity Law School, Amity University where she specialized in Intellectual Property Law. Through her law firm, Kala Legal, she works with musicians, illustrators and other creators helping them protect their interests through legal counsel.

Raül Tidor

Raül Tidor is a scriptwriter, educator, and creative director based in Barcelona, Catalonia, and occasionally in Patan, Kathmandu. Over the past two decades, he has been involved in projects involving creativity and storytelling, from animation and documentaries to graphic novels, marketing campaigns, podcasts, documentaries, digital-only formats, music videos, and street art. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Media and Audiovisual Communication and a Master's in Creativity and Documentary at UAB (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona).



Salil Subedi

Salil Subedi is a musician and artist with 20 years of theatre experience collaborating with renowned groups like Aarohan-Gurukul, Studio 7, Theatre Village, and One World Theatre. He has contributed to 10 nature and wildlife conservation drama productions, while his musical proficiency spans wind instruments, vocals, and electronic music production.



Sharareh Bajracharya

Sharareh Bajracharya is an art educator and currently the director of Srijanalaya, dedicated to making arts accessible to young children and adults alike through systemic approaches. With a background in Studio Art, Art Education, Early Childhood Development, and Anthropology of Education, she teaches at Kathmandu University's School of Arts as well as the School of Education. Sharareh has contributed significantly to children's literature as an editor and producer, fostering diverse storytelling modalities in Nepal since 2011. She directed Kathmandu Triennale 2077 from 2019 to 2022.



Shrijit Rajbhandari

Shrijit Rajbhandari is a multimedia designer working across a wide variety of visual disciplines on both print and digital mediums. He is the Design Director of Sixwasnine Design, and co-founder of Blockout Print in Kathmandu. He has previously worked independently and in design agencies in Sydney and Gothenburg, Sweden, where he completed his BFA and MFA in Design respectively.



Sujan Chitrakar

Sujan Chitrakar is a Kathmandu based artist, educator and an Associate Professor and former Associate Dean at School of Arts, Kathmandu University. He, along with the MFA faculty members, spearheaded the new MFA programme at KU Art+Design.



Veerangana Kumari Solanki

Veeranganakumari Solanki, an independent curator and writer based in India, explores how interdisciplinary forms and creative practices merge to create dialogues in public and private spaces and converge images across disciplines. Her research and practice examine how historical and contemporary thought informs exhibition-making and artistic practices, expanding ideas of medium specificity through narration, memory, time, and storytelling.



Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to the KU Art+Design Team, MFA faculty members and staff. We would also like to acknowledge the following individuals and organisations for their contribution and support in making our MFA journey a remarkable one.

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My Family, Classmates, Denish Maharjan, Harshita Singh, Manjistha Tuladhar, Nabin Sunuwar, Onesimus Rai, Preeti Duwal, Priyanka Tulachan, Rabin Rai, Rojan Budathoki, Shrayam Shakya, Shreesty Maharjan, Shyam Lubanjar, Sujan Lubanjar

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Music and sound effect: www.freesounds.org, www.pixabay.com

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My Family, Swastik Acharya, Milina Tamrakar and family, Robin Shrestha, Bibek Shrestha, Pratikshya Ghimire, Pratap Tuladhar

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LINE OF THOUGHT

Schedule

Tuesday, 9 July 2024

10:30 AM

Opening for LoT

11:00 AM

Art and Knowledge

A conversation on the ways we look at and understand research and knowledge, the kind of understanding that the panelists developed through their MFA and how they have been making use of this understanding in their work.

Moderator: Diwas Raja Kc

Speakers: Amshad Sunuwar, Dishebh Shrestha, Kirti Shakya, Nija Maharjan, Shuvechchhya Pradhan

Commentator: Amina Singh

2:00 PM

Nitya ko Nritya

Sumana Shakya

Sumana Shakya will explore the role of everyday rituals and how they help foster deeper connections and understandings. She will share her remarkable experiences with birds, formed through the practice of daily rituals. Sumana will then elucidate how paubha painting has helped her convey these thoughts and explain why this genre of art has been particularly important to her.

2:30 PM

The Meaning of Making

Dhiraj Manandhar

Dhiraj Manandhar will reflect on what 'making' has meant for him. Through the lens of his design practice, he will investigate the fundamental question: why does one create? Using his family albums, Dhiraj will share how making is an integral part of his lineage, and he will particularly highlight how his grandmother's

resourcefulness influenced the development of his MFA project. He will discuss how he settled on the materials and the products of his project, as well as the directions he would like to take them in the future. Dhiraj's talk will also point to the lessons he learnt from the MFA programme, where contrasting Eastern and Western ideas of 'making' have helped him clarify his artistic positionality.

3:00 PM

Reflecting the journey

Spriha Shrestha

Through her talk, Spriha Shrestha will describe the process behind her MFA project titled 'Unfolding Layers.' She will explore how reflecting on her personal experiences and emotions shaped the development of her project and how the MFA programme provided an environment conducive to introspection and self-discovery, facilitating her artistic journey. She will share insights into the significance of embracing one's authentic self as she has come to understand it through the creative process of her work.

4:00 PM

Navigating the design process in a digital world.

A conversation on the design process of selected KU MFA Design students in relation to the evolving technological landscape that their projects encounter. This talk will focus on the thought process and the implications of the choices made by the designers on their own roles as and impact of their works.

Moderator: Shrijit Rajbhandari

Speakers: Anjan Shrestha, Dishebh Shrestha, Diya Laxmi Joshi, Mrigaja Bajracharya, Pooja Shrestha, Shubhendu Tuladhar

Commentator: Alston D'Silva

Wednesday, 10 July 2024

11:00 AM

Metaphysics of vulnerability: Navigating confusions as we make art

How do we transform the intimacy and vulnerabilities of our thoughts and practices into art? When do our confusions become the very source of our inspiration?

A conversation on how research and knowledge building exercises are integrally tied to a more intimate understanding of one's own self and how this can help inform one's own artistic practices

Moderator: Sharareh Bajracharya

Speakers: Ayonija Maharjan, Neda Haffari, Prakash Ranjit, Shubhendu Tuladhar, Sumana Shakya

Commentator: Ashmina Ranjit

2:00 PM

A Conscious Being Amshad Sunuwar

Amshad Sunuwar will explore how guilt and curiosity manifest visually in his work. In this talk, he will delve into how the MFA environment shaped his practice and reflect on what it has meant for him to be conscious. He will discuss the role of repetition in learning, the importance of intention in creation, and the coexistence of traditional and contemporary knowledge systems. He will also shed light on how his choice of colours and materials has been shaped by these factors.

2:30 PM

Unpacking the packed Kripa Tuladhar

Kripa Tuladhar will present the creative process behind her work 'Remembrance of Shadows.' Her process was driven by a desire to reconnect with her past, which had remained largely obscured to her and her family. The talk will primarily focus on her experience of walking through her ancestral neighbourhood and engaging with the local community. She will talk about how she gradually uncovered her family's history and how it has profoundly shaped her as an individual and an artist.

3:00 PM

Mapping memories with food Nija Maharjan

Nija Maharjan will talk about her project 'When the Lairsū Blooms,' a compelling food memoir about the profound connections between food, memory, and identity. Nija envisions food as a bridge that spans generations and proposes her book as an archive of culinary stories. During the talk, she will also remark on the role of the book form in preserving cultural traditions and the importance of documenting and recording as art practice.

4:00 PM

Art's role in Industry: Balancing tradition and innovation through design

Explore the convergence of traditional skills and innovative design in Nepal. This panel examines modern influences, individual explorations, and the balance between the industry and traditional crafts.

Moderator: Bishesta Dhakhwa

Speakers: Anusha Thapa, Dhiraj Manandhar, Kirti Shakya, Pooja Shrestha, Reejun Pradhan

Commentator: Raül Tidor

Thursday, 11 July 2024

11:00 AM

The Book is Art - On publishing practices

The publishing practices of institutions have laid the foundations for exploring art publishing in Nepal. Learning from the challenges that have been faced and tackled, a clearer understanding of resources and opportunities available to the artist community for publishing opportunities will be outlined through this conversation.

Moderator: Suvani Singh

Speakers: Ashmina Ranjit, Bidur Dangol, Navindra Man Rajbhandari, Sangeeta Thapa

Commentator: Devendra Thumkeli

2:00 PM

Application of 3D Scanning and Printing Techniques in Nepali Sculpture

Ravi Poudel

Ravi Poudel will talk about his paper on traditional metallurgy and alloying techniques unique to Nepalese craftsmanship and will introduce a novel method for integrating modern technologies like 3D scanning and 3D printing within these crafts.

2:30 PM

Maa, Mother, Earth - Shakti

Sushila Singh

Sushila Singh will speak about how her works celebrates the resilience and strength of women - comparing them to clay that when exposed to heat, transforms into strong bricks, symbolizing how challenges make them stronger and are essential in turning houses into homes.

3:00 PM

Globalisation and the Transformation of Nepali Art and Craft

Tejesh Man Shakya

Tejesh Man Shakya will speak on the impact of globalization on Nepali art and craft practices, examining the transformation in production, marketing, and reception due to increased international trade, tourism, and digital connectivity, and will provide insights on how to ensure the continuity of Nepal's artistic heritage.

4:00 PM

Pursuing Narrative: Form, Experience & Voice

This panel explores how artists arrive at narrative or storytelling as a vehicle to explore ideas, choices, and themselves. We interrogate questions of form in the diversity of media that incorporates narratives among our panelists, from visual storytelling to multimedia objects to curatorial practice. Through our exchange, we examine issues of identification, empathy, healing and survival, important aspects of our panelists' work.

Moderator: Alston D'Silva

Speakers: Diya Laxmi Joshi, Mrigaja Bajracharya, Neda Haffari, Prakash Ranjit, Sriha Shrestha

Commentator: Raúl Tidor

Friday, 12 July 2024

11:00 AM

The Book is Art - On art writing practices

While the arts and culture beat in the newsroom is where aspiring writers encounter art writing, writing on the arts continues to wane. This conversation will bring together writers to discuss their experiences of covering the arts to identify opportunities for creative partnerships between artists and writers

Moderator: Suvani Singh

Speakers: Aashish Mishra, Sabina Shrestha, Srizu Bajracharya

2:00 PM

The Curatorial Turn in Nepali Art

The curatorial turn within the Nepali art scene is barely two decades old, but is increasingly a prominent part of how the art world operates. This conversation explores the experiences and approaches of Nepali curators currently practicing in Nepal in relation to the prominence of the curator in the global art industry.

Moderator: Shristi Shrestha

Speakers: Swosti Rajbhandari, Manish Lal Shrestha, Shivangi Bansal, Ujen Norbu Gurung

4:00 PM

The Echoes of the Past

A conversation on the role memories, culture and traditions play in shaping the things the panelists want to make and create in the world, and how they researched, compiled and interpreted this knowledge within their own artistic practice.

Moderator: Sujan Chitrakar

Speakers: Anjan Shrestha, Anusha Thapa, Ayonija Maharjan, Kripa Tuladhar, Reejun Pradhan

Commentator: Sharareh Bajracharya

Saturday, 13 July 2024

11:00 AM

The Book is Art - On the book as a medium for artistic practice

Art books vs. Artist books. How have artists explored publishing? Artists who have experimented with producing books, talk about their experience of using the book as a medium to exhibit their art work.

Moderator: Suvani Singh

Speakers: Kanchan Burathoki, Krisha Tamrakar, Robin Kapali, Shraddha Shrestha

2:00 PM

Built to Last: The past and future of art institutions in Nepal

Although art institutions are an integral part of the art economy, there are precious few in Nepal - mostly because of economic, bureaucratic and social challenges and limitations. This panel will explore the experiences of people who have dedicated themselves to the building of such institutions and consider what the future holds for art institutions in Nepal.

Moderator: Nischal Oli

Speakers: Sangeeta Thapa, Navin Joshi, Rajan Saky, NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati

4:00 PM

Reflections on teaching in the MFA program

A conversation on the teaching and learning philosophy practiced within the MFA program, individual teaching experiences, major challenges faced, and steps to take moving forward.

Moderator: Amina Singh

Speakers: Sujan Chitrakar, Diwas Raja Kc, Sharareh Bajracharya, Shrijit Rajbhandari

MFA Team (2022-24)

KU Art+Design Team

Anil Shahi
Bhuvan Thapa
Kirti Kaushal Joshi
Nabendra Limbu
Pratima Thakali
Sagar Manandhar
Sanjeep Maharjan
Shyam Prajapati
Sujan Dangol

MFA Faculty

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Amina Singh, PhD
Ashmina Ranjit
Ayushma Regmi
Prof Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD
Birat Prasad Shrestha
Bishesta Dhakhwa
Diwas Raja Kc
Fidel Devkota, PhD
Nandini Velho, PhD
Niroj Dahal
Prina Bajracharya
Priyanajana Bhattarai
Raül Tidor
Salil Subedi
Sharareh Bajracharya
Shrijit Rajbhandari
Sujan Chitrakar
Veerangana Kumari Solanki

Seminar / Talk Presenters

Alessandra Campoli, PhD
Alison Saar
Anshika Varma
Anudeep Dewan
Anumeha Yadav
Archana Thapa, PhD
Diskhya Karki, PhD
Indra Mani Rai Yamphu, PhD
Prof Julia Christensen
Karan Shrestha
Prof Keneth Foster, PhD
Marie Sophie Beinke
Marlène Harles, PhD
Prof Natalie King, PhD
Navin Joshi
Nayantara Gurung Kakshapati

Prof Niels Gutschow, PhD
Nikhil Suryanarayana
Nisha Mehta
Lamha Bijili
Ria Pacquee
Samriti Gosain
Sana Nasir
Sandeepa Vithanage
Shikhar Bhattarai
Sujan Shrestha
Prof Tom Leeser
Tina Shrestha, PhD
T Shanathanan, PhD
Viola Rachael Bordon

Workshop Facilitators

Abin Shahi
Abu Hang Samuel
Anil Chitrakar
Computational Mama
Miresch Adhikari
Nisha Thapa Magar
Padma Sundar Maharjan
Prawin Adhikari
Ram Krishna Pokharel
Candice Purwin
Rohit Ranjitkar, PhD
Samuel Thomas
Sushrut Acharya

Urban Transformation and Placemaking

Prof. Arunava Dasgupta, PhD
Prof. Brigitte Solch, PhD
Prof. Christiane Brosius, PhD
Prof. Tarini Bedi, PhD
Prof. Ulrike Gerhard, PhD

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Kirti Kaushal Joshi
Madan Chitrakar
Navin Joshi
Sangeeta Thapa
Prof. Sanjeev Upreti, PhD
Sharareh Bajracharya
Sujan Chitrakar

MFA Exhibition Team

Curatorial Advisors

Diwas Raja Kc
Sujan Chitrakar

Curators

Neda Haffari
Pranab Man Singh
Shuvechchya Pradhan
Suvani Singh Shrestha

Line of Thought Curators

Pranab Man Singh
Shuvechchya Pradhan
Suvani Singh Shrestha

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Rojan Ghimire
Subodh Bhandari

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Alston D'Silva
Diwas Raja Kc
Pranab Man Singh
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Dishebh Raj Shrestha
Ramesh Maharjan

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Kabir Kayastha
Raül Tidor
Rojan Ghimire
Saroj Shrestha
Subodh Bhandari
Sulav Thapa Magar

Sound System

Music Matters

Special Thanks

Alternative Technology
British Council
Centre for Transcultural Cultural Studies
Heidelberg University
Heritage As Placemaking
German Academic Exchange Service DAAD
Khoj Studio
MCube Gallery
Music Matters
Nepal Arts Council Gallery
Nepal Picture Library
RDI, School of Arts, KU
R N Joshi Museum
Satori Centre for the Arts
Sattya Media Arts Collectives
School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi
Taragaon Museum
Tumbahalaya
Young Innovations

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