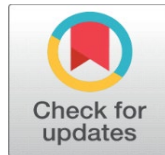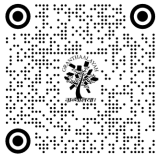# CHAKOR- A TYPEFACE INSPIRED BY THE PHULKARI AND TRUCK ART OF PUNJAB

Dr Marisha Narula [1] ✉ (iD), Ms. Riddhi Chaudhry [2] ✉ (iD)

[1] Assistant Professor, Fashion Communication, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Panchkula, India
[2] Student, Fashion Communication, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Panchkula, India

ABSTRACT

The state of Punjab exhibits a diverse and vibrant visual culture inhabiting numerous handicrafts for fashioning households and ornamental objects. Phulkari carries a GI tag, and copper and brass work is recognised under the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Phulkari is an intricate hand embroidery technique native to the state. Truck Art is the vibrant painting done on the surface of the trucks and adorns what is the second home of the truckers, often having quotes and symbols to ward off the evil eye during the long road journey. Both of these colourful crafts are losing their true essence in the landscape of commercialisation. A Latin typeface was designed, inspired by Phulkari's abstract and geometric motifs and the three-dimensional lettering style of truck art. This typeface can be used for the commercial branding of Phulkari, digitisation of truck art, collaterals for tourism, and other communication applications.

Keywords: Culture, Phulkari, Truck Art, Branding, Commercialization

1. INTRODUCTION

The cultural landscape of Punjab, India, is adorned by a rich tapestry of traditions, crafts, and art forms that reflect the region's vibrant heritage. Among these, Phulkari, the traditional embroidery of Punjab, and Truck Art, a dynamic form of folk art decorating transport vehicles, stand out as emblematic expressions of the region's cultural identity.

1.1. PHULKARI CRAFT

The origins of Phulkari remain shrouded in the mystery, although it is found in the timeless Punjabi tale of Heer Ranjha, penned by Waris Shah. Its contemporary form and widespread popularity can be traced back to the 15th century, flourishing during the era of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. [1]

In the cultural fabric of Punjab, Phulkari holds the utmost significance in the life journey of a girl. Following the birth of a daughter, the task of crafting her future bridal trousseau, completed with Phulkari garments for the wedding ceremony, traditionally falls on her grandmother. Similarly, when a mother welcomes a son into the world, she receives phulkari to adorn herself during significant occasions such as religious festivals and postpartum outings. In addition, Phulkari serves as a poignant cover for the body of a departing woman, symbolising respect and memory. [2]

Originally, Phulkari was a labour of love rather than a commodity for sale, meticulously embroidered by families to mark pivotal life events, such as weddings, births, and religious celebrations. The completion of a Phulkari masterpiece symbolises a young woman's transition to maturity, a sentiment echoed in the sacred texts of the Sikh faith. [2], [3]

Phulkari embroidery typically graces plain cotton fabric known as *khaddar*, spun, loomed, and dyed by hand using natural pigments. The red colour, symbolising vitality and auspiciousness prevails in Phulkari creations, whereas white is reserved for mature women or widows, signifying purity and reverence. [4]

Embedded within the vibrant threads of Phulkari are the everyday experiences and observations of Punjabi women and depictions of local vegetables, cherished animals, and scenes from their immediate surroundings. Passing from mother to daughter, each family's embroidery style is a unique expression of its heritage and creativity, resulting in a diverse array of patterns and motifs. [4]

The choice of rugged *khaddar* fabric as the canvas for Phulkari embroidery reflects the resilience and fortitude of Punjabi women, while the kaleidoscope of colours and motifs reflects the vivacity and imagination that characterise their lives. Adorning oneself with Phulkari imbues a sense of delicacy, grace, and simplicity juxtaposed with the robust and spirited nature of Punjabi women. [4]

The craft of Phulkari has lost its traditional relevance, with the use of different colours, motifs, and fabrics to meet market demands. Phulkari craftsmen are a decentralised community spread across the state of Punjab, and these artisans have little support from designers in the development of novel products, taking significant inspiration from cultural history and promoting this product. [5]

1.2. TRUCK ART

Truck Art has emerged as a distinctive feature of Punjab's visual landscape, transforming ordinary transport vehicles into vibrant canvases of expression. Originating in the mid-20th century, Truck Art has gained popularity as a means for truck drivers to personalise their vehicles. It is known to originate in Khyber Pukhtoon-khawa and Punjab, whereas Peshawar is known to be its birthplace. Although its origin and evolution are unclear, some attribute its origin to hand-painted horse-driven carriages. [9]

Truck art has been a means of communication through semiotic cues and today, it is closely related to government rules including the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 which lays out instructions on symbols to be painted on trucks and colour coding to be done for road safety purposes. [6]

Trucks serve as a home to the driver because their journeys are long, and they spend most of their time in their vehicles. Apart from this, they drive in rugged landscapes, making their journey unsafe. Hence, trucks are adorned with colourful stickers, mirrors, and paintings to make them homely. Devils and charms are hung

and painted as the culture in which they are believed to waive off negative energies. [6]

Trucks often depict colourful motifs, folklore imagery, and witty slogans. Drawing inspiration from a diverse array of sources, including religious iconography, Bollywood films, and traditional art forms, Truck Art has evolved into a dynamic fusion of creativity and cultural symbolism. Bollywood film poster typography has significantly influenced truck art. Road safety instructions such as Blow Horn and Drive are often painted in this calligraphic style. Birds and cows are religious symbols, and national symbols, such as the national flag, lotus, and peacock, are also prevalent. [6]

The immaculate truck art has been declining owing to various factors. The sons of truckers no longer want to take forward the legacy, nor do truckers today find any muse in getting handpainted trucks, which is far more expensive and time-consuming than the use of stickers that are prominent today. Wherever prevalent, the style of truck art has remained the same, with motifs evolving, drawing from political and cultural influence. [8]

1.3. THE INTERSECTION

Despite their distinct origins and techniques, Phulkari and Truck Art share common threads of cultural heritage and artistic expression. Both forms of art celebrate Punjab's rich traditions and offer insight into the region's history, beliefs, and societal norms. Moreover, they serve as powerful media for preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge across generations, fostering a sense of community and identity among the Punjabi communities worldwide. [7]

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the literature review, several studies provide insights into the history, cultural significance, visual treatment, evolution, and current situation of Phulkari craft and truck art.

Grewal and Grewal (1988) uncover the history and cultural significance of the craft of Phulkari. [1] Graham (2004) talks about the cultural significance of the craft and how it is related to the festivities of the state. Many papers discuss the process of making a phulkari, the cloth it is done on, the colours used, the motifs embroidered, and their symbolic interpretations. The author used traditional Phuklkari pieces as a source of reference to base their study. [2], [3], [4] Kaur (2016) enunciates the current scenario of the Phulkari craft, how the practice has changed, the social, cultural, and political influences that have caused its decline, and possible steps to revive it. She used a secondary review and SWOT analysis to support her findings. [5]

Suman (2016), through his documentary 'Horn Please' explores the origin and evolution of truck art. It emphasises the importance of craft in the life of truck drivers and painters as art expressions and examines the motifs, lettering, and art style from a religious, sentimental, and cultural lens. He also explained the reasons for the subsequent decline in the craft. He used ethnographic study and interviews with experts for his research. [8] Madan (2018) uses semiotic analysis as her theoretical framework to illustrate cultural, religious, social and political influences on the motifs of Truck art. She also pointed out the role of government transport safety bodies in truck panting practices and their impact on visual depictions. [6] Khan in his paper draws out the past, present and future of truck art as a practice in

India and across the world. It discusses iconic figures, political figures, and speech as characteristic elements of the art form. It focuses on political influences that led to the beginning of art, its evolution, change in interpretations in the modern day, and subsequent decline. [9] Sonneblick (2020) interviewed truck drivers from across Punjab, uncovering their relationship with their trucks, the painting on them, their cultural significance, how and from where they get them customised, and how graphic stickers are replacing handpainted panels. He has documented the same in a video format under Indipedia, a series on the EPIC Channel that is on a mission to document Indian customs that are not well-researched. [10]

However, while these studies provide valuable insights into the relevance of these crafts in the cultural identity of the state of Punjab, they discuss little on the creative interpretations of these art forms and how they play a role in keeping the crafts alive and serve as a medium for brand identity creation for the state. Further research in this area could contribute to a deeper understanding of how modern design can facilitate the revival of these crafts in their original form and contribute to giving a voice to artisans practising these art forms.

3. CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS

The crafts of Phulkari and truck art have been a source of creative inspiration for various artists and designers. To keep the craft alive or revive aspects that were lost in the trodden landscape, artists expressed themselves by creating contemporary interpretations of the crafts.

Shantanu Suman has undertaken various typographic illustration projects such as the Chhote Miya Exhibit [11], Wire India Project [12], and Taxi Fabric Design [13], which bring forth truck art calligraphic styles. Through these design projects, he uses type as an image by contemporizing the art form with his take-on colour and iconic meanings, yet creating art that keeps the truck art tradition alive. His work found use cases in branding, identity design, and exhibition design for brands with Indian roots. Anurag J. designed the typeface Theka inspired by one of the calligraphy styles of truck art. [14]

Mannat Sidhu takes inspiration from the motifs in Phulkari for the logo for her Phulkari business- FusionPhulkari [17]. Aditya Verma designed a chandelier inspired by the motifs of Phulkari. [18]

Through the Typecraft Initiative, Ishan Khosla collaborates with craft artisans from across India in designing typefaces for their craft that not only encapsulate the essence of the craft but also provide a new tool for the artisans to experiment with type. He has designed typefaces in collaboration with artisans practising Mithila painting, Rabari embroidery, etc. [19]

The interpretations listed above, although not exhaustive, highlight the work that has been done to keep these crafts alive through branding. The above projects truly helped the craft get the voice that they were losing. However, none of the above projects explore the use of an amalgamation of various crafts in developing a sense of identity, not just for that craft, but for the entire state.

4. RELEVANCE OF STUDY

Culture dies when the language dies. The word has kept the culture alive for centuries. Through the involvement of craft-practising communities and the design of a typeface for them, which draws inspiration from the culture of their state and

the intersection of their crafts, the aim is to revive lost heritage and give a new typographic identity to the crafts.

This research paper explores the intersection of Phulkari and Truck Art through the lens of typography, tracing the development of a typeface inspired by these cultural treasures. Through the amalgamation of the two crafts, it aims to design an identity not just for the crafts, but also for the state of Punjab. By taking common facets from the two as well as other crafts of Punjab, such as copper works and durrie weaving, it encapsulates the essence of the state's culture in a singularly tied-up visual identity. By delving into the visual aesthetics of Phulkari and Truck Art, it aims to highlight their influence on contemporary visual design practices. This exploration is an endeavour to celebrate the beauty and cultural richness encapsulated within these timeless art forms while also honouring the resilience and creativity of Punjab's diverse communities. The typeface further aims to help artisans use these visuals as a means of communication in their products, branding, etc., and as a tool to help them adapt to contemporary design landscapes.

5. AIM AND OBJECTIVES
5.1. AIM

This study explores the cultural heritage of Punjab through the creation of a typeface inspired by the traditional crafts of Phulkari and Truck Art. By examining the intersection of typography and cultural symbolism, this study sought to celebrate the artistic traditions of Punjab and their influence on contemporary design.

5.2. OBJECTIVES

1) Investigating the historical and cultural significance of Phulkari and Truck Art in Punjab, tracing their origins, evolution, and enduring relevance in the region's artistic landscape.
2) Studying the crafting processes and visual connotations of the crafts-Phulkari and truck art.
3) Exploring the process of designing a typeface that draws inspiration from the visual connotations and making processes of the crafts of Phulkari and Truck Art.
4) Accessing the utility of the typeface in promoting the state's culture by translating it into craft revival practices, such as branding and other visual communication methods.

6. METHODOLOGY AND TOOL

The research methods include two broad stages: the understanding of the crafts and the design and development of a typeface inspired by them.

6.1. CRAFT UNDERSTANDING

The first stage includes ethnographic research on the Phulkari artisans in the Maloya village of Haryana and understanding the history, cultural significance, processes included in making, and motifs of the craft. Motifs were studied through focus group interviews and observational studies of embroidered Phulkari pieces. It also includes collecting data in the form of photographs of Truck art through sources

like written accounts and documentaries on the same. Observational study of the same is also undertaken.

The secondary research included a literature review of craft practices and their visual classifications. It also included an examination of the existing contemporary implementations of crafts.

After a detailed triangulation of data from the literature review and primary research, key observations are listed (as discussed in sections 1.1 and 1.2). Visual facets from Phulkari craft and truck art are expanded, namely:

1) the lettering style and colour language of truck art
2) the embroidery style of Phulkari

6.1.1. SAMPLE SIZE

eight Phulkari artisans from three different generations are interviewed to understand the craft's past, present, and future. Artisans from Maloya are chosen due to geographic limitations. Two Phulkari pieces from each category, bridal trousseau, festive, daily wear, for the widow and contemporary, are selected for observational study.

Approximately 40 references to truck art are selected from secondary sources.

6.2. TYPEFACE DESIGN

The typeface is designed by selecting shortlisted facets (as discussed in Sections 7.1 and 7.2) from Phulkari and truck art. Briefly, the design process includes exploring calligraphic lettering styles, designing primitive letters, expanding the style to create a complete Latin typeface, iterations, and creating mock visualisations of possible implementation. The detailed methodology of typeface creation will be taken up in Section 8.

7. DATA ANALYSIS

Both the craft of Phulkari and truck art are strongly intertwined with sociocultural and political influences. The motifs and colours have symbolic and iconic significance in their environment.

Phulkari artisans of Maloya village practice the *Vari-da-Bagh* (Hindi for 'garden of flowers for the bride') Phulkari. Their motifs are inspired by the flora and fauna surrounding these motifs. They can be classified into three categories- organic, geometric and flora and fauna. For eg: the rhombus motif is referred to as a *barfi* (a sweet in Punjab in that shape) and the flower bud is referred to as a *kali* (Hindi for flower bud). Rhombus is the primary geometric motif prevalently used in the *Vari-da-bagh* embroidery of Maloya. Flora and fauna motifs include *makkhi* (bee), *chidi* (bird), *phul* (flower) etc. Organic motifs are seldom incorporated by artisans in Maloya. Other common Phulkari motifs from across the state of Punjab include *unth* (camel), *makdi* (spider), *haar* (necklace) etc. [4]

Colours of red, yellow, green, blue, pink and orange are considered auspicious for use in the bridal Phulkari pieces. They are used on a white or off-white *khaddar* cloth. Gold embroidery over black is prevalent for Phulkari for older ladies and white for widowed ladies.

Similarly, truck art symbols hold religious, political, and sociocultural significance. The pictorial imagery varies with the state for eg- the birds painted in Rajasthani trucks and those painted in Punjabi trucks. The one in Punjab trucks is

an eagle since it comes from the Sikh influence and that in Rajasthan trucks is possibly a hawk. [6] The lettering styles can be classified into facets of bold, 3 dimensional etc., on the parameters of tool usage and surface treatment (adornment). Major motifs include national symbols like the cow, peacock, tiger, portraits of national leaders and the Indian flag. It also includes symbols significant to the Sikh culture like the Sikhism symbol, the eagle etc. Other religious symbols like the *Swastika* are also seen. Trucks are also adorned with devils and charms which have a cultural relevance of keeping the negative energies away from the truck. [6]

Trucks are painted with an orange background which is a government mandate. Over that bright red, yellow, pink, blue, green, white, pink and orange colours are used to paint the visual imagery, much like the colours of Phulkari. 3 dimensionality is given to typography by the use of different shades of colour and dual-coloured stems or a different colour of the shadow is seen in typography. [6]

7.1. SHORTLISTED FACETS

Visual imagery played the most eminent role in the typeface creation as that became the cornerstone of the design process, inspiring the design elements. Amongst all the data presented above on the motifs of Phulkari, pictorial imagery of truck art and colours, some key facets were shortlisted for design development as discussed below.

7.1.1. PHULKARI

1) The Floral Motif: The main floral motif which is made by repeating diagonal stitches in a radially symmetric grid, is the characteristic motif of Phulkari in Maloya.
2) Geometric Nature: The above motif is fitted inside an imaginary rhombus with a geometric nature to the stitches. The stitches are perpendicular to each other.

7.1.2. TRUCK ART

1) Bold and Heavy Typefaces: One of the chosen lettering styles is that of heavy, bold, and chunky letters which can be both slab serif and sans serif.
2) Three-Dimensionality: Typography incorporates three dimensionalities in many ways, including giving an offset, gradient, or shadows.
3) Surface Ornamentation: The lettering is embellished with lines and dots drawn over the calligraphic glyph.

8. TYPEFACE DESIGN

Structurally, the typeface borrows from the Phulkari craft and it is styled like one of the truck art lettering styles. The motif and embroidery style of Phulkari is taken as inspiration for the glyph structure of the typeface. The idea is to design typography that can be embroidered by Phulkari artisans. The boldness of the truck art typography style along with the typical colour usage and decorative aspects defined the styling of the typeface.

The typeface design included broadly the following 4 steps:
1) Style Exploration

2) Letterform Anatomy and Designing Primitives

3) Expanding the Letter set and Iterations

8.1. STYLE EXPLORATION

The ideation begins with sketching letters with a divergent design approach. Explorations combine aspects from the listed craft facets. Taking from the rhombus shape of the Phulkari motif angular joining of stems is explored along with experiments in contrast in widths (Figure 1). It is followed by drafting letters on dotted sheets and graph papers to set (Figure 2). The inspiration for the structural aspects and proportions, both come from Phulkari. Inspiration for decorative joineries and three-dimensionality (Figure 2) comes from truck art.

Figure 1

Figure 1 Initial style exploration through the sketching method

Figure 2

Plotting letters on dotted paper   Plotting letters on graph paper   Final Style
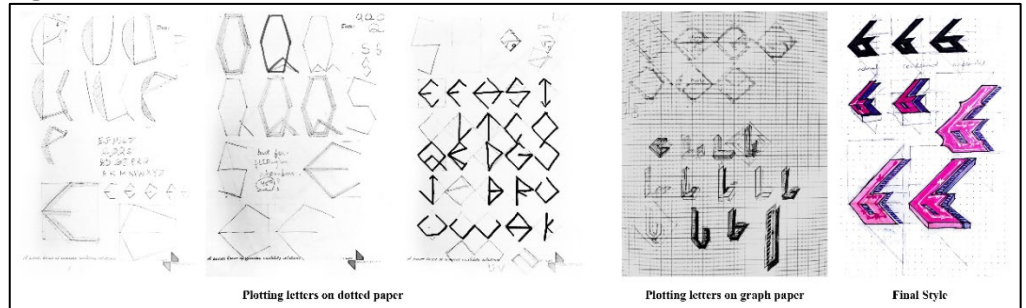
Figure 2 Plotting letterforms on dotted paper and graph paper

Diagonal lines (inspired by the diagonal nature of stitches) are used and shapes are fitted inside rhombuses when designing on graph paper. Offset and extrusion methods are explored to give three-dimensionality to glyphs.

8.2. LETTERFORM ANATOMY AND DESIGNING PRIMITIVES

The final style is indicated in Figure 2. Since letterforms are roughly based on lines and shapes, a grid is used to design them consistently. Some key anatomical features of the typeface followed while designing (all inspired by the floral motif of Phulkari as seen in Figure 3) are as follows (Refer to Section 7.1.1 to correlate how Phulkari inspires such form):
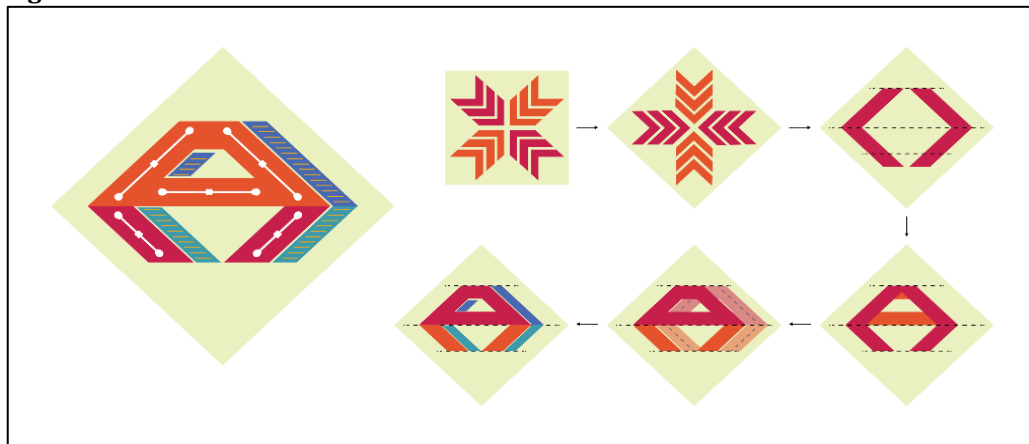
Figure 3

Figure 3 Forms derived from the floral motif of Phulkari

1) Glyphs are fitted inside a rhombus creating a division in the center in all letters.
2) Only slanted and horizontal stems are used. Vertical and curved stems are not used, even in letters that conventionally need one like 'I',' O' etc.
3) Sharp joineries are avoided on the top and bottom since the letterforms are divided in the middle with a sharp corner on both the right and the left side.
4) The height of letters is fixed as marked in Figure 3.
5) Even though letters are fitted inside rhombuses the letterforms are not monospaced, eg- 'A' and 'I' have different widths as seen in Figure 4.
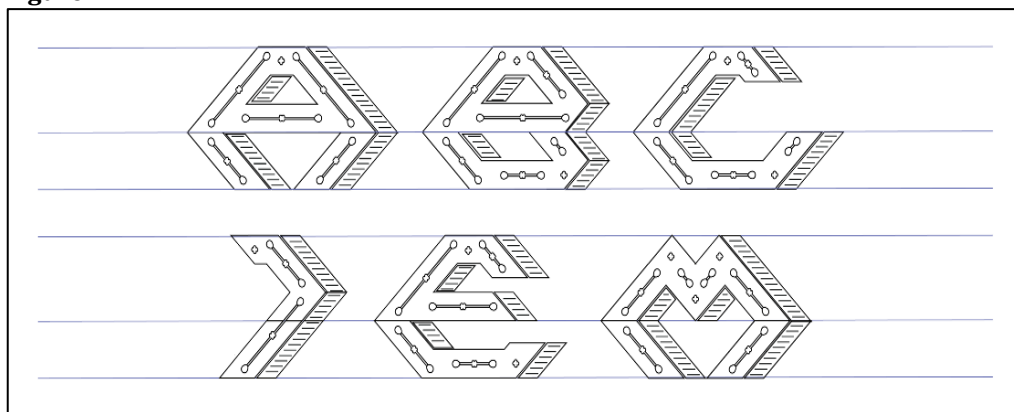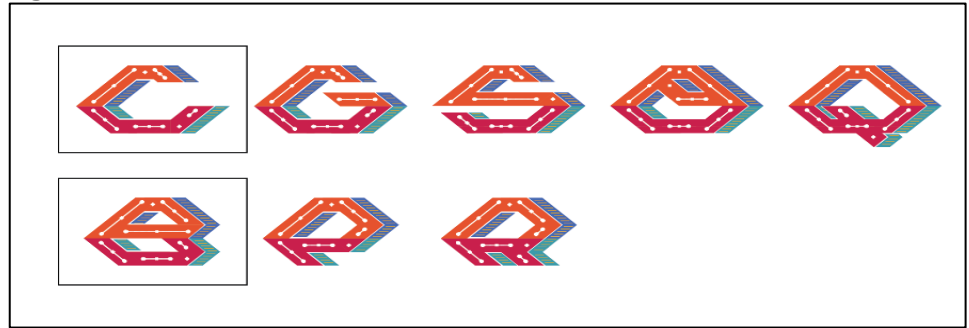
Figure 4

Figure 4 Primitive letterforms

Based on the chosen style, the primitive letters 'A',' B',' C',' I',' E' and 'M' were sketched on dotted papers and then made digitally (Figure 4). Primitives can vary in different typefaces and these were strictly the primitives considering the anatomy of this typeface. Some aspects considered are listed below and shown in Figure 5.

1) A is a primitive for letters with diagonal stems on the sides like V.
2) C is primitive for round and curvilinear letterforms like G, S, O and Q.

Figure 5

Figure 5 Deriving letterforms from the primitives (primitives marked inside boxes)

The typeface with the use of vibrant colours and bold stems taken from truck art. Essentially, elements from truck art have inspired the colour and surface treatment of the letterforms. The key aspects of the typeface's stylization are as follows (Refer to Section 7.1.2 to correlate how Truck Art inspires such implementation):

1) Stems as well as the offsets are dual-coloured.
2) Offset is given to strokes to the right (resembling repeated patterns in Phulkari) to give a three-dimensionality.
3) The typeface has a heavy serif design style.
4) A line and dot pattern are used on the surface along with repeated lines on the offsets.
5) Warm and cool colours from the truck art colour scheme are used together (warm in main form and cool in offset) to create contrast between the two.

8.3. EXPANDING THE LETTER SET AND ITERATIONS

From the primitives, complete letterforms are designed. The first iterations are plotted on the dotted grid and then made digitally (Figure 6). Iterations were aimed at bringing homogeneity, and legibility to the typeface (Figure 7). Two styles were explored majorly- one where the entire rhombus was filled with the glyph or a triangle to counter the space (refer to Figure 7) and the other one with the same height of the rhombus from the middle occupied (Figure 8). The second one was chosen as the final one as also discussed above. With the current style being the final design exploration, the typeface is a work in progress. The complete typeface currently consists of 26 capital Latin script letters (Figure 8). Sample text was written to check the readability of the typeface. (Figure 9)
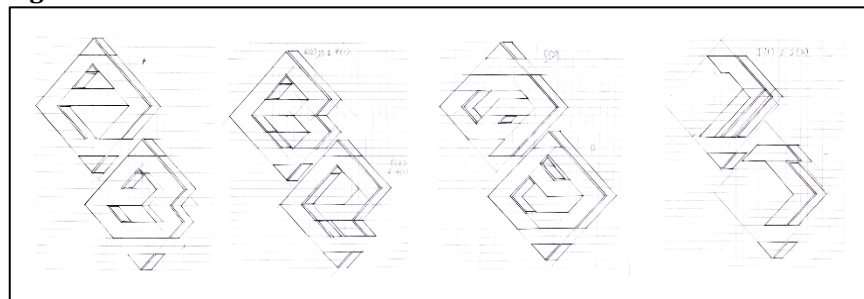
Figure 6

Figure 6 Plotting forms for complete typeface on a dotted grid
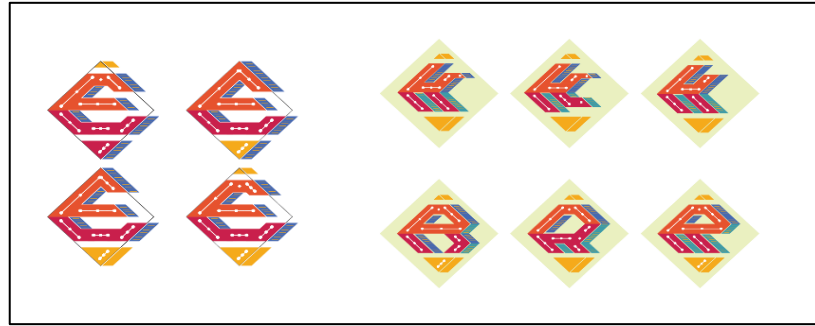
Figure 7

Figure 7 Iterations for letters E, K and R
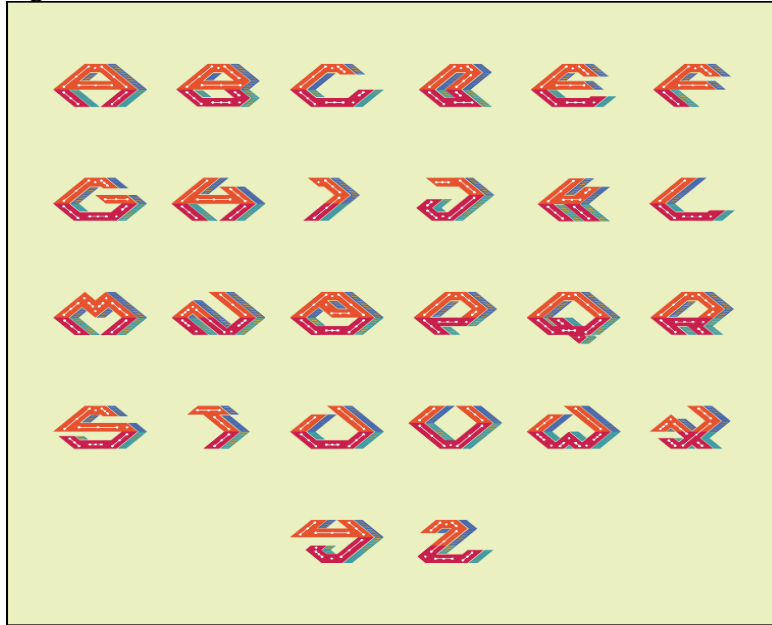
Figure 8

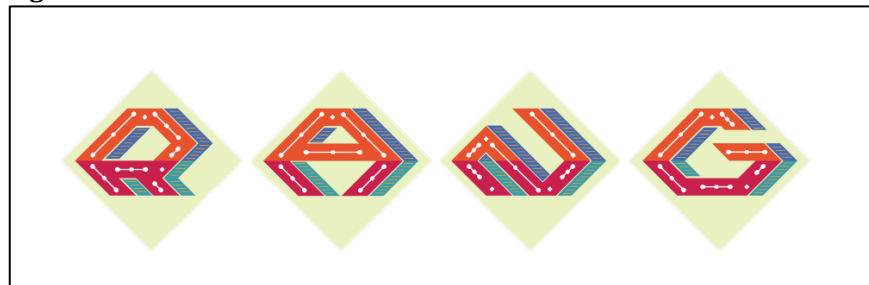**Figure 8** Complete typeface

Figure 9

Figure 9 Sample text in the typeface

8.4. TESTING

The typeface is shown to the Phulkari artisans and their views are taken on how it relates to their craft and the Punjab culture. They are also asked how they can incorporate the typeface in their craft practice. The Phulkari artisans named the

typeface 'Chakor' (meaning a shape with 4 sides in Hindi) taking from the form and how it is inspired by their *phul* (flower) motif.

9. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research is divided broadly into two parts- the study of the cultural heritage of Punjab through the lens of the traditional crafts of the state. It tries to draw parallels in visual depiction of the crafts of Punjab with particular attention to Phulkari and truck art. It tries to understand why these crafts are declining in practice. The second part of the project is exploring how communication design methods can be used to address the same. It includes the design of a typeface- Chakor, which is aimed at reviving the craft in its true essence and giving an expanded functionality beyond the craft practice.

9.1. CULTURAL ANALYSIS
9.1.1. CRAFTS AND THEIR CORRELATION TO CULTURAL HERITAGE

Punjab is home to many vibrant crafts like jutti, durrie, Phulkari, copper and brass work etc. One thing that binds all of them together is that these crafts are done to give an artistic bent to utility products. They are all vibrant with the use of popping bright colours whether it be colourful threads used for embroidery and weaving or strokes for painting trucks. Artistically, all crafts are connected since they all borrow from the culture, social situation, history and religious beliefs of the state. Flora and fauna of the state equally inspired motifs in durrie as in Phulkari. The line texture in copper work is similar to repeated lines given in truck art typography to accentuate forms. Despite coming from the same heritage, and having similarities in design style, these crafts have their voices.

9.1.2. THE DECLINE OF CRAFTS AND CONCERNS

In the contemporary landscape, these crafts do not hold the same significance as they did traditionally. The factors for the decline of each craft vary. Talking specifically of Phulkari and truck art, they are crafts that are still widely practised across Punjab. However, their form and functionality have changed. In an attempt to meet exciting demands and challenges, these crafts have evolved only to lose their true essence. Attempts have been made by designers to revive the crafts through products like decorative merchandise (as discussed in Section 3) but none of them revived the craft in the same context semiotically. Nor do most of these solutions impact the artisans directly. Ishan Khosla's contribution to typography and artisans through The Typecraft Initiative [18] comes out as a good example of crafts being revived in their real essence and artisans being able to both interact with it and benefit from the creation.

Another reason for the decline of crafts is that the new audience gets attracted to buying products through effective branding and marketing techniques. Artisans are not well-versed with creating and utilizing visual identities. Further, they have been using the same artistic imagery in their work for decades, which helps preserve the cultural sanctity of the craft but does not always connect with the modern consumer.

9.2. TYPEFACE DEVELOPMENT AND ARTISAN INTERACTION
9.2.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TYPEFACE

Chakor is a bold, geometric Latin display typeface which serves as a voice for Punjab's cultural legacy. It is a testament to their crafts and especially a communication tool for the artisans of the state. Section 8 discusses in detail the visual nature of the typeface and how it is borrowed from the Phulkari and truck art motifs/ pictorial representation. Going beyond the two crafts, there are elements to the typeface that relate to the larger idea of Punjabi culture as they can be associated with most of the crafts in the state. The rhythmic repetition of lines on the sides relates to stitches in the jutti, weaves on durries, and the texture of brass and copper vessels. Geometric nature also borrows not just from Phulkari motifs but from motifs in Durrie. Vibrant colours are also a testament to the state's culture.

9.2.2. RECEPTION OF TYPEFACE

The Phulkari artisans described the typeface as bold, sharp, angular, colourful, inviting and strong. They could relate it to the geometricity and symmetry of their craft. However, they could not enjoy the same softness as they do with the motifs of Phulkari as they semiotically represent delicacy. Their motifs are fundamentally soft. The boldness, however, displays strength, which is an important attribute in Punjabi culture, where the Gatka martial art holds a strong religious value and men have served in the army for the longest of times. Furthermore, Phulkari artisans found that the letterforms could be incorporated into their pieces as a form of name customisation. The letterform stems were designed such that they could easily achieve them with the stitch techniques used in Phulkari. They suggested making the typeface variations in colour and with different levels of detail for flexibility in usage for purposes like sketching, making posters, incorporating motifs in pieces, building brand identities, teaching village students etc. The reception of typeface by Truck art practitioners could not be captured.

9.2.3. IMPLEMENTATIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The typeface can be implemented in the branding of crafts of Punjab- Phulkari (Figure 10), truck art or any other. It brings together two very different crafts of Punjab making it an inclusive visual identity that encapsulates diverse cultural imagery, hence making it adaptable for identity building of other rafts other than Phulkari and truck art (Figure 11). It can further be used in the play and education sector (Figure 12), especially in primary school. It is in line with the New Education Policy, 2020 that encourages states to teach students about their regional arts and crafts. It also encourages teaching them in languages and visuals they are familiar with and are taken from their surroundings. Saying so, Devanagari and Gurumukhi scripts can be developed for the typeface for a larger regional absorption. It can be used in the state tourism sector, as it gives a taste of the vibrancy of the state.

It can be used to give a wider functionality beyond branding. It can give a new tool for the artisans to explore by incorporating in their pieces which can open doors for nominal customizations. It can act as an inspiration for them to design new motifs inspired by contemporary elements yet borrowing from their rich cultural heritage.

Figure 10

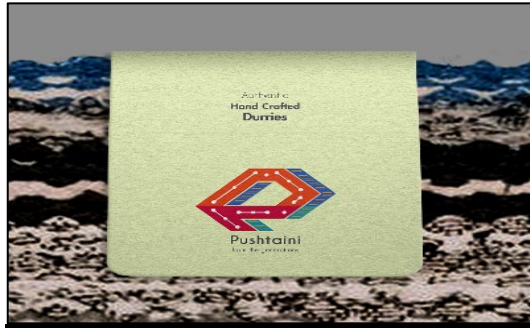**Figure 10** Implementation in Phulkari Craft Branding

Figure 11

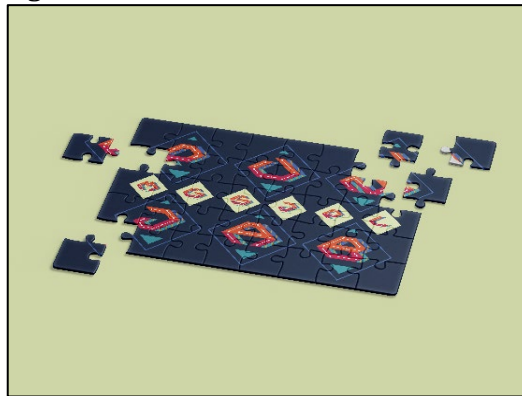**Figure 11** Implementation of Durrie Craft branding

Figure 12

Figure 12 Implementation in kid's letter puzzle

10. CONCLUSION

The culmination of this research endeavour marks a significant milestone in the exploration of typography as a vessel for cultural expression and heritage preservation. Through the creation of the Chakor typeface, inspired by the rich tapestry of Punjab's cultural traditions including Phulkari embroidery and Truck Art, we have embarked on a journey that seamlessly intertwines tradition with

modernity, craftsmanship with digital design, and cultural symbolism with typographic innovation.

The methodology employed in this research paper allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationship between typography and cultural heritage. By delving into the historical origins, techniques, and symbolic meanings of Phulkari embroidery and Truck Art, we gained valuable insights that informed every aspect of the typeface design process. Through iterative design iterations, colour explorations, and cultural analyses, each glyph was meticulously crafted to embody the essence of Punjab's vibrant artistic traditions while ensuring legibility, functionality, and aesthetic appeal.

The Chakor typeface stands not only as a testament to the enduring legacy of Punjab's cultural heritage but also as a versatile tool for designers and typographers seeking to infuse their projects with a sense of cultural richness and authenticity. Its geometric structure, dual-colour stems, and incorporation of Phulkari motifs reflect a harmonious fusion of tradition and innovation, paying homage to the resilience, creativity, and vibrancy of Punjab's diverse communities.

To conclude, it is evident that the creation of the typeface transcends mere typographic design; it represents a celebration of cultural identity, a preservation of artistic heritage, and a bridge between past and present. Moving forward, the Chakor typeface serves as a beacon of inspiration for future endeavours in typography and cultural design, reminding us of the boundless possibilities that arise when tradition and innovation intersect in the realm of visual communication.

11. LIMITATIONS

The project was limited across time and geography. Due to logistic limitations, the research was conducted in and around Chandigarh and hence Phulkari artisans from nearby villages could only be interviewed. Insights on the craft could vary across other parts of Punjab which is compensated through a literature review. Further, an ethnographic study of truck art would have given better insights into the same. The Phulkari artisans are introduced briefly to the typeface and the same if done with truck artists can provide further valuable insights as well as make the typeface usable for them. A study of more crafts can give the study a well-rounded understanding of the cultural heritage of the state from a wide lens.

12. FUTURE SCOPE

1) To collaborate with Phulkari artisans in using typeface real-time in their embroidery.
2) To refine the glyphs further for improved legibility.
3) To create the leftover glyph set and expand across other regional languages.
4) To make a family of similar typefaces with a combination of different crafts.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

Grewal, N., & Grewal, A. (1988). The Needle Lore (pp. 36–55). Ajanta Publications. (Original work published 1988)

Graham, J. (2004). Asian embroidery (J. Dhamija, Ed.; pp. 113–124). Abhinav Publications, Craft Council of India.

Hitkari, & Singh, S. (1980). Phulkari: the folk art of the Punjab. Phulkari Publications.

Kaur, R., & Gupta, I. (2014). Phulkari and Bagh folk art of Punjab: a study of changing designs from traditional to contemporary time. American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.

Kaur, P. (2011). Revival of Punjab's traditional handicraft: Phulkari. Asian Journal of Management, 2(1), 28-38.

Madan, A. (2018). Visual Semiotics of Truck Art in India: From Art on Trucks to a Digital Art Style.

Zahraa, F., & Abdullahb, S. (2020). Vehicular Art Themes: Five Indian Subcontinental Art Forms that Inspire Pakistani Truck Visuals. International Journal of Innovation, Creativity, and Change, 14(1), 1243-1267.

Suman, S. (2016). Horn Please [Video].

M. Khan, S. (n.d.). Truck Art and its Transformations in the 21st Century from Popular Culture to High Culture.

Sonneblick, E. (2020). Indipedia: Truck Art [Video]. In Epic ON.

Suman, S. (n.d.). Chote Miya NYC. Shantanu Suman. https://www.shantanusuman.com/portfolio/chotemiya/

Suman, S. (n.d.). Wired India. Shantanu Suman. https://www.shantanusuman.com/portfolio/wired-india/

Suman, S. (n.d.). Taxi Fabric: Keep Distance. Shantanu Suman. https://www.shantanusuman.com/portfolio/taxifabric-keepdistance/

J, A. (2023). Behance. Behance.net. https://www.behance.net/gallery/22044197/Theka-(Vector-Font)

Sidhu, M. (2020). Instagram. Instagram.com. https://www.instagram.com/fusionphulkari/

Verma, A. (2023). Behance. Behance.net. https://www.behance.net/gallery/144481087/Phulkari-Art-Chandelier

Khosla, I. (2023). Typecraft. Typecraft. https://www.typecraftinitiative.org/?lang=hi