DHEBARIA RABARI EMBROIDERY

SYNERGY RABARI LATIN TYPECRAFT

REGION: Kotay Village, Sumrasar Shiekh, Kutch
COMMUNITY: Dhebaria Rabari
IMPACT: Direct: 5 craftswoman | Indirect: 20 craftswomen

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY

Collaborators
Balli ben, Jeni ben, Seju ben, Parma ben, Dawal ben (Craftswomen)
Ishan Khosla, Shreya Meher (Designers)
Andreu Balius (Type Designer)
Key characteristics include: densely embroidered and appliqued fabric, use of a limited colour palette, some embroidery is so dense that it resembles applique. Additionally, the characteristic “dant” or teeth are ever present on the outer forms of motifs such as mor (peacocks), sudo (parrots) and various shrubs found in the desert regions of Rajasthan and Kutch.
The typecraft initiative

POMWVXCRAFTSWOMENZTQPL

Balli ben

Seju ben

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Jeni ben

Dawal ben
Embroidery is an important part of a Dhebaria Rabari woman’s daily life, evident in the unwavering work put into important garments such as the choli, shawl and skirts for ceremonial occasions like weddings. The Rabari embroidery mostly uses mirrors, abstracted forms of scorpions, peacocks and parrots, flowers and geometric patterns using a chain stitch and accent stitches in bold colours.

**VISUAL RESEARCH**

After visiting Kutch, we collected various images of motifs and embroideries made by the Rabari community. The below look like Latin script letters to us, but of course their meaning and context to the Rabari community is very different.

Existing embroideries that look like the Latin Script

Rabari motifs used in the embroideries
EXPLORATION OF RABARI MOTIFS

After our visual research we picked up certain elements and forms as inspiration to use in the letters we explore. What stands out to us particularly are the loops curving inwards and outwards in their motifs.

THE LOOPS

The challenge is to balance the use of elements from the embroidery with typographic consistency. Different sizes of loops were explored to rationalise the embroidery style.

CURVED OR STRAIGHT CORNERS

The B has been embroidered by Rabari women which helps to understand the forms they use. Explorations were done with curved and linear edges.
**DIRECTION OF LOOPS**

The embroidery consists of loops at endings, which is a crucial element to the typeface, especially for letters like F, H, K, L, M, N, R, U, V, W, X, Y, Z. Depending on the embroidery, we explored variations of loop endings in different directions and numbers.

**ENDINGS**

Most of the embroidery motifs we see, have a straight ending, however to maintain consistency in the typeface.
EXPLORING ALL LETTERS

After brainstorming and exploring, we filled in the letters to make them bolder, easier to see the shape and evaluate. These created the first “Master List”.

![Image of exploratory letter designs]

MASTER LIST

From the above explorations, we quickly vectorized all the letters just to tweak easily and create letters. This helped us to understand how the loops affect kerning and how we can further add ornamentation to them.

![Image of Master List]

& G &

A A A B B B B C C C D D D D E E E E E

F G G H H H H H I I I J J J J J K K K K K L L L L M M M

N N O O O O O O P P P P P Q Q Q Q Q Q Q Q R R R R R S S S S S T T T T T T T T U U U U

V V V W W W W W W W W X X X X X X X X Y Y Y Y Z
EXPECTED OUTCOME
THE TYPECRAFT INITIATIVE
WORKING TYPEFACES

Radha Sullur | Chittara Folk Art by the Deewaru community, Sagar District, Karnataka

Ram Keli, Sumitra, Sunita | Godna (Art of tattooing) by the Gond Tribe Surguja, Jamgala District, Chhattisgarh

THE TYPECRAFT INITIATIVE

UPCOMING TYPEFACES

Balli ben, Jeni ben, Seju ben, Parma ben, Dawal ben | Dhebaria Rabari embroidery and applique Kutch by Dhebaria Rabari community, Sumrasar Shiekh, Kutch, Gujarat
UPCOMING TYPEFACES

Rathore Paani ben, Hetal ben, Varsha ben, Charu Lata ben, Manisha ben, Ramila ben, Amisha ben | Soof embroidery, by Meghwaad Maaru community, Kutch, Gujarat

Maaru community, Kutch, Gujarat | Pakko embroidery by Sodha Rajput community, Kutch, Gujarat
LETTERFORMS

Sajnu ben | Dhebaria Rabari Embroidery by the Rabari community, Kukadsar, Kutch | Year: October 2011

Mamta Jha | Mithila Folk Painting, Mithila, Bihar | Year:

Apam (Hao Crafts), Black Pottery, Ukhrul District, Manipur | Year: October 2013

Kolam typography, Tamil Nadu | Year:

Embroideries from Kutch, Gujarat (l to r: Soof, Dhebaria Rabari, Jat Gharasia, Ahir and Kharek) | Year: 2018
A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NAINA

EMPOWERING CRAFTSWOMEN THROUGH THE CREATION OF INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL DIGITAL APPS FOR CHILDREN

The concept here is to create an alphabet in Devanagari script in the Hindi language, made from Indian crafts (in this case Mithila from Madhubani district in northern Bihar). This alphabet will be used as a part of an educational app for primary school children.

Connect: the letter – alphabet – words – sentences – stories – folklore and local narratives (visual and textual)

How can children at different age groups interact with this font in different manners to make connections between the above, and to also be able to connect to the visual and verbal. The idea is also to sensitise children at an early age to Indian crafts, heritage and authorship.
Example of Book Covers using Godna, done for Harper Collins.

A designer using the Godna typeface to create an animation on the computer.
SIGNAGE

BRANDING FOR THE ARTS

POSTER DESIGN

BWTIC using Godna typeface for posters for the National Theatre Wales

Posters made using Godna Typeface
ALPHABET QUILTS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

The concept here is to create alphabets using Indian Scripts, made from Indian crafts (in this case from Pakko embroidery). The alphabets will be used as a learning aid and an activity book for primary school children. The idea is also to sensitise children at an early age to Indian crafts, heritage and authorship.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

THE TYPECRAFT INITIATIVE

www.typecraftinitiative.org

www.instagram.com/thetypecraftinitiative