The Future of Craft: Avid Learning Explores How Artificial Intelligence is Reshaping Craft Traditions in the Latest Episode of its 'AI & Arts' Series

Craft has always embodied a uniquely human form of intelligence. Long before digital technologies entered the studio or workshop, knowledge was transmitted through apprenticeship, refined through repetition, and sustained by communities, materials, and place. Across generations, artisans have preserved techniques, adapted traditions, and responded to changing social and economic realities, ensuring that craft remains both a cultural inheritance and a living practice.

Today, artificial intelligence is entering spaces once defined by the human hand. From documenting endangered techniques and preserving craft knowledge to generating design possibilities, forecasting consumer trends, and expanding access to global markets, AI is beginning to influence every stage of the craft ecosystem. As these technologies become increasingly accessible, they raise important questions about creativity, authorship, livelihoods, and the future of traditional knowledge. Can AI help sustain centuries-old craft practices without diminishing the value of human skill? How might artisans shape the development of these technologies rather than simply adapt to them?

Avid Learning, in collaboration with **Chanakya School of Craft, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai,** and **INTACH Greater Mumbai Chapter**, presents ***The Future of Craft: The Human Hand in the AI Age***. This special program in celebration of **40 years of Chanakya** and **10 years of the Chanakya School of Craft** is the latest episode of Avid Learning's '**AI & Arts'** series. It brings together *Founder,* Gullakaari **Sushmita Kaneri,** *Chair, Creative Dignity* **Meera Goradia**, and *Founder Director, ARTISANS*' **Radhi Parekh,** in a conversation examining how craftsmanship and artificial intelligence intersect, moderated by *Assistant Professor, Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology and Design Director, Inclusive AI Lab* **Siddhi Gupta.**

The discussion will examine how artisans, designers, researchers, and cultural institutions are engaging with artificial intelligence across documentation, design innovation, education, knowledge preservation, and market access. Moving beyond simplistic narratives of AI as either a threat or a solution, the conversation will explore the more nuanced realities emerging at the intersection of technology and craftsmanship. It will consider what AI can enhance, what must remain distinctly human, and how centuries-old craft traditions may continue to shape the future of innovation.

Since 2023, Avid Learning has explored the transformative intersection of **'AI and Arts'**, decoding its influence on visual arts, literature, design, music, cinema, the written word, gaming, and law. This new series is the latest chapter in AVID's tech-forward, innovative programming, doing a deep dive into the understanding of changing artistic expression through the lens of artificial intelligence. Through a series of conversations spanning the arts, the series seeks to examine not only what AI enables but also what it disrupts by opening up critical questions about creativity and the future of artistic expression.

Join us as we examine the future of craftsmanship at the intersection of tradition, technology, and human creativity.

Program Details:
When: Wednesday, 30 September 2026 **|** 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
Where: National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai
Register: www.avidlearning.in
For Press: Ayeshah Dadachanji (ayeshah.avid@gmail.com)

About Speakers

Sushmita Kaneri is a software engineer turned social entrepreneur and the Founder of Gullakaari, an NGO working with 1000 tribal and rural artisans to revive India's traditional crafts and provide them with sustainable livelihoods. Gullakaari launched in 2023 with Dr. Kiran Bedi, marking the beginning of Sushmita's mission to preserve India's rich craft heritage. She is a recipient of the **Asia's 1000 Women Faces Award** and has also been recognized among India's leading women entrepreneurs and social innovators. Her work beautifully blends technology, entrepreneurship, and social impact to create sustainable change.

Meera Goradia is a graduate of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Her experience of working with artisan clusters spans 3 decades. She has co-founded Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan with Sushma Iyengar and Alka Jani. She was the Director of Khamir, a premier organization in Kutch for the cultural and creative industries. Khamir was nurtured by her over ten years to develop innovative approaches to the artisan sector. Her experience ranges ground level artisan supply chain realities, building farm to fibre value chains, archiving cultural histories along with frontend integration. Since 2016, she has been consulting organizations and companies such as AIACA, RiseWorldwide, Jaypore, Center for Pastoralism, Ikai Asai etc. In 2020, she co-founded Creative Dignity with a group of other creative professionals, as a network to support the artisan sector through and post the pandemic. She is the Chair of Creative Dignity at present.

Siddhi Gupta teaches Creative Education at the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology and is Design Director at the Inclusive AI Lab. She is currently pursuing her PhD at Utrecht University. Her practice spans visual storytelling, design research, pedagogy, craft, and emerging technologies, with a focus on creating access and facilitating learning through making. She has worked across alternate-learning schools, craft and cultural organisations, NGOs, government stakeholders, design labs, and museums, including the Ministry of Textiles, IIT Delhi, and the V&A Museum. At the Inclusive AI Lab, she has led projects with partners including IDRC, Adobe, and UN-affiliated initiatives, spanning digital rights, representative datasets, and ethnographic research.