

NIKITA SHAH

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Education

- FASHION INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY, New York, USA
Associate of Applied Science, Fashion Design 2018-2019
- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANNUR, INDIA
Bachelor of Design, Textile Design 2008-2012
- SWISS TEXTILE COLLEGE, ZURICH, SWITZERLAND
Student exchange program May-Jun 2010

Guest Lectures & Short Intensives

- Sari, Not Sorry
Fashion Institute of Technology, NYC, USA Fall 2025
- Introduction to Kalamkari
Princeton University, NJ, USA Fall 2025
- Outsider-Insider: Practices of ethnography in co-creation
Tufts University, MA, USA Spring 2025
- History and Practice of Kalamkari
Amherst College, MA, USA Spring 2025
- Introduction to Kalamkari
Fordham University Spring 2025
- Artist Talk, in conversation with Lucia Monge
Amherst College Spring 2025
- Craft to Fashion: Motifs, Meanings and Design Process
Fashion Institute of Technology, NYC, USA Fall 2024
- Neo-Heritage Textile Design Process
National Institute of Fashion Technology, Kannur, India Spring 2024
- Vocational training in Creative thinking and Design
MEHR BABA TRUST, Punjab, India Fall 2021-2023
- Introduction to Kalamkari, IIT, Hyderabad, India 2016-2018

Professional Workshops & Public Programs

- Sari in everyday life, New York Historical, NYC Oct 2025
- Fursat for Creative Aging, New York Public Library Oct-Dec 2024
- History and Practice of Mirror Embroidery, MFTA, NYC Aug 2024
- Fursat 01, Fursat 02, recurring every month, Brooklyn Jan 2023 – Dec 2025
- Introduction to Kalamkari, Shopify, NYC Mar 2024
- Introduction to Kalamkari, Bloomberg x MFTA, NYC Mar 2024
- Introduction to Kalamkari, GRIOT Circle, Brooklyn Apr-Nov 2024
- Introduction to Kalamkari, LGBTQ center, Brooklyn Feb-Nov 2024
- Introduction to Kalamkari, Home Studio Brooklyn Dec 2023
- Introduction to Kalamkari, Temple of Belonging, Oregon Sep 2023
- The history and drapes of sarees, Asia Society, NYC Sep 2023
- Mirror Embroidery, Herbert Von King Park, Brooklyn Aug 2023
- Gujarati embroidery with my ancestors, Virtual May 2023
- Inter-generational healing through textiles, Private, NJ Mar 2023, Apr 2024

- Introduction to Kalamkari, Agaati Foundation, CA *Nov 2022*
- Introduction to Kalamkari, Oakland, CA *Nov 2022*
- Introduction to Kalamkari, My Fabric Stash, Seattle, WA *Oct 2022*
- Introduction to Kalamkari, New York Textile Month, Brooklyn *Sep - Oct 2022*
- Upcycling through embroidery, Sustainable Fashion Week, PA *Apr 2022*

Semester-Long Courses & Curriculum Design

- South Asian textile history, Contemporary textile production practices and economy
Tufts University, MA, USA *Fall 2023-Spring 2024*
- Diasporic migrations of South Asian fashion and Indian fashion design industries.
Tufts University, MA, USA *Fall 2024- Spring 2025*

Publications & Writings

- Fursat: Crafting Community, Rest and Decolonization through Traditional textile practices, *Fashion Studies' special issue - Unravelling Fashion Narratives* *Jun 2025*
- Henna's New Medium; Dilemmas in translating color and culture from skin to cloth, *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of World Textiles*, Vol.4: Color, co-authored with Matthew Raj Webb *forthcoming, 2026*
- Slowing down with Kalamkari, *Paper Magazine* *Jan 2024*
- How Kalamkari became Chintz, *The Juggernaut* *Apr 2024*
- The Kahani of: Nikita, *Kahani Digital* *Apr 2024*

Symposium & Conference Presentations

- Fursat: Crafting Community, Rest and Decolonization through Traditional textile practices, *South Asia Conference* *Oct 2025*
- Kalahasti in Brooklyn: A return to Kalamkari's storytelling, *Marangoni London Research* *May 2025*
- Fursat: Crafting Community, Rest and Decolonization through Traditional textile practices, *Textile Society of America* *Nov 2024*
- Fursat: Crafting Community, Rest and Decolonization through Traditional textile practices, *Fashion Studies Network* *Jun 2024*

Grants, Fellowships & Residencies

- Designer-in-Residence *Materials for the Arts*, NYC *2023*
- At home in Brooklyn- Kalamkari story cloth, *Brooklyn Arts Council Fund*, NYC *2024*

Fashion, Performance & Art Installations

- *Sari not Sorry* *July 2025*
- *New York Sari*, New York Historical, NY *Sep 2025*
- *When Eye Speak festival*, San Francisco, CA *Oct 2025*
- Ramti Aave, Barkha Dance Co., Harlem Stage, NYC *Dec 2024*
- History of Sari drapes, South Asia New York Fashion Week x Asia Society, NYC *Sep 2023*
- Oceans that live, Sustainable Fashion Week, NJ *Apr 2023*
- The Road back home, Brooklyn Fashion Week, NYC *Apr 2023*
- The Headhunters Romance, South Asia New York Fashion Week *Sep 2022*
- Home Lies Inside, Sustainable Fashion Week, NYC *Sep 2021*

Styling, Costume & Visual Design

• Costume, Visual Design and Styling, Barkha Dance Co.	<i>Feb 2022-present</i>
• Costume Design and Styling, LaWhore Vagistan	<i>Oct 2023 - present</i>
• Styling, Mehndi Moment Blush for Kulfi Beauty	<i>Feb 2023</i>
• Sari Styling, Usha Jey & troop, Vogue World Show	<i>Sep 2022</i>
• Costume Design Assistant Keerthy Reddy, Mahanati	<i>2016-2018</i>

Professional Experience

VINTAGE INDIA NYC, New York, USA

Creative Director, Textile and Vintage Upcycling Expert

Feb 2022-present

- Lead designer and educator for in-store and public workshops exploring Indian textile heritage through upcycling.
- Develop and execute design strategies that combine traditional craft techniques with contemporary silhouettes for red-carpet appearances and retail collections.
- Mentor interns and emerging designers in embroidery, handcraft techniques, and cultural research to support sustainable fashion learning.
- Curate educational content and storytelling for digital platforms that celebrate the history of South Asian textiles and diasporic fashion.

NEST, New York, USA

Fellow, NEST Expert Network

Nov 2020-present

- Provide curriculum-style design mentorship and capacity-building support to artisan organizations in India, Africa, Cambodia, Mexico, and beyond.
- Collaborate with craft brands (e.g. Marasim, Legado, FivePVenture, Collective Humanity, Seeds & Stories) to co-create culturally respectful and market-viable collections.
- Conduct market research and write reports on sustainability, global craft economies, and fashion innovation with a focus on ethical storytelling.

ADITIANY, New York, USA

Textile design Consultant

Jan 2024-present

- Engage in the development of bespoke embroidery designs for high-end fashion houses and interior designers, ensuring the integration of both modern and traditional techniques.
- Work alongside a diverse team of skilled artisans, contributing to the preservation and innovation of hand embroidery crafts

INTERNATIONAL FOLK ART MARKET, Sante Fe, USA

Hindustani Artist Mentor and Volunteer Chair

Jul 2021-2024

- Designed and implemented onboarding sessions for Indian artisans with an emphasis on cultural presentation, product development, and communication.
- Coordinated multilingual volunteer teams and training programs to facilitate cross-cultural learning and exchange.
- Developed mentorship guides tailored to traditional Indian textile artists navigating international markets.

ĀVE India Design Collective, New York, USA

Jul 2019 – Nov 2019

Head of Operations and Retail

- Led retail and logistics operations while developing training for staff on South Asian textiles and their contemporary applications.
- Served as design consultant for collaborative collections integrating artisanal fabrics with contemporary silhouettes.

GAURANG, Hyderabad, India

Oct 2012- June 2019

Head of Design and Operations

- Led a multidisciplinary team in textile and fashion design, integrating traditional weaving and hand-painted techniques with contemporary fashion aesthetics.
- Designed and executed collections showcased at Lakmé and other Fashion Weeks, bringing indigenous craftsmanship into global conversations on design.
- Mentored design interns and junior staff, fostering knowledge exchange between young designers and artisan communities.
- Facilitated workshops for students and international visitors, offering insights into the Kalamkari process and sari drape heritage.
- Organized student-artisan exchange programs to build capacity in heritage textile practices and sustainable production.

KALAM CREATIONS, Hyderabad, India

Mar 2013-Jul 2018

Craft Designer

- Co-developed educational modules on Kalamkari for design students and professionals, later presented in academic institutions including IIT Hyderabad.
- Collaborated directly with artisans to modernize design motifs and storytelling techniques while preserving traditional hand-painting practices.
- Facilitated site-based learning for visiting scholars and designers to explore Kalamkari as both a spiritual and socio-political textile tradition.
- Designed heritage textile-based workshops and exhibits for public audiences, bridging historical research and contemporary design

M.P KHADI & VILLAGE INDUSTRIES BOARD, INDIA

Nov 2011- May 2012

Graduation Project

- Researched and designed two handloom sari collections in collaboration with Maheshwar and Bagh artisans for final semester at NIFT.
- Developed documentation and training resources on block-printing and natural dyeing techniques, with an emphasis on artisan pedagogy.
- Presented the project as a model for rural artisan collaboration, receiving recognition for culturally embedded and sustainable design.