

Somaiya Kala Vidya Brings the Artisans of Kutch to the Lakm? Fashion Week x FDCI Runway

Published on 14 Oct 2025 | By IFI Correspondent



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By [IndiaFashionIcon.com](https://indiafashionicon.com)

Fashion weeks, with their back-to-back showcases and high-octane energy, often blur into a parade of trends and theatrics. Yet, every so often, a show cuts through the noise to offer something truly moving. On **Day Three of Lakm? Fashion Week x FDCI in Mumbai**, that moment arrived courtesy of **Somaiya Kala Vidya (SKV)** — a skilling institute from Kutch that empowers craftspeople to become independent designer-entrepreneurs.

What unfolded on the runway was not just fashion—it was a dialogue between heritage and innovation. **Ajrakh, Mashru, Bandhani, and Batik**, the four crafts that define Kutch's textile identity, took centre stage in a showcase that was equal parts poetry and performance.

? Crafts in Motion: Tradition Meets Transformation

The runway was divided into chapters, each celebrating a specific craft story. **Ajrakh**, with its laborious resist-dyeing and block-printing technique, appeared in vivid reds, indigos, and earthen tones—its geometry and botanical motifs narrating centuries of skill and patience. The show intertwined these visuals with **live folk music and spoken-word poetry**, transforming the runway into a living museum of Indian artistry.

While crafts in India are often framed through romanticised visuals of weavers at looms and embroiderers at work, this show shifted the lens—**placing artisans not behind the scenes but in the spotlight**, as designer-entrepreneurs.

? Five Artisans, Five Stories of Craft and Courage

Representing the new generation of craft-driven labels nurtured by **Somaiya Kala Vidya** and its social enterprise **Design Craft**, five artisan-designers presented deeply personal interpretations of traditional crafts:

- **Shakil Khatri**, a veteran from Mundra, showcased his label *Neel Batik*, blending layered dyeing and block motifs with Kutch's signature mirrorwork on saris, kaftans, and blouses.

- **Mubbasirah Khatri**, one of the few female Ajrakh artisans, presented *Elysian*—a painterly, almost abstract take on Ajrakh that challenged convention and technique alike.
 - **Zaid Khatri**, with *Ajrakh Gharana*, explored co-ord sets and richly hued suits so textural they bordered on wearable art. His own Ajrakh suit worn during his finale bow became a viral highlight of the evening.
 - **Amruta Vankar**, through her label *Alaicha*, celebrated **Mashru**—a silk-cotton weave historically rooted in Kutch—with gradient-striped saris that spoke of quiet luxury.
 - **Muskan Khatri**, the creative force behind *Musk*, brought **Bandhani** into a new era with neon accents and astral motifs that connected heritage to a futuristic aesthetic.
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? A Redefinition of the ‘Artisan’ Narrative

The showcase also questioned how craft is perceived and marketed today. In an era where “sustainability” and “artisan-made” have become industry buzzwords, **Somaiya Kala Vidya’s presence served as a reminder** that empowerment begins not with branding but with recognition, education, and agency.

As the artisans took their final bow, they weren’t just representing centuries-old crafts—they were embodying the evolution of Indian fashion itself: *from craft as heritage, to craft as contemporary design*.

? A Moment of Cultural Resonance

In a week dominated by couture, celebrity showstoppers, and digital buzz, **Somaiya Kala Vidya’s show** stood out as a moment of stillness and strength. It reaffirmed that the true luxury of Indian fashion lies not in embellishment or excess, but in the *hands that make, the minds that create, and the stories that endure*.

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