

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh>



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

## Introduction

Thangka is not just an artistic representation of form and design, but it is also entangled with religion and spiritual message. The purpose of Thangka which is crafted, is treated differently in different parts of the world. Like many of other cultural heritage, Thangka has been passed down through generation, it is also used as an illustration for poetry, recite history and spiritual teaching. Thangka is one such art which is considered as sacred. Thangka artists are not just creator of art, their mission is to give deep spiritual meaning through Thangka art.

The use of textile for painting can be seen throughout the history, Thangka is one such example of religious scroll art. The literal meaning of word Thangka is “something rolled up”, this form of art is mostly painted or embroidered on fabric and generally cotton or silk is used to represent the Thangka art. According to sources, it is believed that Tibetan art and thangkas are closely associated with each other, many believe that the painting form of thangka is an inspiration from Gupta period of 330-520 A.D. Earliest examples of thangka can be traced back to 9th or 10th centuries in Tibet. The style and technique resembles the Indian cloth painting patas. Influence of Nepal, Kashmir and Central Asia, can be seen in thangka art. This art generally portrays Lord Buddha encircled by deities. In many Thangka, Lord Buddha's life is being portrayed along the branches of cosmic tree known as the wheel of life, horoscope, etc. Thangka is meant to be more than a two-dimensional image, the full view of Thangka can be achieved once they are mounted and three-dimensional image can be seen. Usage of raised cover, ribbons and bottom rod (added in the bottom of the scroll for weight) helps in achieving the three-dimensional effect.

The applique Thangka was initiated by the great king Sontsen Gampo in 7th century from Tibet, Applique Thangka is an art form where colored cloth generally silk, which is imported from China or brought from Varanasi (India) is cut in required shape. Pieces are sewn to each other or to a background silk fabric. One of the main reasons for introducing applique technique was to make it more durable than Thangka painting. Applique Thangka lasts longer compared to Thangka painting as the effect of moisture, dust and heat does not affect much to applique thangka while travelling. Due to the usage of pure silk fiber, applique thangka found expensive and were only afforded by wealthy individuals, monasteries and Chinese imperial government.

3rd century BC is the time when Buddhism influence was seen in Himachal Pradesh during Ashoka period. The great king Ashoka who believed in Buddhism, created many stupas (a hemispherical structure containing ashes of Buddhist monks, used as a place for meditation.) one such stupa is made at Kullu valley located near banks of the Beas River at Himachal Pradesh.

During the kingdom of King Songtsem Gampo at Tibet in 7th century, one of his seven students Thonmi Sambhota was chosen to send to India to find out the information about Indian Buddhism. During his visit he spread and collected the information about Buddhism and hence migration of artists from Tibet took existence.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Generally, thangka's are made on canvas but following are few well known made from other material (Reference [www.jcms-journal.com](http://www.jcms-journal.com)):

1. The dpar ma, Thangka is created on canvas using block printing. Outline for the Wheel of Life is printed before painting. This method shortens the painting duration.
2. The metal thangka, these were used while travelling and due to its durability and foldable nature, they were used in procession.
3. The paper mache thangka. A unique form of Thangka made up of paper Mache. Paper pulp is pressed, dried and colored. This technique gives a three dimensional look to Thangka.
4. The tshen drub ma, embroidered thangka. Which are made in eastern part of Tibet and mainly used in china.
5. The woven thangka. One of the very rare kind of Thangka which is woven. This kind of thangka was made so that Tibetans could have a thangka for the family altar.
6. The dras-drab-ma, gos-sku, appliqué thangka, mainly made of silk fabric.

Essential parts of a thangka / Designs of Thangka depicting certain character or thing and the particular color or fabric used to define it according to. (Huntington 1970; Unesco 1975)

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Part	Name	Fabric/Colours	Symbolism	Other functions/features
1	<i>Ja</i>	Silk, various	Spectrum of the rainbow	
2	The right strip is <i>gyas-pa</i> and the left <i>gyan-pa</i>	Dyed black or blue cloth		
4	<i>Gnam</i>		Heaven	
5	<i>Sa</i>	Cloth, gold brocade or embroidered silk	Earth	Magic formulae are written on thin tissue paper and kept below the <i>sa</i>
6	<i>rtsa-ba</i>	Cloth	The root	
7	<i>thang-rgyugs</i> or <i>thang-shing</i>		Wood of the thangka	Inserted tightly into the seams in the <i>sa</i> and <i>rtsaba</i> . Suspends the thangka and keeps it stretched laterally. The lower rod acts as a weight to keep the thangka hanging straight; over it, the thangka is rolled up for storage. The lower rod is always round and often has ornamental knobs on either sides, made generally of brass, but sometimes of gold, silver or ivory
8	<i>thang-khebs</i> or <i>jalkhebs</i> and ribbons		Picture cover or cover of respect	Shields the painting from the eyes of disrespectful viewers as well as smoke, oil and dirt. The cover hangs over the thangka and the ribbons hang over the cover. The ends of the ribbons are weighted with small quantities of sand to keep the veil straight and immobile. The rolled up cover is held in position by the ribbons, which are wound round it. The ribbons also serve to tie the scroll when it is stored.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>



Adhesive is used as medium to fasten the designed pieces to the frame.



Main design sheets help is taken to place the pieces at correct place.



Using silk threads to stitch applique pieces enhances the beauty.



Facial features are embroidered or painted with fabric paints.

### 1. Introduction

### 2. Tools and Raw Materials

### 3. Making Process

### 4. Products

### 5. Panorama

### 6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>



Thangka applique of Shakyamuni Buddha.



Craftsmen involved in this work are well trained and experience people.



Outline of the design is first stitched with silk thread and then cut.

### 1. Introduction

### 2. Tools and Raw Materials

### 3. Making Process

### 4. Products

### 5. Panorama

### 6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/introduction>

### 1. Introduction

### 2. Tools and Raw Materials

### 3. Making Process

### 4. Products

### 5. Panorama

### 6. Contact Details



Thangka applique depicting Manjushri Buddha.



Thangka applique of white thara Buddha.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and  
Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

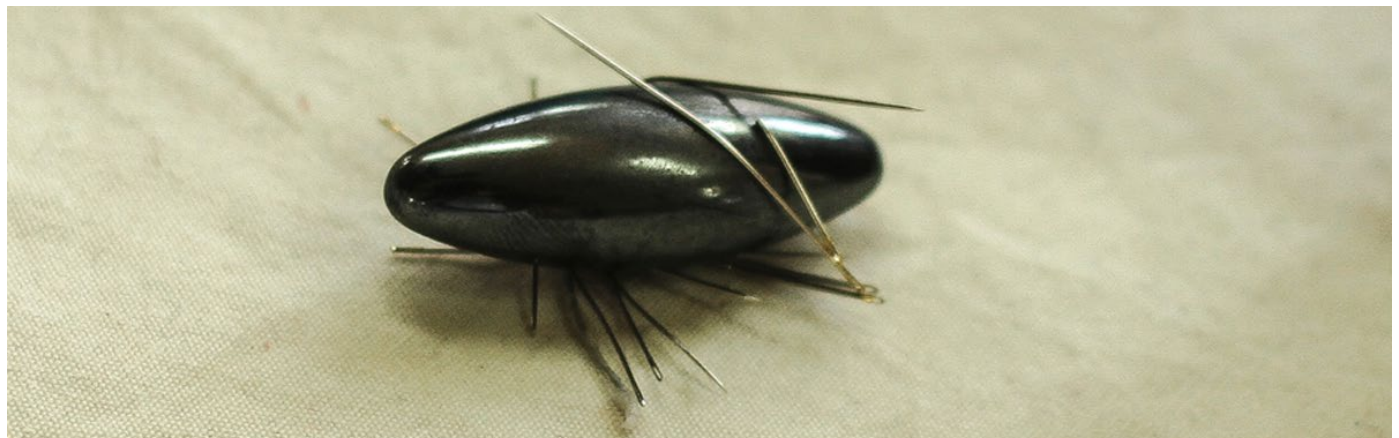
5. Panorama

6. Contact Details

## Tools and Raw Materials

Thangka is a handmade art form and all other parts are done manually in making of applique Thangka. Most of the materials used for applique are procured from nature. Silk fabric and thread is brought from Varanasi (India), horse tail hair is bought from Mongolia. Below is the list of other tools and raw materials used:

- **Silk Fabric:** Its Used as base cloth and to make different cut piece of the design.
- **Silk Thread:** Its Used to wrap around the horse tail hair and also to stitch the parts on the cloth.
- **Horse Tail Hair:** Placed on the outline made on fabric and stitched.
- **Needle:** It is used to stitch the cut pieces on the base fabric.
- **Adhesive:** To stick the fabric on the base cloth.
- **Heating Tool:** Electric iron box helps to fasten the cut piece on the base fabric.
- **Tracing Paper:** To trace design on the fabric.
- **Chalk Powder:** To form the design on the fabric.
- **Scissor:** Its used to cut the fabric according to the design.



Sewing needles are used stitch the thread and cut pieces together.



Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>

1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Chalk powder is stored in a cotton pouch and puffed on tracing sheet to trace the design on the cloth.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>



Different colored silk cloth is used design piece of the applique.



Synthetic resin adhesive is used to paste the cut pieces to form the big picture.

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Panorama

6. Contact Details



Designed silk cloths are also used to make the applique.



Horsetail hair is wrapped in silk thread and stitched on the borderlines of the design.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

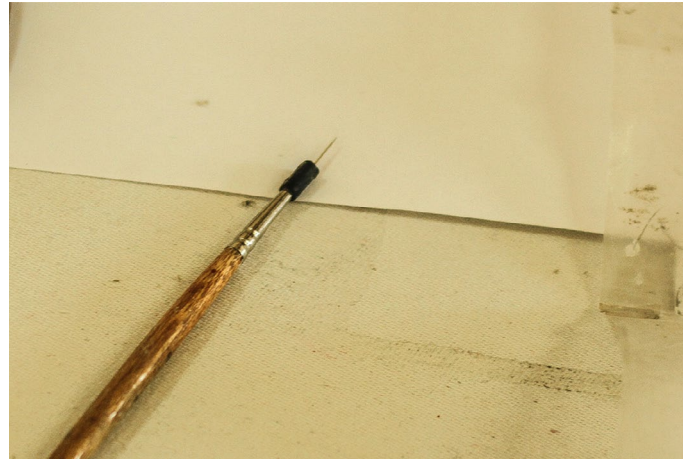
Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

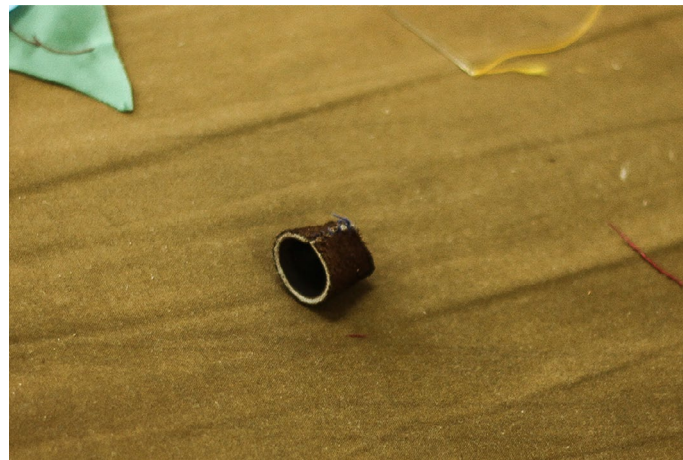
<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>



Thin painting brush is used to paint the facial features.



Glue is used to hold the horsetail hair and silk thread while wrapping the thread on the hair.



Finger protector made of cloth is worn on the finger while sewing to prevent needle poking the finger.



Cutter is used to cut the unwanted thread and cloth.

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Panorama

6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/tools-and-raw-materials>

1. Introduction
2. **Tools and Raw Materials**
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Only silk thread is used for sewing and stitching of thangka painting.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work  
by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and  
Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

### Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

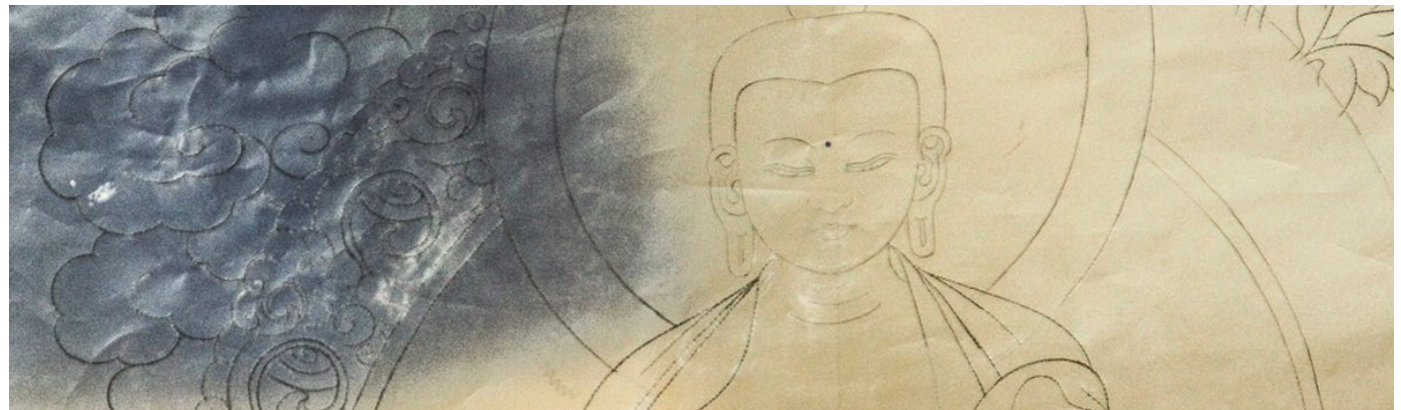
## Making Process

Various color silk fabric is used for different color form and back ground. Color scheme plays a very important role in representing the applique Thangka. Traditionally, thangka painting or applique is started at a particular time which is set by the planetary position.

Silk fabric of required color is selected and one side of the fabric is coated with glue and allowed to set for 5 minutes. Glue give stiffness to the fabric, which makes it easy to handle. Pricked tracing sheet, on which the required design is made is placed on the silk fabric (on the side, where glue is not applied), a cotton pouch containing chalk power is carefully tapped all over the tracing paper. The design is formed on the silk fabric in a dot pattern, using pencil line is drawn over the dotted pattern forming an outline of the complete design.

Horse tail hair is wrapped with pure silk thread and placed on the outline made on the cloth and stitched on the silk fabric. Excess fabric is removed leaving the outline area, all the parts of the art to be made is cut separately, for example hand, leg, head etc. Feature like eyes are created in last, creating eyes is one of the most difficult task as it requires to represent the realistic nature of the eye. The edge of cut pieces are finely cut without damaging the outline thread, to loosen the fabric. EVA (Ethylene-vinyl Acetate) based adhesive is applied at the ends and pasted by folding the ends towards backside of the piece. The glued ends are heated to set the loosen fiber permanently, which helps in shaping the cut piece.

Cut pieces are stitched together to form the complete design. The stitched pieces are fasten to a base silk fabric using adhesive. Once the pieces are set, they are stitched to the base cloth using the required color silk thread. The applique Thangka is attached to a silk brocade border frame in the end. A final glance is made to check if any rectifications has to be done.



Required thangka design is initially drawn on a sheet and the drawn lines are pierced.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Synthetic adhesive is applied (spread) on the fabric to make it stiff.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>



Drawn design sheet is used as template by placing on the required color fabric and the design is traced on the cloth using chalk powder.



The traced design lines are darkened using a pencil.



Adhesive is applied on the silk thread to make it stiff.



Thick thread (horsetail wrapped with silk thread) is sewed on the borderlines of the design.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>



Different color threads are used according to the design.



The cut pieces of the applique are made with different colors of plain or designed fabrics.



Facial features and anatomy of the figure is also made the same way but with a single color fabric.



Sewed pieces are trimmed separately.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>



The edges of the pieces are cut with help of a cutter.



Cut edge is folded backward with a divider and pasted with using adhesive.



Glued edges are ironed to get a fine finishing.



Patterns are cut and stitched to make the background.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>



The edges are folded and glued backward of the design.



All the pieces are gathered to convert to an applique art.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



The centerpiece is first fastened.



The centre figure depicting the form of Buddha.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>



Other pieces like border are joined in the end.



Once the pieces are fastened it is ironed to fix firmly.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Completed applique is stitched on the base canvas, which is a plain silk cloth.



Silk brocade is prepared using sewing machine for thangka applique.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Thangka applique is decorated with the silk brocade and hung on the wall as wall hanging.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/products>

## Products

Applique Thangka products have very unique feature, which are much different from other forms of art work, each applique work tells a different story from the other one. They are generally made of 14x18 inches (LxW) size, these painting are sold in Netherlands, china, Japan and Tibet. Thangka is used to increase good fortune and prevent negative energies. The starting price of applique is Rs 10,000/- and the maximum price goes up to lakhs depending on the size and work done.



Thangka applique of Dhyani Buddha Akshobhya.

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/products>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Colorful thangka applique depicting Green Thara.



Thangka applique of White Thara.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/products>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Thangka of Bhaishajyaguru who is known as the medicine Budha.



Another form of Bhaishajyaguru who is prayed for good health.

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/products>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Panorama
6. Contact Details



Applique of bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara.



The Buddhist deity Mahakala is depicted in thangka applique.



Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

### Panorama



#### Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/panorama>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. **Panorama**
6. Contact Details

Design Resource

## Silk Applique Thangka - Himachal Pradesh

Thangka Silk Applique Work

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Vijay G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

### Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/silk-applique-thangka-himachal-pradesh/contact-details>

## Contact Details

This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Vijay G. at [NID Campus, Bengaluru](#).

You can get in touch with

- Prof. Bibhudutta Baral at [bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu)

You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

### Helpdesk Details:

Co-ordinator

Project e-kalpa

R & D Campus

National Institute of Design

#12 HMT Link Road, Off Tumkur Road

Bengaluru 560 022

India

Phone: +91 80 2357 9054

Fax: +91 80 23373086

Email: [dsource.in\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:dsource.in[at]gmail.com)

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Panorama
6. **Contact Details**