



SRISHTI MANIPAL COLLECTIVE'25

Under Graduate Professional Programme





In South Asia, we are blessed with rich, plural forms of creative arts and crafts practices that have emerged historically and continue to flourish through individual and community of practitioners. Folk and traditional forms as well as new forms of creative writing (in and for regional languages), oral storytelling, performance arts, textile arts, musical arts, etc, have evolved with and through a range of technological advances in our places.

Planned, designed and facilitated by a collective of collectives-- Deccan Living Labs - Living Labs Network & Forum, Team YUVAA, Manesiri Women-Producers' Collective--this project invited students to wonder: What if the imaginations are from the people and their everyday practices of making, crafting, working with technologies? What kind of human-technology relations and forms could such imaginations hold, and bring forward?

Supriya Nandgouli, Muni Ramakka, Harshawardhan Rathore, Vinay Kumar Malge, Eshwari R, Archit Dhiman, Adhavan Sivakumar, Shreyas Srivatsa and Naveen Bagalkot, as a group of co-facilitators in Bidar and Channapatna facilitated the students in smaller teams to engage with a specific micro-context of a unique practice of the place through place-based approaches. In Bidar we worked with a) Bidri Practices, b) Hoogararu (community of flower-garland makers), c) Women Farmers, and d) Banjara Embroidery. In Channapatna we worked with a) Women's Agrarian Practices and Animal Husbandry, and b) Community Health Practices in Islampur. Over three sessions of intense place-based engagements, we moved from understanding & co-learning and identifying a unique idea of technology embedded in the specific living practice, and collaboratively building speculative artifacts and worlds to highlight the idea of technology. The work collectively highlights the rich, plural ideas of technologies rooted in the living practices and places, and open up possibilities for re-imagining new, advanced forms of technologies from the place.

LOCAL TECHNO FUTURES

NAVEEN BAGALKOT AND SHREYAS SRIVATSA

Supriya Nandgouli, Muni Ramakka, Harshawardhan Rathod, Vinay Kumar Malge, Eshwari R, Archit Dhiman, Adhavan Sivakumar

Deccan Living Labs - Living Labs Network & Forum,
Team YUVAA, Manesiri Women-Producers' Collective.





This project is rooted in Bidriware craft practices of Bidar - often called the “city of whispering monuments.” Trupti Agarwal, Vedant Nikam, and I collaborated with Bidriware artisan Shakeel Ahmed, along with his family and colleagues, over three weeks distributed across three months. Like many artisans in this community, he comes from a long line of Bidriware practitioners—a craft deeply intertwined with Bidar in its process, product, and communication. Working alongside Shakeel Sahab involved iterative idea development and hands-on engagement with the craft. I began by bringing a self-made air-dry clay mold to explore its potential for Bidriware replication. Although it broke, it sparked a conversation about traditional molding techniques. Shakeel Sahab demonstrated the actual process, and I observed and attempted each step. He later invited me to design a “real” peacock, leading to a collaboratively developed Bidriware peacock. This clarified how his practice functions as a form of technology—translating lived experience into design through a balance of realism and abstraction, black and white, pattern, and form. On a later visit, I shared a fictional narrative based on the peacock, prompting discussion and another story imagining an active Mahmud Gawan Madarsa and vibrant fort. It sparked reflection on what the workshop could become—a space where artisans collaborate with visitors, learners, and enthusiasts in ongoing dialogue, making, and knowledge exchange. Shakeel Sahab responded with new design ideas, leading to four unique Bidriware artifact concepts, each paired with a fictional narrative. One artifact-story set was kept by each collaborator. To complement this, I created an immersive storytelling website that showcases his envisioned world and design approach. He shared that this would help him present his collaborative work to potential clients, through both the physical artifacts and the website.



BEING BIDRI

Bidri Practices

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TRACING STORIES THROUGH SOPPUS

Women's Agrarian Practices and Animal Husbandry in Channapatna

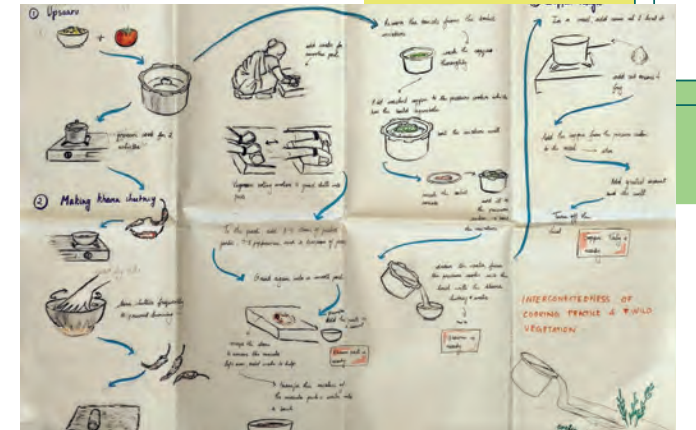
ANANYA SARANGI

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Collaborator: Mangalamma

This project is rooted in the foraging practices in and around Channapatna, Karnataka. I collaborated with Mangalamma, a member of the women farmers' community and the women's Health Navigator network in the region. She is based in Hunasanahalli, a village located near Channapatna. Foraging is an integral part of Mangalamma's way of life; she gathers locally found soppus (herbs) to add to her family's daily meals for nourishment and to make home remedies for various ailments. Over a period of three weeks, I worked with Mangalamma to understand her practice of foraging in depth: the different soppus she gathers, their health benefits, the dishes she prepares with them, the techniques she uses, and the relationships and memories embedded in her practice. I accompanied Mangalamma to the places where she forages and foraged with her to make herbarium cards with pressed soppus, documenting their habitats, characteristics, and health benefits, while mapping them to the locations where she gathers them. As she cooked the soppus and shared her recipes, I observed the techniques involved in their preparation and compiled an illustrated and annotated collection of her recipes into a recipe booklet. My understanding of technology within this practice is the embodied knowledge and techniques Mangalamma uses while foraging. She relies on sensory cues like texture, smell, appearance, and even the sound leaves make when crushed to identify plants. Her technique of picking soppus prevents overharvesting and stimulates regrowth, reflecting a deep, more-than-human connection with the land. Her practice is rooted in care; care that extends beyond her family's well-being to include the land, fostering a reciprocal relationship with the environment. Together, we imagined what the practice of foraging would look like if foraging knowledge that is traditionally passed down within families is also shared collectively across households. This led to the creation of a community-owned herbarium that takes the form of an interactive digital map of the region in and around Channapatna, with layers of information that map soppus, remedies, recipes, stories, and experiences to the contributors and the place. It captures how cross-learning could occur, enabling people to contribute to and learn from the herbarium, while making visible the diverse knowledge systems of the community and its local culinary and health practices..





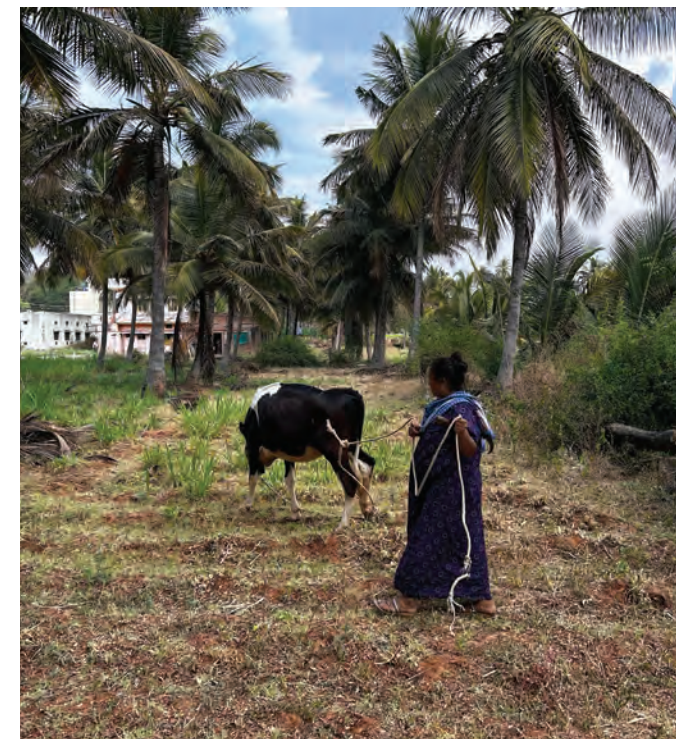
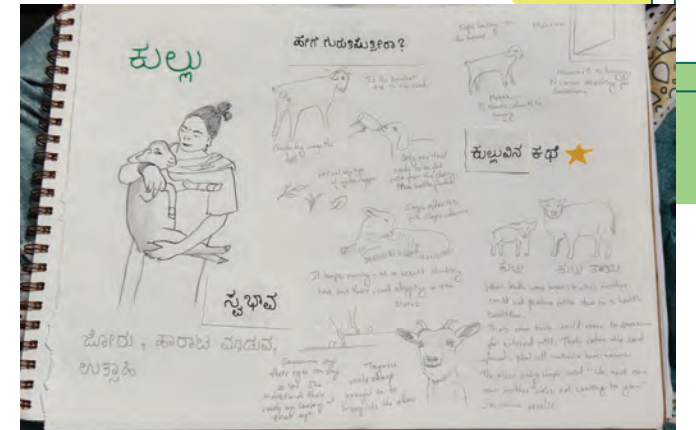
THE HANDS THAT CARE

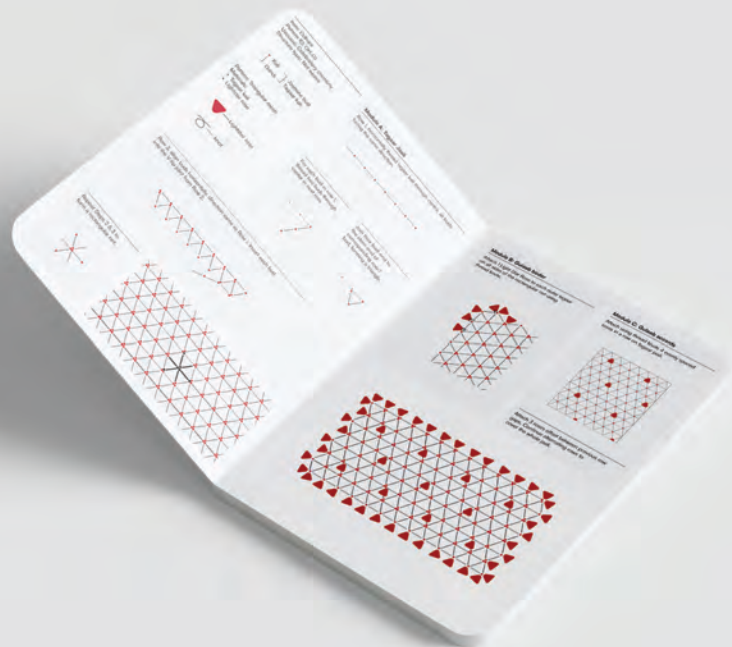
Women's Agrarian Practices and Animal Husbandry

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Collaborator: Sarasamma

This project is in collaboration with Sarasamma, a woman farmer in Dyavapatna, Channapatna Taluk, where she also works as a health navigator with the Manesiri Women's Producer Collective. Sarasamma's practice of animal husbandry is shaped by attentiveness, memory, and a deep sensory understanding of each of her animals. Her relationship with them is built through touch, gaze, routine, and a kind of intuitive recognition - she doesn't count them, she simply knows them by their moods, behaviours, and eyes. Over three weeks, my peer Samriddhi and I worked with Sarasamma to understand her practice of care in animal raising. I used oral histories supported by cue cards and animal personas to explore stories of recognition, bonding, and memory. I sketched and annotated these stories, co-creating illustrations with Sarasamma, and documented her day-in-the-life to better understand how care is embedded in her everyday routine. These were synthesized into a narrative artefact titled *The Hands That Care*—a visual storybook that traces quiet, ordinary moments of embodied care, where she is not just feeding or herding, but observing, guessing, playing, and remembering. Through this process, Sarasamma's care emerged as a kind of technology—a lived knowledge system passed through doing, not telling. Her way of raising animals through memory, interaction, and instinct, without external tools, is an important and often overlooked practice. Together, we imagined a world where each woman farmer keeps her own Farmer's Almanac—a personal knowledge archive where ways of knowing are authored by the farmer herself. The outcome took the form of a present-day almanac documenting Sarasamma's animals, methods, and rhythms, which will later evolve into a speculative version that reimagines how animal-rearing knowledge could be decentralised, shared, and valued through lived experience..





In this project, I explored the Hoogararu community of Bidar, Karnataka, known for crafting garlands and floral arrangements for cultural, social, and religious occasions. I collaborated with Ameer ji and Khaleq ji (an ustaad) from Bidar's old flower market to understand their practice. With Ameer ji, I observed, created a seasonal flower calendar, drew to understand different techniques, and co-named patterns through a large photographic collage. Working with Khaleq ji, I learned to make a chocolate garland, gaining firsthand experience of how knowledge is passed down. Through these engagements I began to see them as cultural enablers of Bidar, who hold the power to transform skill and material into meaning. Technology here was the art of naming and assembling garlands - a kind of logic that is not written down but lives in gestures, materials, and repetition. Each arrangement is a set of decisions, shaped by constraints and individual choices. Ameer ji and I collaborated on making a visual dictionary of all the wide range of garland patterns he could make. He helped me understand the structural logic behind them - the connection between materials, techniques, and creative intent. The outcome captures the existing structural logic and its creative potential as speculative design. Making garland is like an algorithm, structured but still flexible, allowing for endless variations like writing a code. My project presents a new way of looking at the craft as informal technology - an intelligent, combination system driven by logic and set of rules..



FLORGORITHM

Hoogararu

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This project is situated within the embroidery practices of the Banjara community in and around Bidar. My colleague Madhura Bondare and I worked closely with Muktha Bai, a Banjara embroiderer in her 50s who is based out of Sindhol Thanda, a Banjara settlement near Bidar. Embroidery has been an integral part of this community and it has evolved along with the community's movement across space and time; it is a material rich practice that we explored in depth with Muktha Bai. Over a period of 3 weeks, at different intervals, we learnt about how the craft has evolved through the lens of materials by creating an extensive material catalog with Muktha Bai and creating a detailed relational database that shows the relationship that Muktha Bai has with her materials. Working with Muktha Bai I came across the practice of seamless adoption and incorporation of new materials into the craft as a key technology in the practice. I worked with Madhura and Muktha Bai to uncover speculative ideas of what the materials in the craft look like if the community continued sourcing materials through gathering rather than buying replicas from the markets, we worked on a speculative artefact in the form of a hat that would capture the role played by materials in Muktha Bai's craft and built an alternative world with Muktha Bai. This narrative led to the creation of an immersive gamified narrative which acts as an insight into how Muktha Bai imagines the community to adopt new materials, while also being a memory keeping system for Muktha Bai about materials in the craft..



WEAVING WITH MATERIALS

Banjara Embroidery

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This project is situated in the embroidery practices of the Banjara community from Sindhol Thanda, a settlement near Bidar. My colleague Eshwar Venkatesan and I worked closely with Muktha Bai, an experienced practitioner, to learn from her ways of making and thinking. Embroidery has been an important part of the Banjara community's history, travelling and changing alongside their movements across different regions and times. Over three separate trips, we spent time with Muktha Bai through conversations, stitching sessions, and collaborative making. We embroidered on the same cloth, through which I learned, conversed and exchanged ideas. We also maintained detailed field notes, captured process photographs, and engaged with artefacts Muktha Bai shared to explain how patterns and practices have shifted over time. Through this process, I learned that in craft, knowledge lives in the hands, memories, and emotions of its makers, passed down through materials, practice, and time. I worked with Muktha Bai and Eshwar to explore speculative ideas, where I imagined a world where crafted objects hold memories and stories woven in by the maker, and touching them lets you directly feel and know them. Craftswomen like Muktha Bai act as memory keepers of their communities, giving them ownership over their stories and narratives. This world took shape in the form of a speculative artefact - an embroidered bucket hat that we co-created with Muktabai, bringing together her embroidery practice and my interest in form and pattern to encode the story of how materials have evolved throughout the craft's history. I further created a visual speculative narrative that helps imagine this world while making the intrinsic value behind Muktha Bai's practice visible..



REMEMBROIDERY

Banjara Embroidery

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SENSING CLIMATE

Women Farmer Practices in Bidar

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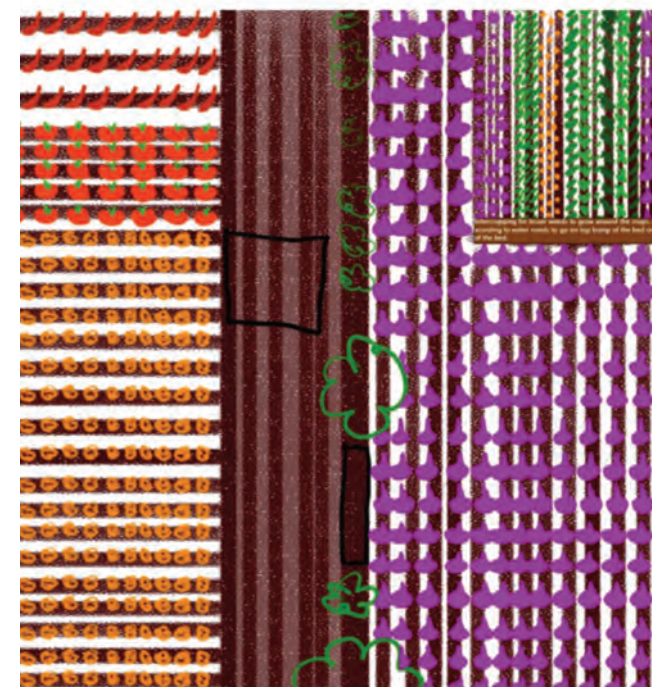
Collaborator: Shilpa Mali Patil, a woman farmer from Halhipparga

This project is situated in the farming practices of women around Bidar, Karnataka. Alongside my colleague Shubh Wadhwa, I collaborated with Shilpa Mali Patil, a farmer in her 40s from the nearby village of Halhipparga. My focus was on exploring her deeply sensory, land-based knowledge; a key technology rooted in observing her land and experimenting year after year, despite the certainty that some crops fail. This form of climate resilience is rarely visible in mainstream agriculture, where women like Shilpa ji are reduced to cheap labour, rather than decision makers with strategic moves on crop cycles, soil health and sustainable practices. Over three weeks, at different intervals, I worked with Shilpa ji to co-create pattern farm maps, a data-visualised crop calendar and a dialectogram to document her climate decisions like intercropping, crop rotation and pest management. This form of technology stands in sharp contrast to the top-down advisories from agricultural institutes like ICAR and KVK, which issue climate predictions and mandate what farmers should grow such as pushing millet cultivation through subsidies, often without considering farmers' local expertise or needs. To challenge this, Shilpa ji and I began to imagine a world where a shift from labour to power is marked. This power is in their decisions to live in partnership with their crops and strengthen resilience against both climate shifts and market prices. We worked on a speculative artefact in the form of a 'fasalnama' that would record Shilpa ji's experiments to envision a more-than-human ecosystem. The ideas uncovered culminated in an immersive narrative that highlights how Shilpa ji imagines her community evolving, while also signalling the need to make her invisible practice visible to the mainstream..





This project explores the farming roles of women in Bidar. We often picture farmers as men, but it is women who do most of the fieldwork; their labor remains invisible. For eg, harvesting itself includes many tasks such as, cutting the crop, putting them in a bag, weighing, sewing the bag, loading it to send it to the market etc. Over 3 weeks in Bidar (at different intervals), my colleague, Rianna Chattopadhyay and I, worked closely with Shilpa Malipatil, a farmer from halhiparga, to understand the embodied knowledge their community possesses. My focus area emerged around seedmaking, a process of producing seeds from the original crop. I co-created a zine with Shilpaji that highlighted global farming rituals to spark conversations around similar agricultural practices in Bidar. Alongside this, I developed a storyboard that initially featured international farming stories, which gradually evolved to include personal narratives from Bidar's farmers. I also mapped the layout of their farm, gaining insights into their rationale behind farm practices. I created flashcards, mini flipbook and a scanimation to highlight the technology/technique and synthesize the information. I was fascinated by how techniques evolved through repetitive practice, gradually becoming so refined that it took the least time and effort to complete the task. To imagine an alternate world that makes farming practices visible, shilpaji and I worked on artefacts like, seed-cookbook, newspaper (2028 issue), and ideal farm-bill. This process sparked a dialogue in the Shilpaji's house about farm responsibilities, land titles, financial incentives. These insights were synthesised to create a visual scroll and a text script to compare and contrast the practice in an ideal world and the current one..



ONION HERVEST

Women Farmer Practices in Bidar

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Collaborator: Shilpa Mali Patil, a woman farmer from Halhipparga





In this project I explore the Hugararu Community who make flower garlands in Bidar, Karnataka. I worked closely with Basavaraj Hugar, a flower garland maker in his 60's, whose family has been practising this craft for generations. His ancestors have been practising garland making since Basavanna's Lingayat Movement started in the 12th Century, hence carrying the last name "Hugar" - meaning florist. Over a period of 3 weeks of engagement with Basavaraj Hugar, I learnt about the reasons for using particular flowers in garlands, its histories, evolution and their unsaid connotations to different communities in Bidar. I recited a self-composed poem on the various uses of the marigold flower to spark conversations around its cultural and symbolic significance. Accompanying Basavaraj to the Matha and temples allowed me to experience firsthand the emotions and intentions behind garland offerings. Creating a Shivlinga with flowers alongside him further deepened my understanding of the material qualities that make various flowers suitable for making garlands. Over time, our conversations opened up a deeper understanding of his religious and spiritual perspectives, revealing how the ideologies of Basavanna—the founder of Lingayatism—are reflected in his practice, especially the principle of Kayakave Kailasa (Work is Worship). The ideology of Kayaka—working as a form of puja rather than for monetary gain—stands in stark contrast to contemporary notions of work. With Basavaraj Hugar, I began to speculate about a world where Kayaka is the guiding principle of work. This led to the co-creation of a world with Basavanna's imagined utopia of a casteless society rooted in devotion to work. In a world without deity worship, how would garlands be used? In a world of caste and monetary equality, how would hard work be rewarded? His accounts of experimenting with garlands and flowers, credit and ownership of garlands, stories of the old way of life led to the co-creation of a speculative world, offering glimpses into a way of working shaped by purpose, creativity, and spiritual intent. I have represented this alternative world fiction in a poetic format, narrating the role and devotion of garland making in the utopia imagined by Basavaraj..



BLOSSOMS OF KAYAKA

Hoogararu

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PATTERNS OF SYNERGIES

Bidri Practices

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Bidriware, a metal handicraft of silver inlay is deeply established in the heritage of Bidar, Karnataka. Introduced by the Bahmani Dynasty in the 14th century, the craft has adapted to changing cultures, lifestyles, and traditions over centuries. Aditi Jain, Vedant Nikam, and I collaborated with Bidri craftsman Shakeel Ahmed Sahab, his family, and fellow artisans in Bidri Colony. Like many in his community, he comes from a generation of Bidriware practitioners. Over 3 weeks, stretched over 3 months in Bidar, I immersed myself into the evolution of the practice. Centered at Shakeel Sahab's workshop, this journey of co-creating Bidriware revealed the craft's layered nuances. I closely observed and visually documented tools, gestures, processes and materials in each phase of making. Through conversations, I explored the etymology of words used in the workshop. Gradually, the hyperlocal nature of the craft emerged; where tools and materials hold unique, personal relationships with each artisan, resonating differently across processes. I co-created a catalogue of Bidri forms and patterns to understand the evolution of the craft and how it has adapted to socio-economic shifts, material availability, and emerging technologies. I realised that imaginations of forms and patterns, when brought into making, transform the process itself. Following this, we speculated about an alternative world with Shakeel Sahab where his workshop is situated in the Mahmud Gawan Madarsa; a space where Bidri artisans and other visitors interested in co-learning and co-creating about the craft. Together, we speculated on new forms and patterns changed by sharing lived experiences. To capture the processes and the nuances of the craft through co-creation, I created a visual dictionary that describes the synergies between people, tools, materials, places, language and dialogue. This form of storytelling creates an immersive engagement for the readers and helps visualize a world of co-creation in the process of making..





This project is rooted in Bidriware craft practices of Bidar. My colleagues - Trupti Agarwal, Aditi Jain and I collaborated with Shakeel Ahmed and his team of Bidri artisans based in Bidri Colony. Shakeel sahab and his brothers, along with his uncle, are all generational Bidri practitioners. They share a common workshop in Bidri Colony where they work together to produce Bidriware items. Over three weeks spread across three months, we engaged in hands-on learning and co-creating Bidriware items with Shakeel Sahab and his colleagues. Long hours were spent in the workshop, not just learning techniques but also immersing ourselves in the space through conversations, observations, and making. Initially, I set out to understand how a single artisan imagines during the craft process. But through this experience, I realised imagination here is plural. The co-creation of artefacts revealed a deep synergy among the artisans, with each complementing the other. The workshop functioned as a space of shared co-imagination, shaped by the different lived experiences of its members. This led me to speculate: What if Shakeel Sahab's workshop was part of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa—a historic centre of learning where Bidri was once taught? In this imagined world, the Madrasa flourishes as a space where artisans, learners, and visitors co-create by sharing their own lived experiences with personal narratives to explore new materials, forms, and patterns in a synergetic collaboration. I created a Dialectogram, a spatial narrative capturing relationships, tools, gestures, stories and dialogues. Through this Dialectogram, I represent the idea of synergetic practice as a form of technology that I uncovered while collaborating with Shakeel Sahab and his colleagues, which is elaborated in the speculative world of the collaborative workshop..



THE LIVING WORKSHOP

Bidri Practices

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Collaborator: Shakeel Ahmed and team.

