

Course Name:
Artisan Name:
Campus:

Namda Craft of Kashmir: Felted Wool Traditions of the Valley
Farooq Ahmed
Ahmedabad



शिल्प संगम



About Craft

The Namda craft of Kashmir, a unique form of felted woolen rug-making, is a vital part of the region's cultural heritage, providing warmth and aesthetic appeal in the cold climate. Its origins are often traced back to the 16th century during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar, though some evidence suggests it is even older.

The primary process is felting—not weaving—where layers of sheep wool are spread, sprinkled with a soap solution and water, and then rolled and pressed with hands and feet (sometimes using a tool like a pinjra). This interlocks the fibers to form a thick, durable mat. The finished products are predominantly floor coverings, rugs, and decorative wall pieces, often embellished with vibrant Kashmiri Aari embroidery featuring floral motifs.

The craft is traditionally associated with the Muslim communities of the region. Despite facing challenges, efforts are now underway for its revival, recognizing its deep cultural and economic significance.

Course Objectives

- Through hands-on engagement, collaborative projects, and reflective dialogues, participants will explore the multifaceted nature of craft—its rituals, cultural significance, and contemporary relevance.
- Enjoy the privilege of co-creating with Craft practitioners and exploring the historical foundations of craft practice, rooted in the cultural landscape.
- To spark creative detours, an infusion of unbiased interdisciplinary participation, and breakthrough
- Outcomes that celebrate diversity in thought and contemporary themes in a traditional setting
- Through the platform, opening up possibilities for intercraft collaborations.



About Artisan

Farooq Ahmed is a renowned fourth-generation Namda artisan from the Safa Kadal area of Srinagar, Kashmir. He is a dedicated preserver of this centuries-old but dying Kashmiri craft, which involves creating felted woolen rugs. Recognizing the need for innovation to sustain the art, he is celebrated for blending traditional Namda processes with modern techniques like Nuno felting to create contemporary products, including silk carpets and scarves. Despite challenges like low market demand and limited resources, his primary commitment is to training and inspiring the next generation to ensure the unique legacy of Namda-making continues to thrive.

Course Methodology

- Demonstration by Master Craftsperson
- Learning the basics of the craft, explorations of traditional forms
- Developing contemporary themes for contemporary narratives and new possibilities
- Making prototypes
- Finishing and displaying new outcomes to encourage conversations around them.

Expected Outcomes- Explorations in toys, games, storytelling through new characters and documentation

Maximum Number of Participants - 12 to 20