



Summer Internship Report

Happy Hands Foundation, New Delhi

PROJECT 1

IDC, IIT BOMBAY

Summer Internship Report
Happy Hands Foundation, New Delhi

PROJECT 1

IDC, IIT BOMBAY

Divya Bhardwaj

126 250 004 | Visual Communication | M.Des

Batch 2012-2014



LEFT The Delhi Metro—
Inside **RIGHT** Yamuna
Bank Metro station, New
Delhi Source: Author

Acknowledgements

It is not often that one gets to do what one wishes to. My Summer Internship was a great blend of good work and motivation and at the end of this 34-day internship I am most certainly taking back a lot more than what I had hoped for. For all this and more, I Thank **Medhavi Gandhi**, Director—Happy Hands Foundation; a young inspiring bundle of energy who is full of ideas and is highly self driven. I am extremely grateful to her for giving me the opportunity to work with Happy Hands Foundation and The People's Project and for entrusting me enough to give me absolute freedom in my work.

A huge Thanks to **Chandni Aggarwal, Deepti Gupta, Sarina Grewal, Shreya Gupta and Ekta Kapoor** for being a great team to work with and being there through sun, heat, rains and no rains.

Humbling Thanks to DMRC and the Delhi Metros without which travelling everyday would have been much worse and tiresome.

Last but definitely not the least Thanks to Mother Dairy for the *Tadka Chaas*, to keep the heat away and Nescafe for instant coffee without which doing anything seems next to impossible.

Content

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| About Happy Hands Foundation | 2 |
| About The People's Project | 4 |
| The HHF Team | 5 |
| My Role as a Visual Communication Designer | 6 |
| What I did for 34 Days | 7 |
| Duration 1 Warm up! | 9 |
| Google Service Week | 10 |
| Visiting a Repoussé Workshop | 13 |
| Duration 2 Let's Play! | 15 |
| D-Code Green–The Delhi Word Hunt | 16 |
| Duration 3 Finding Ways! | 21 |
| The Youth ACT Fellowship | 22 |
| Duration 4 Game On! | 25 |
| Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi | 26 |
| Challenges Faced | 37 |
| My Learning | 38 |
| Completion Certificate | 41 |

Introduction

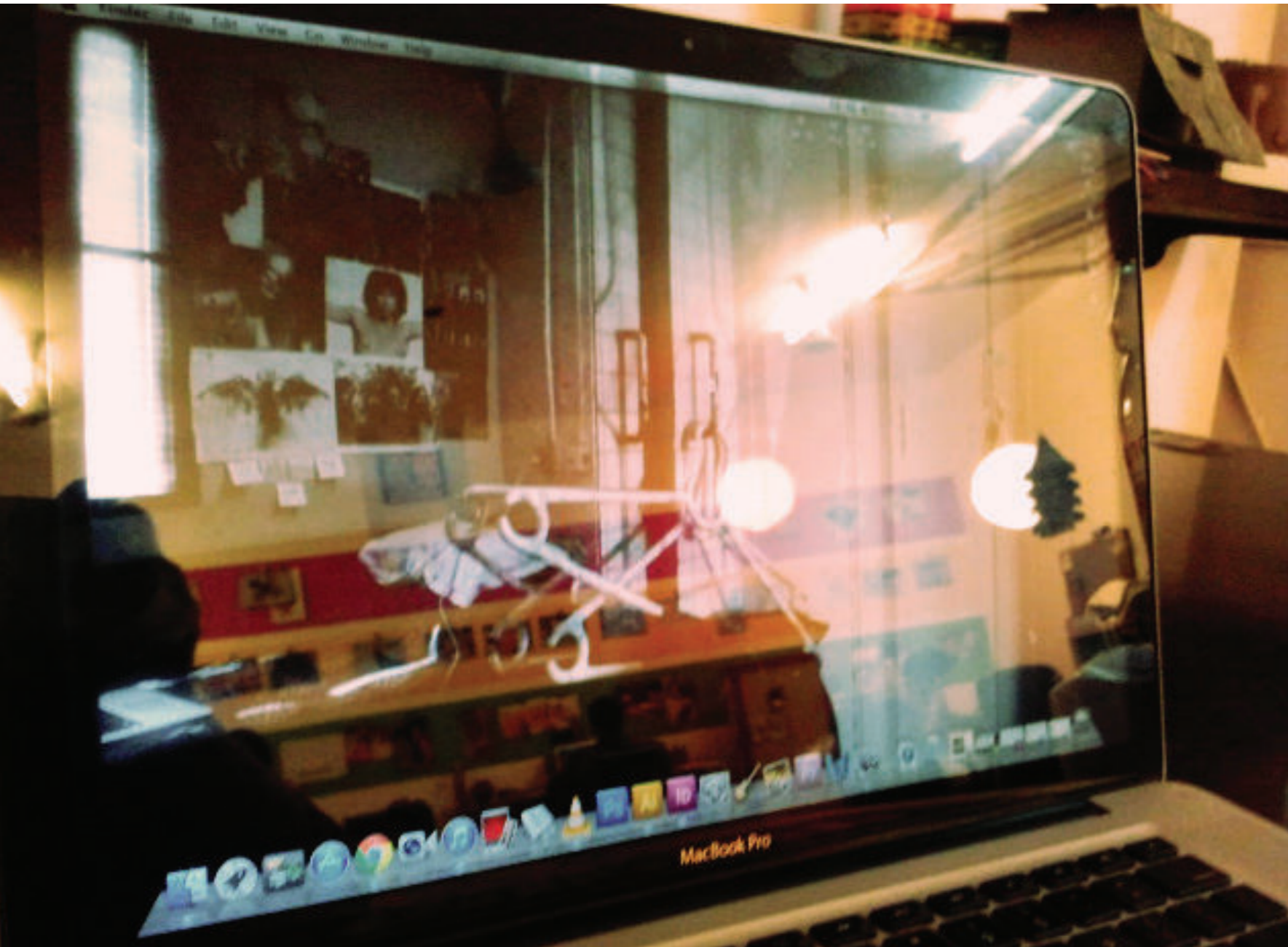
AIM OF THE INTERNSHIP

The stated purpose of a summer internship by IDC was to expose oneself to different design firms in rural and urban sections of the society and to understand how design can intervene to bring in constructive changes as per the socioeconomic and cultural context.

As a Visual Communication student I wanted to work with an organization that is driven to work for the society and uses design intervention to not merely have commercial benefits but to change lives and make a positive social impact.

Working as a Designer in the past, I have often been exposed to several Indian Crafts and Folk Arts and have had the privilege of working with them, even though on small projects. Ever since I have been really keen on learning more about them. I wanted to use this Internship as a chance to explore this possibility as well.

Happy Hands Foundation and **The People's Project** married these two interests and requirements marvellously along with fulfilling the criteria mentioned by IDC.



About Happy Hands Foundation

Each year, almost 12% of our artists abandon the craft in search of better livelihood opportunities. This leaves a craft to be abandoned, endangered, and in process, we lose the identity of a community.

Happy Hands Foundation (HHF) is a registered non-profit, working towards preserving the traditional crafts of India, while empowering artisans as entrepreneurs. *The aim is to create sustainable development opportunities for artisans and craftsmen and to allow them to live a life of dignity, not charity.*¹

Officially established in early 2009, they aim at making craft clusters self-empowered and through this sustainable approach towards the sector they have helped impact around 600 artist families in the last four years, spread across 12 states of India.

They choose to work with artists directly, through Self Help Groups (SHGs), and often partner with rural development organizations as well. *"We are different because more than selling and marketing, we focus on education the artisans. A lot of artisans didn't want their kin to take up*

the art because of the economic hardships in the sector, and that is the attitude we wanted to change." says Medhavi Gandhi, Director – HHF.²

They work with over 30 arts and crafts including Block Printing—Rajasthan; *Jadupatua*—West Bengal; Coir—Orissa; *Sanjhi*—Uttar Pradesh; *Madhubani*—Bihar; *Kophi*—Nagaland; *Bastar*—Chattisgarh; Lacquer Toys—Andhra Pradesh; *Chittara*—Karnataka; *Patachitra*—Orissa; *Ajrak*—Gujarat; *Gond*—Madhya Pradesh; *Warli*—Maharashtra; *Cheriyal*—Andhra Pradesh; among others.

Post training and creatively equipping various clusters, Happy Hands Foundation helps them by giving them marketing inputs, required contacts and grants to build access to Markets, Buyers or Museums or informing them about various stalls and membership opportunities.

Happy Hands Foundation works under different programs dedicated to Education, Art and Craft Revival and Livelihood Training Projects.



TOP Logo of Happy Hands Foundation

REFERENCES

1 *Femina*, May 2012—Handful of Happiness, Purabi Shridhar

2 *Femina*, May 2012—Handful of Happiness, Purabi Shridhar



EDUCATION

They believe in disseminating the knowledge about the crafts and there is no better way to do so but by focusing on students and young adults.

Workshops like **Art Pitara** aim at exposing students to different art forms and making them work with artisans. This helps the students appreciate these arts and crafts and also spread awareness about them.

Programs like **The Youth ACT Fellowships** or **Green Room Fellowships** focus on the youth by giving them an opportunity to work with various craft communities in a rural area and help towards strengthening the community through innovative suggestions, thus, helping the communities sustain.

TOP LEFT Art Pitara Session at Happy Hands Foundation's Studio. Source: HHF Archives

TOP RIGHT Training women and giving them craft related education to help them sustain. Source: HHF Archives

ART & CRAFT REVIVAL

Happy Hands Foundation works at identifying craft clusters, further training them in the respective skill, building creative potential and encouraging them as sustaining entrepreneurial ventures. Through games, storytelling and design workshops they help artists develop creatively and hone their ability to make products for a suitable market.

LIVELIHOOD TRAINING

Along with Cluster developments, they offer training and craft education related services to other organizations, NGOs. A few Success Stories are—**Lokmitra** – Trained women in bead-work to create accessories;

Rajahmundry – Livelihood Training was provided for Sex Workers at the *Nari Saksham* Unit, *Rajahmundry* funded by Care India to learn the craft of crochet.

Vidya – 150 women were mobilized, training was imparted in block printing, jewellery making and accessories.

About The People's Project

The People's Project Studio is an initiative of the Happy Hands Foundation where they constantly challenge routine ways and designs. They experiment by merging design inputs with traditional/ folk art and explore various creative routes including products, graphics or collaborative or social events.

The Studio believes in collective thinking and thus, often joins hands with people to poke, probe, think and create something extraordinary out of the ordinary. Some of the successful campaigns that The People's Project has conducted are **Trash Bash** (an anti-litter campaign) and **Switch OFF** (in support of the Earth Hour).

However, for its own endurance, Happy Hands Foundation works on Gift packages for personal occasions and corporates, conference kits and mementos. It also provides Design Consultancy in Interiors, Merchandize, Branding, Packaging, Artwork/Graphics, Publications, Installations, etc.



THE PEOPLE'S PROJECT

TOP Logo of The People's Project

LEFT Photographs from Trash Bash—The Anti-Litter Campaign at Hauz Khas Monument, New Delhi. Source: HHF Archives

The HHF Team

"If kitsch can be made cool, Crafts can be made way cooler..."

—MEDHAVI GANDHI



Medhavi Gandhi
DIRECTOR

Small Packet, Hyperactive!

A self-driven young woman who is focused on making an impact and uplifting the craftsmen and artisans of India. Leaving behind the conventional ways of living, *Medhavi Gandhi* decided to act upon her belief in traditional and folk art and work towards their preservation, making her one of the youngest and more successful entrepreneurs. HHF was recognized as one of the top 100 social change-makers in 2009 by the FYSE Asia Pacific.



Deepti Gupta
MANAGER (KARTA-DHARTA)

Never-Say-No-Workaholic

She was the only person anyone could turn to for any kind of help or advice. Also extremely self-driven, Deepti was always happy to overwork herself to make sure everything is managed smoothly.



Chandni Aggarwal
DESIGNER (SPACE)

The Enthusiastic One

With a trademarked sing-song way of talking, no one could miss the extremely enthusiastic Chandni, who would almost with slight pride tell her name was kept because her parents loved Bollywood. An ex-employee from Lotus Design, she was well experienced in space design and was organized, exhibiting a great sense of responsibility.



Shreya Gupta
DESIGNER (TEXTILE)

The Critical Eye

Although she was a fresh graduate, Shreya, was honest and untouched with the rights and wrongs of the industry. She was the one who would question and critically view things. One could always expect an honest feedback from her.



Sarina Grewal & Ekta Kapoor
DESIGN VOLUNTEERS

Kar-ke dikhayenge, haan bhai haan!

It is always refreshing to meet young motivated people who choose to work and learn at every opportunity available. Both Sarina and Ekta were hardworking volunteers who enjoyed art and design and were enthusiastic about doing something new.

My Role

AS A VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGNER

Although there were people from the design background, there wasn't anyone who worked with Graphic Design or Visual Communication. Being the only Visual Communication designer in the studio, there was always more to do and little time.

Being a small studio and a small team, everyone had their hands full. *Medhavi*, the Director, was mostly busy with meetings and other commitments and therefore, more than once I had to take up the lead and work on a project entirely, as getting a proper brief or guidelines was difficult. Since I did not have a creative head, it was a further more important for me to take up the responsibility and make more informed decisions.

From Constructing a Brief, Sourcing and structuring data to executing the design and printing and implementing it, I handled most projects from conception to execution.



TOP A photograph of the Happy Hands Foundation Studio in Saidulajab, New Delhi. *Source: Author*

What I did for 34 Days





TOP Minds at work at Happy Hands Foundation Studio in Saidulajab, New Delhi. *Source: Author*



Duration 1 Warm up!

20th May – 25th May

NO. OF WORKING DAYS – 6

The first week at Internship was quite overwhelming as I was introduced to several simultaneously running projects. I was initially informed that I might have to intervene in almost all of them during my course on internship. There were projects in packaging design and Visual Merchandising; Space Design and Craft installations; Conceptualizing Products and design; Promotional graphics and other collaterals for upcoming events, fellowships and workshops; Planning new workshops and events; re-designing existing games; DIY kits... and the list goes on.

It is not hard to get lost with so much activity around.

Just when I was desperate to find a little orientation, I was allotted the first small project – Planning a Proposal for the **Google Service Week**.



Google Service Week

A PROPOSAL PRESENTATION

In order to promote social service amongst it's employees, Google Delhi was celebrating the Service Week where they planned to work with different NGOs for 7 days.

We were required to ideate possible events or activities we can propose to Google keeping in mind the ideology of work Happy Hands Foundation and the work it does.



We chose to make three main proposals –

TRASH BASH

An initiative by The People's Project to discourage littering and promote a cleaner environment. With each episode, the Event targets a monument to be cleaned up by the citizens. For The Google episode we went on a quick location recce-cum-Dilli-darshan. From various possible

monuments we narrowed down to two final proposed locations – the India Gate Grounds and Red Fort.

The Plan of Action included a Cleaning drive, arranging and classifying the trash, making a 2D installation using the collected trash and exhibiting it at the monument for the day, followed by spreading awareness about the same through digital and social media i.e. photographs and viral videos.

An additional 'fun' idea to make this Trash Bash special and more impactful was to create Big 'I-SEE-YOU' Masks re-using available material. Volunteers could wear these masks and stare at people as they litter in order to discourage the act.

LEARN & GIVE

The best way to preserve a craft or Art is to learn it. This proposed activity aimed at teaching the volunteers a traditional / folk art or craft and apply it to make small products that could be donated to the needy.

The proposed arts and crafts were –

- » Making feeder bowls from **Pottery** for the animals and birds providing some relief in the Mid-May heat



RIGHT Slides from the proposal presentation made to Google for their service week.

- » **Toy Making with Papermache** which reuses waste paper and further painting them in **Madhubani style**. These could be donated to the underprivileged kids who cannot afford to buy toys.
- » **Paper Lanterns** in **Sanjhi Art** could be a constructive activity as one learns the intricate paper craft called Sanjhi and also re-use paper wasted in offices to create beautiful light fixtures.
- » **Make and Gift a Book** aimed at donating hand painted/ illustrated Hindi *Varnmala* (alphabets) books to kids who cannot afford them. We also proposed that these could be done in an easy to learn folk art style such as **Warli or Gond**. This was proposed as a 2-day workshop

where volunteers could illustrate and bind these small books for a good cause.

TEACH THEM

Even though there are schools available in the rural areas, it is unfortunate that they do not have good teachers to make use of these facilities provided. Teach them was a proposal for a long-term association with Google, where volunteers could interact with young students in different rural areas and impart awareness about issues such as importance of Hygiene and Sanitation or Energy and Water Conservation through workshops and sessions.

Due to shortage of time and this being their first ever attempt at collective social service, Google chose to take a rather easy way out and decided to paint coasters in *Madhubani* and *Warli* styles for a fund-raiser that could help HHF in future endeavour's.



EXTREME LEFT *Sanjhi* Paper Craft practiced in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

LEFT *Madhubani* Art found only in *Madhubani* District, Bihar.

Visiting a Repoussé Workshop

SEELAMPUR, NEW DELHI



TOP Detail of an engraved peacock motif; its outspread plumage forming the central motif on the lid of the container. Source: *Handmade in India*, ADITI RANJAN & M P RANJAN

REFERENCES

1 ADITI RANJAN & M P RANJAN *Handmade in India* Page 66 | First published in India in 2005 by National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad; Council of Handicraft Development; Corporations (COHANDS), New Delhi; Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), New Delhi in association with Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd.

Happy Hands Foundation is working on several large-scale installations for the new Dilli Haat that is being built in the Janakpuri area of Delhi. They have proposed to incorporate various traditional arts and crafts to assemble these theme-based installations. During the first week, I got the opportunity to visit a Repoussé Artist's workshop in Seelampur to source samples of his work and understand the nuances of the art along with the possible production cost of one such installation.

My colleague, *Chandni*, and I visited **Mr. Yusuf's** Workshop, who is a highly skilled and renowned Repoussé artisan. Mr. Yusuf along with his family has been working with the Repoussé art for generations and has been featured and recognized for his work.

Repoussé is a highly specialized and skill-based art used to create exquisitely ornate products such as a *Lota* (ritual vessel), *Ghada* (pot used for water/decoration), *Hookah*, *Surahi* (Narrow necked pot), Plates and glasses, Bowls or Decorative wall hangings.

REPOUSSÉ PROCESS

Repoussé is done on sheet metal, mostly brass and copper. "Metal sheets are cut and beaten to create the form of the desired object. The base and the body of the vessel are made separately and then soldered together.

The soldered joints are beaten with a hammer and the surface is scraped. The object is frequently heated in the furnace to keep the metal soft; it is also repeatedly beaten with a *mogri*, wooden hammer, in order to remove all the dents on the surface. A recipe of lac, *buroza* (a gum made from rice), powdered brick and mustard oil is made and heated until a viscous solution is obtained. This thick paste is poured into the metal object and allowed to solidify for 5 to 6 hours. The lac ensures that the utensil does not get punctured during the engraving process when it receives multiple blows from the chisels and hammers employed to create patterns on the object's surface. After the *naqqashi* is completed, the engraved object is heated so that the lac may be poured out of the utensil. The left-over lac stuck at the edges of the utensil is burnt in the furnace and the engraved utensil is then beaten from within to remove all dents. Finally, the utensil is burnished with a buffing machine." ¹

OUR EXPERIENCE

At the workshop we saw a set of young artisans working and Mr. Yusuf was kind enough to explain the process and show us several samples of his work. While he discussed the possible way of implementing the ideas for the installation and the likely cost of production, he could not stop himself from discussing the problems he faces as one of the few

surviving Repoussé artists in Delhi. He mentioned how the amount given to the young practitioner of his craft is rather less than a bare minimum required to survive in times today. He also seemed disheartened at the thought that his coming generations might choose to move away from the family practice of continuing this traditional art.

Although his labour costs along with the raw material costs could not fit in to the sanctioned budget for the installation, visiting an old practitioner of an art left a certain impact on me. It is rare to find people who so selflessly offer themselves to keeping a tradition alive. *Yusufji* is a passionate and inspiring man who wishes to keep promoting his art and is persistently working towards it. The experience of meeting him and visiting his humble workshop was stimulating in more than one way.



LEFT A brass container embellished with repoussé and engraving.
Source: *Handmade in India*, ADITI RANJAN & M P RANJAN

RIGHT An engraved Silver Platter Source: *Handmade in India*, ADITI RANJAN & M P RANJAN

Duration 2 Let's Play!

27th May – 7th June

NO. OF WORKING DAYS – 11

It was by the second week I found my ground in the studio and started to blend in with the team.

It was over one of our lunches when we together as a team and a part of **The People's Project** and **Happy Hands Foundation**, started to brainstorm on a possible activity we could do on the then forthcoming *World Environment Day* – the 5th of June. Something that started as a light conversation seemed like a bright idea to promote our NGO as well as spread awareness about the crafts.

Post a longer and a more extensive brainstorming session, a small team of us, Medhavi, Chandni and I, decided to play a game :) ...



D-Code Green-The Delhi Word Hunt

A SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERIMENT

While bouncing ideas at each other of a possible activity we could do on the World Environment Day, we thought of playing word hunt with Delhi through Social Media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Planned for five days from 5th to 9th June, we narrowed down on five phrases or messages related to the environment. The plan was to update a new incomplete phrase each day with a missing word or two. Alphabets from these missing word/s would be spread around various popular locations in Delhi duly announced a prior day.

Being an initiative by Happy Hands Foundation(HHF) these could not just be ordinary alphabets. Each letter was on an A2 size panel and proudly sported a traditional Art or Craft of India. The Panel gave brief information about the respective art/craft along with the instruction of clicking and sharing the alphabet and a QR-Code link to Happy Hand Foundation's Facebook page.

It was then up to the *Dilliwalas* to fill in the blanks and complete the phrase by finding these alphabets, clicking them and sharing them on any social media platform i.e. HHF Facebook Page, #tag on Twitter or Instagram. By the end of the day we would 'Share' a completed environment related message crediting the contributors.

Therefore, every day the people would help us build, share and spread a new eco-friendly message, making more people aware of the World Environment Day and reminding them of their duty toward the environment.

With this event we chose to bank upon a routine lifestyle activity for most people these days of clicking and sharing images on different social media platforms.

DEFINING ROLES

All excited with a new and innovation event idea, we further went on to brand the event and narrowed down to call it **D-Code Green 2013 – The Delhi Word Hunt.**

The responsibility of handling the event was shared by *Chandni* and I, where she took on the role of calling in Volunteers and fixing the costs with printers and getting permissions while I took on the charge for every visual design work including **Branding** the event, Building the **Identity** for it, **promotional graphics** and **information graphics** and the **A2 Alphabet Panels.**



TOP Logo designed for the event D-Code Green, The Delhi Word Hunt 2013

CENTRE Volunteers helping put up panels around Hauz Khas Village on day one.
Source: HHF Archives

BOTTOM A person noticed the panel and is clicking the alphabet to share online.
Source: HHF Archives

TOP Facebook Cover Photo graphic to upload the phrase of the day; Dimensions 851px by 315px

EXTREME RIGHT The Key to D-Code-Infographic to explain the process of playing the Word Hunt

RIGHT E-mailer to promote the event



CHOSEN QUOTES

DAY#1
Never refuse to **REUSE**

DAY#2
THINK, before you **PRINT**

DAY#3
May the **FOREST** be with you

DAY#4
COOL kids help a warm **PLANET**

DAY#5
EACH DROP boosts the ocean





FIRST DRAFT

This draft was discarded as the instructions weren't as highlighted and the information about the craft was off the eye-level, considering these boards are supposed to be put up at a slightly higher height to be easily noticeable.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRADITIONAL ART/ CRAFT



HEADER WITH THE NAME AND EVENT DETAILS

FINAL DRAFT

INSTRUCTIONS

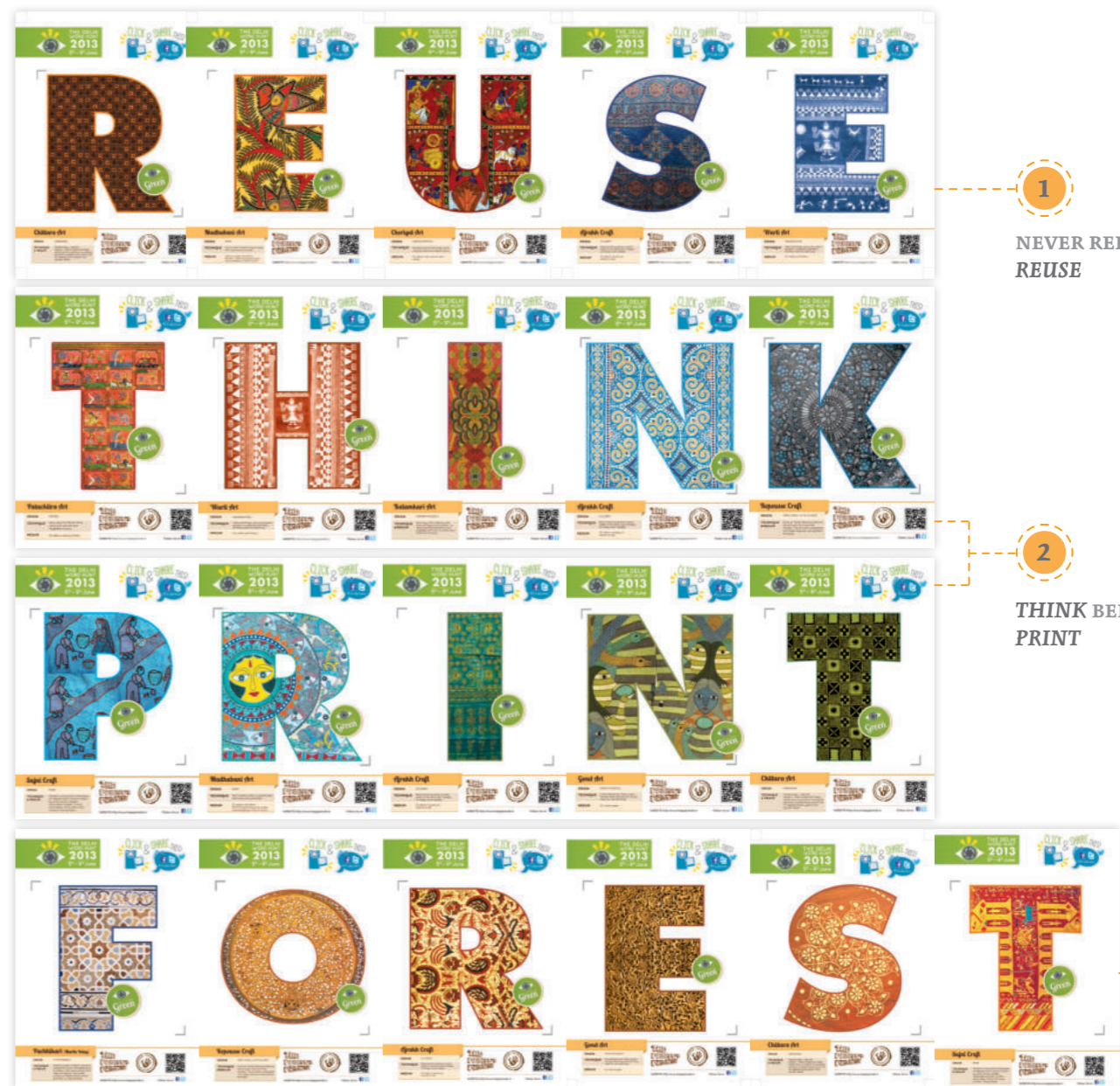
ALPHABET SPORTING A TRADITIONAL ART/ CRAFT

QR CODE LINK TO HHF'S FACEBOOK PAGE

EXTREME LEFT First Draft of the A2 Alphabet Panels.

LEFT The Final a2 Alphabet panel template printed on a vinyl and put up reusing old waste packaging material

RIGHT Artworks for the Alphabets of the missing words, for the first three days. These were to be spread across Delhi for the people to Spot and Share.



1

NEVER REFUSE TO REUSE

2

THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT

3

MAY THE FOREST BE WITH YOU

INFERENCE AND LEARNING

From building on an idea to fabricating the A2 Vinyl boards and putting them up, D-Code Green was a ride with several highs and lows. With in a short period of 11 days we conceptualized, designed and executed an event. Although we tried to promote it as much as possible, due to limited social reach of HHF and short period of time the event did not score well. Since this was a self-initiated event with no sponsors attached and promoting the event through any other print or electronic media would peak the investments a lot higher, we had to call it off mid way.

We saw the faults and loopholes in managing an event such as this. With an extended time invested in promoting and holding the event, joining hands with a possible corporate or another NGO and more widespread ways of promotion, we could have extended the reach of the event. These points can be worked upon later and the event could be re-implemented with required changes made.

Even though the event wasn't a success, it was a great learning experience for me as I worked with both digital and print formats. I also learnt a great deal about the do's and don't of using social media as a brand building and marketing platform.



TOP Team at work at Happy Hands Foundation's Studio; Reusing material to assemble boards to put up the printed A2 Alphabet panels.

Duration 3 Finding Ways! 8th June - 12th June

NO. OF WORKING DAYS - 4

Just while the buzz of running around, crazy working hours and deadlines for D-Code Green were wearing off, I was asked to take on the task of making an **Orientation Kit for The Youth ACT Fellowship** with an extremely tight deadline. The fellowship was planned to commence on 13th June and this year's fellowship was to focus on the **Coir Craft** in **Satasankha, District-Puri, Orissa**. Yet again the time was short and there weren't any proper guidelines or a structured brief given.

Therefore, I had to formulate a brief keeping in mind the purpose and possible requirement of an orientation kit for a fellowship of this nature.



The Youth ACT Fellowship

ORIENTATION KIT

The Youth Arts, Community and Transformation Fellowship aims to connect the youth with the existing craft traditions of India, where they build a shared understanding, become a part of the process of creation and inspire change in the lives of the artists.

This collaborative programme provides selected fellows the opportunity to travel to craft clusters, be a part of the artists' daily lives and assist capacity building across disciplines.

This year there were five fellows who were chosen to visit and live in a remote village in Orissa for the first time and work with **Coir Craft**.

FORMULATING THE BRIEF

To frame the brief I brainstormed on the necessary information one would need before heading to a new place and interacting with a new set of people. It seemed important for the Orientation kit to give information

- >> About the aim of the fellowship;
- >> The Location;
- >> The Craft and the Craft Cluster;
- >> Profiles and Contact Information of other fellows;
- >> Contact information of their coordinators and
- >> A timeline for the whole fellowship.

DESIGNING THE INFORMATION STRUCTURE, FORMAT & LAYOUT

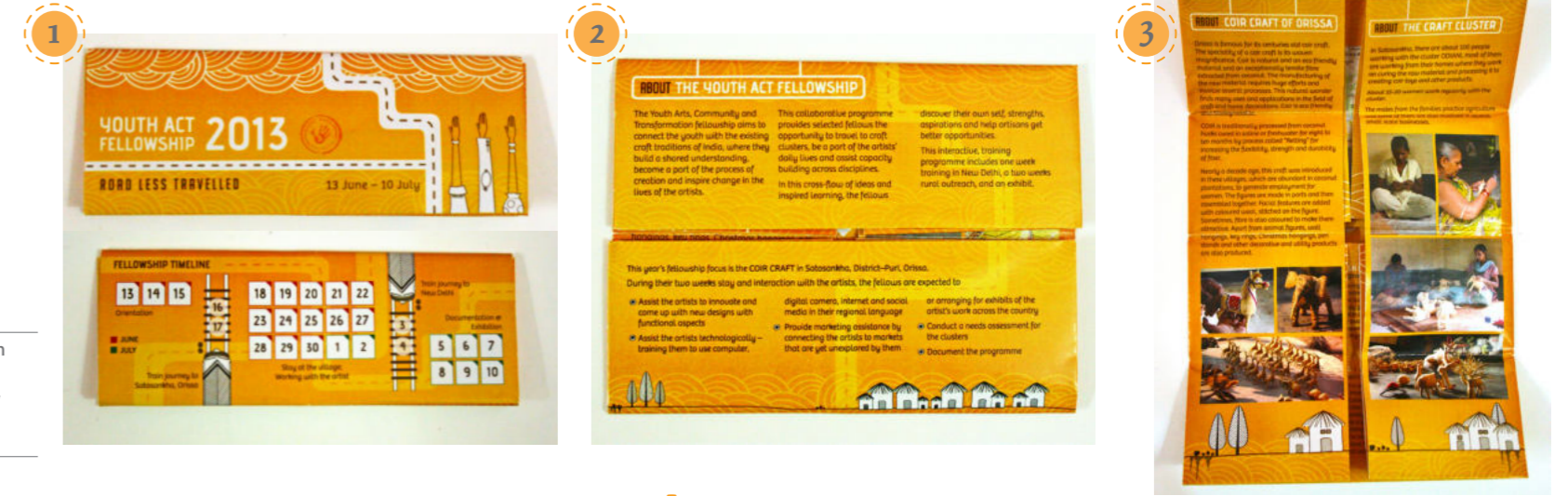
It was also important to keep the Kit concise, convenient and cost effective. Therefore, we decided to make it a single page collapsible information guide. It was also decided that this guide should double as a souvenir from the fellowship, which is why we chose to give a Certified Happy Hands Fellow Poster on the reverse side of the information guide. This was a proposed system for the fellowships henceforth, where the poster every year is contextual and represents the region and the craft.

Along with the information guide it was proposed to personalize the kits with an Identity card for each fellow and assemble the kit with a *Jadupatua* Diary, a pen and a Coir Doll Key-ring.

After sourcing the data, I worked on an easily comprehensible flow for the information.



LEFT Coir Toys in the process of being made at Orissa; Source: D'Source. <http://www.dsource.in>



RIGHT The Information guide that opens up to reveal a certified Happy Hands Fellow Poster.

1 TOP Front of the information guide.
 BOTTOM Back of the information guide with the timeline of the fellowship

2 OPEN THE FIRST FOLD About the Youth ACT Fellowship-Aim and expectations.

3 OPEN THE SECOND FOLD About the Craft and the Craft Cluster.

4 OPEN THE THIRD FOLD About the Cluster Location and About the Fellows

5&6 OPEN THE FOURTH FOLD A Happy Hands Fellow Poster exhibiting the craft and the region the fellowship took place in.



CONSTRAINS AND CHALLENGES

- » I had to adopt and continue with the predefined visual language for Youth ACT Fellowship 2013.
- » Since Happy Hands Foundation was funding the travel and living expenses of the fellows we had a budget constrain for the kit. Therefore, we tried to keep the printing costs at a minimum and used things available in the studio.
- » I was a one-man army for the project. From Ideation to sourcing and structuring information, designing, printing, execution and assembling the kit was managed by me.
- » After printing the information guide I got to see the problems in the grid. While folding a lot of folds we on text where it would hinder reading. Not considering a small margin for folding also creating some problems while folding the prints into the compact size. These issues could have been avoided if I even had a day more to work on it, however, being an urgent project I couldn't rectify these issues.



TOP RIGHT The poster on the reverse of the information guide.

TOP LEFT Assembling customized Orientation Kits for the fellows. *Source: Author*

This game is a rather nostalgic one; ... (it) seems like a fallen soldier in the battle of survival against technology...



Duration 4 Game On!

13th June – 24th June

NO. OF WORKING DAYS – 9

During my first week at Happy Hands Foundation, the one mentioned project that got me excited was redesigning the card games they sell under The People's Project. However, due to the other ongoing projects it was difficult to begin work on them. Post the completion of the *Youth ACT fellowship Orientation Kit*, I found an open window and willingly chose to work on one of the games they produce.

This game is a rather nostalgic one; it is a kind that you feel attached to, since it had been a part of every Indian's childhood for generations and seems like a fallen soldier in the battle of survival against technology – it is **drum rolls please** **Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi**.

Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi

THE CARD GAME

A game that we grew up with; a game that required nothing but torn sheets of paper and a pen; a game that came with no baggage; **Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi** became almost extinct for it was probably too basic for a generation for whom complexity and technology seem a little more green a pasture. It almost seemed like it was my duty to help this game make a comeback with a possible makeover.

BRIEF GIVEN

The old marketed **Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi** was a card game with the exact same old rules with an addition of 4 Praja cards to increase the number of players, to reduce the probability of spotting the *Chor* (thief).

The People's Project wanted to produce a new edition of **Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi** with 'better looking' illustrations. This time they wanted to make the cards in the traditional Miniature Painting style. However, this wasn't a rigid brief as they were open to more ideas and improvisations.

'BETTER LOOKING' ILLUSTRATIONS ≠ RE-DESIGNING

From the very moment I took on the project of redesigning the game I knew just making new illustrations will not be enough. For the audience today, the traditional way of playing Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi is a

A game that we grew up with; a game that required nothing but torn sheets of paper and a pen... Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi became almost extinct for it was probably too basic for a generation for whom complexity and technology seem a little more green a pasture.

rather unexciting and limiting. The game screamed for a new strategy and little more density.

THE OLD GAMEPLAY

The original way of playing **Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi** Cards, much like the traditional way, was –

- » The Cards are shuffled and distributed.
- » The Player who get the *Raja* (the King) card announces himself and gets maximum points.
- » The Raja then commands his *Mantri* (the Minister) to reveal himself.
- » The Mantri then announces himself. He is then supposed to spot the *Chor* (the Thief) out of the remaining players by 'reading their faces', i.e. 4 *Praja* Players (The public) and 1 *Chor*.



- » If the *Mantri* successfully spots the *Chor*, he gets his well deserved second highest points and the *Chor* gets nothing. The *Praja* gets the second lowest points. However, if the *Mantri* fails to spot the *Chor*, then the *Mantri* and the *Raja* get no points and the *Chor* gets the cumulative points of the two.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS

At the studio, after a lot of pestering, we played the original game to identify possible problems.

- » The game was too basic and spotting the Thief was purely based on guessing.
- » Apart from the Minister, no one really has anything to do.
- » While playing the cards, players who got the Praja card more than once became a bit disinterested in the game as there wasn't much incentive for them in terms of the points and neither were they supposed to do anything.
- » The *Chor*, although the infamous one, had nothing much to do.

TOP The earlier Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi cards; Source: Sanchita Jain's Website <http://sanchitajain.com/The-PEOPLE-S-PROJECT>

I like games that are simple. Not games that are trivial, but also not games that require you to invest a week or to relearn something. I like games that you can just pick up, sit down in front of, and get going.

— SID MEIER



LEFT My working table in the studio; Ideating about the game strategy.
Source: Author

RESEARCH AND CONCEPTUALIZATION

I started looking through various gameplays eventually narrowing down to study the rules and gameplay of Scotland Yard, Who am I? and Monopoly in detail.

Could it be a Board Game?!

The initial concept was to convert the game into a card + a board game where after spotting the thief one would have to capture him too. Also the Praja, would have occupations and thus, they would start from a certain region. As individual players they could move around the board and, much like Monopoly, occupy regions where the thief, whose position otherwise unknown, would be free to commit crimes leaving behind a trail for the Mantri to follow to eventually catch the Thief.

This concept had a lot of exciting possibilities and a lot of probable anomalies to figure out. However, it was far off and very different from the traditional-age-old Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi and most people might

not be able to relate the two with each other. It wasn't wise to decimate the nostalgia attached to the game. Also adding so many different features to the game would increase the manufacturing cost and make it less feasible to produce.

And SO... It was time to go back and wear the thinking hat.

While thinking of a new strategy, two features from the previous concept kept coming up again-

CRIMES and **OCCUPATIONS**

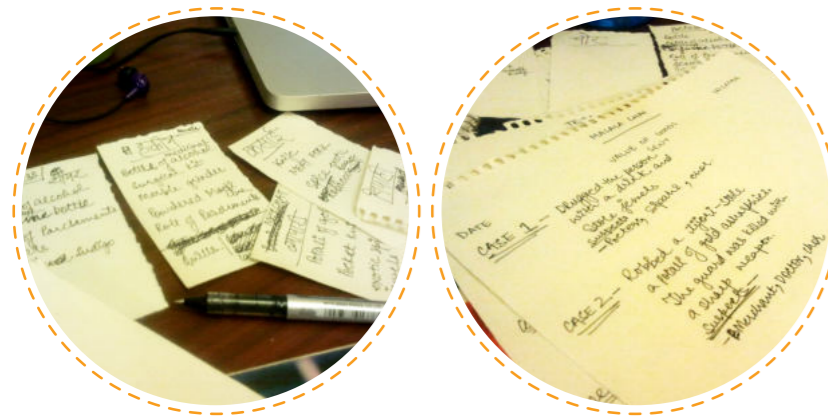
The idea was to make sure that the Chor and the Praja have got to play a bigger role in the game. Therefore, it was decided to keep the cards and the gameplay as it is but add three new features – Crime Cards, Professions for the Praja and Props related to each profession with a slightly altered Gameplay.

THE NEW FINAL GAMEPLAY

The final Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi Card Game post it's makeover can now be played between 4 or 7 or 9 people.

If less in number it can be play it the traditional way with *Raja* (The King), *Mantri* (The Minister), *Chor* (The Thief) and *Sipahi* (The Guard); where *Raja* declares himself and asks his *Mantri* to spot the *Chor*.

However, this edition gives allows more number of people to play the age-old game with a new twist. Along with the usual *Raja*, *Mantri*, *Chor*,



Sipahi; we introduce 5 NEW PRAJA CARDS – *Vyapari* (Merchant), *Vaidya* (Doctor), *Sunar* (Goldsmith), *Kaviyatri* (Poetess) and *Kasai* (Butcher). Also a new set of Crime Cards (hexagonal) was introduced along with the playing cards.

Steps to play the game-

- » Shuffle and distribute the cards and spread the hexagonal Crime Cards, face down, on the table.
- » The one who gets the *Raja* card announces himself as the King and gets maximum points. He then asks the *Mantri* (the Minister) to reveal himself.
- » The *Mantri* acknowledges his position and the king then asks him "Jurm kya hai?" or "What is the nature of the Crime?" This is when the *Mantri* uncovers the crime by opening one of the crime cards and announcing the crime. Every crime comprises a kind of WEAPON and a commodity STOLEN/ DESTROYED.
- » "Ab sabki talaashi li jayegi..." Proclaims the Raja. It is then the *Mantri* starts searching the *Praja* and asks them what is the one thing he can find on them.

EXTREME LEFT Figuring out and working on the playing cards – professions and props. Source: Author

LEFT Figuring out the possible Crime Cases as per the props and professions Source: Author

- » All members then have to truly confess to one object on them (mentioned in their card as per their professions), including the *Chor*. Since it has been announced, every player knows the crime related evidences. The catch is that the *Praja* could either help the *Mantri* by making his job easier or help the *Chor* escape by confusing the *Mantri*, depending upon what side they want to take or where their conscious leads them.
- » Once everyone has confessed, The *Mantri* must scrutinize the other's faces and figure out the *Chor* from the lot. If he succeeds he gets points and so does everyone who helped the *Mantri* as a reward, and the *Chor* gets no points.
- » However, if the *Praja* is blamed as the *Chor*, the *Raja* and the *Mantri* will get no points and the *Chor* will receive everybody's share of points. Also, those who helped the *Chor* in his escape will get Bonus Bribe Black points ;).

SUGGESTED SCORING SYSTEM

50 points for the King
30 points for the Minister
20 points for the Guard
10 points for the *Praja*.

If they helped the *Mantri*, they get 10 points as reward and a clean conscious! But if they helped the *Chor*, they get 20 points as the Bonus Bribe points or Black money.

TESTING AND CONCLUSION

A final Gameplay was decided upon post a basic testing of the game. Played with dummy cards the testing brought out some important changes in the game.

What if no one supports the Chor?

Initially the concept of reward points wasn't there. It was more dependent on the choice of the player to either help the *Mantri* or the *Chor*. During the testing in a few rounds none of the *Praja* members helped the *Chor* and he was easily caught. Thus, the system on incentive of points was introduced. This was also reflective of the morality in the society.

What if the Chor doesn't know what to say?

In the initial version of the game, the *Chor* card had no hints as he was expected to improvise and be clever to keep himself hidden. However, during the testing it was noticed if the *Chor* is the first person

to be frisked he may not know what to reply to not make it obvious. Therefore, in the final version the *Chor* card comes with a set of hints for the player to cleverly improvise a disguise.

Inconsistent Words

During the testing it was noticed that the players could not comprehend the evidences mentioned in the crime cards. Therefore, by using better choice of words, keeping them consistent on the Crime and Playing cards and highlighting them appropriately on the crime cards seemed to eradicate this problem in the final version of the game.

9 is a Big Number

Testing the game for the longest was an issue because we could never find the total number of players. One may say - *The More, the Merrier*; but 9 after all, is a big number. Therefore, it became crucial to make the game flexible. So alterations were made such that, if Crime Card - Case# 8 be removed and Playing Cards - Merchant and Goldsmith are removed, then the game can be played between 7 players.

THE ILLUSTRATION STYLE AND VISUAL REFERENCE

As mentioned in the brief, I looked us visual references in the Miniature Painting style for deciding on the look of the cards. The Miniature



Painting Style seemed to fit quite well with the era of the *Raja* and his *Mantri*. However, I limited my references to the Mughal Miniature Paintings also read up on the socio-economic and cultural scene at that time. Keeping in mind these details I decided on the occupations of the Praja Cards and the possible 'props' or objects found on them.

During the Mughal period, India was exporting a lot of Spices, Indigo, Tobacco and Textiles. It is also said that trade, culture and medicine flourished in that era. Therefore, these inputs were included in the game.

The Mughal Miniature Painting style is highly intricate and includes details of clothes and jewelry. Also it exhibits a rich use of colour.

TOP LEFT The Mughal Miniature Painting style portraits that were visual references for the illustrations



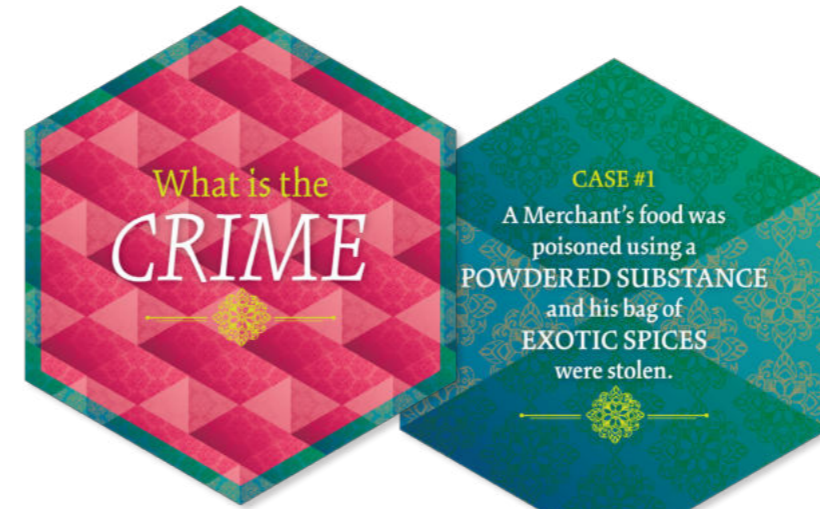
TOP EXTREME LEFT & LEFT Illustrations sketched out on paper post which they were inked on gateway sheets where details of clothes and jewelry were added.

TOP EXTREME RIGHT & RIGHT Exploring water colours and the befitting style of rendering the illustrations.

Miniature Painting style also includes a lot of portraits. Keeping these as a basic reference, I decided to give the illustrations a more contemporary look. I decided to use water colours and inking as the two basic media to render the illustrations.

The Graphics done on the cards and packaging were kept rather visually contrasting from the style of illustrations. I also chose to use hand lettering instead of using available typefaces. This gave me the flexibility to work with both devanagiri and latin script and it added to the visual feel that looks in sync with the illustrations. .

At the end on 9 exhaustive days I could manage to take a test-print and compile a dummy of the game with final illustrations and design. Required alterations were made and the files were submitted to the studio for production purposes.



OPPOSITE PAGE Final illustrations and playing cards including the back of the cards, Raja, Mantri, Chor, Sipahi and the 5 Praja cards.

TOP Final Crime Cards and instructions (to be printed back to back)





LEFT The Final Game kit.
RIGHT Hand-lettered and designed Packaging Box; Front (top); Back (bottom)

Challenges Faced

I have always preferred working in small studios or groups, where roles are well divided. However, this was a very small group for the amount of work and projects available. Everyone was overworked and so was I. Most of the projects were so constrained with time that one had to compromise on the quality of the work or manage with 'what we have.' I have always felt uncomfortable not putting up the best possible solution but here due to lack of time and multiple active projects with tight deadlines, one had little choice.

The studio is relatively new and thus it was a bit disorganized. Sourcing data, defining roles and getting work done was tedious.

Being the only Visual Communication designer on the team, managing projects was a lot more difficult because I would have to handle most projects single-handedly as far as graphics was concerned. For execution I did manage to get some help, although, this was true only for D-Code Green. But this also gave me a certain sense of ownership and thus, a sense of responsibility towards each project. This resulted in me pushing myself a lot more to get a suitable and desired result.

Long travelling hours was exhausting and would leave no time to reflect on the kind of work that was being done at the studio.

My Learning

I was always fascinated by the traditional and folk arts/ crafts of India. However, I was always restrained with the limited knowledge on the various styles. Even though, I got exposed to ‘**Handmade in India**’ almost a year back, I was never motivated enough to go through it. On my very first day at **Happy Hands Foundation** I was introduced to a Big-Red-Bound copy of the same that everyone more popularly called the Bible. I figured the general motto in the studio was – ‘*When in doubt, refer to Handmade in India!*’

This internship was a great opportunity for me to know more about the elaborate visual culture that India is gifted with and seeing the art/ craft work physically helped me understand and appreciate them better. Getting an opportunity to visit a **Repoussé artist’s workshop** and seeing craftsmen at work was a rare opportunity one could only get while working in a place such as HHF.

Working with different media is always interesting and adds on to our understanding and knowledge. Handing a Social Media based public experiment where I got to work with graphics for both digital viewing and print purposes, enhanced my understanding of – how different weights of typefaces behave when in print and when viewed on the screen; the sizes and formats that work better for digital platforms and

how they differ from available standard print sizes. Since the **D-Code Green** was Facebook and twitter centred I got to understand handling social media as a medium for promotion—how the of uploading the ‘Right promotional material at the right time slot’ is crucial and how one could work around the statistics offered by these websites in order to promote a campaign online. In times today, where internet has taken over many traditional ways sending out information and is conjuring new ways of reaching out to people, working closely with it was a great learning experience.

Handling a project from ideation to execution and physically assembling it gave a sense on ownership on the projects, which was preceded, with a sense of responsibility that the given project should be implemented well. The **Youth ACT Fellowship Orientation Kit** was a project with an extremely close deadline. From structuring the information flow to sourcing the data to working out the layout and then printing and assembling the kits, it left me with no time to get dummy prints to find the problems with the grid while folding the guide. I couldn’t manage to re-work on the design to fix the errors. Although I wasn’t happy with the information guide, due to the number of errors in it, I had to learn to back off a bit and present the compiled kit in the best possible manner. From making bags out of brown paper envelopes to last minute

LEFT A Visual Campaign in Delhi by the Graffiti Artist *Daku*, Photograph taken near Moolchand Flyover, New Delhi. *Source: Author*

RIGHT A Graffiti on one of the walls in Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi. *Source: Author*

jugaads, I learnt the importance of using the presence of mind to pull off a task well.

Game design was a fun project. Who hasn’t played and enjoyed *Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi*?! Working on the cards and improvising ways in which the game can be made better was engaging. I also got to explore water colours and a different style of illustration. Mughal miniature style has been a fascination since childhood. One of the more popular traditional arts, it would be safe to say most of us have grown up being fascinated by the beautiful features of the figure and careful details put by the artist in *Bani Thani* and many others. Though I may have remotely worked with this style before, I was glad I got to experiment and contemporise the illustrations. I personally feel, with the minor faults that it may have, ***Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi*** is a proud addition to my portfolio considering the time frame of 9 days.

Working with different kinds of people is always a new learning experience. Understanding how to interact with people and be a team player is an important lessons of working-life. Happy Hands Foundation was a unique experience as the people in the studio were highly self driven and the idea of working for a cause they believe in was enough to keep them motivated. While Medhavi left her easy MBA life to start HHF,

...above all the positive attitude and act of relentlessly working towards what one believes in is what I take back from the whole experience.

Deepti also left a high paying job to join her in this noble endeavour of making a difference in the society and helping the arts and crafts of India sustain. To conclude, I did learn a fair amount about working as a Visual Communication Designer, our scope of work and about the crafts sector but above all the positive attitude and act of relentlessly working towards what one believes in is what I take back from the whole experience. It is important for us as informed designers to *Stop Criticising* and work towards a better society and for that we must not be hesitant to *Access All Areas* and take a few leaps of faith. :)





011 26564977, +91 9810886981
 info@happyhands.in
 Building No. 8/1, Lane 2, Saidulajab,
 Saket, New Delhi-110030
 www.happyhands.in

To Who It May Concern

This is to state that **Ms. Divya Bhardwaj** worked with Happy Hands Foundation from **20 May 2013 to 24 June 2013**.

During this period, Divya worked on several projects simultaneously and contributed wholeheartedly to other projects going on at the organization.

Divya has successfully completed three major projects during such a short while - DCode Green (a public experiment), YACT Fellowship (Brochure, Fellowship Kit, etc), and the Raja Mantri Chor Sipahi game. Working with her was a sheer pleasure, as she diligently completed all her responsibilities and contributed towards a healthy work environment.

Her caring, and helpful nature, makes her a favorite with colleagues.

We wish her all the best for her future endeavors.

Medhavi Gandhi

Director

Happy Hands Foundation

DIRECTOR
 Happy Hands Foundation

COMPLETION
 CERTIFICATE
 from Happy Hands
 Foundation

