

Design Resource

Zardosi Work - Yadgiri

Elaborate Metallic Embroidery

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Srikanth B.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/resource/zardosi-work-yadgiri>



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Introduction

Embroidery is an art of decorating fabrics with fine thread works, unique from other styles. Apart from threads and needles, the craft also fixes materials like pearls, beads, quills, and sequins, etc. Historically, the embroidery threads were made out of silk, gold, or silver, sewing elaborate hand-stitched clothing, boots, and hats. The origin of embroidery is recorded to the start of 30,000 BC, where the Orient and Middle Eastern parts of the world were involved in heavily mend thread works. While in China, the history of embroidery dates back to 3500 B.C where pictures depict embroidery of silk thread, precious stones, and pearls. Later in the 1100s, the religious artifacts adopted this style for incorporating small seed pearls on to vellum, followed by beadworks clothing in the coming decades. It was thus considered a symbol to evaluate one's economic status with the range of embroidery work done on their clothing, religious objects, and other household items. This was very prevalent in the cultures of ancient Persia, India, China, Japan, Byzantium, and medieval Europe.

Globally, the raw materials used for embroidery work differs from place to place and the same is the case with India internally, dozens of regional embroidery styles vary by its region of origin, like Aari from Barabanki region of Uttar Pradesh, Banjara from North India, Banni from Gujarat, Karchobi of Rajasthan, Shamilami from Manipur, Kasuti of Karnataka, Rabari of Kutch region, Zardosi prevalent in Lucknow, etc. to name a few forms. The word 'Zardosi', a form of metal embroidery, is derived from Persian terms, 'Zar' meaning gold and 'Dosi' meaning embroidery. Owing to the use of precious metal threads, it was highly regarded in royal houses while designing attires for the royal families, especially the Kings of Persia. Later though this embroidered clothing paved its way into India through trade, here the art was more used to decorate walls of the royal tents, scabbards, carpets, wall hangings, and head plates for regal elephants. The Zardosi, all through its cultural importance in the 17th century, enjoyed heavy patronage from Emperor Akbar's court, but unfortunately under the rule of Aurangzeb, the financial aid was withdrawn, leading to its decline. This ignorance towards the craft forced many artisans, move to Punjab, Rajasthan, and Delhi, and rebuilding a new version of Zardosi with cheap and easily available cotton and polyester. Industrialization of the 18th century also fell heavy on its further growth, later it was in the year 1947 that the Indian government undertook steps to revive certain Indian art forms including Zardosi embroidery. Now many regions in India actively practice the art like Lucknow, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Delhi, Agra, Kashmir, Mumbai, Ajmer, Chennai, and Varanasi.

In Zardosi work, the difference between a handmade and machine-made Zardosi work can be easily identified, as the machine work gives a delicate design unlike hand stitches, which comes evident in its flip side stitch. Today Zardosi products available in the market range from various forms of garments, accessories like purses, belts, shoes, hairbands to even home furnishings. Tirumala Garments Training Centre from Yadgiri district of Karnataka, India serves the purpose of manufacturing fabrics with Zardosi Embroidery works. They offer training programs and workshops for local people from the area, providing them an opportunity to master the art and sell up their works even on international platforms. Yadgiri, also known as "Yadavagiri" is well regarded for its rich historical

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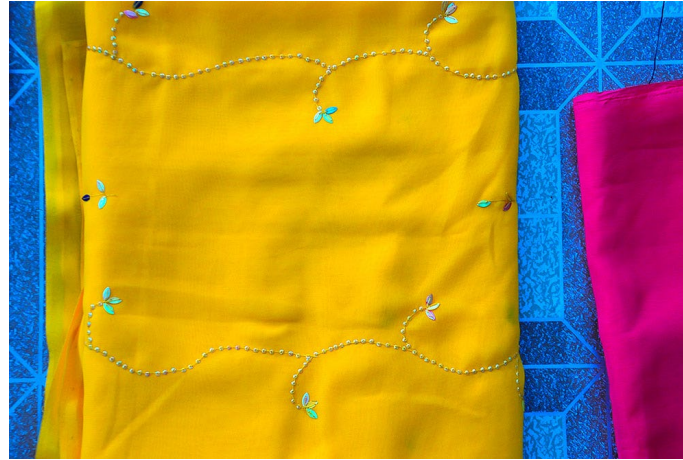
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NID Campus, Bengaluru

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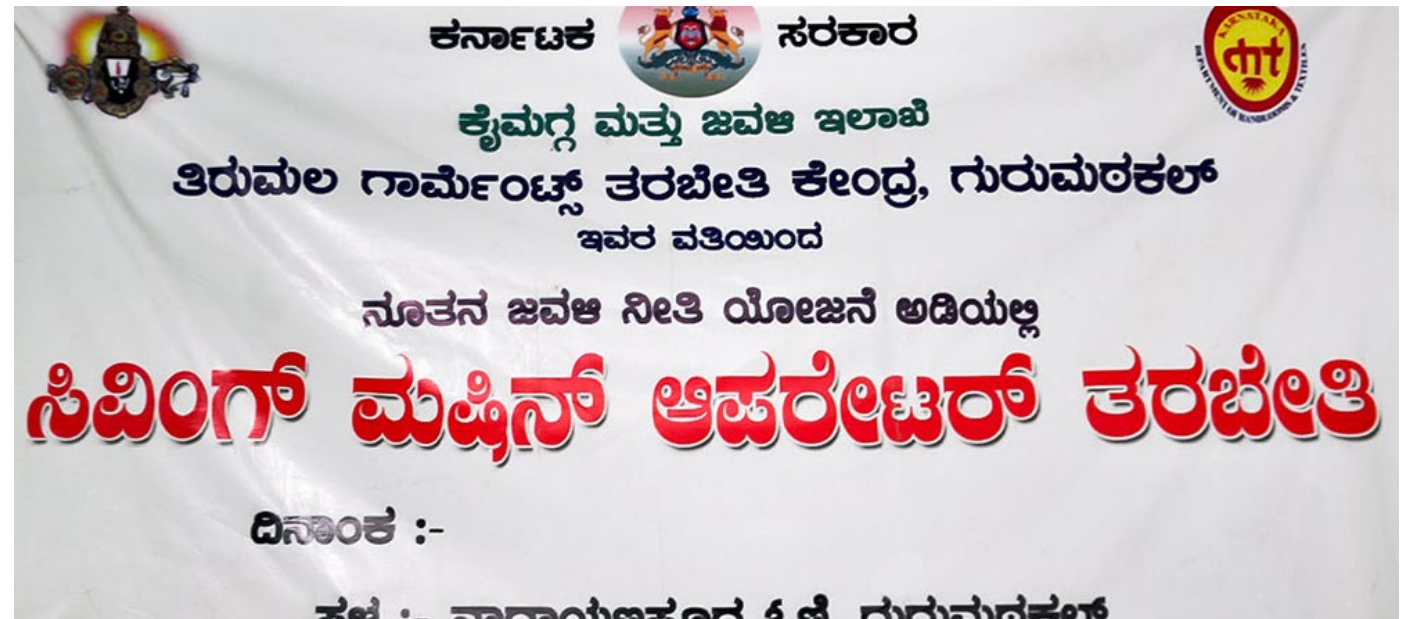
and cultural traditions.



Zari works embossed on a Saree with a seamless pattern of a flower.



Group of Artisans who work on Zardosi designs.



Tirumala Garments Training Center, from Yadgiri, is a skill development center approved by the Government of Karnataka.

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Zari work stamped on a saree border depicting a bird's nest design.



Artisan stitching a pattern on to the fabric using thread and needle, after gluing decorative rhinestones over the cloth.



Artisan doing corrections on a finished Zari work.



Elegantly designed Zardosi work.

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Tools and Raw Materials

The following are the tools and raw materials used for Zardosi Work:

- **Embroidery Hoop:** It is used to stretch and hold the cloth in place.
- **Embroidery Needle:** It is used to push the thread in and out through the cloth.
- **Coloured Stones, Beads, and Sequins:** These are used to create various patterns and colour combination during the making of Zardosi design.
- **Coloured Threads:** Threads are used to fill the designs with required colours.
- **Fabric:** The main piece of cloth on which embroidery is done.
- **Carbon Paper:** Thin paper coated with carbon or another pigmented substance, used for making a second impression of a document.
- **Pen, Pencil:** It is used to draw on the fabric.
- **Tracing Sheet:** It is used to transfer a particular design on to the fabric.
- **Fabric Glue:** It is used to stick beads and coloured stones on the fabric.

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Thread is used in the process of stitching.



Scissors are used to cut down the unwanted or extra threads.



Fabric Cloths are used as a base material for zardosi work.

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Embroidery Hoop used to fix the fabric cloth for better grip while drawing designs as well as stitching.



Aari Needle is used to pull threads and make stitches.



Fevicol is used to stick all the decoratives.

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Making Process

Firstly, the artisan takes the required size of cloth or the fabric on which the embroidery has to be done. Here they usually prefer satin, velvet, cotton, or silk cloth for attractive results. Then placing carbon paper on the selected fabric, a sheet containing various floral designs is placed over it to use as a stencil to trace the imprinted designs onto the fabric. This outlining is done with the help of a pen or pencil. Some artisans also go for freehand drawing than tracing out pre-prepared sketched. Once done, both the sheets are removed and the fabric is then secured on an embroidery hoop or a wooden frame to start the thread work. According to their plan, the first stick beads or coloured stones on the fabric at appropriate places with the help of fabric glue, and then advance to thread embroidering, once the beads dry up. Here the choice of beads, stones, and thread colour is left to the artisan's wish. Various kinds of stitching like running stitch; satin stitch and couching stem stitching are used to make the Zardosi embroidery. For this purpose, a crochet-like needle is fixed to a wooden stick called "Aari", which is believed to speed up the task. Here the process goes like, when the needle is pushed through the fabric from the top, the craftsman holds a retaining thread below the fabric, which gets pulled up at the hooked end of the needle. In this manner, the fine stitches create a dense mesh of exquisite work of art.

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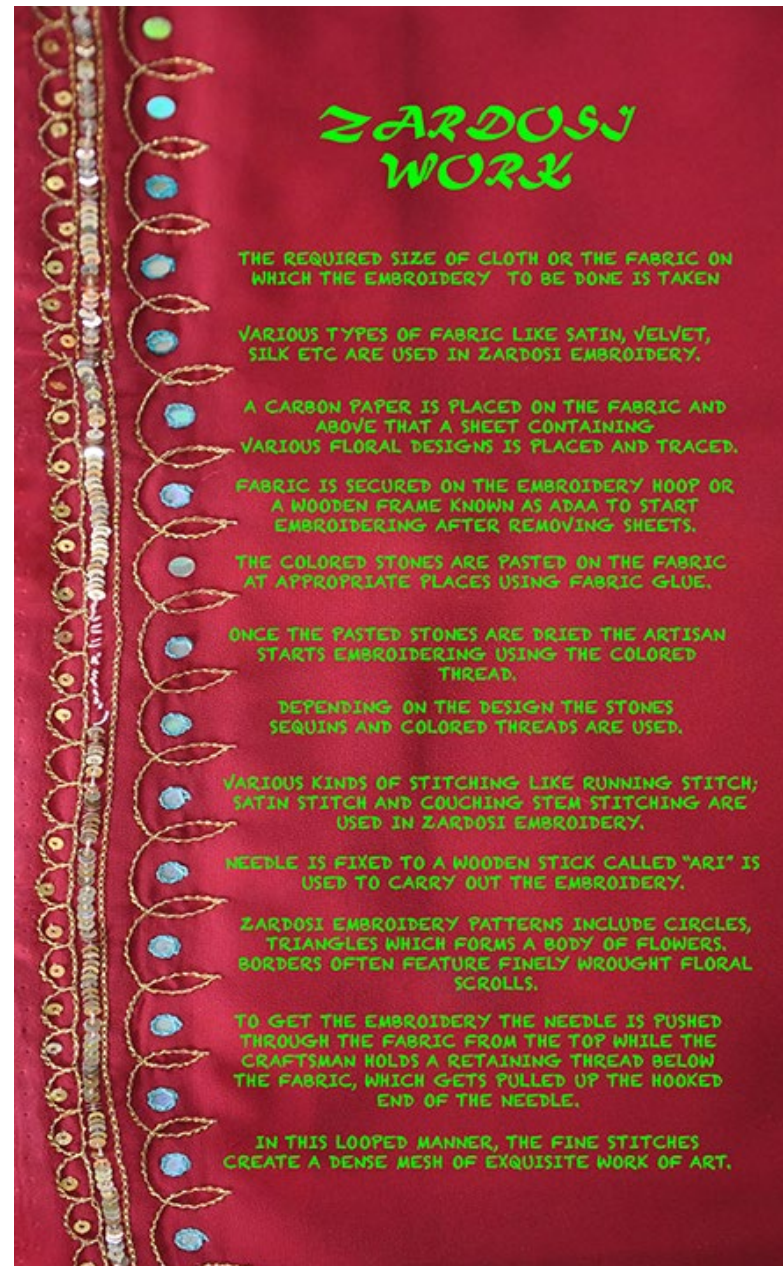
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Flow Chart:



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To get started, a fabric is taken and fixed onto an embroidery hoop and a design or pattern is drawn using a pen.



Glue is added to the area where Artisan wants to stick decorative elements.



Rhinestone being placed on the glue applied area.



Flat multi-coloured disc beads are being placed on the fabric.

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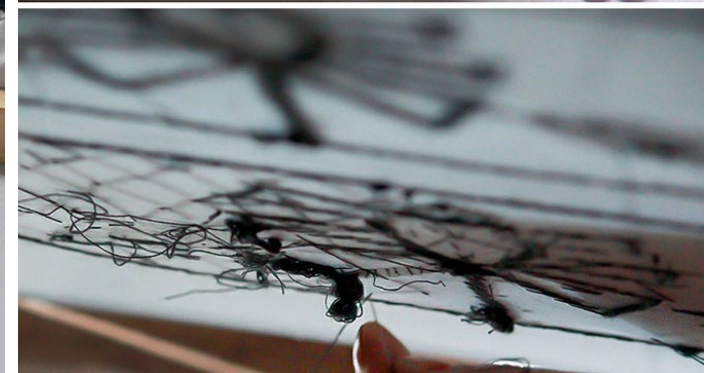
Artisan inserting the Aari needle within the disc bead upside down.



Artisan pulling up disc beads into the needle one after the other.



Artisan using the middle finger to pull up the disc beads into the needle.



Artisan taking a thread from the downside of the embroidery hoop and pulling the thread up by making a loop in the fabric using the Aari needle.

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After pulling up the thread, a single disc bead is added into the thread that is in the needle.



Artisan pushing the needle down and making sure that the disc bead is stitched into the fabric, thus repeating the same steps further.



The same process is done until the drawn design is finished.

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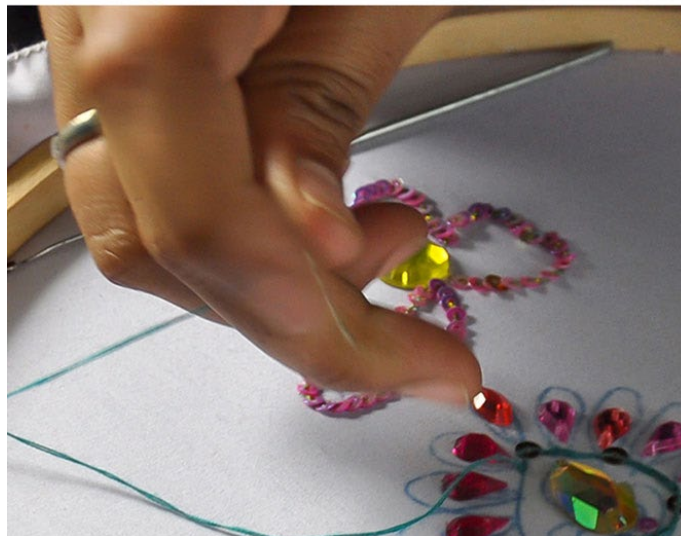
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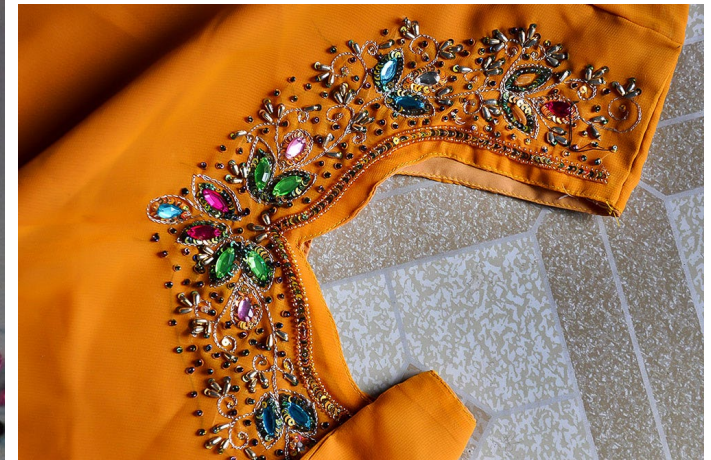
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Artisan stitching the thread on the drawn pattern on the fabric in the Embroidery Hoop.



Artisan stitching small decorative works without using the Embroidery Hoop.



A glimpse of the final product.

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Products

Zardosi embroidery is widely done on Saree, Dress materials, Wall hangings, Home furnishing materials, etc. Hence their rate depends upon the kind of product made and the range of designing done on them and is fixed after calculating the over expense levied on per unit of the product, labor charge, plus a small margin of profit, for its sustainability.



Elegant Zardosi work on a piece of fabric.



Saree with a decorative pattern that has acrylic beads embossed over it.



A thread work decorated with flat silver disc beads and mirrored acrylic beads, glued inside and around the design.



Alluring Saree with a designer zardosi border.

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Video



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This documentation was done by Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Srikanth Bellamkonda at [NID, Bengaluru](#).

You can get in touch with him at [bibhudutta\[at\]nid.edu](mailto:bibhudutta[at]nid.edu)

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

Key Contacts:

Mahadevamm and Triveeni Mitti
Narayanpur Street,
Near Bhavani Temple, Gurumitkal,
Yadgiti Dt. Karnataka.
India
Mobile: 9980779212 / 9739350022

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)

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