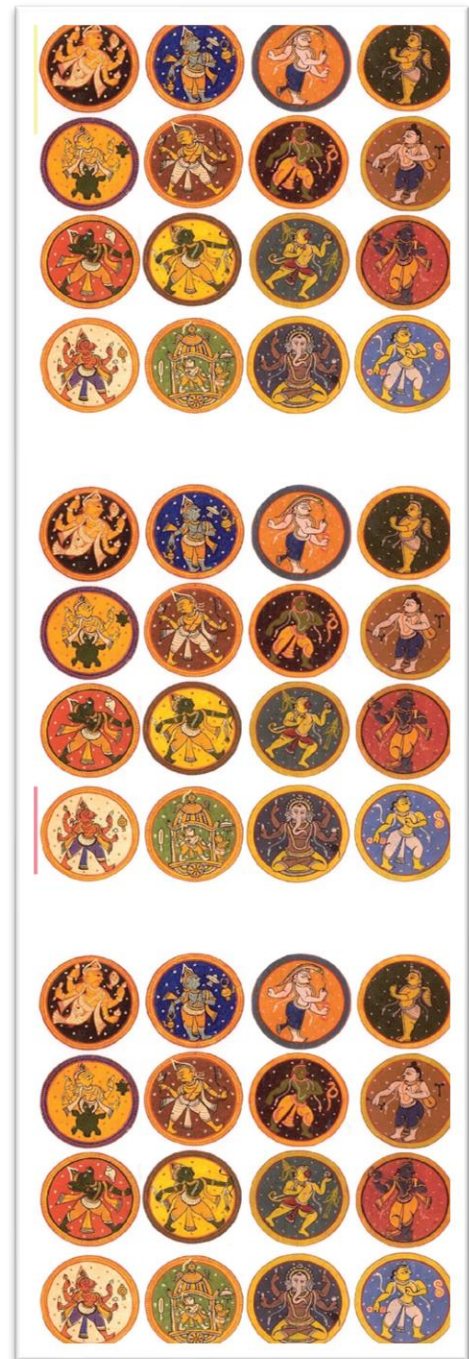# Exploration on two GI clusters of Mysore

Ganjifa Cards of Mysore &
Mysore Traditional Painting

Principal Investigator – Dr. Sanjukta Ghosh

Srishti Institute of Art Design & Technology

Contributors

- Research Associate – Shipra Purohit
- Experiential Space Design - Abhishek Jain
- Product Ideation - Shipra Purohit , Megha Jain
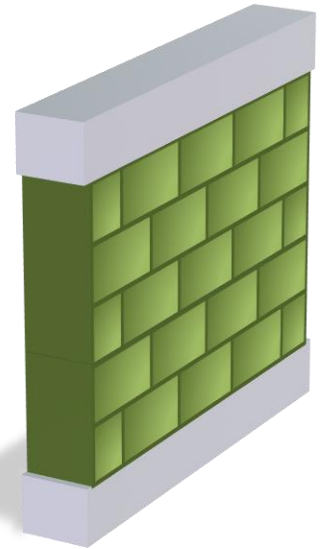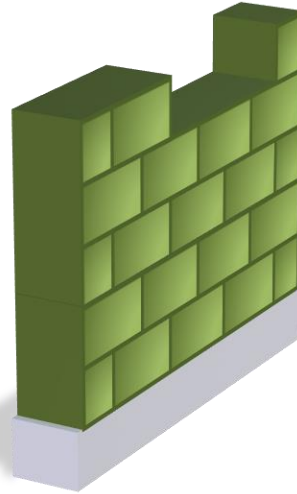- Promotion Strategy – Ayan Barua , Suhrd Joshi

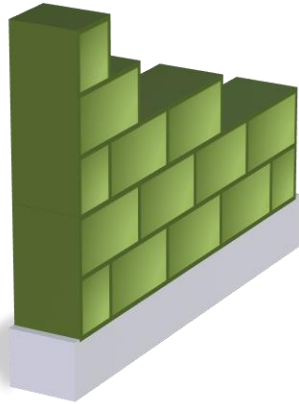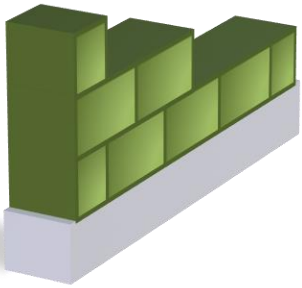Detailed Exploration and Exhibition conducted by a team of Undergraduate Students

Literature Exploration

Depth Interview with Artists & Researcher

Ideation & Design

Analysis & Recommendations

Literature Exploration

History of Mysore Traditional Painting

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

The Art of Playing Ganjifa Card

Work of Ganjifa Raghupati Bhat

Explore Ganjifa Art Practices in different parts of India
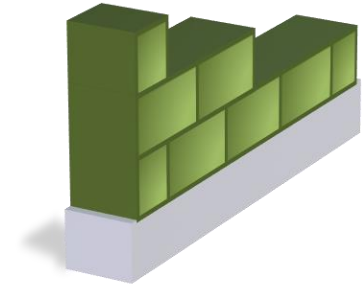
Depth Interview With Artists and Researcher

A detailed open ended questionnaire was developed to interview the artists.

Multiple Artists were interviewed.

A detailed discussion with two popular Ganjifa Art researchers.

Multiple discussion with Art educators and authors of different book chapters titled "SPLENDOURS OF GANJIFA ART".

An exclusive long discussion with the General Secretary of Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad.

Organization of the excerpts from Interview.
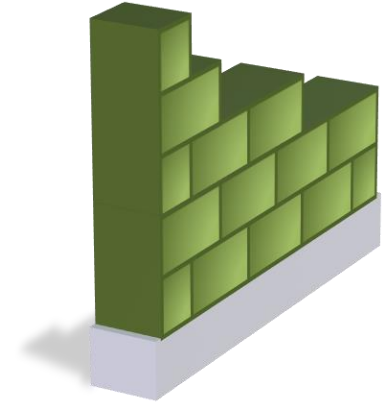
Ideation and Design

Multiple Product Ideation to embed Ganjifa Card in other products.

A experiential space design for the Artists and Artisan community.

Exploration around Ganjifa Card Game.

Website design for promotion and awareness.
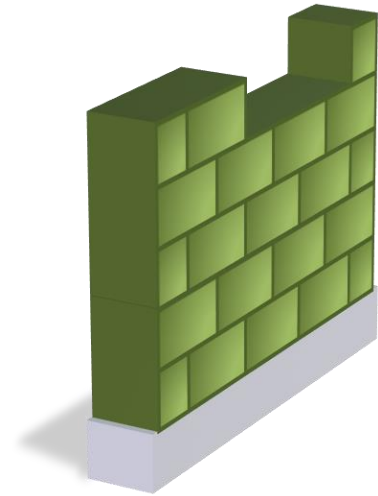
Analysis and Recommendations

Inferences drawn from Primary exploration .

Navigate through complexity and Co creative workspace.

Focus on traditional production process

PESTEL Analysis

Business Model Canvas

Value Creation Framework

Literature Exploration

SPLENDOURS OF
GANJIFA ART
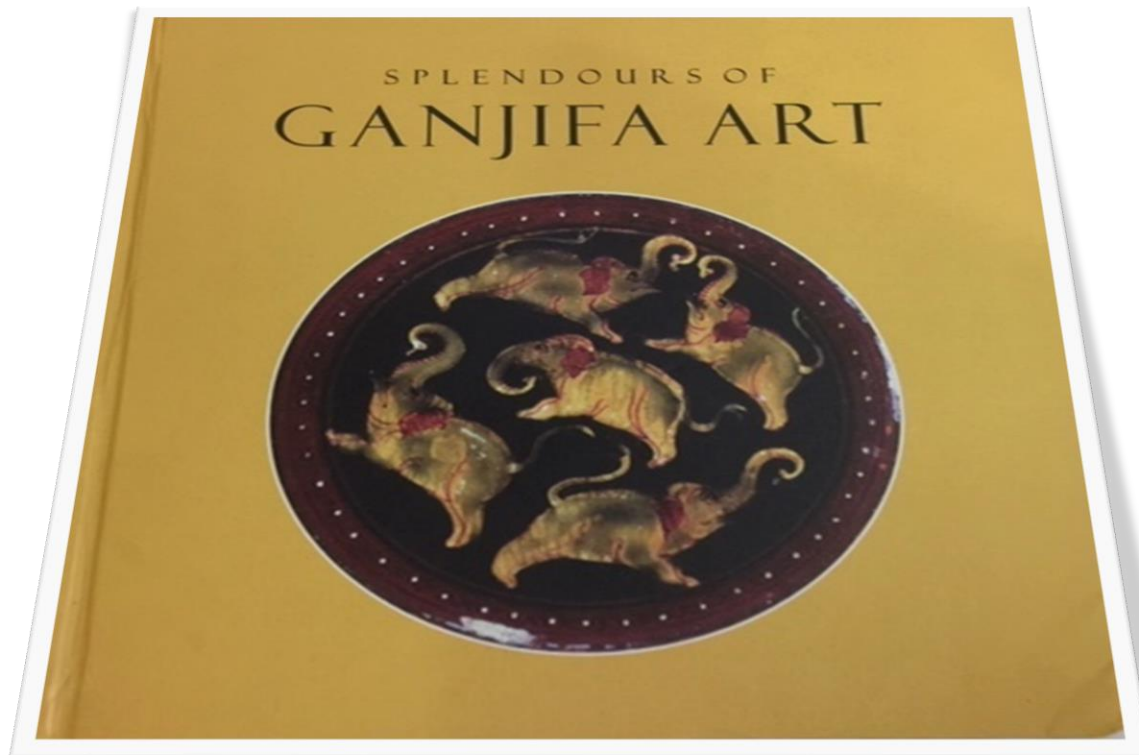
History of Mysore Traditional Painting

The Tanjore and Mysore traditional paintings are the contribution of the Vijayanagar School of Painting (A.D. 1336 to 1665) to the Indian art .

The students were specialized in drawing war scenes folk dances, animal hunting, commercial transactions and everyday life of the common people.

The Mysore kings were ruling the princely state from Srirangapattana and Raja Wodeyar (1578-1617 A.D.) employed several painters from Vijayanagar and thus laid a sound foundation of Mysore Traditional Painting.

History of Mysore Traditional Painting

These painters were also assigned allied work in decoration, preparing banners, doll making, gold work, painting the temple cars, preparing portraits of rulers, deities and saints. The Mysore kings that followed also encouraged this style of painting.

The inscription or the God and Goddess figures were taken from the shlokas. The artists during that time used to imagine the description to draw their paintings and the words were translated to paintings.

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

The intricate age old Ganjifa art can be seen in the Jagan Mohan palace of Mysore, Folk art Museum, Gangotri, Mysore, special Ganjifa museum at Srirangapattna and Manjusha museum at Dharmashala.

The traditional art of ganjifa cards has evolved over time and varieties of versions came into existence with various rulers and artists adding value to the art. The shape, size paintings on the cards, material used and the rules of playing the game, all the aspects saw a significant changes and innovation over a period. The paintings on the cards were influenced by the rulers and the regions, which is the reason for distinct patterns found on the cards. Taking a look at the contribution of different people involved in the evolution of the traditional cards.

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

Mughal Period

- Mughal emperors had a taste for this form of art, was a part of the luxurious life of Mughals.
- Played by kings, prime ministers and other courtiers .
- During Mughal rule new additions were made to the game with the introduction of political tricks, vazir, Ghulam, army motifs, birds, vehicles leaves etc were introduced to the cards.
- Introduction of various shapes: rectangular oval etc.
- Cases for keeping the cards safe also came into existence during this period.

Khiljii dynasty

- Ameerkhusro brought in handmade paper from Persia and introduced the miniature painting including the Ganjifa art.
- Change in material made it useful to common man too.

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

Southern region

- In the South, Ahamednagar, Bijapur, Golkonda, Bidar, Gulbarga ruled by Sultans were the regions that promoted this art form.

- Adilshahi of Bijapur encouraged the art and the southern miniature painting style was developed by adding birds, flowers, leaves, fruits, etc., in the traditional painting of cards.

- Karnataka had typical styled Ganjifa cards which were famous due to patronage of Mysore rulers especially Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar the 21st King of Yadava dynasty. He is remembered as Bhoja of Kannada who had encouraged literature, art, dance, sculpture, music, including Mysore Ganjifa art.

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

Tipu Sultan's dynasty successor

Mummadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was given the throne in 1799 after Tipu Sultan(who could not take part in promoting the art and craft as he was busy fighting with Britishers). During Krishnaraja's rule the Ganjifa arts reached new heights and new versions sets of cards with hindu deities on them were devised by him, he was inclined towards

- Devised Chomundeshwori (320 cards),
- Ponchopandavas (210 cords)
- Jagan Mohona (210 cards),
- navorothano Naveenoramo (36 cards)
- Sodyajotho (72 cords)
- hastadigpalo (160 cords)
- Devi dosavatara (180 cards)
- Sorvomangolo (160 cards)

History of Mysore Ganjifa Art

British period

During the British period the craft was hard hit, as it started losing the traditional value and almost was at the verge of extinction.

Revival

- Shri Raghupati Bhatta took interest in reviving the art and dedicated himself to the craft.
- Won various awards and recognitions at national and international level.
- Trained number of candidates under the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) programme.
- The elderly master craftsperson like Shri Ramnarasaiah also took interest in the art and encouraged younger artists to learn the art form.

Ganjifa Art Practices in different parts of India

Mysore - Karnataka
Sawantwadi - Maharashtra
Ganjam, Raghurajpur – Odisha
Bishnupur – West Bengal

Bishnupur, West Bengal
Raghurajpur, Odisha
Ganjam, Odisha
Sawantwadi, Maharashtra
Mysore, Karnataka
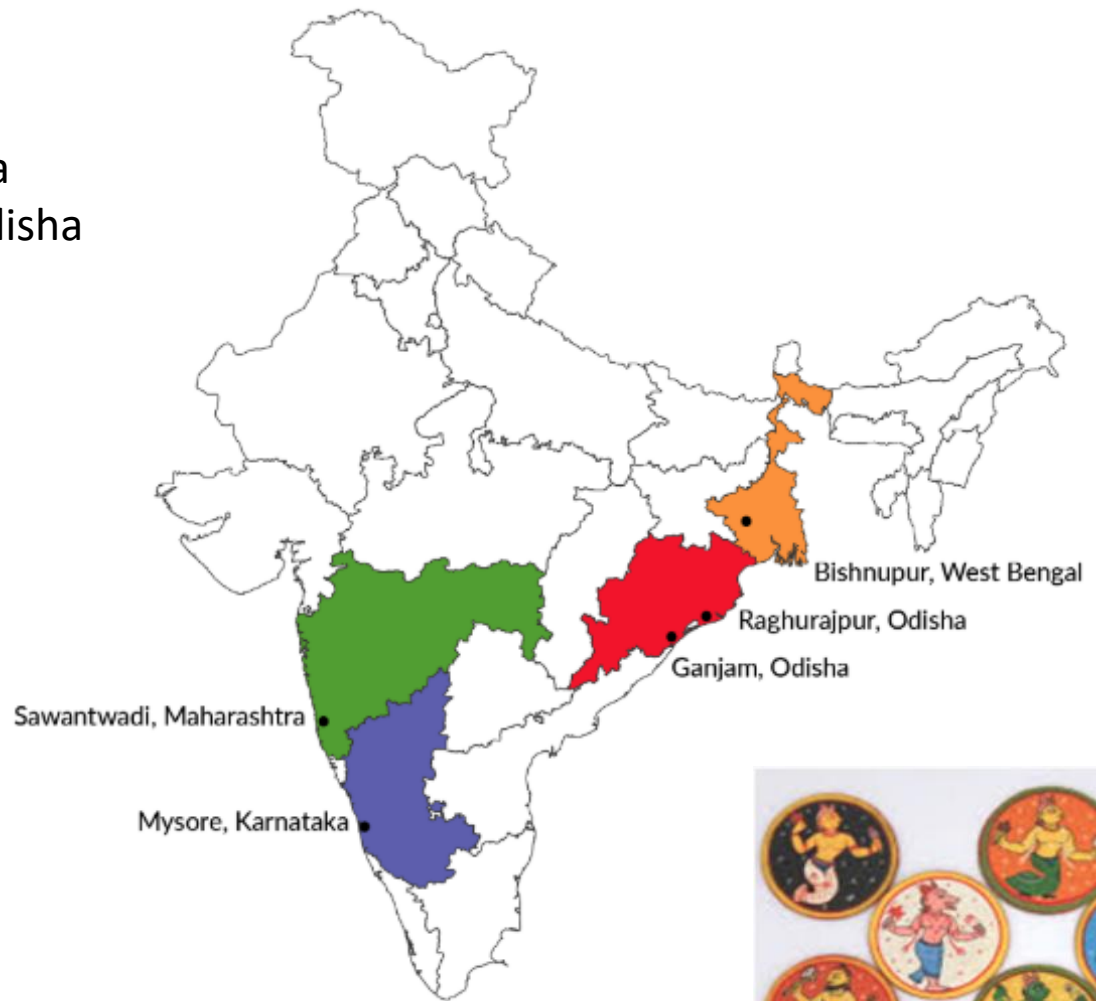
Depth Interview with Artists & Researchers

Depth Interview

Depth Interview with the

- Artists

- Researchers

- Art historians

- Academicians

Depth Interview

- A detailed questionnaire was developed to interview the Artists of Ganjifa Cards and Mysore Traditional Painting

- Semi structured discussion was conducted with Art Educators and Researchers from the field.

Depth Interview

The areas or categories addressed through the questionnaire are as follows.
Motivation and commitment of the artist
Adoption among young generations
AU registration process
Market opportunity
Production Process
Training required for the Art form
Quality Control
Supply Chain
Innovation and New Product line

Questions

Motivation and commitment of the artist
For how long are you practicing the art form (Ganjifa or Mysore traditional painting)
Are you a first generation artist?
Do you want to impart this knowledge to your next generation?   Are they motivated enough to learn this art form?
Do you conduct workshops to pass on the knowledge? If not are you willing to do that.
Do you feel that this art form can provide livelihood to some artists in the GI mapped region?
Can you provide some input related to the history of this art form .

Findings

Motivation and commitment of the artist
Belongs to handicraft family
Father was a curator in Jagan Mohan Palace (Sudha Venkatesh)
Neigbour of Raghupati Bhat or somehow got connected with him
Attending workshops at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad
Conducting workshops to train artists above 15 years of age
Art has a very strong cultural heritage and knowledge
Artists (eg. Raghupati Bhat's Nephew) used to practice Gajifa Art but left as they could not make their earnings with this.

Questions

Adoption among young generation
What is the level of motivation among the young artists to take this art for a longer period of time?
What are the challenges mostly faced to train young artists?
How can the young artists be motivated to take up these art forms specially Ganjifa cards ?

Findings

Adoption among young generation
Younger generation want to skip the labor intensive process of making the card base.
They are not interested for long term engagement with a particular art form .
They are more inclined to contemporary art instead of traditional art
They can be enchouraged to adopt through multiple product innovation
Young artists don't have enough time so they duplicate work through photocopy images.
Young artists should be attracted through potential market creation and significant financial incentives .

Questions

Authorized User (AU) registration process
What is the process of getting this certification?
How difficult was it for you to get into this certification process?
Do you feel all Artists will be interested for Authorized User registration?

Findings

AU registration process
AU registration process is not so difficult .
From whom and where the Art has been learnt is a very important parameter
For how many years the Art has been practiced by the Artist
Submit the certificates related to that Art
Some artists do not have much knowledge about it and want to stay away from it.

Questions

Market opportunity
Do you see that market opportunity and acceptance will increase after you receive AU certification?
Do you think that the scope of commercialization will increase after AU certification?
Do you feel that there is a value for hand crafted intricate artwork among a certain group of people?
Do you feel it is difficult to reach the right group of people? Do you expect some government support for that?
How have you tried to connect to the clients so far ?

Findings

Market opportunity
There is a potential niche market for traditional Indian Art .
The traditional process for Ganjifa card making and preparation or organic colours are quiet labour intensive . Therefore a potential local economy evolves around that.
Market penetration can be done through product innovation .
Very niche marketing strategy needs to be adopted instead of mass marketing
Most of their produce gets sold off through reference
The artists need to interact with each other and work collaboratively
People who appreciate and understand the value for work are ready to pay.

Findings

Market opportunity
On the other hand some people are price sensitive and do bargain a lot.
Some of the artists have no clue that AU certification can increase market opportunity and acceptance.
Most of our art gets sold through our regular clients and word of mouth.
For few artisits initially the art work used to get sold through exhibitions and then through that network. The demand for their product is consitent.

Questions

Production Process
Can you please briefly explain the process you follow from beginning to end?
How difficult is it to stick to the traditional procedure considering labour and cost?
Explain the limitations you face with the traditional production process.
Explain the limitations for modern production processes in relation to this art form.

Findings

Production Process
The art requires lot of time and the materials and are expensive .
The process is getting simplified with time which in some form dilutes the traditional practice .
Hand brush should be used for drawing the figures .
More focus should be given on preservation of traditional process.
Moving out from traditional process will dilute the art form .

Questions

Training required for the Art form
Do you feel that this art form should be nurtured extensively in order to create livelihood in the mapped region?
Are you proud to be a part of this traditional artist community?
Do you feel that more and more artists need to be trained and increase its popularity?
How long does it take to train an artist?
Have you conducted any workshop to impart training in this art form? How difficult or time consuming to learn this art form?
Do you feel that younger generation have enough patience to learn the art form?
Do you think that more artists should be listed as authorized users for the benefit of legal practices associated to the Art and eventually popularize the art.

Findings

Training required for the Art form
Kids above 15 years can learn this art form through intense workshop
Knowledge about Mysore Art can help an artist to learn Ganjifa art through an intense 6-8 weeks workshop
Traditionally Ganjifa Card making and painting is extremely labour intensive so the young generations look for short cuts which sometimes dilutes the art form .

Questions

Quality Control
Do you feel that the requirement for maintaining a quality standard will increase after AU certification?
Do you feel that trustworthiness among the clients will increase with GI tag?
Can you please brief us about the specification, which can contribute to a certain quality standard?
What are the checks and balances for quality control?

Findings

Quality Control
If authentication is done correctly then low quality products will not get so much value in the market .
People with GI tag also produce or trade duplicate products .
If there is no quality control then there is no value for genuine artists who are still practicing the traditional process .
Standardization of process needs to be recorded .
Only authentic producers or traders should be given GI tag
Artist's signature is important for quality check
Duplicate 'work' can be identified through line work mainly outline of the figure.

Questions

Supply Chain
Do you feel that there are not enough artists to meet the demand of such traditional artwork?
What kind of initiative do you feel is required to increase production and maintain an effective supply chain?
What kind of government initiative is expected from your end in order to maintain an effective and robust supply chain? For example 'Common Studio Facility', market place for GI product etc..
Do you feel that you can produce a significant amount of product to supply in a GI outlet?
What can be the maximum number you can manage to supply?
If you get an opportunity to display in international and national exhibitions, are you ready to supply .

Findings

Supply Chain
Most of the artists pursue this to fuel their passion.
If there is a continuous market demand then young artists can be attracted to work with senior artists and produce a significant volume of work.
As the materials are expensive the making and storage of the product for long is difficult.
A perennial supply chain can be maintained with the support of one or two junior artists.
The artists have to work 6-7 hours a day to create a significant volume of work.
Currently the production is mostly as per order.

Questions

New Product Development
Do you feel that there is a need for popularizing Ganjifa Art through other products to make it much more functional ?
Do you feel there is a scope for developing multiple types of product with embedded art form without diluting the originality of the art form?
Some product ideation examples and the questions applicable for each of the product .
Is it possible to design this ? What can be the price ? What are the limitations for this design ?

Jewellery Box

Pooja Mandir

Doors

Doors Hangings

Wall Hangings

Findings

New Product Development
Can be collaborated with other GI product like Rosewood Inlay .
Ganjifa card should remain as card .
One should be very careful about incorporating it in another product as it is closely connected with religion and culture.

Ideation & Design

Experiential Co creative Studio & Market Space

Frugal Space Design
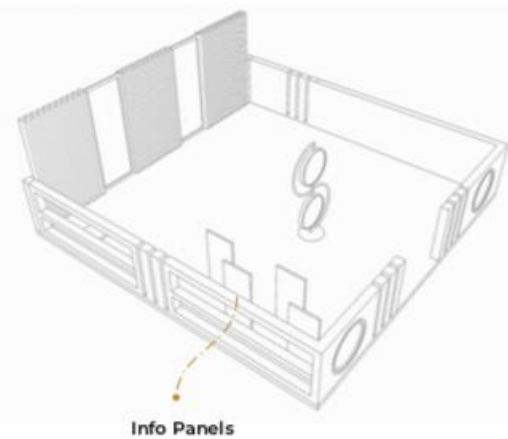
Popularising Mysore Art in Artport Space

Airport Kiosk

The airport kiosk is designed based on 3 major factors that give a holistic experience to the user and gives a thorough understanding of the artform. The segregation of the spaces comprises of 3 zones:
1. Information and display zone
2. Game zone
3. Retail/counter sales zone
Apart from this, there could be a space which demonstrates live Ganjifa paintings to give a more hands-on experience to the customers. This kiosk will be situated in the arrival and departure waiting areas.

Kiosk Concept A
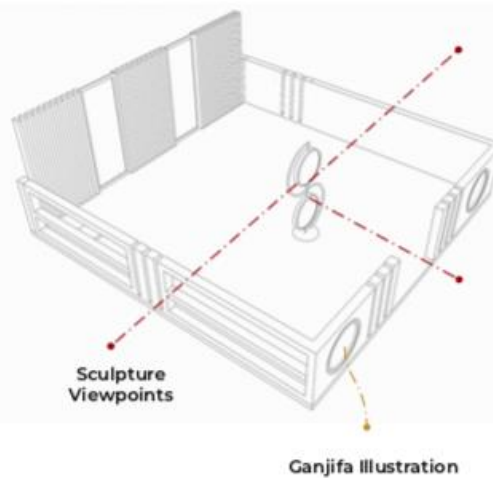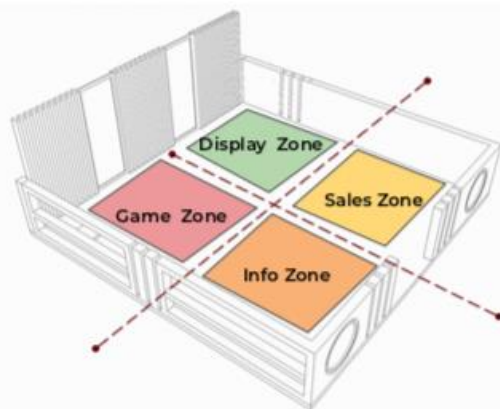
Sculpture
Viewpoints

Ganjifa Illustration

Info Panels

Concept Breakdown

Kiosk Concept A

Island Counters

Island Counters

Game Table

Counter Sales

Concept Breakdown

Kiosk Concept B

Sales Zone

Play Zone

Info/Display Zone

3-Way Access

Parametric facade

Sculpture Viewpoints

Concept Breakdown

Kiosk Concept B

Game Table

Counter Sales

Island Counters
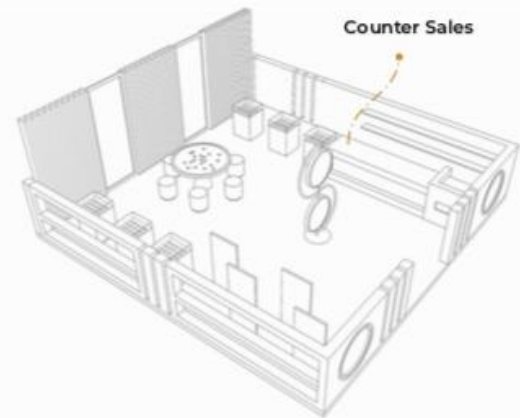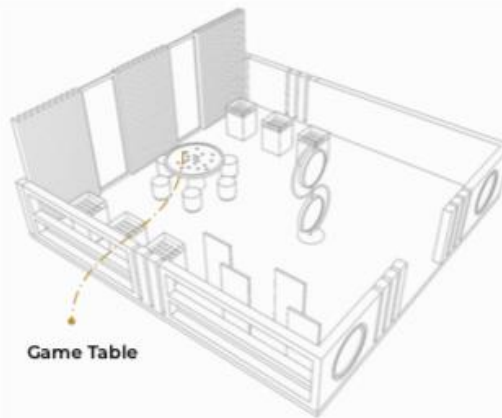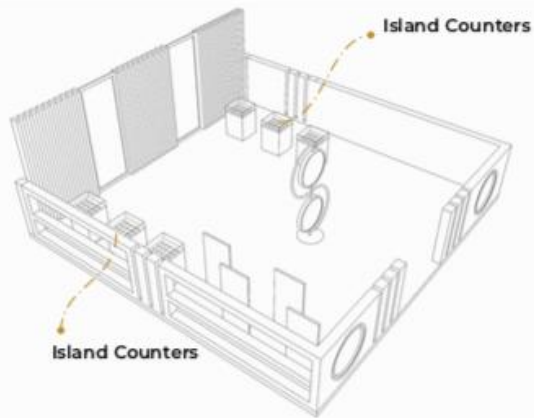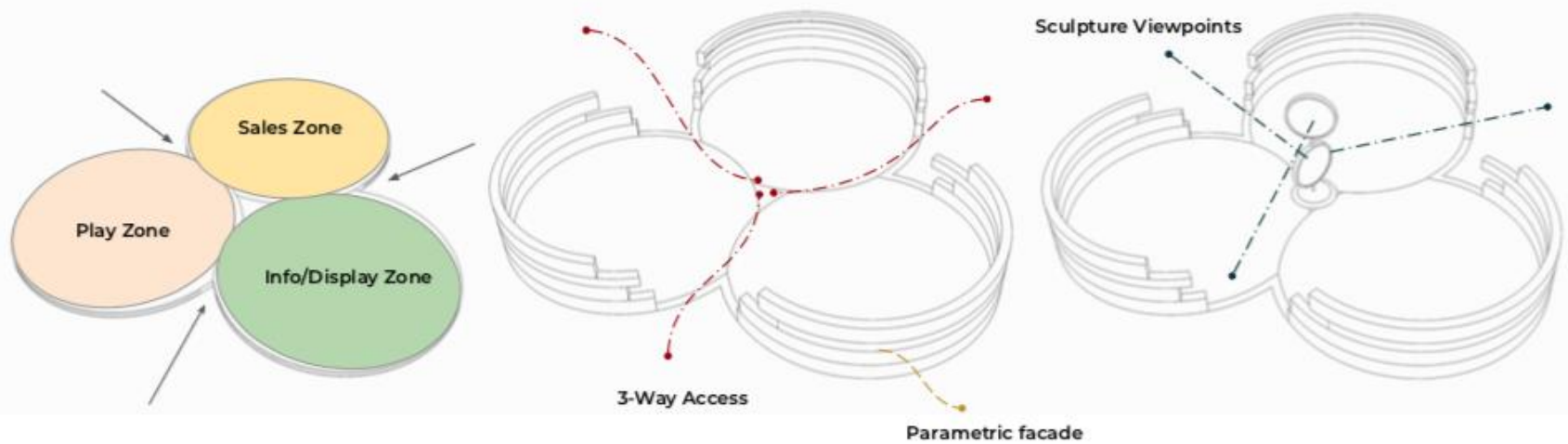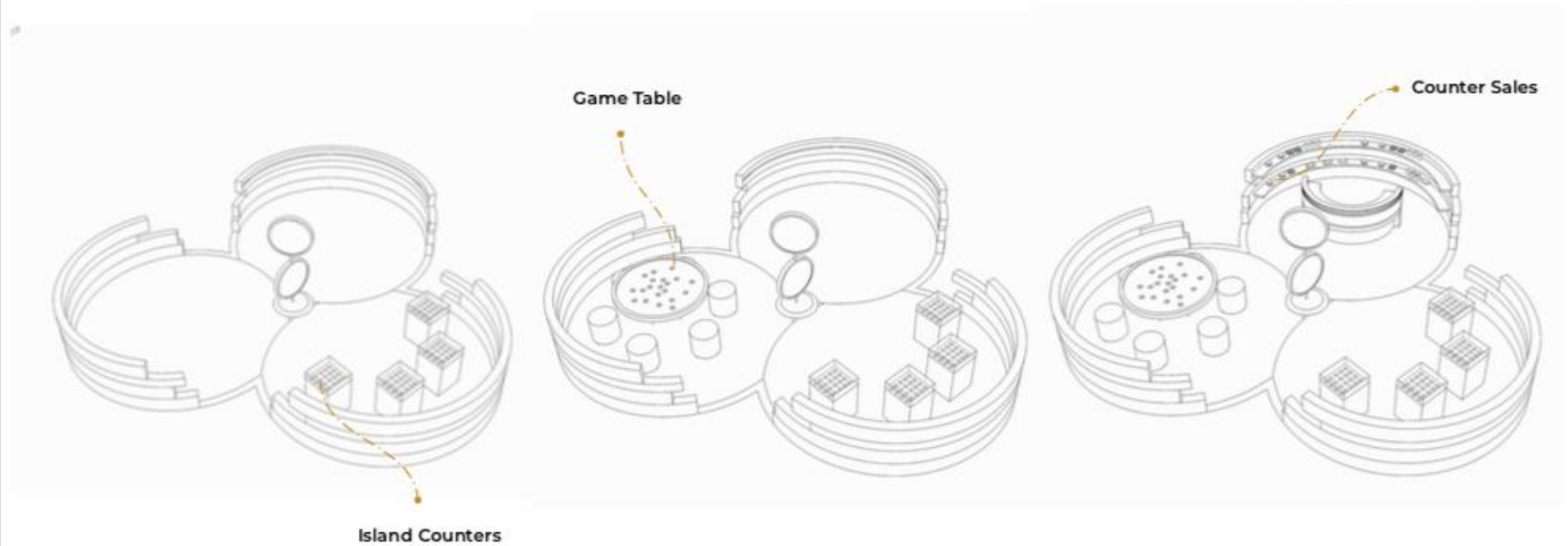
Concept Breakdown

PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

BAIL - The owners of the area, which have dedicated a space for Mysore and ganjifa art.

Mysore Painters - These are the artists who will be exhibiting their work in form of paintings and different products in the space at the airport.

Ganjifa Artists - They will provide the space with their traditional ganjifa card game, so that people can kill time while waiting for their flights.

SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS

Travelers - People who will enter the space to wait their and witness and experience the art while waiting for their flights.

Art Enthusiasts - Users who are interested in traditional art form can visit the space.

Shoppers - People while waiting for flights can also visit the space to buy small handicraft accessories and products.

People waiting to board - The space also acts as an area for people to hangout and kill time allowing them to play the card game while they wait for their flights.

SUPPORT STAKEHOLDERS

Shopkeepers - Those who will manage the shops in the space.

General Management - People who will take care of the space, clean and manage it. Put up new paintings after every month ends.

Transporters - Will carry the paintings from the artists to the airport space. Also, will bring the products to the shops in the space.

SECONDARY

Shoppers

PRIMARY

BIAL - Bengaluru International Airport limited.

Mysore Painters

Ganjifa Artists

Travelers

People waiting to board

Art Enthusiasts

SUPPORT

Shopkeepers

General management (for space)

Transporters

Mysore paintings displayed

Handicraft stall to buy traditional Mysore and ganjifa products.

Entry / Exit to space

Seating area of the space

Mysore paintings displayed

Cafe, to eat something while in space. Plates and cups of ganjifa and Mysore art

Stall to rent or buy ganjifa card game

Entry / Exit to space

SERVICE BLUEPRINT

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE	Airport	Paintings	info plate	Shops	Game stall	Seating area
CUSTOMER ACTIONS	When at the Airport enters the space, will waiting for the flight to board.	Views the paintings that have been put up to decorate the space. Users get a chance to experience the art form.		Purchases/ views the traditional products from the shop installed in the space.	Buys/Rents the game of Ganjifa cards.	Finds a nice place to sit, to play the game and chill while waiting for the flight to board.
LINE OF INTERACTION	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -
FRONT STAGE ACTIONS	Observes/visits the place while roaming around in the airport	Sees the paintings and learns about the art and artisans via the Info plate under each painting		Chooses/explores diff handicraft products available in the shop	Pays for the game and how to play the game via instructions on the game manual	Searches for an empty place to sit and play. Orders food if hungry to sit and eat.
LINE OF VISIBILITY	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -
BACK STAGE ACTIONS	Preparing and maintenance of the space	Putting up paintings in the space. Transporting the paintings from the artists to the airport. changing paintings every month		Bringing and having regular supply of products in the shop Managing record of purchases and sales	Managing record of rent time and payments Having sufficient number of ganjifa cards	Having a good number of chairs and tables Arranging the seating area
LINE OF INTERNAL INTERACTION	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -
SUPPORT PROCESS	Finding an suitable place in the airport for the space	Constant making of new paintings Paying the artists		Making new handicraft products after identifying popular areas of products	Making of ganjifa cards. Easy writing of instruction on the game manual	Buying tables and chairs. Identifying an appropriate seating arrangement

KIAB Flybus Branding

Bengaluru international airport has buses which travel from the airport to Mysore.
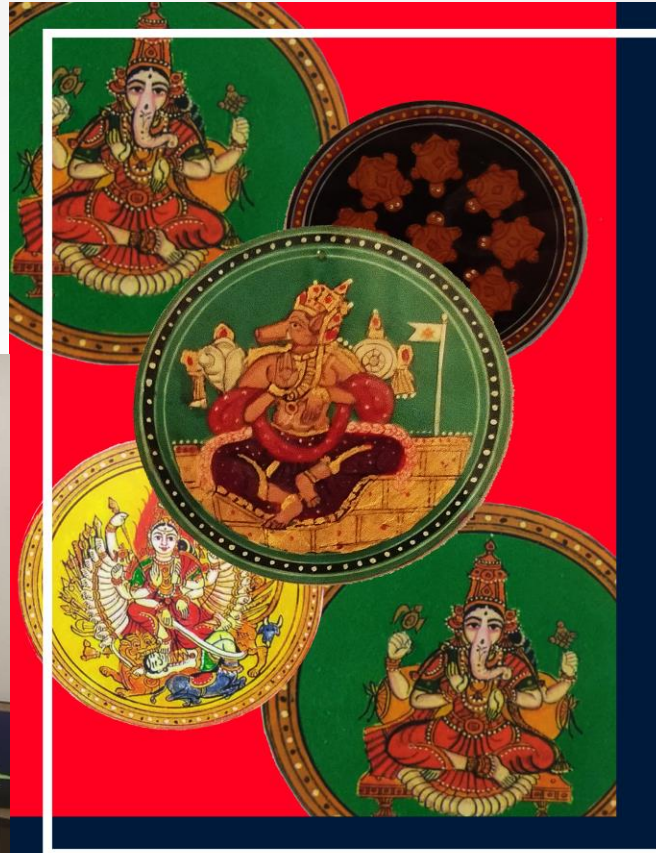
In-flight Advertising

Product Ideation and Exploration

Product ideation and exploration exercise
Publicity and Branding strategy
Exhibition and Presentation

REVITALIZE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE
EXPLORATION THROUGH
MYSORE ART FORMS

Room 306A
N5 Campus
Srishti Institute of Art,
Design and Technology
Business of Service Design

Date : 25/10/19
Time : 10:00-12:00

Mysore

Art Exhibition

Ruled diary

This art exhibit features the traditional Mysore artists
who have shared their unique and beautiful artfork
with us. The Mysore artfrom narrates the famous
stories of Hindu Gods, Goddesess and tales from the
Hindu mythology.

Want to know more?

Authentic experience   Meet the Artists   Workshop

Contact
9080445556
xyz@gmail.com   MRP 230/-

Concept note

With the growth in technology, art and design have evolved to a great extent. Digital design dominates more than half of the art community. hence, the traditional arts and crafts communities have lost the ability to portray their presence.

Traditional mysore paintings were one of the most popular artforms in the 18 century. They narrated royal tales of hindu gods and goddesses in a magical and traditional manner. But with time, this artform lost its popularity and was overpowered by modern art. Hence I chose to promote mysore paintings in a manner which will help it grow in this tech influenced society. I chose to incorporate traditional handpainted artwork to digital prints. The digital prints of the mysore paintings will promote the artform although, promoting the artists is also important. For this aspect, I chose to provide a platform for the traditional artists to sell their works. Giving away one complimentary printed product with an original painting would also help with the sale of the products.

The labels on each of the products or artworks sold would have a tiny paragraph explaining Mysore artform, an opportunity to work with the artists through a workshop and the contact details of the person incharge of contacting the artists to the community.

Tote bag

Mysore
Art Exhibition

Diary

Mysore
Art Exhibition
2019
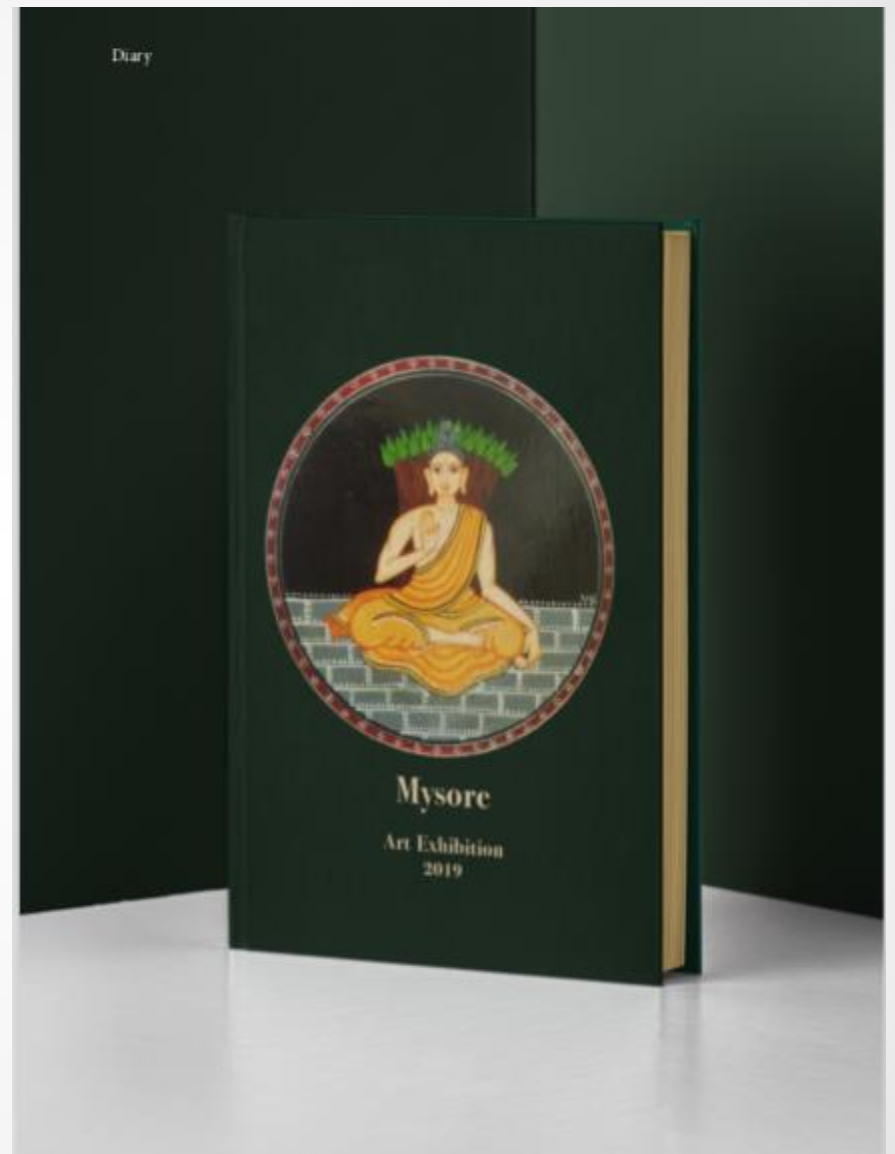
This kind of product ideation is not accepted

It can be transformed into a pen stand

Ganjifa Card Making Workshop

Mysore Ganjifa Cards

Ideation on Simplified Game Design

Properties and Constraints in the card.

10 Suits are involved in this game. 5 of them more valuable than the rest.

Round Cards, with Delicate material and paint, lends to a different handling.

The back side of the cards are similar for all the suits. The game lends to a secretive play.
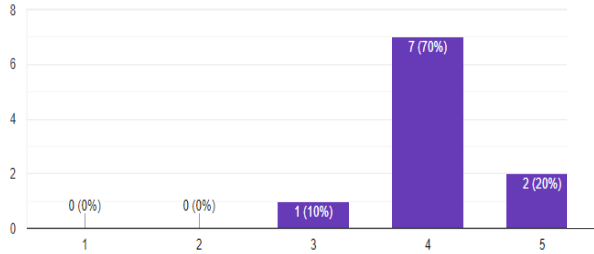
Strong Narrative element- Props and Environment in the Pradhan and Raja Cards in Each of the 10 Suits.

Pradhan Card in the Suit called Taj Wazir. This could correspond to a Jack in terms of Value.

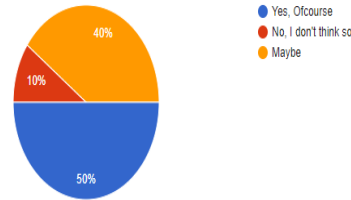Numerical card, which is represented by the number of torches (1 to 10).

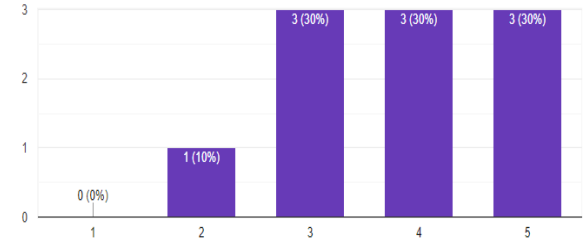Rate your inclination towards a Memory Game:

10 responses

Ganjifa is a traditional game In Indian History. Would you spend more to play the original version of the game?

10 responses

- Yes, Ofcourse
- No, I don't think so
- Maybe

Rate your inclination towards a Story based Game:

10 responses

A Basic Consumer Research was done through an online questionnaire, through which we got some insights into the kind of game that the audience is expecting.

Rate your inclination towards a Strategy Game:

10 responses

What is the maximum time you would invest in any board game at a single stretch? (10 minutes to 3 hours)

9 responses
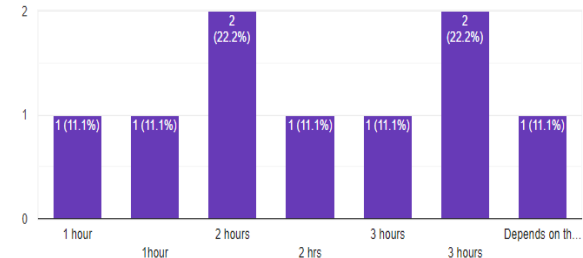
What is the maximum time you would invest to learn a card game? (10 minutes to 1.5 Hours)

9 responses
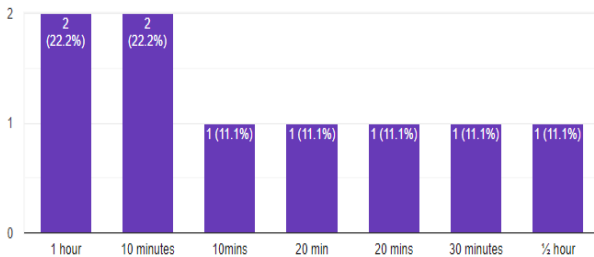
Rate your interest in Regular Card Games (like UNO, Rummy, etc.)

10 responses
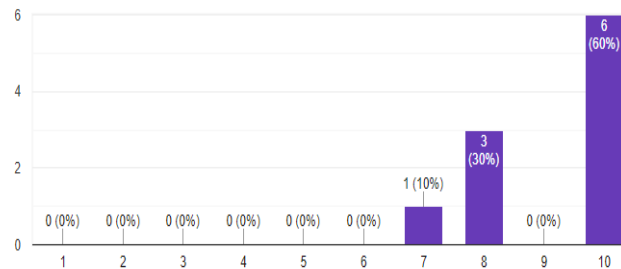
Consumer Research Insights

The traditional aspect of the cards does not interest the player by itself but if it is integrated to the narrative of the game, they find it fascinating.

The ideal bracket of time to learn is 15 minutes.

People under the age of 25- Enjoy Strategy, Memory and Story-based (like Pokemon action cards) games

2 hours in a single board game is ideal.

Each Suit has a different power in the game, relating to their story.

The Audience must be 16+ and those who can appreciate a complex narrative.

The game must be a mix of strategy and Chance.

Cooperative Game- all players play against the scenario in the game.

There themes of the game will involve the governance of the world across various eras.

- Me and my friends played "Forbidden Desert". This was a cooperative game. We were giving ideas about what moves each of us can play in our turns, so that we can complement our individual special powers. We were also looking at each others water resources, and constantly thinking about how we could save players in the game. The game design elements and actions such as turning cards and placing rocks on top of them, gave us insight into how we might simplify a wider narrative into simpler physical actions.

- The sandstorm brought in an element of chance but it wasn't too unreliable so as to finish the game in one unexpected card. The SANDSTORM card brings in a level of difficulty which gradually and visibly increases. Therefore, we always felt that we needed to and we were in control of strategizing for the future.

- Contrary to this, we ended the game in a sudden and uneventful way. We lost because one of us had lost all the resources.

- We were not alert enough to notice this while playing. Therefore, we did not experience the higher tensions or a sense of desperation to somehow fix things, that I had expected this game to end with.

Point of inspiration
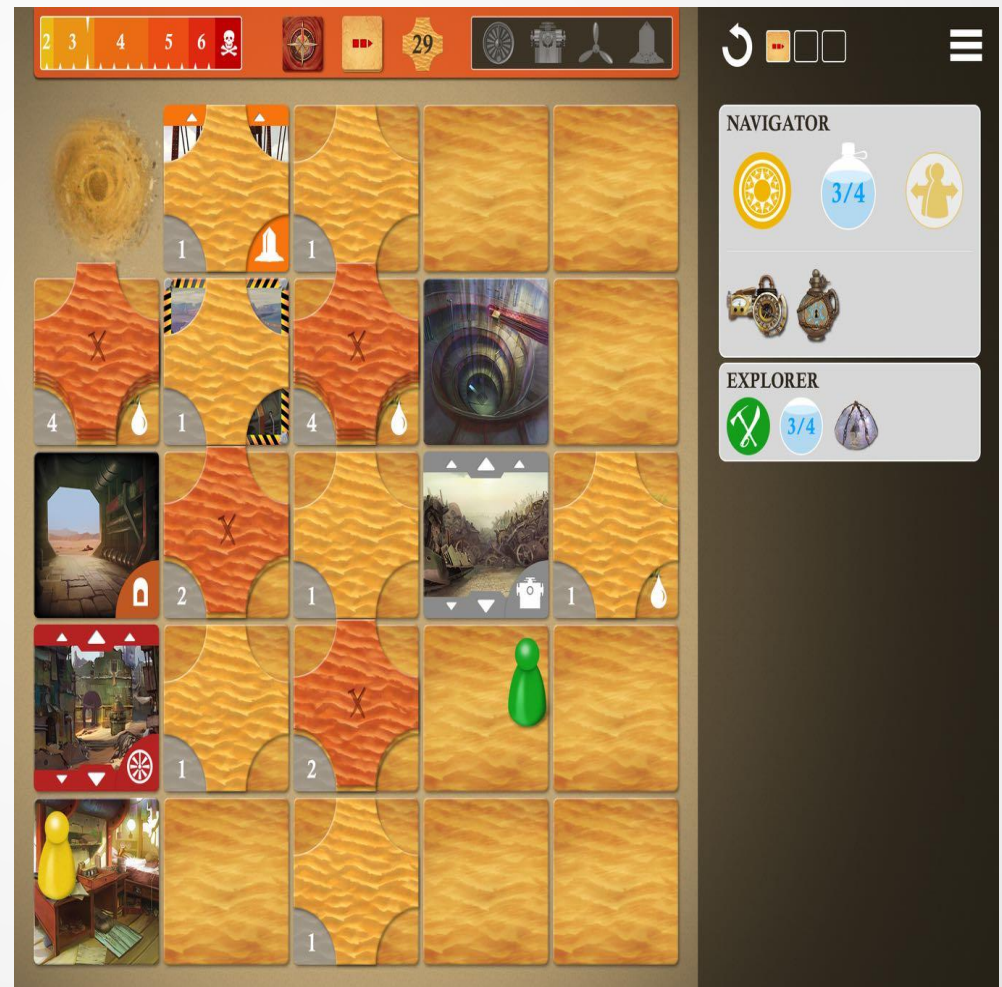
The inspiration for the Instruction manual was from the Card-dice game Quarriors.

1. The length was long- about 18 pages. It took about 30-40 minutes to read through it properly.

1. The motivation to get through this was through smaller satisfaction in understanding the individual game mechanisms and its logic.

1. The structure of the manual is
(a) Setup
(b) Function of each component
(c) What happens in every turn of a player (player actions) ?
(d) How the Game ends?

Point of inspiration

Iteration 1:

Objective is to place all the avatars in the right timeline.

• Destiny points (the numerical cards) is the primary resource to be shared between the players. Everyone gets a mixture of this coins. Each player needs stipulated destiny points to place one avatar to the timeline.

• Each player makes an approximate call for how much destiny points he needs to place a coin. After everyone has pooled in, we get to know the exact amount. If there is more amount than the exact amount, then the avatar is placed. After the avatar, all the destiny points of these coins double in value.

• Diamond coins, which each department will have, which they can only use to resurrect other departments. Till the end of the process this idea represents what a cooperative game could feel like.

Iteration 2: Mock up

Objective for all avatars to get all the numerical avatars to get their card back.

1. Each player has a different number of steps that they can move, so they have to decide what move to make so that they can compliment each other.
The board is round so that there is a cyclical approach to the game.

2. Since there are ten avatars, we are looking at ten players playing the game.

3. Two of my friends and I sat together and played a basic mockup of the game. There were many errors in the instruction manual, where in there were easy shortcuts to win the game. Also teaching the game through the manual was hard. Then the instruction manual was reworked to accommodate the new changes and illustrations.

4. However, larger questions like how much of this game and its design are relevant to the form and narrative of the cards, is a question unanswered.
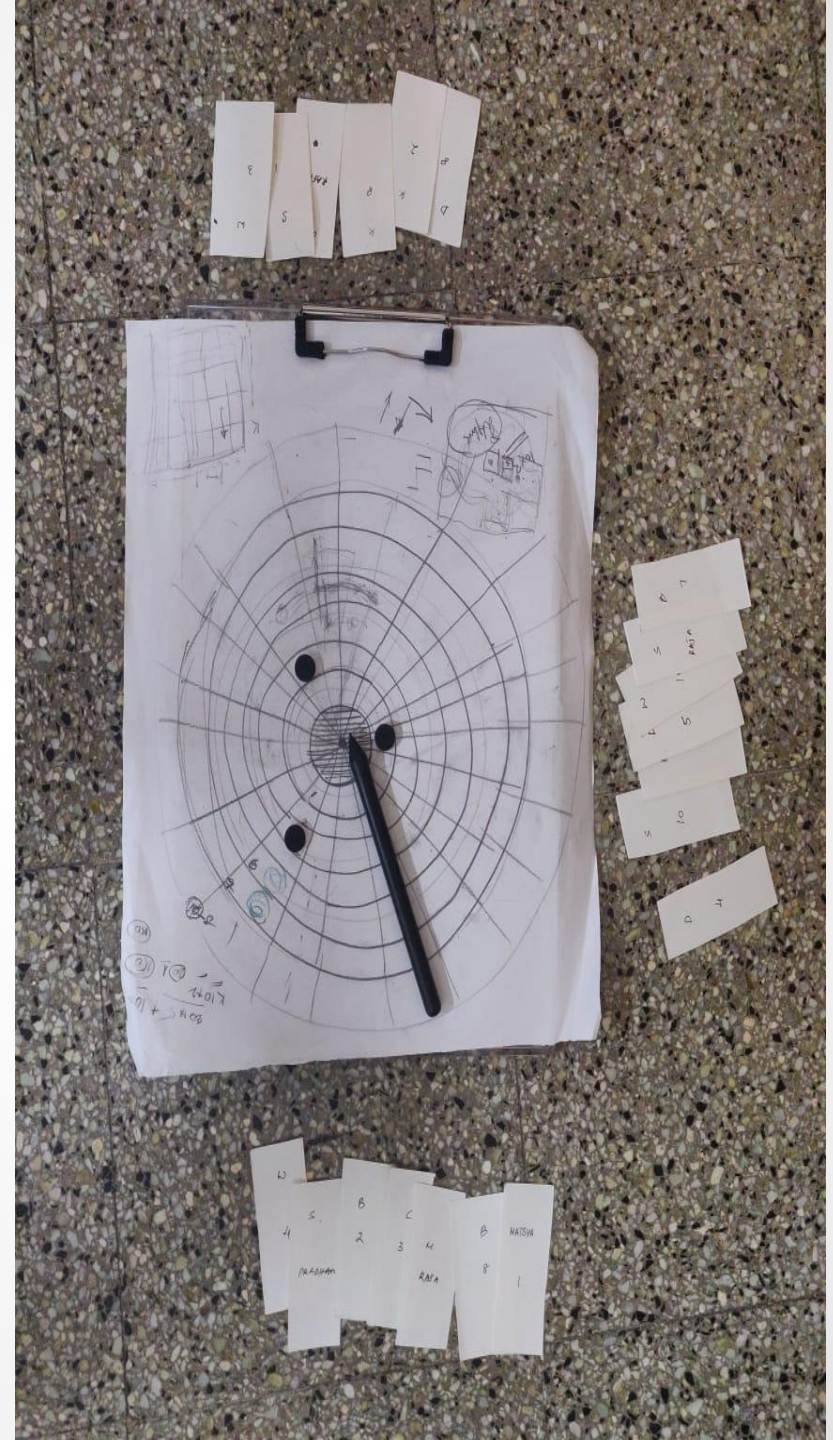
Website Design

The aim is to create a website as an engaging experience to bring the knowledge of Ganjifa art to the mainstream consumer in cities. The website will be informative and content-based, with a strong narrative and authentic information. The information throughout will flow in a narrative-structure to better explain to consumers the meaning, origin, history, and significance of the Ganjifa artform. Information regarding sellers, events related to the artform, and photos and videos of the same will also be provided. In addition, the website will reinforce brand values and characteristics – therefore promoting brand creation and awareness. The brand identity will be further supported with a visual theme, story, and colour palette which will include traditional motifs, themes, and colours.

Overall, the website aims to provide an experience to the consumer while they are navigating through it – therefore giving them an engaging experience, building experience about the artform, promoting the artisans and unique aspects of the game, and finally encouraging the purchase of Ganjifa cards from original, authentic sellers.

Ganjifa:
A piece of ancient Indian history

Ganjifa is an ancient Indian card game. Quite aptly the name Ganjifa
comes from the Persian word Ganjifeh which means playing cards.
The specialty of these cards is that they are traditionally
hand-painted. The cards are made and played across India, in
places like Orissa, Kashmir, Karnataka, Gujarat, etc.

Know more

Purchase your own cards here!

The story of Ganjifa

Let's begin with some history

Among the popular Pastimes of Ancient India, the game of Ganjifa found as much favour with Kings, Courtiers and general masses as Dice and Chess. The game became popular at the Mughal court, and lavish sets were made, from materials such as precious stone-inlaid ivory or tortoise shell (darbar kalam). The game later spread to the general public, whereupon cheaper sets (bazâr kalam) would be made from materials such as wood, palm leaf, stiffened cloth or pasteboard.

Each region in the country had its own form of the game. There was the Sawantwadi Ganjifa from Maharashtra, Navadurga Ganjifa from Orrisa, Rajasthan and Gujrat Ganjifa , Kashmir Ganjifa, Nepal Ganjifa and the Mysooru Ganjifa which was greatly patronized by the Mysore Royal family during their reign.

The artisans and their art flourished

Ganjifa cards are circular or rectangular, and traditionally hand-painted by artisans. Typically Ganjifa cards have coloured backgrounds, with each suit having a different colour. Different types exist, and the designs, number of suits, and physical size of the cards can vary considerably. With the exception of Mamluk Kanjifa and the Chads of Mysore, each suit contains ten pip cards and two court cards, the king and the vizier or minister. The backs of the cards are typically a uniform colour, without patterning. Ganjifa today is taken over by the printed playing cards. The originals displayed enthralling objects and showered the folk art painted by the artists. Artists have preserved the traditional art in the cards and also the main Hindu religious symbolism. Ganjifas are very beautifully packed in the sliding boxes which too are very artistically crafted.

Stories from across the country were told

Mughal Ganjifa :History says Mughal and Hindu ganjifas were very common and had grabbed all the limelight. The present game of Mughal Ganjifa was introduced by Akbar. The Mughal ganjifa carried eight suited ganjifa pack and had 96 beautiful cards in eight suits of 12 cards each. The twelve cards in each suit comprised of two court or figure cards and 10 numeral or pip cards.

Dashavatara Ganjifa :The Hindu Dashavatara (10 incarnations) were different in their composition and construction. In the first order the number of suits and cards were more which made the game complicated . The figures and the suit signs were common to the Hindu players. Each pack of ganjifa carried 10 suits, which displayed one of the incarnations of Vishnu.

Ramayan Ganjifa, a type with imagery from the Hindu epic, the Ramayan. It is closely associated with the Ganjapa tradition of Odisha and usually has eight, ten, or twelve suits.

Naqsh Ganjifa, for playing Naqsh, shorter Indian decks exist, with 48 cards. There is only one suit which is quadruplicated. The suit symbols used for the run of 12 cards vary from one pack to the next. These decks are associated with gambling or play during the festival season in India.

Mysore Chad Ganjifa. Mysore was a centre for Ganjifa card making, encouraged by the ruler Krishnaraja Wadiyar III in the mid-19th century. He devised a series of complex Ganjifa games, some requiring as many as 18 different suits, permanent trumps, and wild cards. A typical Chad suit had twelve numeral and six court cards, and packs had as many as 360 cards. They never achieved mass appeal and are quite obscure, possibly played only within his royal palace if at all. The games are described in the work called the Sritattvanidhi, in the section 'Kautuka nidhi', and colour illustrations show designs for the cards.

Akbar's Ganjifa. The 16th-century Mughal emperor Akbar played using a 12 suited deck, which is described in detail in the Ain-i-Akbari. The suits were horses, elephants, foot soldiers, forts, treasures, warriors in armour, boats, women, divinities, genii, wild beasts, and snakes.

The treasure of Ganjifa must go on

Like so many traditional games, ganjifa also went into oblivion due to lack of royal patronage and players but a few artists in different parts of the country remained in its pursuit as an art form, albeit on a small scale. After Ganjifa cards fell out of use in Iran before the twentieth century, India became the last country to produce them. The form prevalent in Odisha is Ganjapa.

Today, Ganjifa, originally called ganjifey, is crawling back to public memory.

THE GANJIFA ARTS FOUNDATION

About   **Play Game**   Media Library   Find Retailer   News & Events   FAQs

Try your hand at a game of Ganjifa

*play the game of strategy, story, legends and gods
like the kings, ministers, and priests of ancient India did*

Mughal Ganjifa

pick the suite you'd like to play with

*both games originate from different places
and have different rules - but are equally fascinating!*

Dashavatara Ganjifa

check out Ganjifa game events near you!

THE GANJIFA ARTS FOUNDATION

About   Play Game   **Media Library**   Find Retailer   News & Events   FAQs

Ganjifa Art from Across India

click to view more

CARDS   **ARTISANS**   **PROCESS**

Purchase your own cards here!

Get your own set!

Enter your details to find Ganjifa artisans & sellers near you

Ganjifa art is practiced in states across India, enjoy this beautiful, fascinating artform and game by getting your very own set.
Show your support to local artists with a purchase - and help protect and promote Ganjifa

Country: _____

State: _____

City: _____

Pincode: _____

Address line 1: _____

Address line 2: _____

Learn more about upcoming pop-up shops and artisan events

Purchase your own cards here!

Here's what's happening with Ganjifa

Meet the artisan

GANJIFA GAME NIGHT

@Cubbon Park Metro
29th July 2020

7pm

Exhibition f
@Sunday Ar

12 *p*

DIY kits available for sale

Interactive talk with Artisans and Curator Mr. Chandra

@Chitrakala Parishad

Purchase some cards here

Matsya Card
Dashavatara Pack

Vishnu's first incarnation is Matsya or Fish.
According to science, life originated in water.
From water the life eventually moved
partly to land.
Price: Rs.350

Know more about this card
Learn about Varsha, the artisan who made this card

See more cards

Analysis & Recommendation

Provide raw material to artisans

Social Investment to improve artisans livelihood

Develop design

Artisans profit from Making the craft Sales

Production in the community respecting artisans time

Global Marketing bridging artisans to end users

Fair and punctual payment

Production Space

Near shore outsourcing

Artisans

Raw Materials

Customer

Market Space

Authorised Users

Authorised Users

Proprietor

Inferences drawn from primary exploration

✧ Traditional Artists are not so much open for collaboration, innovation and changes.

✧ Miniature art form requires enough concentration so it is difficult to attract young artists.

✧ Requires a strong knowledge base on Hindu Mythology to play the game.

✧ The game needs to be simplified in order to popularize it.

Inferences drawn from primary exploration

✧ Ganjifa cards can be sold only as a set as it has matrix structure along with a theme, which is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology.

✧ Ganjifa cards have an interesting combination and appeal.

✧ Most of them are relying on Mysore Traditional Painting as there is a market for it.

✧ Artists will be able to produce if there are orders.

Inferences drawn from primary exploration

✧ Can be associated with one more GI product like Rosewood Inlay.

✧ New product innovation can only be possible if Ganjifa Card can be embedded as a set on the product.

✧ Some confusion among the artists lies in terms of quality control and set of parameters in line with GI.

✧ The price of the artifact is dependent on Artists experience and reputation.

Navigate through complexity

No community practice among the Artists

No Artisan community
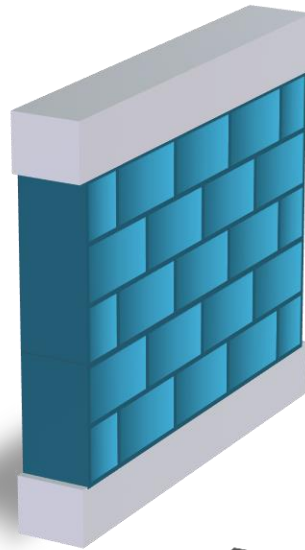
Drive –

✓ Co creation

✓ Creativity

✓ Innovation

Create Design Studio for a collaborative workspace .

Appreciative and Transparent Workspace

Raw material Sourcing

Artisan

Artist

Trader

Go To Market Strategy

Supply of Materials

Production and supply of Products

Standard Quality Control
Fair Production & Trade

Space Locally Rooted In Mysore

- I suggest to create a collaborative space locally rooted in Mysore itself where the various GI locally rooted there can come together and create.

- The space should fulfil the following –
  Livelihood
  Social Innovation
  Transparency
  Tradition and Passion
  Awareness
  Respect

- Core Value Proposition – **Sensitise** and **create awareness** for our local traditional handcrafted produce to **preserve** and **popularise** artisanal practises and create livelihood opportunity for traditional craftsmen.

Focus On Traditional Production Process

- Traditional canvas production process is more sustainable and provides an opportunity to recycle old cotton cloths.

- Production and use of organic colour will provide more economic value to the art form compared to artificial chemical colours.

- A sustainable production and demand for traditional raw materials will provide an opportunity for a certain group of community / artisans and contribute to local economy.

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

Traditional and Eco Friendly Practice

Solution Preparation

Cloth Soaking

Cloth Layering

Sun Dry

Paste Preparation

Base Formation

Canvas Buffing

Final Shaping
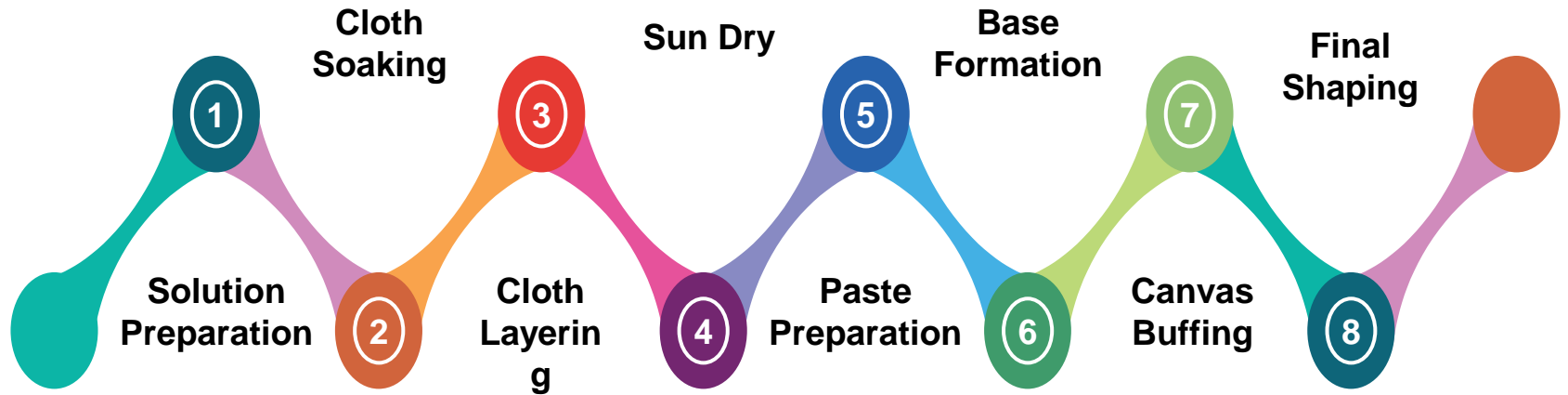
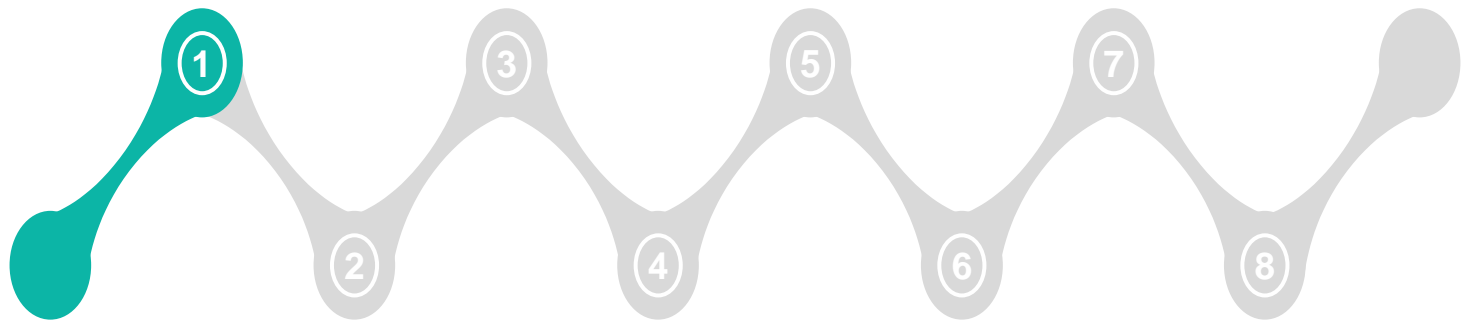# Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

01 Solution Preparation

The solution was prepared by crushed Tamarind seed and water .

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

02

Cloth Soaking

Old starch free cotton clothes are soaked in the solution for 4 to 5 days

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

03

Cloth Layering

Two layers of soaked clothes are placed one above the other.
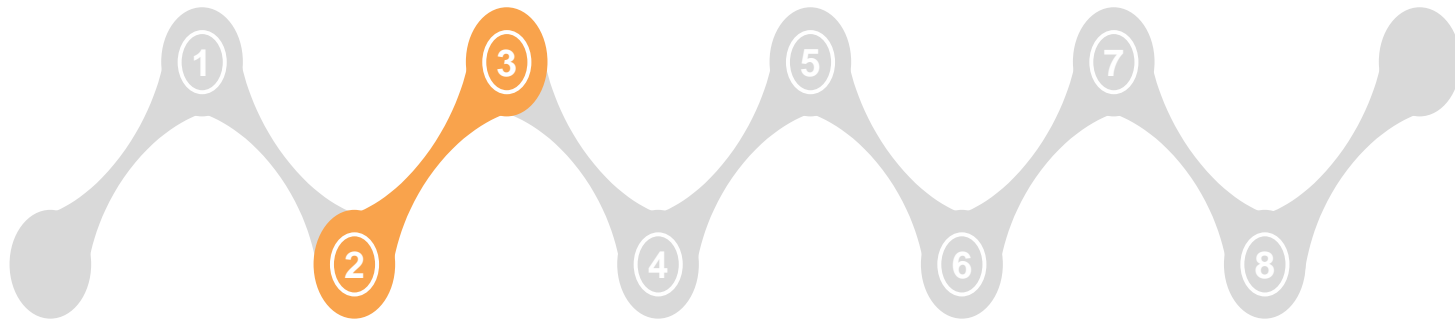
Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

04

Sun Dry

Then the layered cloths are exposed for sun dry.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

05

Paste Preparation

A paste was prepared by chalk powder, crushed tamarind seed and gum.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

06

Base Formation

The paste is applied to both sides of the cloth. This dries into a tough hard base.

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

07

Canvas Buffing

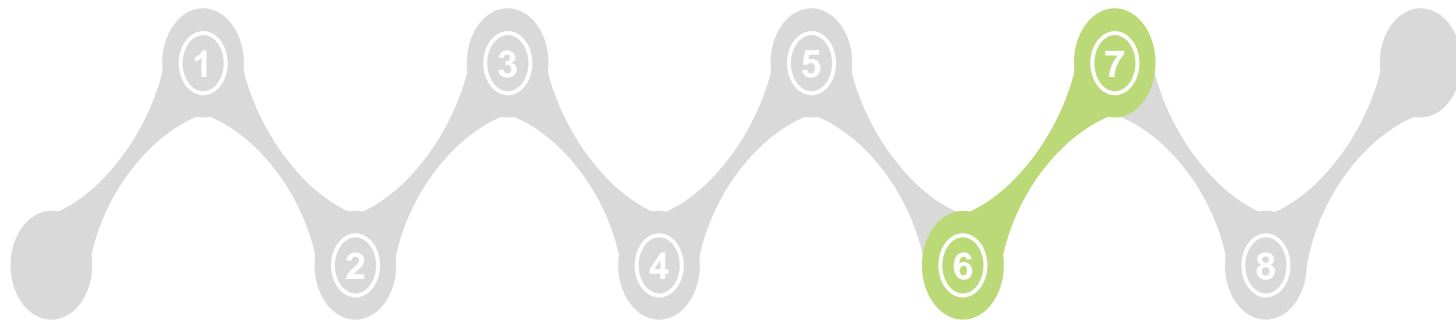The artisans buff this into a smooth canvas using locally available stone.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧

Ganjifa Card Canvas Preparation

08

Final Shaping

The canvas is then cut by hand into a perfect circle or sometimes rectangle.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
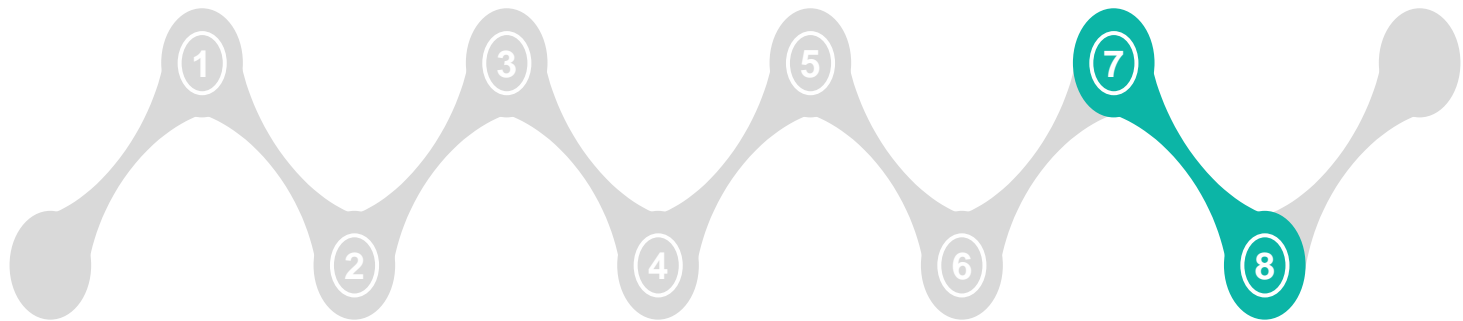
Natural Colour Source

Traditionally Ganjifa Cards were painted with mouse hair brushes and natural colours.

Colour	Source
White	Powdered conch shell/Clay
Green	Various leaves
Black	Lamp soot / Carbon
Red	Hingulal stone/mix of turmeric and lime
Blue	Khandneela stone/Indigo
Yellow	Hartal stone / Turmeric
Maroon	Mud
Yellow ochre	Mud

Ganjifa Painting Process

Border Painting

An Intricate border is painted around the edge of the circle
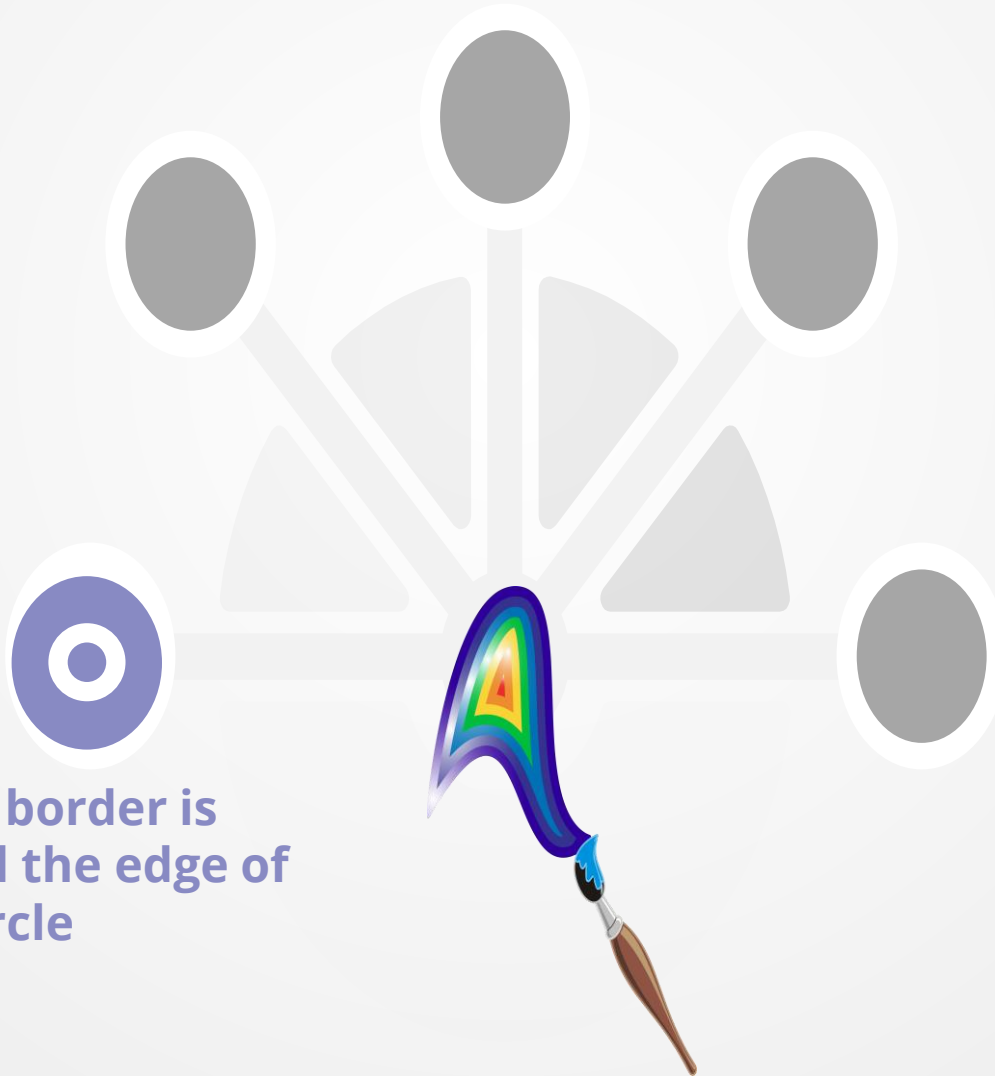
Ganjifa Painting Process

Outline Figure Drawing

After a prayer the artist draws the figures first with pencil and then with thin white brush
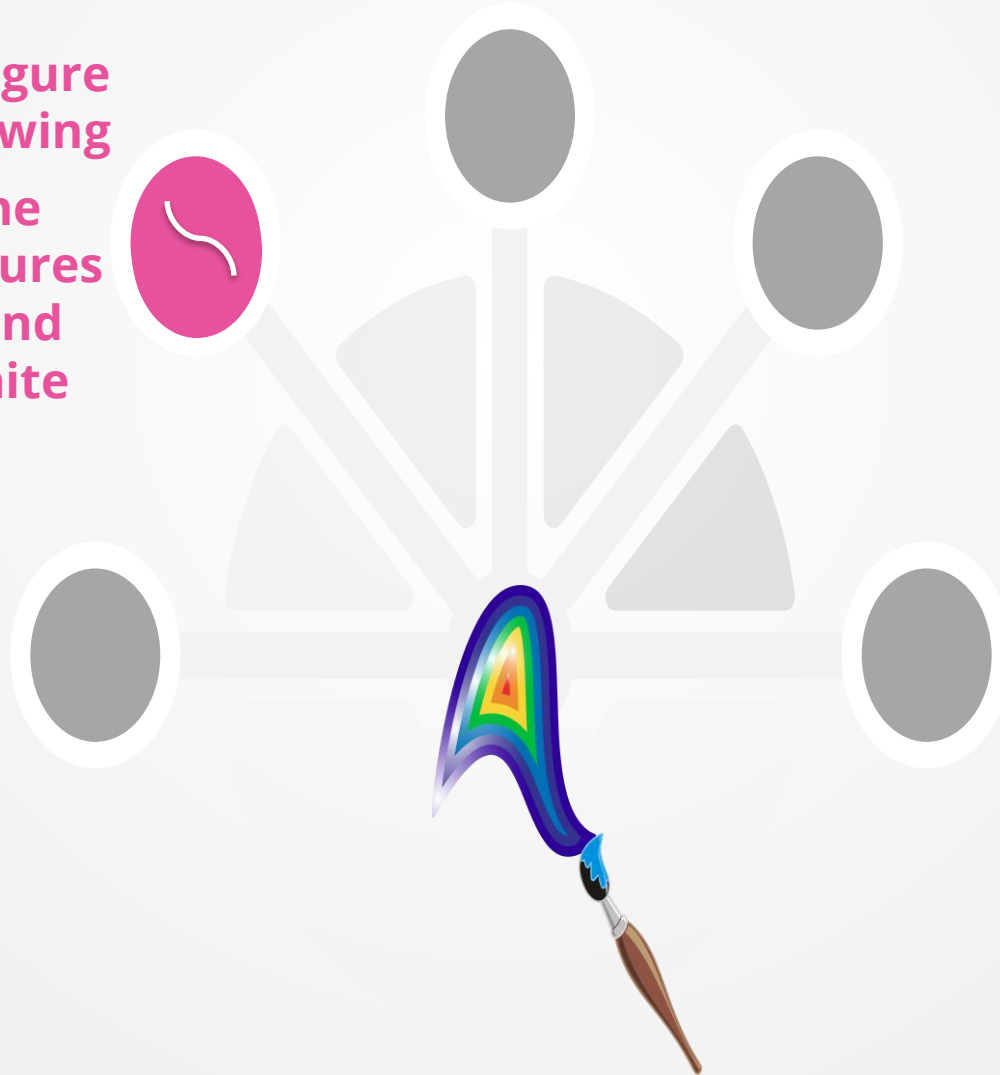
Ganjifa Painting Process

Cloths and Ornament Painting

The artist paints the cloths and ornaments of the figure. They sometimes use gold leaves for the ornament.

Ganjifa Painting Process

Seconary Motives

The motives are then outlined with black.
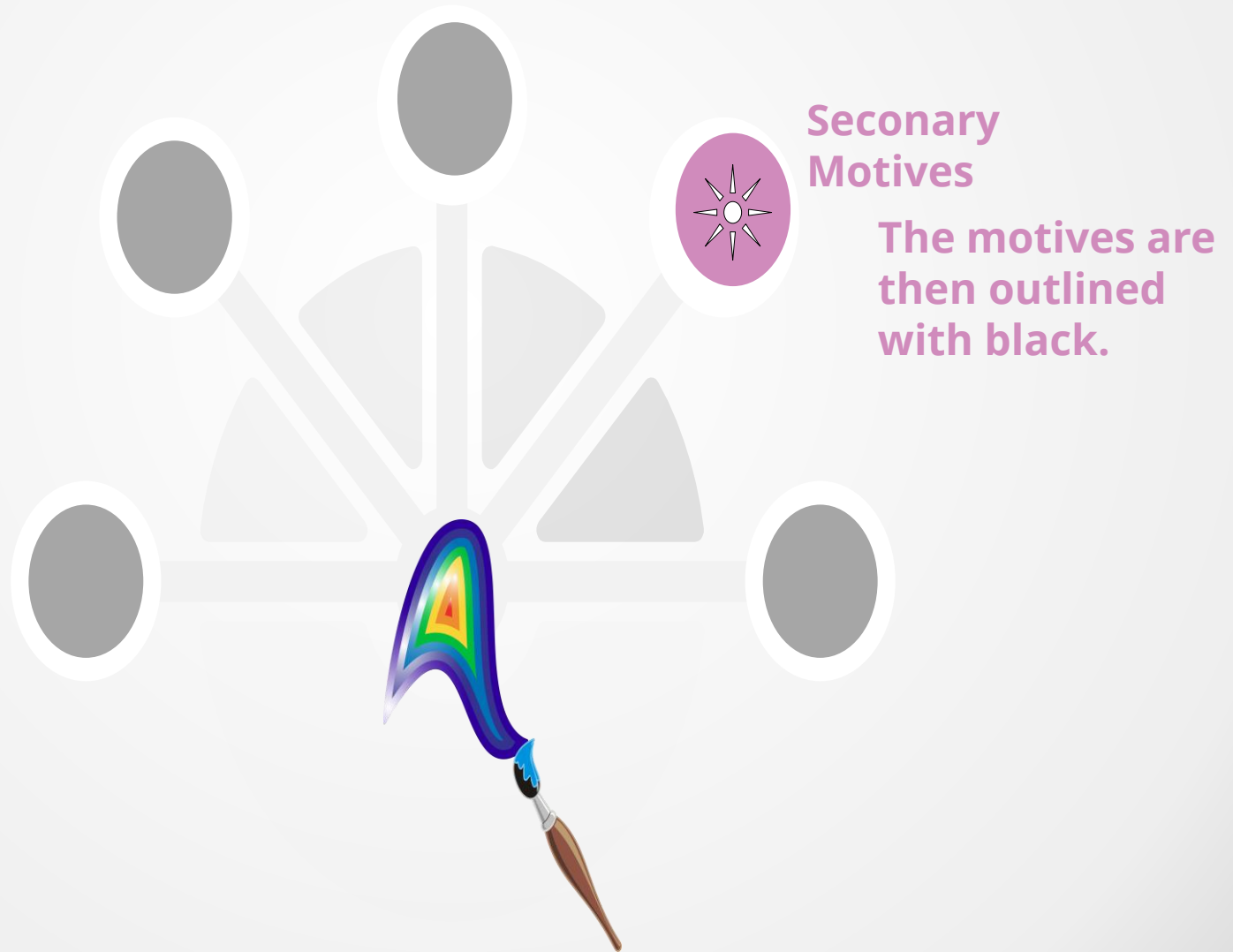
Ganjifa Painting Process

Whites of the Eyes

At the end the whites of the eyes are highlighted .

Mysore Traditional Painting

Mysore Paintings are characterized by
delicate lines,
 intricate brush strokes,
 graceful delineation of figures and
The use of bright vegetable colours and lustrous gold leaf.

More than mere decorative pieces, the paintings are designed to inspire feelings of devotion and humility in the viewer.

The painter's individual skill in giving expression to various emotions is therefore of paramount importance to this style of painting.

Mysore Traditional Painting

The first stage of Mysore Painting was to prepare the ground; paper, wood, cloth or wall grounds were variously used.

The paper board was made of paper pulp or waste paper, which was dried in the sun and then rubbed smooth with a polished quartz pebble.

If the ground was cloth it was pasted on a wooden board using a paste composed of dry white lead mixed with gum and a small quantity of gruel.

Mysore Traditional Painting

A number of steps are involved in the process of producing a Mysore painting. The first step requires the artist to make a preliminary sketch of the image on the base, which comprises of a cartridge paper pasted on a wooden base. Thereafter, he makes a paste of zinc oxide and Arabic gum, known as 'gesso paste'. This paste is used to give a slightly raised effect of carving to those parts of the painting that require embellishments and is allowed to dry. Then, gold foil is pasted onto the surface. The rest of the painting is prepared with the help of watercolors. After the painting is fully dried, it is covered with a thin paper and rubbed lightly with a smooth soft stone.

Mysore Traditional Painting Process

The line drawing is made on the paper.

Yellow coloured paste is applied on the areas where the gold is to be applied later, example the saree borders and jewellery.

Gesso work where, the paste of these 3 elements is made: white lead powder, gambose and maravajra are mixed with the help of vessel and mortar to form a paste.

Paste is applied to give the yellow parts an embossed effectThe gesso is kept to cool and dry.

Gold which is present in thin sheet form is applied to the painting wherever there is yellow paste applied (settles on its own).

The Business Model Canvas

Key Partners

- Artists
- Artisans
- Designers/ Art Educators
- Government Entities
- Traders
- NGOs / Social Entrepreneurs

Key Activities

- Build a platform for collaborative open ideas and value creation.
- Market research for a potential customer base .

Key Resources

- Traditional knowledge of the artists.
- Raw materials Production
- Knowledge of playing the game

Value Proposition

- Preservation of Traditional Art form
- Create a common working studio with other GI's from same region.
- Encourage a sustainable ecosystem for local production of clours and canvases
- Create consumer awareness
- Practice Fair Trade

Customer Relationship

- Establish a connection and relationship between artists and the potential buyers.

Channels

- An experiential and interactive market space for the artists and artisans
- An online platform for promotion.
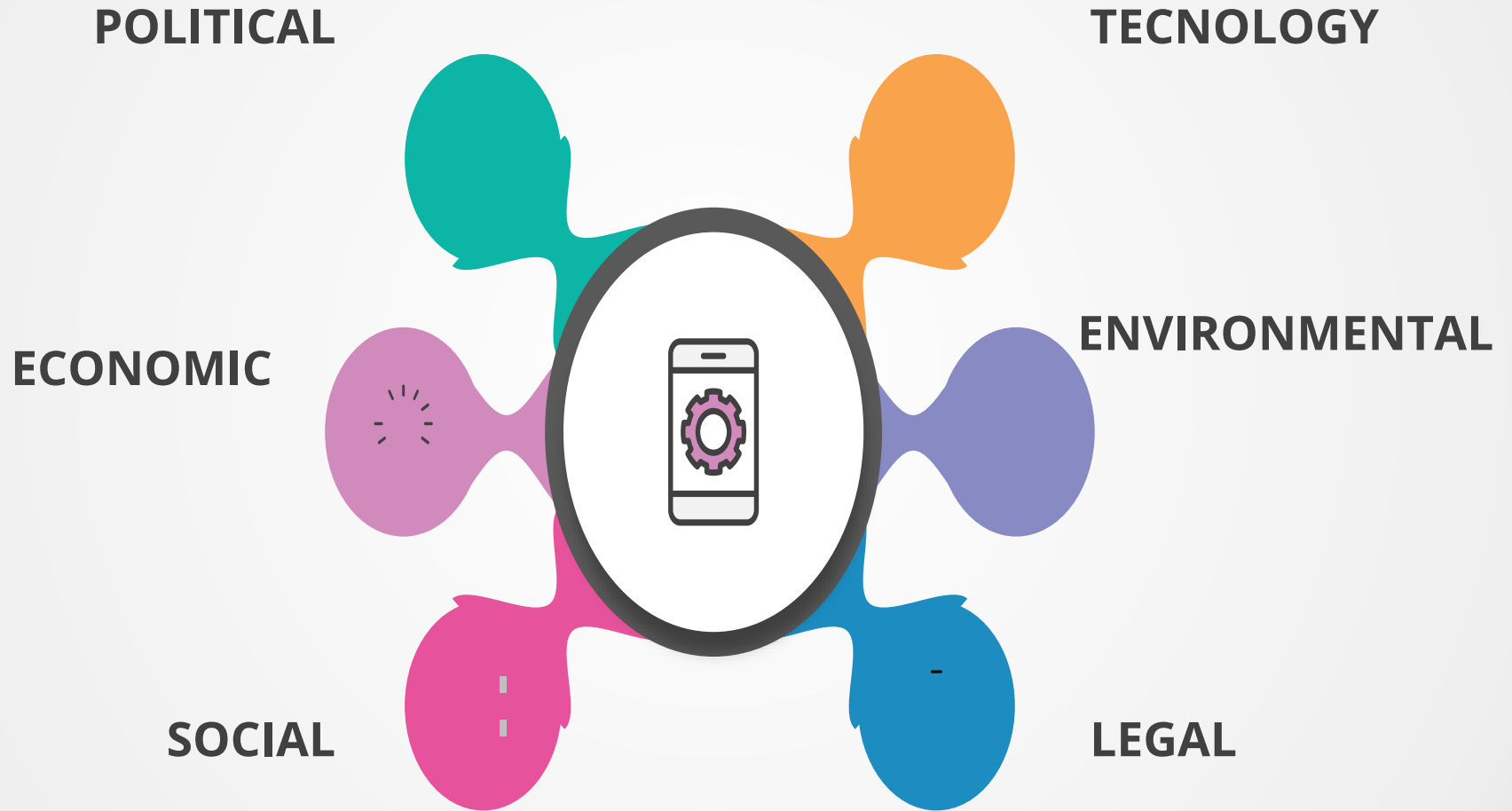
Customer Segments

- Art and Handicraft enthusiasts
- Art collectors
- Concerned about preservation of traditional knowledge.
- Care for local economy
- Other GI producer to embed the Art
- NGOs and Designers

Cost Structure

- Establishment of a working studio space for the artists
- Purchase of Raw Materials
- Payment for Junior Artists
- Cost of organizing exhibition
- Cost for online presence
- Studio maintenance cost
- Inventory holding cost

Revenue Streams

Artisan

Production of raw materials for the Artists

Artist

Sell their Artwork to the consumers or intermediaries

Intermediaries

Maintain a sustainable supply chain and cash flow

PESTEL

POLITICAL

- Manage different artists groups and understand their power dynamics .

- Strong government support to develop the ecosystem.

- Government financial support is extremely important for sourcing and manufacturing colours and canvas locally.

ECONOMIC

- Local economy can be developed if the colours and the base for the cards are sources and manufactured locally.

- Niche marketing strategy needs to be adopted to optimize promotional costs.

- Offer financial opportunities for young artists.

PESTEL

SOCIAL

- Motivate young artists to adopt the art form.
- Develop a community of artisans to produce organic colours for Mysore Art and the bases for Ganjifa Card.
- The organic and locally produced raw materials should be accessible to the artist and a standard quality should be maintained.

TECHNOLOGY

- An online market space to be created for the artists and artisans to trade their materials and the Art work.
- As the price of Mysore Art depends on the quality and reputation of the artist. An individual virtual space for the artist becomes important to promote the product.
- A collaborative online platform between the artist and the buyer is important.

PESTEL

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Health hazards associated to use of different materials during creation of this art form need to be considered.
- Old cotton cloths up-cycled through manufacturing of canvas for Ganjifa cards.
- The artists should be motivated to use traditional organic colours.
- There are eye sight issues with the artists associated with miniature painting that need to be considered.

LEGAL

- Need to follow labour and employee safety rules.
- Geographic indication norms should not be violated.
- A quality control protocol should be formed through collaborative artists meeting and feed into GI norm.
- A more or less standard pay structure (freelance or full time) based on the quality and experience should be formed.

Value Creation Framework

- Livelihood for the Artisan community .
- Social Innovation through Eco friendly practices.
- Preservation of a Traditional art form.
- Practice transparency and fair trade.
- Awareness among common people.
- Respect for the Art, Artisans and Artists.

Conclusion

Preservation and popularization of the art by providing artists and artisans with a space where they can benefit from each other.

To create a collaborative workspace between Mysore's Geographical Indications.

The development of an ecosystem around this art form should focus on the growth of local economy.

Traditional Artists need to be little more proactive to motivate young artists towards this art form .

Government support and funding is extremely important to develop an efficient production process, quality control and supply chain.

Future Scope of work

Sponsor Workshops in Collaboration with Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad to train and motivate young Artists to take the craft forward .

Action : Had an interaction with the artists and can be done through sponsorship .

Initiative to develop small scale indigenous manufacturing unit for cards and colours through indigenous process. Connect with NGOs to identify and train this micro entrepreneurs from various parts of the state .

Action : Interacted with the researchers and trying to look for some potential NGOs who can actively contribute to this idea.