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golden jubilee heritage lectures

ARTISANS BY DESIGN

An odyssey of education for textile
artisans in india

AN ILLUSTRATED TALK
by

JUDY FRATER

Author, Founder of Kala Raksha Trust

26 FEB, 2026
6.30 P.M.

BANGALORE
INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE
SEMINAR HALL

No. 6, 4th Main
Domlur 2nd Stage
Bangalore: 560071
Tel: 080 25359680

Restricted Seating
Priority for IMAS Members
RSVP: imasind@hotmail.com



Judy Frater will present an illustrated talk on her recent book **Artisans by Design: An Odyssey of Education for Textile Artisans in India**. The book was published with Schiffer Publishing Ltd. on October 28, 2024.

Artisans by Design chronicles the journey of developing the first design school for artisans in India and fifteen years of artisans learning design. Spanning 50 years, the story is told in vignettes of artisans who were part of the journey, intertwined with the author's story. Through these stories we experience how and why the program was developed, and what its impact has been on traditional artisans in the contemporary world.

In this vivid journey, Frater offers personal connections to artisans and insights into tradition, craft, and creativity. She illuminates sustainability as cultural heritage, and presents development as human centered.

Artist bio

Fulbright and Ford Foundation fellowship alumnus and Ashoka Fellow, Judy Frater lived in Kutch, India, 30 years, where she researched traditional textiles and founded Kala Raksha Trust, the Kala Raksha Museum, and Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya, the first design school for artisans. She later reinvented the school as Somaiya Kala Vidya. During almost 15 years as director of the program, she was honored with the Sir Misha Black Medal for Design Education, the Crafts Council of India Kamala award, and the Designers of India Design Guru Award. She was recognized by Conde Nast Traveller India as one of 50 champions of sustainable travel and by Architectural Digest India as one of nine "Grande Dames of Craft."

Frater has Masters degrees in South Asian Languages from the University of Minnesota and in Museum Studies from the University of Washington. Previously Associate Curator at The Textile Museum in Washington DC she is author of *Artisans by Design: An Odyssey of Education for Textile Artisans in India* (2024), *The Art of the Dyer in Kutch* (2021), and the award-winning *Threads of Identity: Embroidery and Adornment of the Nomadic Rabaris* (1995).

She currently resides in Santa Fe and teaches the values of hand craft through lecturing and writing. In 2022, she was Artist in Residence at the UW, Madison, and she has led annual artisan tours in Kutch since 2022.

