



In the valley of Kashmir

Internship at Craft Development Institute, Srinagar

Midhun KM, 136130010, IDC, IIT Bombay

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Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India*

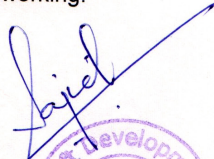
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that **Mr. Midhun K.M. Roll No. 136130010**, of Industrial Design Centre, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay has successfully completed his internship at Craft Development Institute, CDI Srinagar during the period of 13-05-2014 to 24-06-2014.

During his period of internship Mr. Midhun demonstrated his skills to adapt to the challenging work environment of the craft sector. He further showed his keenness to learn and came out with innovative solutions to the given problems.

We found him to be creative, confident, focused and hardworking.

We wish him luck in all his future endeavors.


Sajid Nazir
Activity &
Faculty Coordinator, CDI





Craft Development Institute

Craft Development Institute is an autonomous Institute under the Jammu and Kashmir government. The institute is located at Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir. The institute is committed to providing professional educational programmes in the area of entrepreneurship in handicraft sector. CDI also conducts skill based training and workshops for mentoring new generation of artisans. The activities at CDI are aligned such that the region craftsmen are aided in understanding the contemporary design and market trends and helping them out of other issues prevailing in the handicraft sector.

Acknowledgements

My thanks to Prof. AG Rao for referring me to CDI without which I would have missed this wonderful opportunity. I also thank for all the support and motivation and for sharing with me his thoughts about the Kashmiri handicraft sector.

My thanks to Prof. Sajid Nazir for his timely support and guidance and for all the motivation during my stay at CDI. Without the help from him the project would not have reached to this level. I would also thank him for making my stay at Srinagar wonderful.

My thanks to Prof. Yaseer Ahmad Mir for all his support from the very beginning till the moment I left.

My thanks to Mr. Akhther Hussain for helping me throughout the course of prototyping. My special thanks to Mr. Mohammed Aslam, Mr. Tanveer and Mr. Kausar Ahmed the artisans who made the concepts into a reality.

I also thank all the faculty, staff and my friends at CDI and IDC for helping me to reach to this level. And above everything I thank my mother. Without her I wouldn't have ever reached anywhere.



Mr. Kausar Ahmed and his team



Mr. Mohammed Aslam

Artisans

Without the dedication and skill of these artisans no design will be a reality. A line of acknowledgment would not be sufficient to bring forward these wonderful people. I was lucky to work with Mr. Kausar Ahmed and his team to prototype papier-mâché lamp shades. The dedication and the quality of work is impressive and their efforts are to be really appreciated. For the parts to be made of copper I again met a wonderful highly skilled artisan, Mr. Mohammed Aslam. I was surprised by the patience and the approach of him to achieve the maximum possible perfection in making the parts. He is a highly skilled artisan who assures a comfortable collaboration in work.

From my experience, I can say these wonderful people can always be contacted if you are looking for any reliable and highly skilled artisans in the valley of Kashmir. Their contact information is available at CDI, Srinagar.

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1 Introduction

The valley of Kashmir

Six thousand feet above the sea, guarded by mountains from the outer world lies the valley of Kashmir. 'The valley is an emerald set in pearls, a land of lakes, clear streams, green turfs, magnificent trees and mighty mountains-where air is cool and water sweet, where men are strong and the women vie with the soil in fruitfulness'. [1] The beauty of the valley lies over a broad range of visuals. The snow clad mountains, the streams, the paddy fields on the slope of mountains, the walnut and apple orchards, the beautiful Kashmiri women, the rounded stones, the colourful flowers, the pleasant smell of roses, the honey bees collecting their share of nectar, the large turfs of greenery with the embracing shades of huge chinar trees, the fine breeze of cool air and many more wonders of nature make the valley a real paradise on earth. The harmonious life of Kashmiris with the nature and the transfer of craftsman skills over the period of time could have stimulated a sense of aesthetics and the valley is famous for the most reputed artisans in various sectors of handicrafts for their amazing skills. The skill of the Kashmiri artisans ranges from weavers, carpenters, basket weavers, black smiths, carpet makers, papier-mâché, silver work, copper work, wood work, leather, furs, paper, boats etc.



2. Sozni embroidery

The handicraft sector

Kashmiri handicrafts are unique in its richness and beauty. The craft of the Kashmir is deeply rooted to the culture and traditions. The craftsmen are well renowned for their intricate workmanship. The handicraft reflects the richness of the nature and wide variety of flora and fauna found in the valley. The handicraft industry is an unorganized sector with a low investment capital and the craftsmen work with the traditional tools and processes.

Hand weaves

Hand weaving is one of the popular craft existing in the valley from an early period of time. The ranges of materials used for weaving were mainly silk, linen and wool. In olden days hand spinning was one of the basic occupations of women while men did the weaving. The women recited religious anecdotes, legends and historical tales while spinning in the olden times. [2] Sozni embroidery is shown in figure 2.

Wood work

The history of wood craft in Kashmir spans over ten centuries. The twelve storied wooden palace of king Harsha as referred in Rajatarangani depicts the skill of artisans of Kashmir from the very olden times. A close watch on the houses in Kashmir itself showcases the magnificent usage of wood even now. The wood work was born out of the needs of the local people and inspired by the beautiful wood like walnut and deodar available in the valley. The creativity of Kashmiri craftsmen have enriched the wood work from not merely being a functional craft to a decorative as well aesthetically sound products like toys, interiors of buildings, ceiling panels, ornate door, lattice work



3. Wood Work on Shah Hamid Shrine, Srinagar

etc. [2] Some of the wood works of Kashmir are:

Pinjra

Pinjra is a geometrical lattice form built up of minute laths. The pressure exerted by each other hold them in position and no glue or adhesive is used to join the individual parts. The craft involves a great amount of skill and artistic feeling to make pinjra.

Khatamband

Katamband is an art work popular and widely used in creating beautiful ceiling from wood. The art is said to have been introduced by Mirza hyder tughlaq during the period of Mughals. This wood work showcases the marvellous skills of craftsmen as it involves fitting of small slabs of wood cut into geometrical shapes to create ceilings showcasing floral and geometrical designs. The process involves high level of skill and expertise as no nails are used anywhere in the joineries. The woods used are mainly fir, walnut or deodar.[3]

Wood carving

Wood carving is one of the most important crafts of the valley of Kashmir. The carving is done on walnut wood which is available in very few regions around the globe and Kashmir is one among these regions. The hard and durable walnut with its close grain and even texture facilitates fine and detailed work. A wide variety of utilitarian and artistic products are made by the artisans working in the carving sector.

Papier Mache

It is one of the most popular craft practised in Kashmir. The origin of this art is rooted in the 15th



century during the period of king Zain-ul-Abidin who invited artists and craftsmen from central asia. The products are made out of paper pulp by layering over a mould and finished by skillfull hand painting of nature inspired patterns on the surface. The craft was confined to ornamentation of cases used for keeping pens and other small personal articles in the beginning. Over the period of time a wide arrange of contemporary items such as table sets, bangles, lamp stands, cups bowls etc are made. [2]

Metal work

The usage of metals from ancient times is evident in the valley. Every village had a craftsman who attends to the local requirements of the community for agricultural and other tools. The valley is famous for the skill of artisans working on copperware. [2] The skill of copperware artisan is shown in figure 4.

Statues

Statues were made during the reign of Hindu kings and the evidents of metal figures made from brass are still found in olden temples.[2]

Weapons

Kashmir was famous for the manufacturing of swords and gun barrels. The Kashmiri made swords and shields are ornamented with beautiful designs. The guns made were of high quality and was unable to distinguish from the renowned English works. [2]

The market

Jammu and Kashmir handicrafts are famous worldwide for the attractive design and high quality



5. Samovar

craftsmanship. The absence of large scale industries in the state has resulted in the handicraft being a key economic activity over the period of years. Products like shawls, crewels, namda, wood carving, papier-mâché and carpet are exported widely and the Kashmiri handicrafts has secured an important position in the international market.[4]

It is reported that Jammu and Kashmir has exported handicraft goods worth Rs. 1643 crore during 2011-12. The intrusion of Chinese handicraft items and the bad trade practices has resulted in artisans not yielding much benefit for their hard work. Meanwhile the government has started self-employment scheme for individual artisans and supporting them through various schemes. [5] The unorganized structure, poor exposure to emerging trends and the latest technologies in market has made handicraft sector suffer. The government has now set up institutions like Craft Development Institute and several others in the state to cater craft education to young people and to secure them employment opportunities in this sector.



2 Field Study

To understand the handicraft sector in Kashmir a field study was conducted. The study included collecting information about the different areas of Kashmiri handicrafts, visiting work place of artisans, shops, discussions with tourists and meeting experts working in the field of Kashmiri handicrafts.

The artisans (primary users)

In the context of the current project, artisans are considered to be the primary users. The Kashmiri artisans are well renowned for their intricate craftsmanship. The artisans work and supplies goods mostly based on orders received from middle men who takes a major chunk of the profit. The bad trade practices by the middle men have resulted in the artisans in not yielding proper reward for their efforts. Every craft is done in stages and each process is carried out by different set of artisans who are experts in that particular task. They build up a strong network and the products flow within this network from the initial stage till the final product is completed. The products are generally made for orders in bulk. They make products for local as well as for outside market. The artisans set up their work places with very low capital investment and employs traditional practices in crafting out the products. The products are made from the locally available materials. It is observed that the majority of the artisans are not very keen on experimenting with new designs and prefer working on the traditional products. There is no fixed timing and they work based on the weather. During



hot summers many prefer working in the early morning and rest during noon. The unorganized structure of the sector is reflected upon the work culture which is not very much streamlined and is unpredictable. With the policies set up by government and NGOs a set of young artisans are emerging who are enthusiastic and willing to explore the latest trends in market.

The consumers (secondary users)

The consumers for Kashmiri handicraft products range from the national and international tourists visiting the valley, the local people, hotels, government organizations etc. The tourists visiting the valley are mostly interested in buying the products so that they can cherish the memories of the time spend over here and also for the value of the hand crafting. People buy the products for its hand crafted value and also due to the availability of wide varieties which is lacking in the industrial products. Organizations and hotels invest in unique products from handicrafts sector which adds aesthetically pleasing ambience. As far as the local people are concerned, the products are bought mainly for daily use and for gifting it for marriages and other occasions of celebrations.

The tertiary users

The shopkeepers, transporters and raw material suppliers constitute the tertiary users. The shopkeepers selling genuine products are affected by the intrusion of Chinese and other fake products in the market. The traditional process followed in the making of products has not catch up with the advancements in the material science and has possibly resulted in making products which are heavy to transport. The lack of modularity in design also affects packaging and transportation.



8. Waggu, an extinct craft

3 The Issues

An analysis of the current scenario in the handicraft sector of Kashmir reveals a lot of issues. The unorganized structure of the sector is one of the reasons for many of the issues prevailing currently. The exposure of the artisans to emerging markets and technological advancements are limited and this has resulted in many products not surviving in the outside market. The role played by middlemen has a very severe negative impact on the artisans and has resulted in artisans not being confident and the efforts they put go unnoticed. The confidence level of the artisans in experimenting new designs and exploring areas which are alien to them seems to be very reluctant in the current scenario. The unavailability of materials and manufacturing processes in the state has also restricted the handicraft sector from innovating new products. The lack of innovation in handicrafts sectors has resulted in extinction of some crafts when new industrial products came into market which is cheaper and efficient. The skill levels of artisans in some of the trades have seen to be reduced over the period of time due to shrinkage of market space for that particular sector.

4 Design Directions

An analysis of the study conducted on the sector has opened up different design opportunities. Following are some of the design opportunities.

The development of new products for the contemporary market by design interventions to boost the handicraft sector.

To establish a strong collaboration between different trades within the sector by developing new composite designs which can result in endless products and eliminate the possibility of any trade getting extinct.

To design an innovative business model by understanding the consumers, market and the trade to ensure artisans are benefitted for their effort and to eliminate the bad trade practices prevalent in the current scenario.

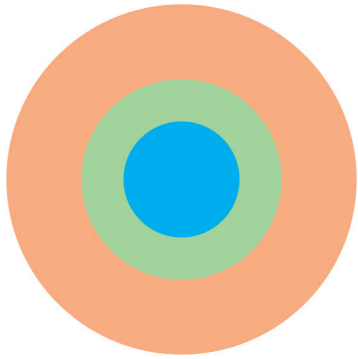
To design and develop products with challenging forms to enhance the workmanship of the artisan and to make them think beyond the existing traditional forms.

To develop methods for artisans to collaborate with designers at ease and develop new products by working as a team which will facilitate the sharing of knowledge between each other and can result into a range of products which will be new from the sector.

Further analysis of the design opportunities and considering the current scenario, the possibility of

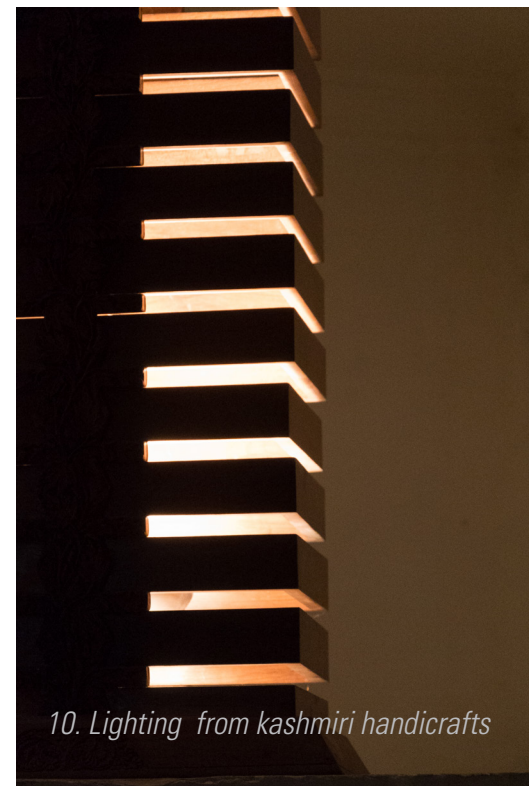
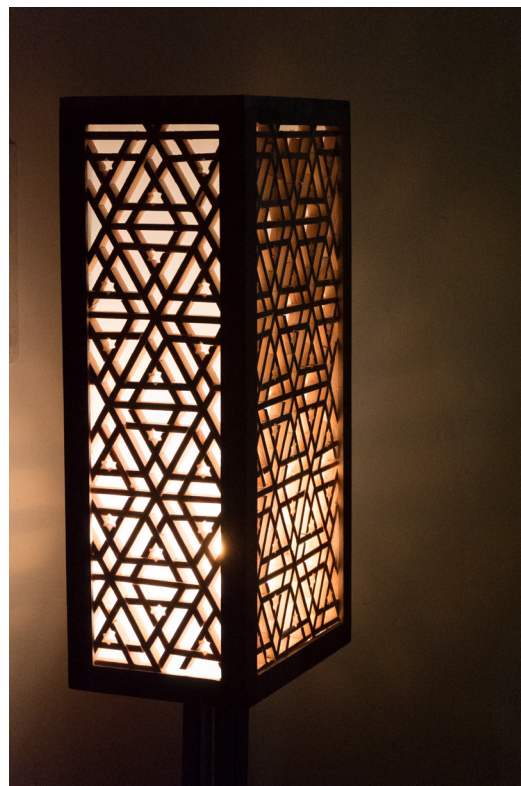
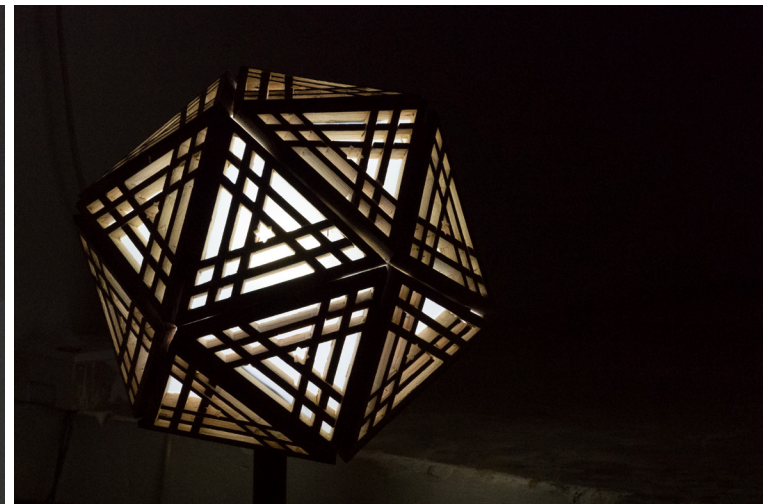


enhancing the skill of artisans in developing new forms, collaborative working, the ability to visualize organic forms and to impart strength and knowledge to innovate continuously for sustaining in the market seems to be an interesting and challenging task for a designer to work upon.



5 Design Objective

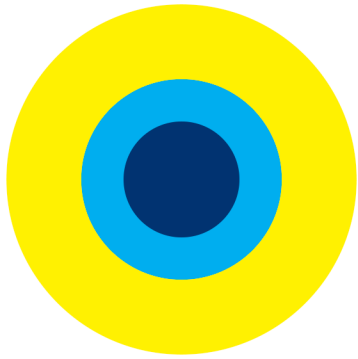
To design new products in the area of lighting through which the artisans will be exposed to new forms and contemporary designs which can enhance their skills and opens up possibility of being more creative and thereby opening up the endless possibilities of wonderful luminaire designs based on Kashmiri handicrafts.



10. Lighting from kashmiri handicrafts

6 Parallel Products

The Kashmiri handicraft sector is not much exposed to the area of lighting. The availability of fittings and raw materials is one of the reasons. Other issues like the reluctance of artisans to explore new areas and the absence of collaboration between different craft trades also is a reason for very less number of products in the area of lighting. Figure 10 shows the existing designs in the Kashmiri handicraft sector for lighting



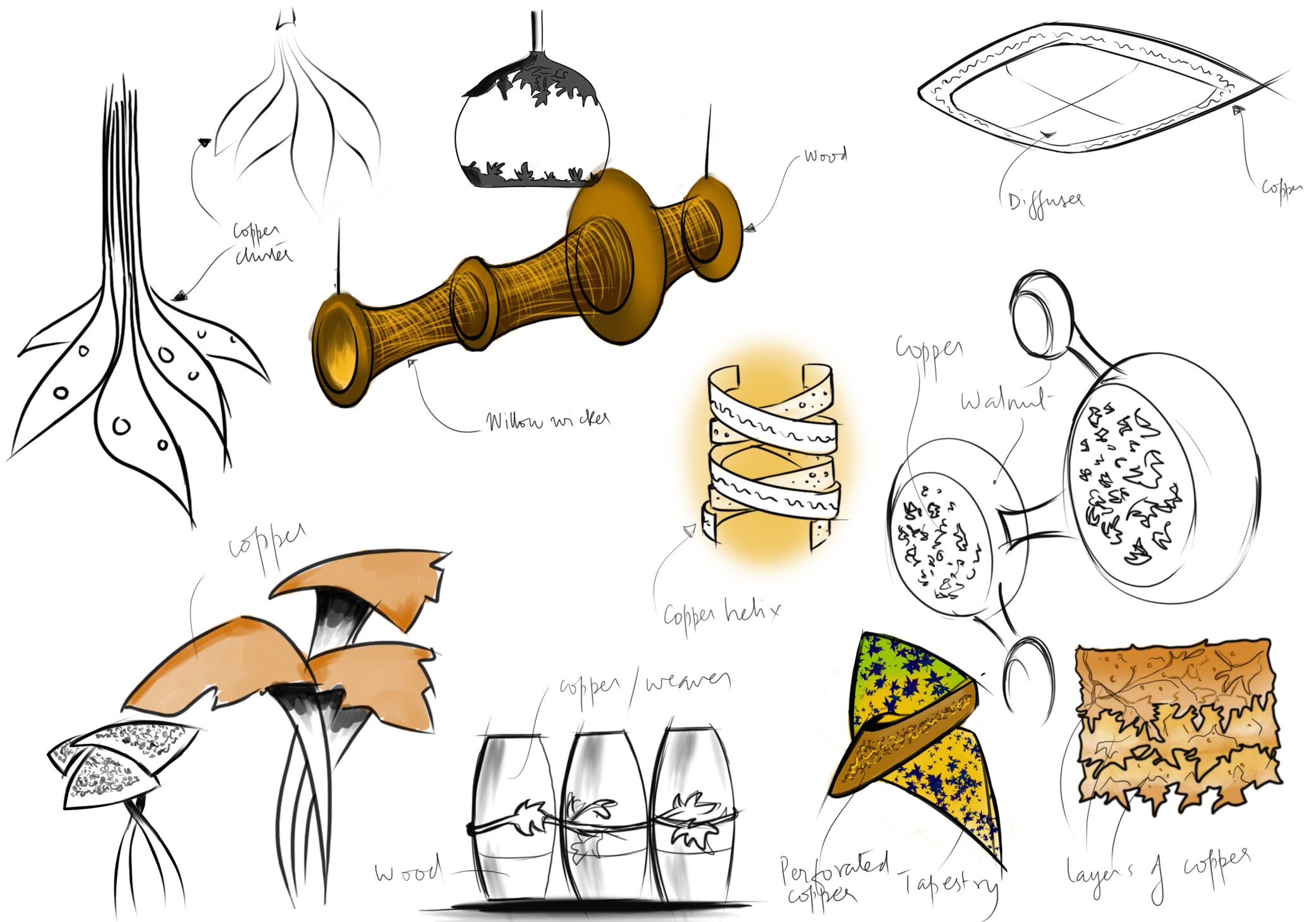
7 Design Brief

To design new products in the area of lighting and to enhance the skill of artisans in developing new forms, collaborative working, the ability to visualize complex forms and to impart strength and knowledge to innovate continuously for sustaining in the market. The outcome will also be trying to open up a new market in the area of lighting for the Kashmir handicrafts. The product designed should project the value of handicraft and should exploit the limits in hand crafting as a creative medium. The product should be modular and easy to disassemble and assemble for ease of packaging and transportation. The identity of the product should be closely associated to the nature and the culture of Kashmir.

8 Activity Analysis

An activity analysis is carried out to study the work practise and the response of artisans to new forms and products. An activity analysis in an unorganized sector is quite difficult but the purpose here is to understand the basic process involved.

The conventional practice of working with artisans is by explaining them the new design through sketches and by referring to existing forms they are familiar with. The artisan starts prototyping based on the inputs after buying the required amount of raw material and tools. The prototyping is carried out in stages. Each stage is handled by the experts in that particular task and passed on to the next. During the process, frequent following up needs to be done to ensure the progress in work as per the design requirements and time frame. The final product is finished as per the requirement.



9 Ideation

Ideation demands an in-depth understanding of the identity of handicraft products, the availability of raw materials and the culture to develop products for the sector.

The initial phase of ideation involved in designing the products which can explicitly showcase the skill of the artisans by incorporating the traditional motifs on designs in contemporary designs for lighting. The second phase of ideation is focused more towards the development of organic forms which can add more value for the hand crafting. Figure 11 depicts the outcome of ideations showcasing ceiling mounted, pendant and pedestal kind of luminaires.



12. Rig test

10 Rig Testing

The luminaire design requires a good amount of study about the flow of light and the drama it can unfold when interacting with multiple surfaces made of different materials. To get a clear idea about the output of the proposed designs, rigs are made and tested. Figure 12 shows the paper and sheet metal models used for testing.



11 Final Concepts

The outcome of all the efforts and enthusiasm for developing a range of luminaires has driven me to go ahead with two final concepts for detailing and prototyping.

Smaya

The pendant light with an elegant dome with its emptiness filled with light and the concentric rings with the rich handcrafted engravings in a soothing rhythm let the light flow over the surface illuminating the elements abstracted from the nature. Light up above the dining table to share a meal with that special person or during a cosy moment relaxing on the sofa. The light caressing the shiny metal is always an enchantingly beautiful visual.

Zuhrah

The mighty chinar tree with the morning rays of sun dispersed through the hanging leaves always gives a tingle of joy. Inspired from this is developed the hanging pendant crafted from copper by the skilful coppersmith of Kashmir valley. The organic form with a modular concept of design brings a great drama when lit up above. A story where light is embraced within the expanse of emptiness.



12 Concept Detailing

Smaya

A pendant light to hang low and sit and gaze at for hours or to spend the most pleasurable time with the special ones. The lamp is housed in the handcrafted papier-mâché dome and the light dispersed by rings concentrically placed at the open end of the dome.

Dome

The dome is made of papier-mâché and leaves a smooth outer surface to paint it with the most beautiful designs exclusively from Kashmir. The dome acts as the lamp shade and is a safe housing for the fragile lamp hung from the ceiling. It connects the wire from ceiling with lamp and transfers the load to the wire at the top junction. The dome is fixed with support for holding the copper rings.

Concentric rings

The rings are made of copper and engraved with designs by the skillfull naqash. The rings are of varying heights and made detachable for ease of transportation and maintenance. The rings are connected to each other through brass rods of 4mm placed at right angles to each other.

The product can be made at a cost of 1200INR including the raw material and the charges for the artisan.



Zuhrah

To live with the elements of nature even inside your home is a blessing. The need for this product is an outcome of a series of discussions about the possibility of introducing new lighting products into the handicraft sector which can be different from the existing handmade or industrial products. The organic form is chosen so that the products become unique and can have the limits in hand crafting utilized as an element of design. The concept is also designed to make the artisans confident in developing products distinct from the existing forms and to explore and utilize the talent hidden within them. The effort put has been successful both in terms of an elegant luminaire and in enhancing the skills of the artisans.

For ease of packaging and prototyping the design is made modular with the minimum number of elements. The product consists of three shades of linearly varying sizes attached on to a tube at the centre. Halogen/LED lamps are used and these are hidden into the gap formed at the junction where the shade gets fixed on to the supporting tube. The individual parts are explained in detail below.

Lamp Shade

The shade is made out of copper sheets by the skilful hands of the Kashmiri artisans. The shade covers up the light and reduces the intensity of the light rays directly on your eyes. The metallic surface reflects the light onto the shades arranged one below the other in a twisted pattern. The copper also helps in acting as a heat sink for the light source.



Support Tube

A copper tube supports the shades and houses the electrical wire inside it. The usage of copper ensures the integrity of the product and maintains the flow in the design.

Holder

A wooden holder made by turning the walnut wood is used for holding the luminaire and as an enclosure for the electrical wire connector.

Considering the raw materials and the workmanship, the product can be made at a cost of 1500 INR.

17. (a) Covering the



With paper (b) making of paper pulp (c) Layering on mould (d) Finishing the rings

17. (a) Covering the mould with paper (b) making of paper pulp (c) Layering on mould (d) Finishing the rings

13 Prototyping

The prototyping involves not just detailing the concepts in an unorganized sector like handicraft industry. The experiences gained during this phase is very much valuable and involves planning the process by considering the unorganized work scheduled, sudden climatic change, socio-political issues and the availability of raw materials. There has been instances where the work was delayed because of the unorganized work practices of artisan and had to search for reliable artisans to complete the work. The strikes in the valley has also delayed the prototyping. The unavailability of light fittings and the high profit margin of shop keepers by hiking the prices of light fittings are another major issue faced.

Smaya

Smaya showcases the collaboration of artisans from two different trades. The dome is made out of papier-mâché and the rings out of copper. The process starts by making a wooden mould as per the given dimensions for layering the paper pulp. The mould is made out of a single block of wood by turning it in a lathe.

The process starts by soaking waste paper in water and draining out the excess water after several days. The pulp is then mixed with starch solution and mixed to form a pulp. This pulp is then rolled



18. (a) Making of model (b) Making of shade (c) MDF model and copper shade (d) Final assembly

and layered over the wooden mould after covering the mould with a thin layer of paper for easy removal. The applied layer of pulp is then smoothened by a piece of stone during different stages of drying till the desired surface finish is acquired. Once dried the mould is removed and the support for the rings are attached at the desired location and pasted with adhesive. The dome is now coated with lacquer and painted with the traditional motifs by the skilful artisans.

The copper rings are made by cutting out strips as per the dimensions and the strips are engraved with the traditional motifs of chinar by the naqashs. After that the ends are joined together by brazing. The rings are then polished and assembled concentrically using brass rods drilled through the peripheries. Figure 17 (a), (b), (c) and (d) showcases the process of making.

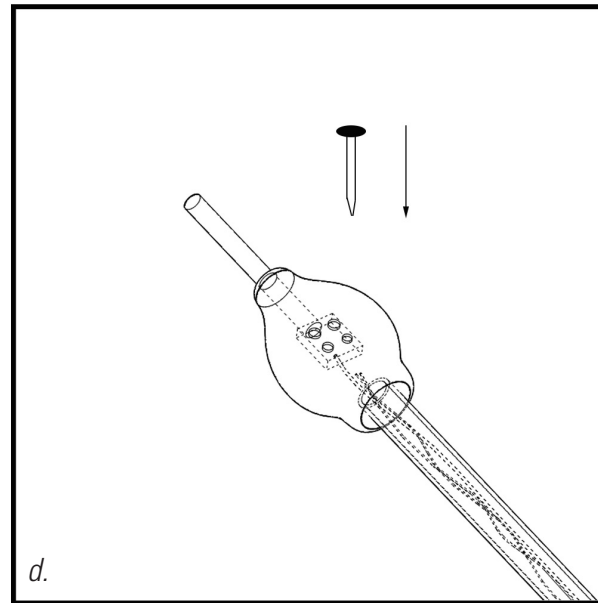
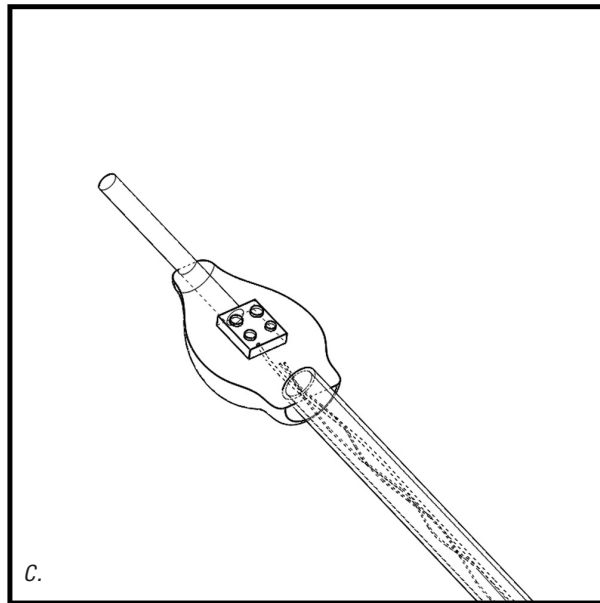
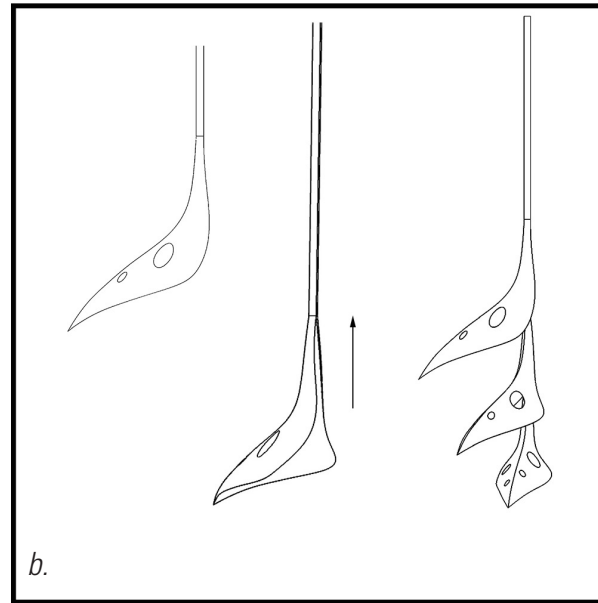
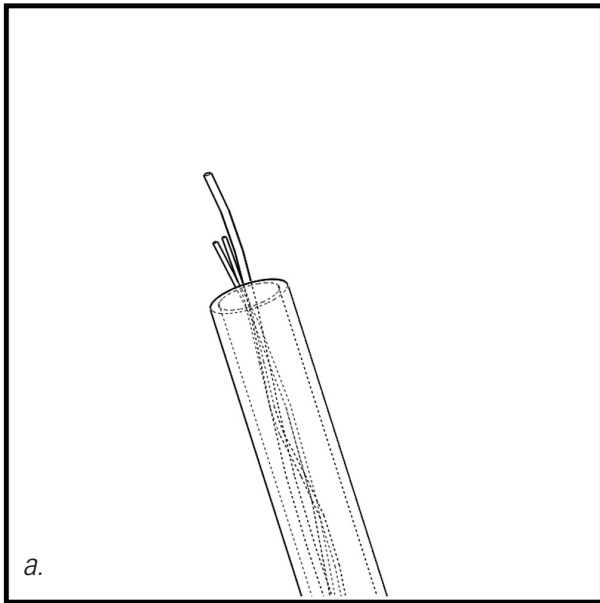
Zuhrah

The design is developed by keeping copper as a medium to give it life. The design is modeled in CAD and the possibility of clustering is studied. The CAD along with 2D drawings are then explained to the artisan and started with the prototyping. The initial stage of prototyping turns out to be unsuccessful. The inability to understand the form from the given materials has resulted in developing a physical model of one of the part in MDF and this was handed over to the artisan. The second attempt was also unsuccessful as the artisan limited his skills by working in the traditional manner of building the whole from individual parts. Again with further discussions and efforts the desired form was developed.

The shades were made by cutting out copper sheets as per the form and then shaped by hammering and chiseling out the excess portions. The different sets of anvils are used for acquiring different

shapes. The completed shades are then attached to the tube with the light sources by sliding in from one end of the tube. There is no requirement for any fasteners as the dimension of the neck of the shade is made to facilitate tight fit joints. The top of the supporting tube is flared out to hang from the holder. The holder is made by turning walnut wood in a lathe and then cut into two pieces and a slot is made to contain the wire connector.

The modular approach in design facilitates the easy assembly and disassembly of the product and the possibility of forming clusters. Figure 18 (a), (b), (c) and (d) showcases the process of making.

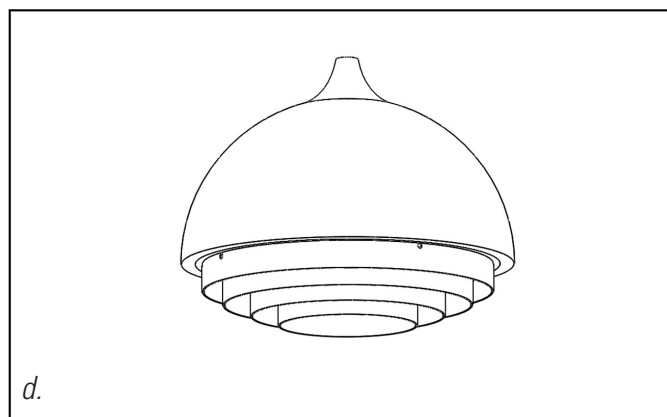
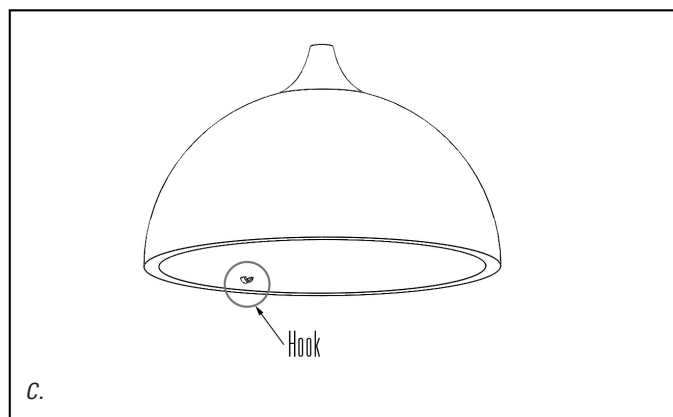
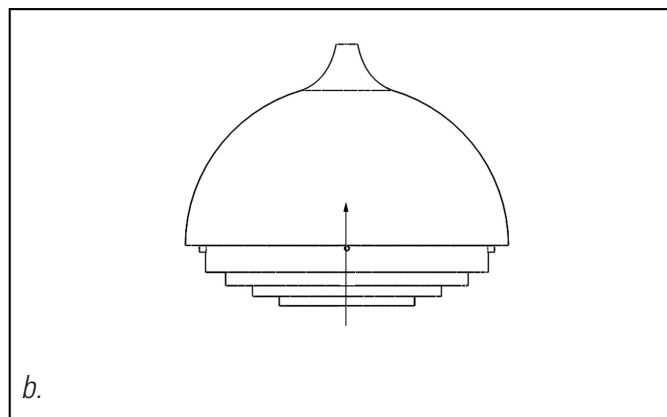
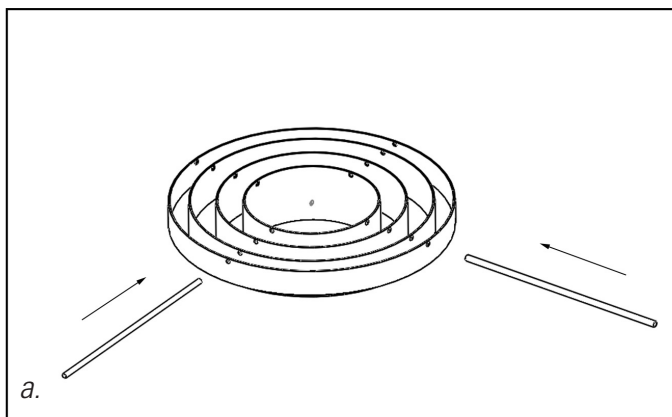


14 Assembly

Zuhrah

The details of assembling the individual parts are shown in the figures 19 (a), (b), (c) and (d).

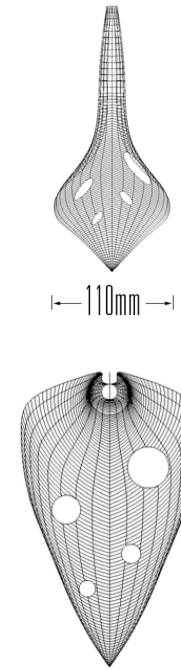
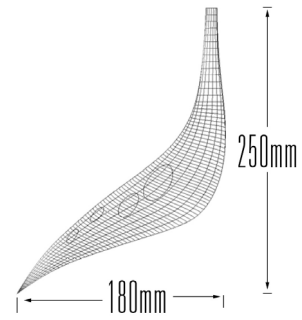
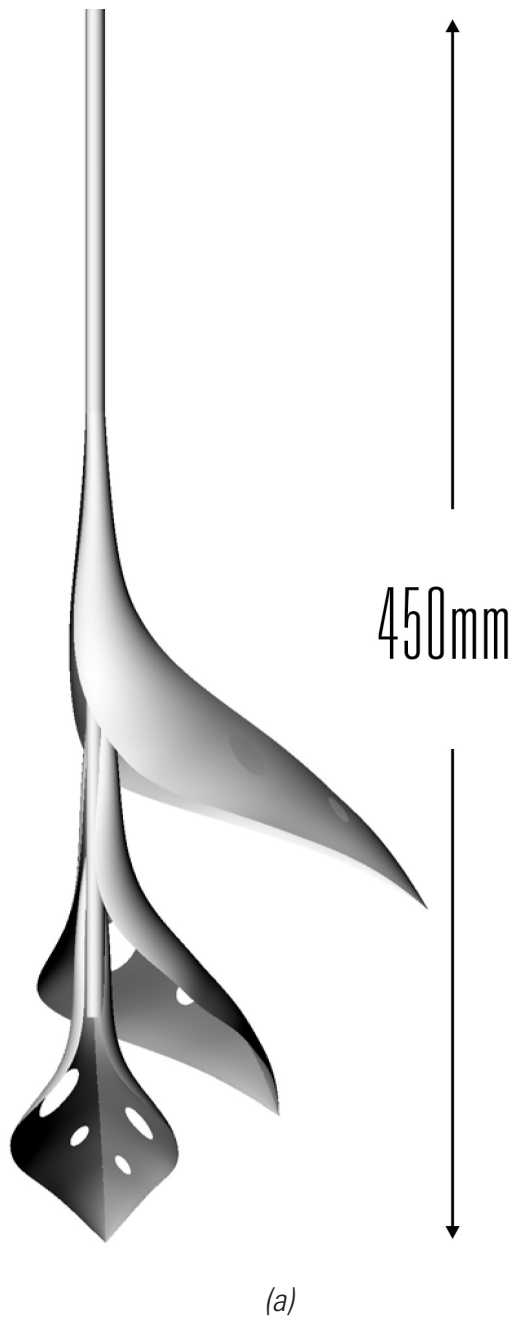
The electrical wires with the halogen lamps are inserted into the tube through the holes drilled on the wall of the tube as shown in figure 19 (a). The lamp shades are inserted from one end of the tube and pushed upward and assembled one after the other as shown in figure 19 (b). The connector attached with the two piece wooden holder is fixed to the wires as in figure 19 (c) and the other half of wooden holder is placed and joined together using screws as in figure 19 (d).



Smaya

The details of assembling the individual parts are shown in the figures 20 (a), (b), (c) and (d).

The copper rings are placed concentrically for assembly after drilling holes and the brass rod is inserted as shown in figure 20 (a). The assembled rings are inserted into the shade as shown in figure 19 (b). Figure 20 (c) shows the hook/support for holding the rings. The brass rods rest on this at four points. The assembled luminaire is shown in figure 20 (d). The lamp source is fixed on to the holder which will be hung on an electrical wire and hidden by the shade.



(b)

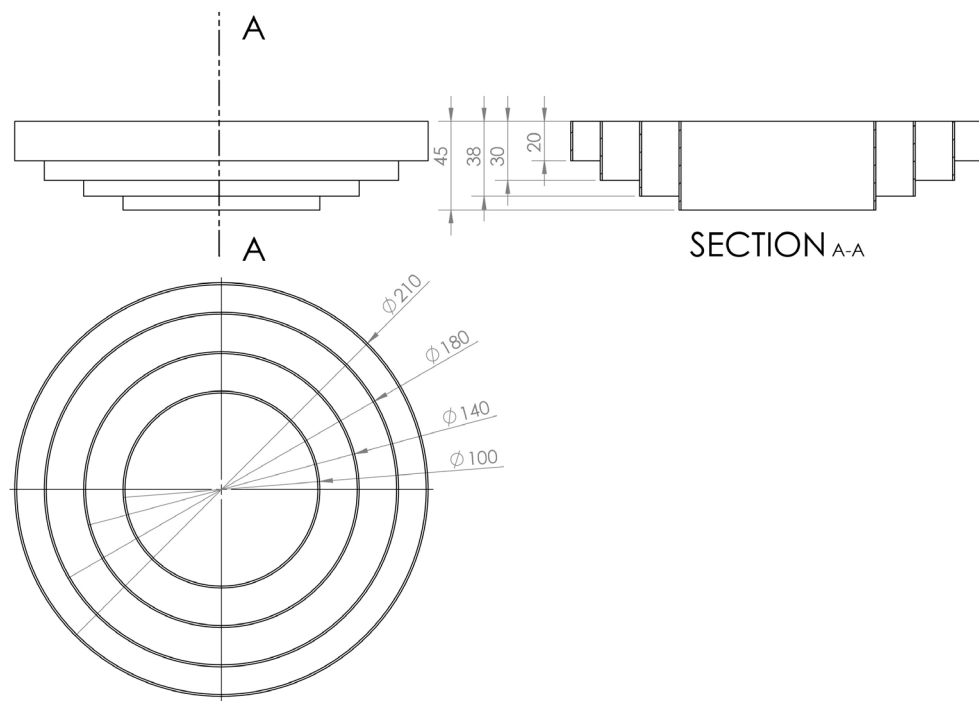
24. (a) Overall dimension of assembly (b) Dimesions of shade

15 Dimensional Details

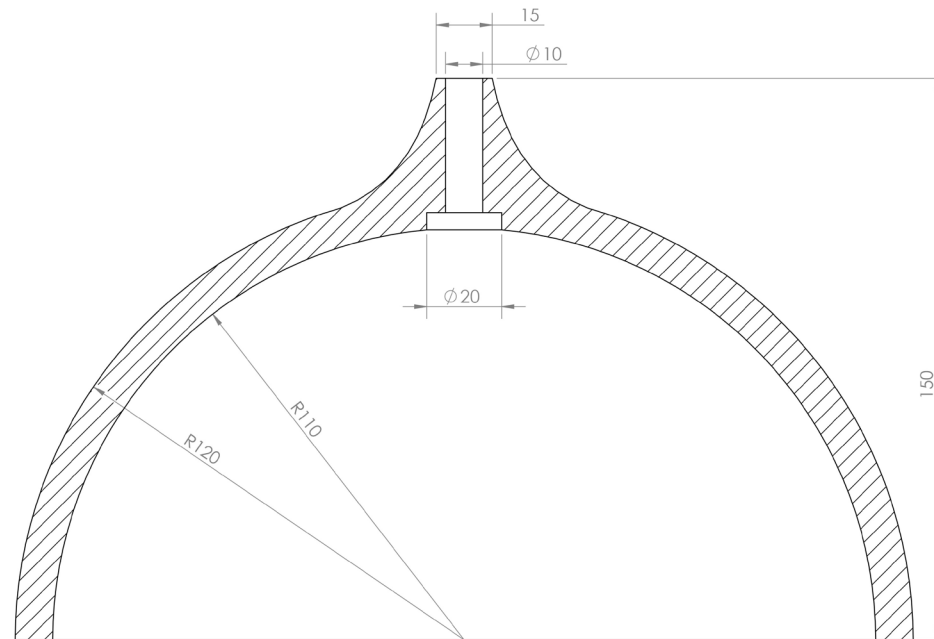
The dimensional details for the designs developed and discussed are provided solely for getting a basic understanding of the size of the product. As a product from handicraft sector, the designer and artisan has the liberty to develop the product regardless of the dimensions mentioned here. As the designer of this products I personally feel the further prototyping of this product should never be the same as this and should evolve into a beautiful new variant of the existing design. The experience of working on these designs has opened up a good number of different variants and I feel the future work should bring out that possibilities.

Zuhrah

The dimensional details of the luminaire *Zuhrah* is shown in the figure 24 (a) and (b) for future references.



(a)



(b)

25. (a) Dimensional details of ring (b) Dimensional details of shade

Smaya

The dimensional details of the luminaire *Smaya* is shown in the figure 25 (a) and (b) for future references.



16 Conclusion

The time spent working with Kashmiri handicraft sector through Craft Development Institute is one of the fortunes I have had in my life as an aspirant designer. It was a platform to meet new people and understand their culture, religion, trade and the beautiful land they live in. The programme also offered me a platform to interact and get guided by experts in the handicraft field. During this time all the fundamental courses I have learned about design from IDC and my own learnings were applied to the fullest to make these beautiful products. The passion for playing with light was always there with me and the freedom and support given at CDI helped me to chase my dream of luminaire design. The importance of helping the community using design as medium which IDC emphasise strongly has also driven me to think in a different perspective which resulted in developing products inline with that cause. The experience working with the handicraft sector has broadened the thought process to design products which are unique. The handicraft sector has opened up a new world infront of me leading to the endless possibilities of designing products which need not be always industrial. The time spend discussing with the artisans about their problems has also added more responsibilities on to my shoulders which I am happily looking forward to take over in the near future. CDI is a great place with nice people to work with and I personally recommend this place for those who are passionate about design and love to be creative.

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Contact

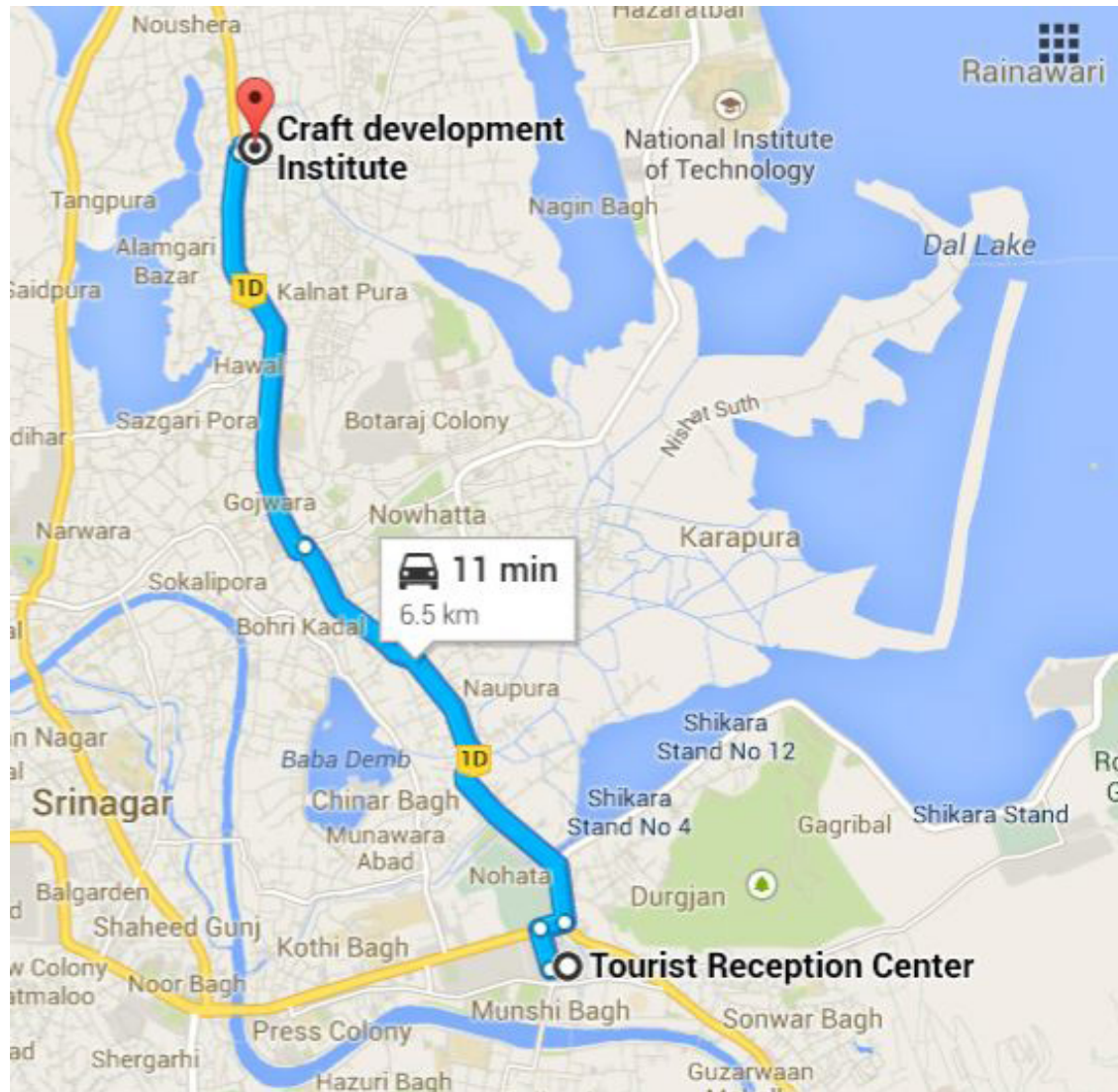
The institute

Craft Development Institute,
Opp. J&K Bank, Nowshera, Srinagar-190010, Kashmir.
Phone: 0194-2411430, 2411772
cdi@cdisgr.org

The people

Mr. Sajid Nazir, Faculty
sajid@cdisgr.org
91-194-24311430 /2411772 ext 106

Mr. Yaseer Ahmad Mir, Faculty
yaseer@cdisgr.org
91-194-24311430 /2411772 ext 109



How to reach CDI

For those who love travelling this is the best place. Start from anywhere. Go via anywhere and finally reach TRC, Tourist reception centre, Srinagar. From there take an auto and pay 100-120 Rs and get down at Mill stop and ask anyone for Mughal darbar bakery and you can find CDI opposite to that. In case you reach there at night do not be scared of the barking dogs. They are very much scared of us and never comes near. If you are worried about reaching Srinagar, try for air or rail. If by rail, catch a train which will reach Jammu early in the morning and then immediately catch a shared taxi right outside the railway station. Try getting in a scorpio or xylo and get a middle or front seat. Charges are around 800 Rs. The journey time can vary from 7 hours to 12 hours depending on the traffic.

