

Communication Design
Project 3

Devanagari Calligraphy and Calligraphers

BY:

Devika Bhansali | 166450001

GUIDE:

Prof. G. V. Sreekumar



INDUSTRIAL DESIGN CENTER

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BOMBAY



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INTRODUCTION

2 Calligraphy and Writing in India

CALLIGRAPHY

According to the definition given in dictionaries, calligraphy is the art of beautiful handwriting. The word 'calligraphy' originated from the Greek words 'kallos' and 'graphein', meaning beauty and write respectively. It is therefore the visual art of beautiful handwriting.

WRITING IN INDIA

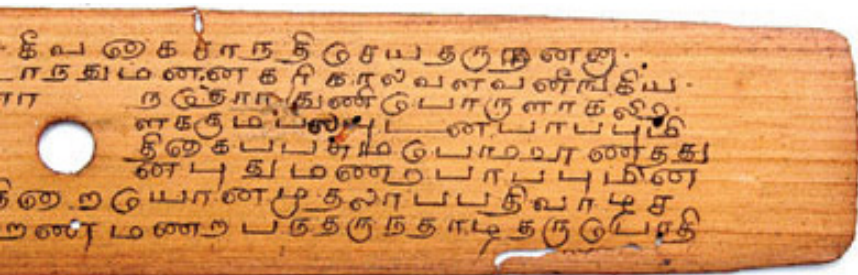
Surfaces such as burnt clay, copper, and dried leaves were used for calligraphy. Initially when paper was not discovered, birch bark, also known as bhojpatra or palm leaves were used to write manuscripts. Many old manuscripts were written on palm leaves and birch bark

as cinnabar in English is a bright scarlet to brick-red form of mercury sulfide. Gold and silver inks were used in writing the illuminated manuscripts.

Pen made of reed or wood, and brush made of fibre and hairs were known as 'lekhami'. The reed pen was also known as 'kalama'. A stylus was used in the south to write on the palm leaf. The characters were subsequently blackened with charcoal or black soot.

Palms leaves were an excellent surface for writing, and were usually used in the Southern parts of India. Religious texts were largely written on palm leaves. Manuscripts are a fine example of the humanistic and artistic activity of the past. Birch bark was commonly used for writing in the Northern part of India.

Ink was made with charcoal mixed with gum, sugar and water. Permanent inks were prepared from Borax and lamp black made from sesame oil. Red dyes were made from alaktaka or hingula. Hingula, known



Palm Leaf Manuscript
(Image courtesy: Google)

3 Devanagari

India is known for many unique features, one of them being the variety of languages spoken here, and the scripts used to write them. Each script has its own history and is beautiful in its own ways. Every script has its unique characteristics and way of writing letters. We can see multiple scripts being used all over India. As we cross the border of one state, and enter the other, we can see a different culture, language and script being used in that state.

Devanagari is one such Indian script which is used to write more than hundred languages. Some of the languages that are written in Devanagari are Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Bhojpuri, Nepali, Konkani, Marwadi, Rajasthani and Prakrit. The name 'Devanagari' is made up of two Sanskrit words, 'dev' and 'nagari', meaning God and city respectively. Hence, Devanagari means 'script from the city of Gods'. An old and

widely used script, Devanagari has roots in the ancient Brahmi script. According to the Ancient History Encyclopedia, the Brahmi script is the earliest writing system developed in India after the Indus script. It is one of the most influential writing systems; all modern Indian scripts and several hundred scripts found in Southeast and East Asia are derived from Brahmi.

Devanagari is written from the left to right direction in a horizontal way. Being an abugida, the script is divided into vowels and consonants. Each letter represents a consonant with an inherent vowel 'a'. According to the book 'Typography of Devanagari' written by Bapurao Naik, the Devanagari alphabet is composed of a total of thirty-four consonants and fourteen vowels. These are the alphabets of the script. However, there are many more letters in the Devanagari script other than

these basic letters. There are numerous conjuncts, vowel signs and diacritics. The Devanagari numerals are also different than the Latin numerals. Although the script is same, the way of writing the numbers five and eight in Hindi and Marathi are different.

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ
 ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः लृ
 क ख ग घ ङ
 च छ ज झ ञ
 ट ठ ड ढ ण
 त थ द ध न
 प फ ब भ म
 य र ल व श
 ष स ह ळ

4

Structure of Devanagari Letters

In the book 'Typography of Devanagari', Bapurao Naik, has made a graphical grouping of Devanagari letters titled 'Graphical classification of Devanagari'. Naik has graphically organized Devanagari letters into five groups based on the position of the Kana or Verti-bar.

GROUP 1

Letters with full verti-bar attached

अंत्यदंडयुक्त

अ ख घ च ज झ त थ ध न प ब
भ म य व श ष स क्ष ज्ञ ढ

GROUP 2

Letters with full verti-bar detached

अंत्यदंडयुक्त

ग ण श

GROUP 3

Letters with short-bar

अल्पदंडयुक्त

उ ऊ लृ लृ ड छ ट ठ ड ढ द ल
ह ळ

GROUP 4

Letters with central-bar

मध्यदंडयुक्त

ऋ ॠ क फ

GROUP 5

Letter without a bar

दंडरहित

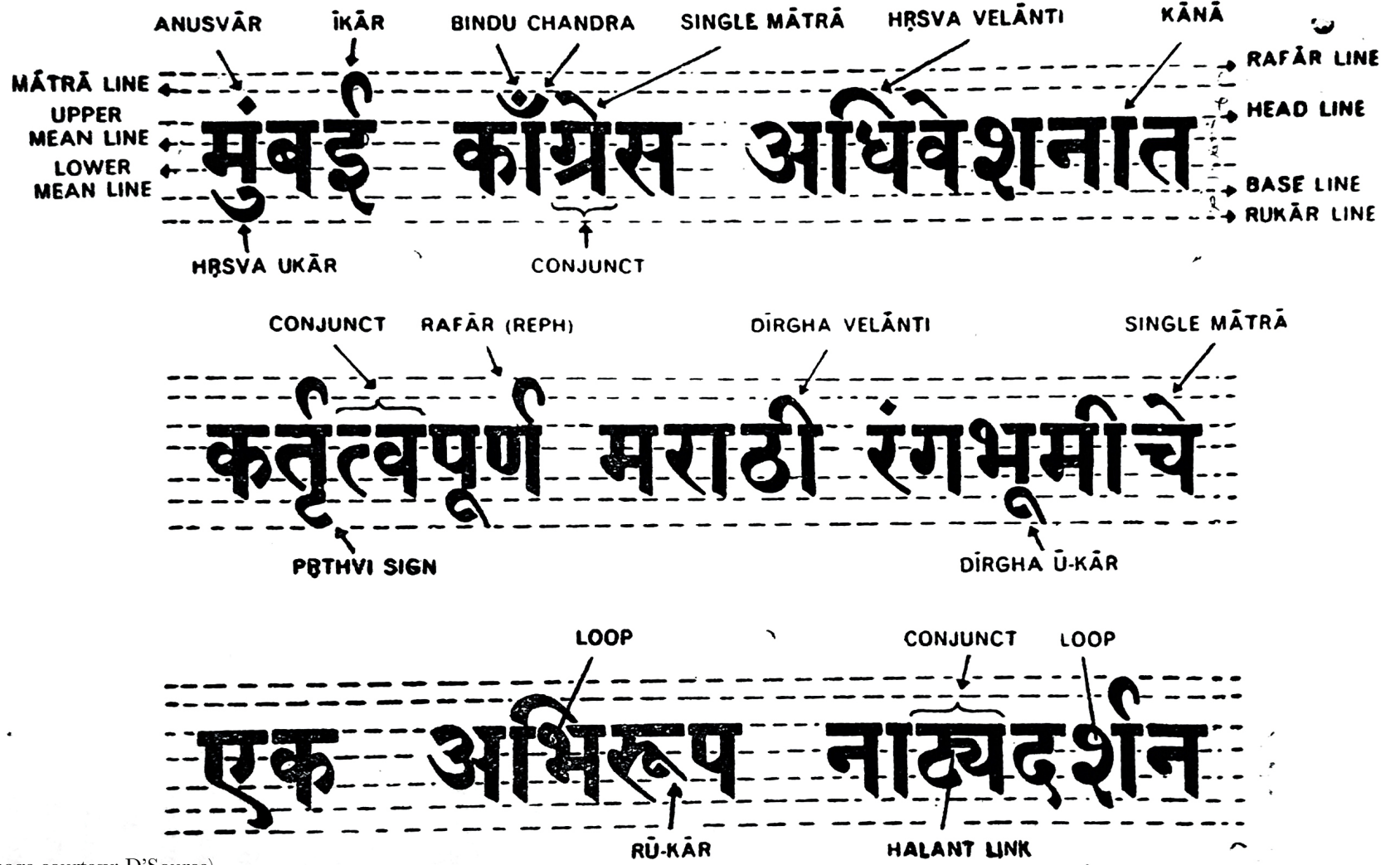
र

Further on, Naik goes on to mention the sequence based on graphic similarities that is used to teach students how to write. The groups in the sequence have letters and what their common elements are

Common Element	Letters
𑀓 and/or 𑀔	ग म भ न
र	र स (ग ख)
त	त ल लृ
व	व ब क ख
च or ङ	च (ज) घ ध छ
प	प ष फ ण
ट	ट ठ ढ द (क्ष)
ड	ड ढ इ ई झ ह

य	य थ
अ	अ आ ओ औ अं अः
ए	ए ऐ
ऋ	ऋ ॠ
उ	उ ऊ
-	श ळ ज्ञ ज

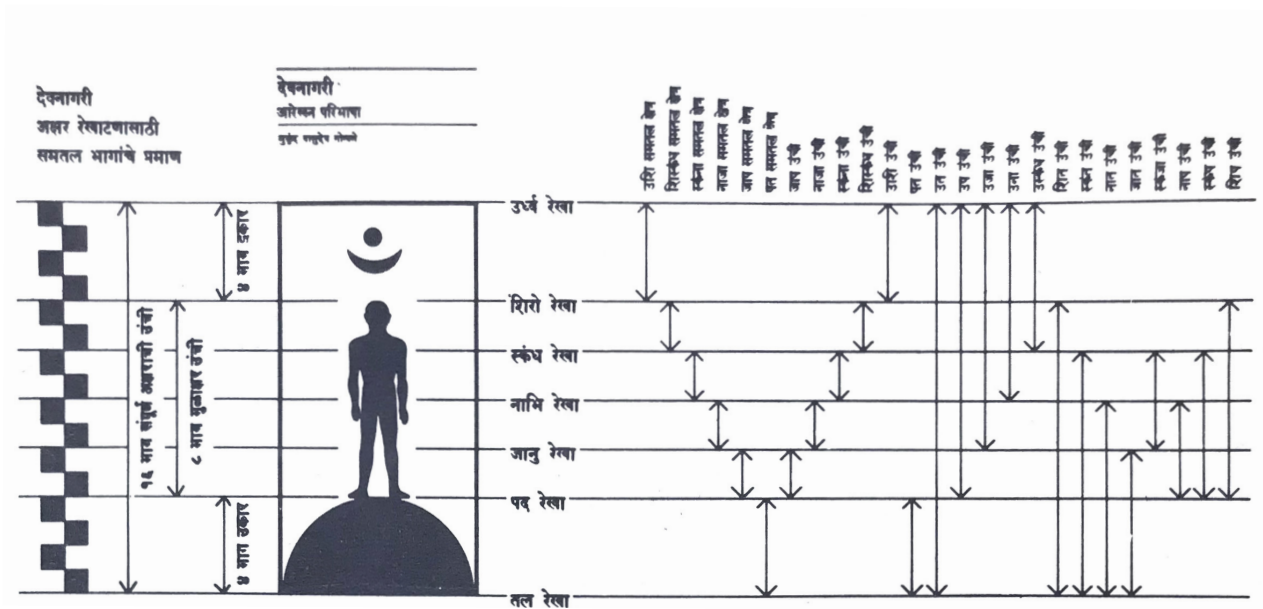
Naik says that Roman letters are analysed in their graphic forms (ascenders, descenders, x-proportion) and limiting factors (cap-line, base-line, ascender-line, descender-line). He has made a similar analysis for Devanagari letters. He says the x-proportion in Roman, can be the kana height in Devanagari. (Although there are some exceptions to this). Devanagari letters are alligned from the top, that is, at the headline instead of the baseline.



(Image courtesy: D'Source)

In the article ‘Design Parameters of Devanagari’ written by Prof. Mukund Gokhale for Caltis 83, he says, ‘Before proceeding for lettering, one must necessarily master the calligraphy of Devanagari trying reasonable variations. This will help in understanding the functional aspects of the script, legibility and aesthetics.’ He says that calligraphy helps the designer to understand the structure and anatomy of the characters and aid him in deciding on the method and tools for calligraphic variations.

Prof. Mukund Gokhale has illustrated two diagrams to explain the structure of the letter and terminology that he has set for Devanagari letters. He has divided the Devanagari letter in seven horizontal parts. Namely, Urdhwa Rekha, Shiro Rekha, Skanda Rekha, Nabhi Rekha, Janu Rekha, Pada Rekha, and Tala Rekha.



(Image courtesy: Devanagari Aarekhan Paribhasha by Mukund Gokhale)

Prof. Mukund Gokhale goes on to explain the terms used for horizontal guidelines as follows:

Urdhwa Rekha (Top Line)-

This is the line at the extreme top of the letter character where all the vowel signs coming above the main character are positioned. It is an invisible line but a necessary guideline, while drawing the letter character.

Shiro Rekha (Head Line)-

This is the line where the 'shir' or head of all the letters start with a cap on the top of each letter character which is called 'Shiro Rekha'. The most integral part of the Devanagari script is 'Shiro Rekha' which, it is said, guides the movement of the eye and keeps the alignment of all the letter characters.

Skanda Rekha (Shoulder Line)-

This is the upper mean line, lying in between the Shiro Rekha and the Nabhi Rekha. It is derived from the human shoulder position.

Nabhi Rekha (Navel Line)-

This is the normally the centre line of the main character (Mulakshara). This is an imaginary horizontal line on which the half letters are joined to the Mulakshar.

Janu Rekha (Knee Position Line)-

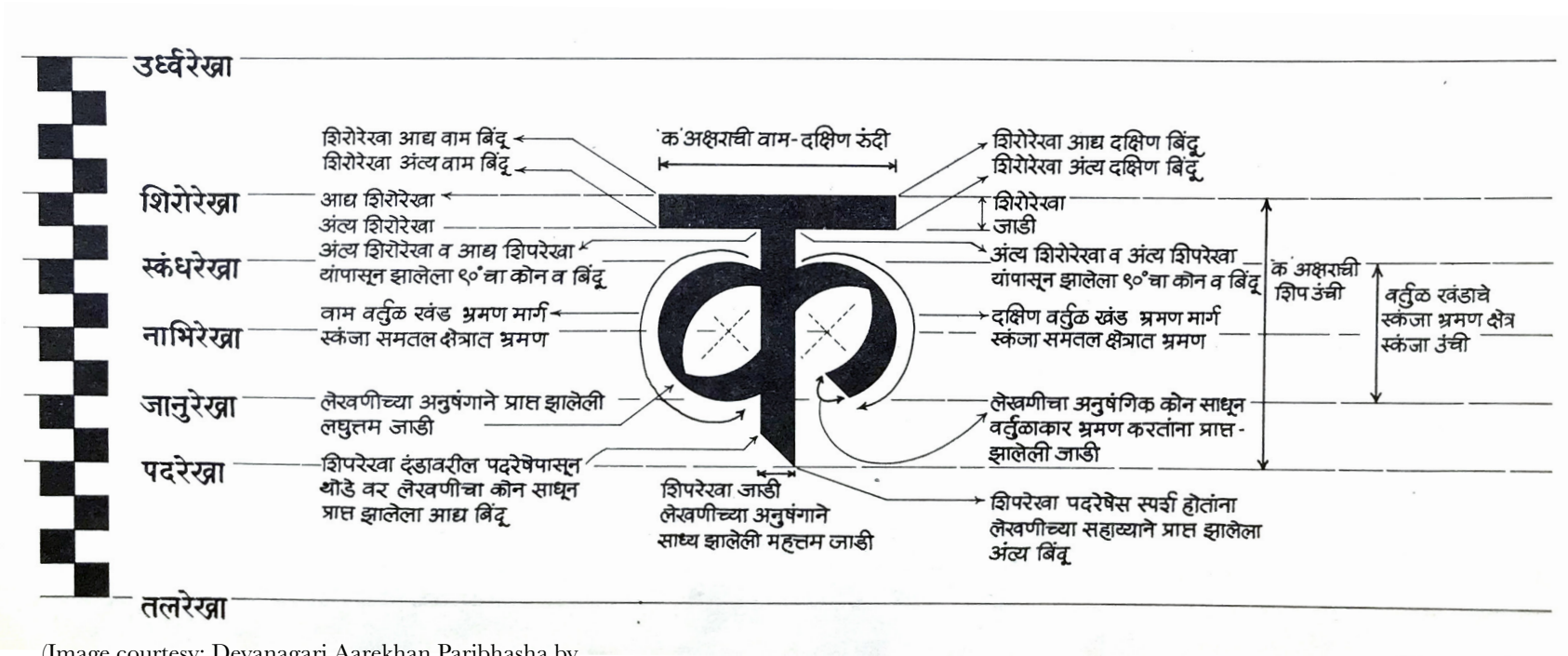
This is the lower mean line, lying in between the Nabhi rekha and Pada Rekha.

Pada Rekha (Foot Position Line)-

This is the line where all the Mulakshara rest. It is the base line of all full vertical strokes where they rest or touch and below which some vowel signs are placed.

Tala Rekha (Extreme Base Line)-

This is the extreme opposite line of the 'Urdhwa Rekha'. It is the lowest line where vowel signs terminate.



(Image courtesy: Devanagari Aarekhan Paribhasha by Mukund Gokhale)

5 Devanagari Calligraphy

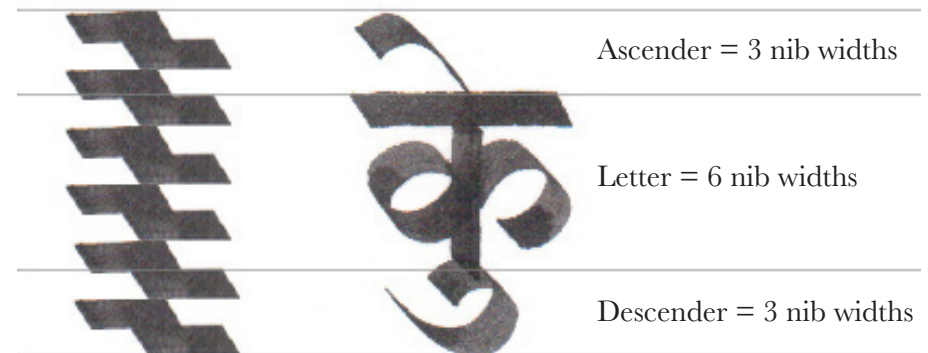
Devanagari calligraphy has been practised since many many years. It has been used to write manuscripts, religious scriptures and documents. Devanagari calligraphy has different styles, but the most basic of them is the 'Balbodh' style. It is the basic style for Devanagari calligraphy and a beginner is advised to practise 'Balbodh' first.

TOOL

The most common and traditional tool for Devanagari calligraphy is the 'boru'. A 'boru' is a reed or bamboo pen. It is flexible yet sturdy, and hence makes for a great tool. The reed pen is sliced from one side and then cut at a -45 degree angle to make it suitable for writing Devanagari.



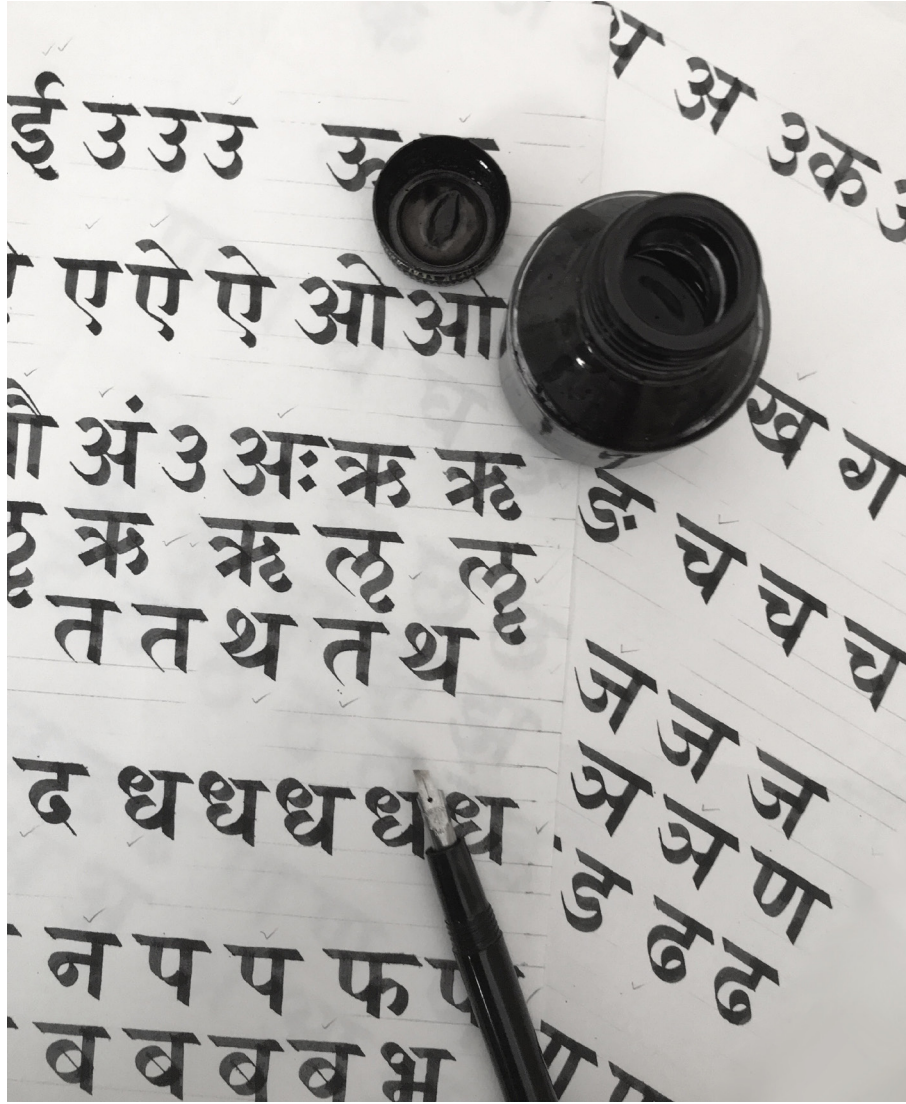
Boru (Reed Pen)



Ascender = 3 nib widths

Letter = 6 nib widths

Descender = 3 nib widths



VOWELS

अ	आ	इ	ई
उ	ऊ	ए	ऐ
ओ	औ	अं	अः
ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	ॡ

CONSONANTS

क ख ग घ ङ
 च छ ज झ ञ
 ट ठ ड ढ ण
 त थ द ध न
 प फ ब भ म
 य र ल व श
 ष स ह ळ क्ष ज्ञ

NUMERALS

० १ २ ३
 ४ ५ ६ ७
 ८ ९

Apart from the boru, many unconventional tools are used for calligraphy such as injections, shaving brushes, sponges, markers, bow pens, droppers, toothbrush, etc.



STUDY

6 Readings

- Typography of Devanagari (Vol. 1)
By Bapurao Naik
- Ganesh Vidya
By L. S. Wakankar
- Books, Letterforms and Design in Asia
By Sugiura Kohei
- Articles in CALTIS
- Editing by Design
By Jan V. White

Apart from these, I have read several articles and interviews on the internet. Some of which were talks presentations from Aksharsanwad and Typography Day.

The talks of Achyut Palav and Santosh Kshirsagar from Audiogyaan also helped me. Apart from them, Noopur Datye and G. V. Sreekumar's talks have also been helpful.

7 Existing Books

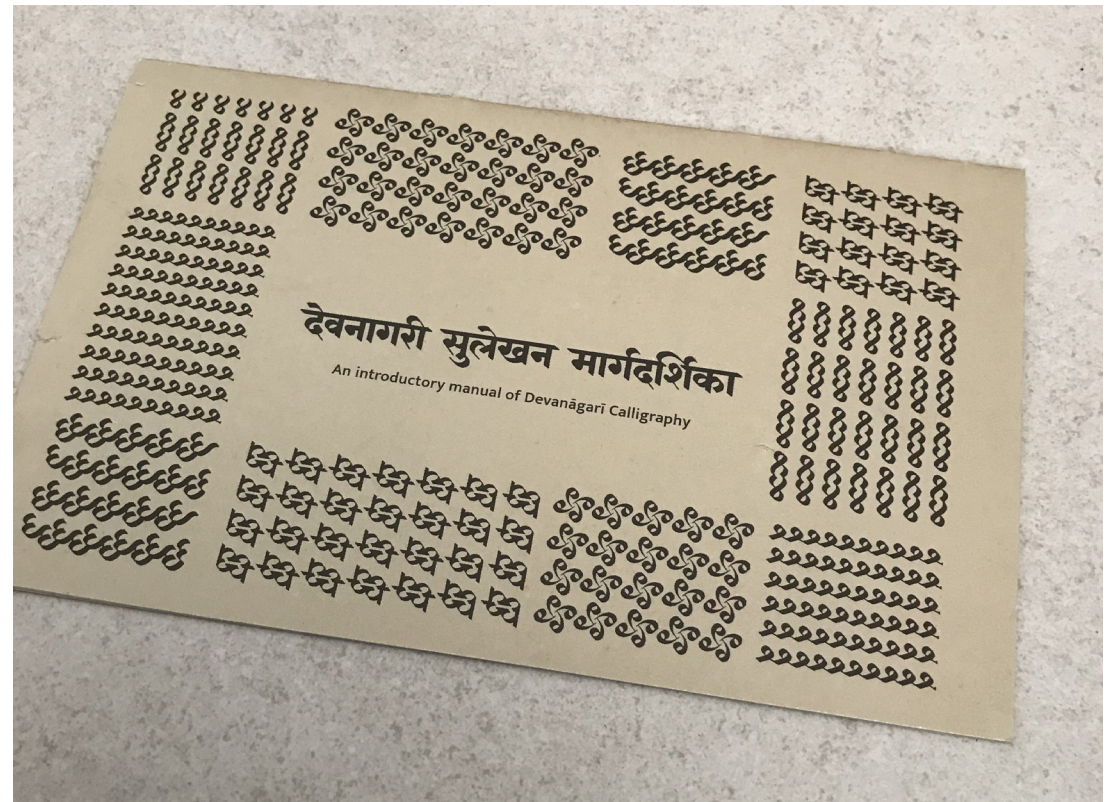
A lot of books are available on calligraphy, but they are mostly Latin books. There are some books, manuals or articles available on Devanagari calligraphy as well. There is no specific book that talks about the different tools that can be used for Devanagari calligraphy, or calligraphers from this field. There is no documentation done on the views and thoughts of different calligraphers, and their calligraphic work. The books, magazines, manuals or articles that are available are mostly those which teach the 'balbodh' style of Devanagari and talk about the history of the script and its printing. There is certain documentation done by different people about the workshops that they have conducted or pictures of calligraphic works done by the students.

Devanagari Sulekhan

Margdarshika

By Aksharaya

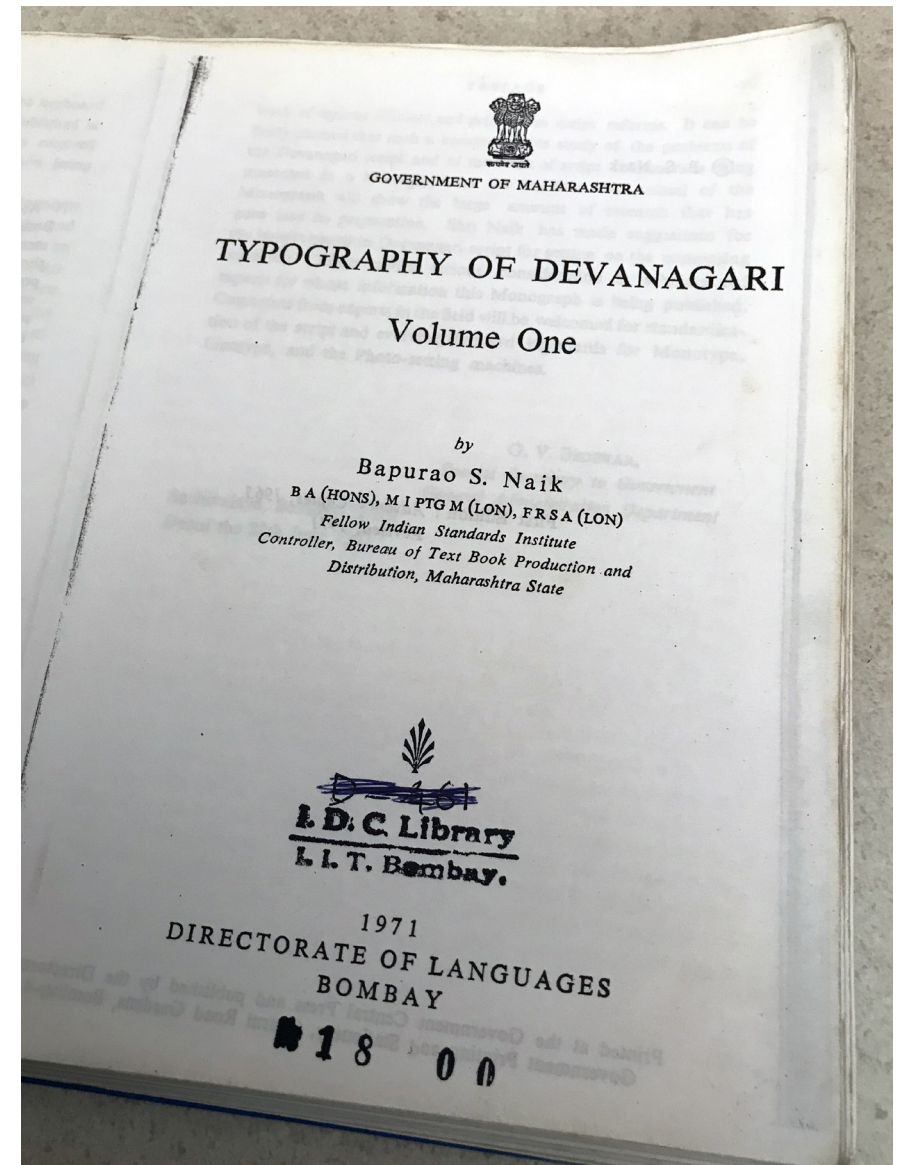
This is an instructional Devanagari calligraphy manual. It teaches the basic calligraphy from strokes to letter proportions and letters.



Typography of Devanagari

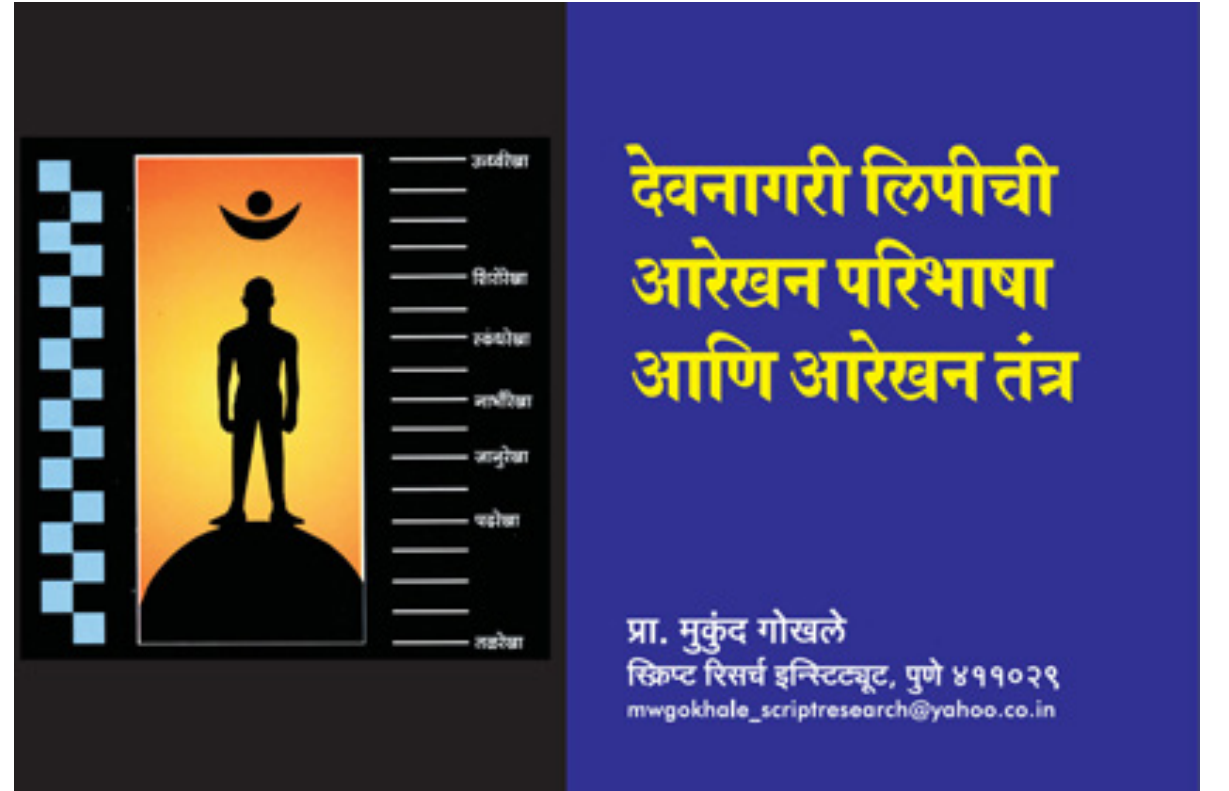
By Bapurao S. Naik

This book was published in 1971 and talks about the history of Devanagari, how the script was formed, early stages of the script, the structure of letters, and how Devanagari printing evolved over a period of time.



**Devanagari Lipichi Aarekhan
Paribhasha aani Aarekhan Tantra**
By Prof. Mukund Gokhale

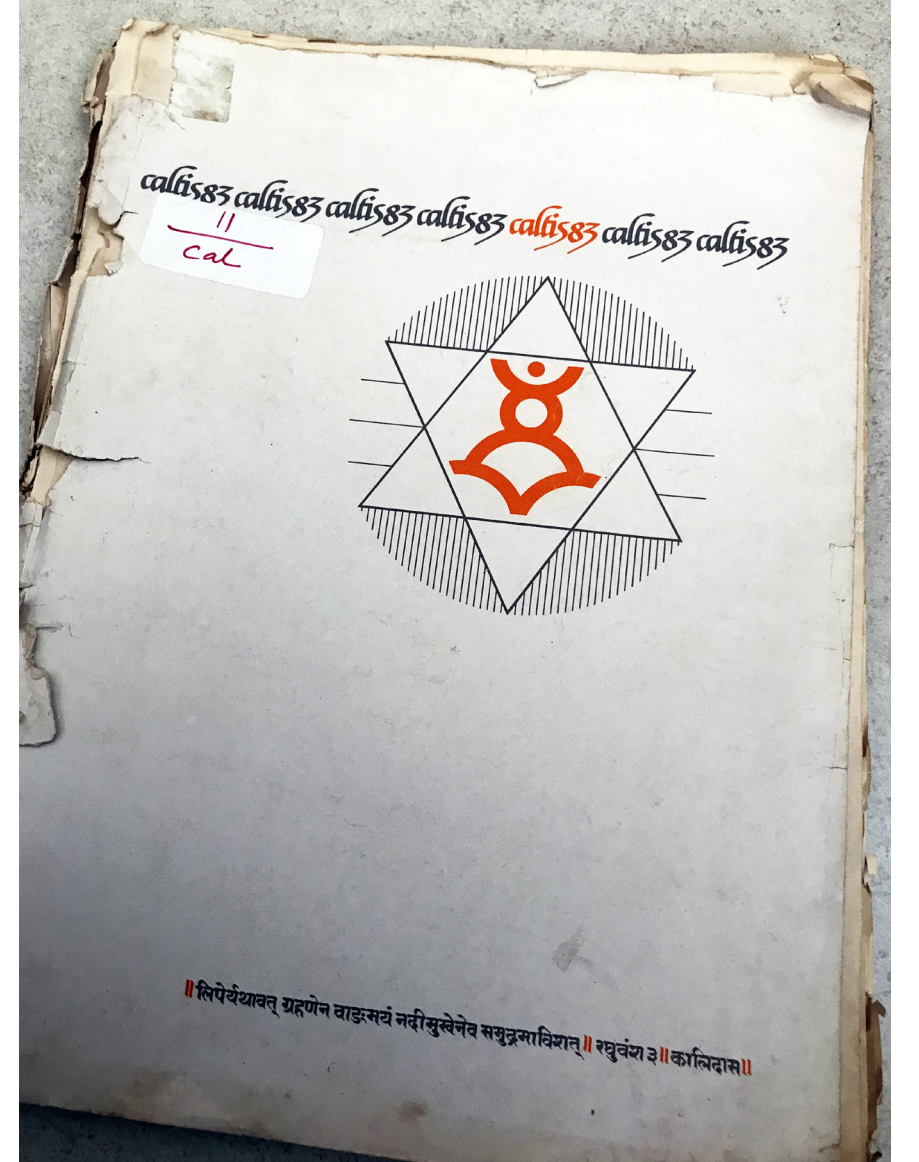
This book is considered to be one of the very important books while understanding the structure of a Devanagari letter and sets a terminology for the proportions and guidelines of the letter.



(Image courtesy: Google)

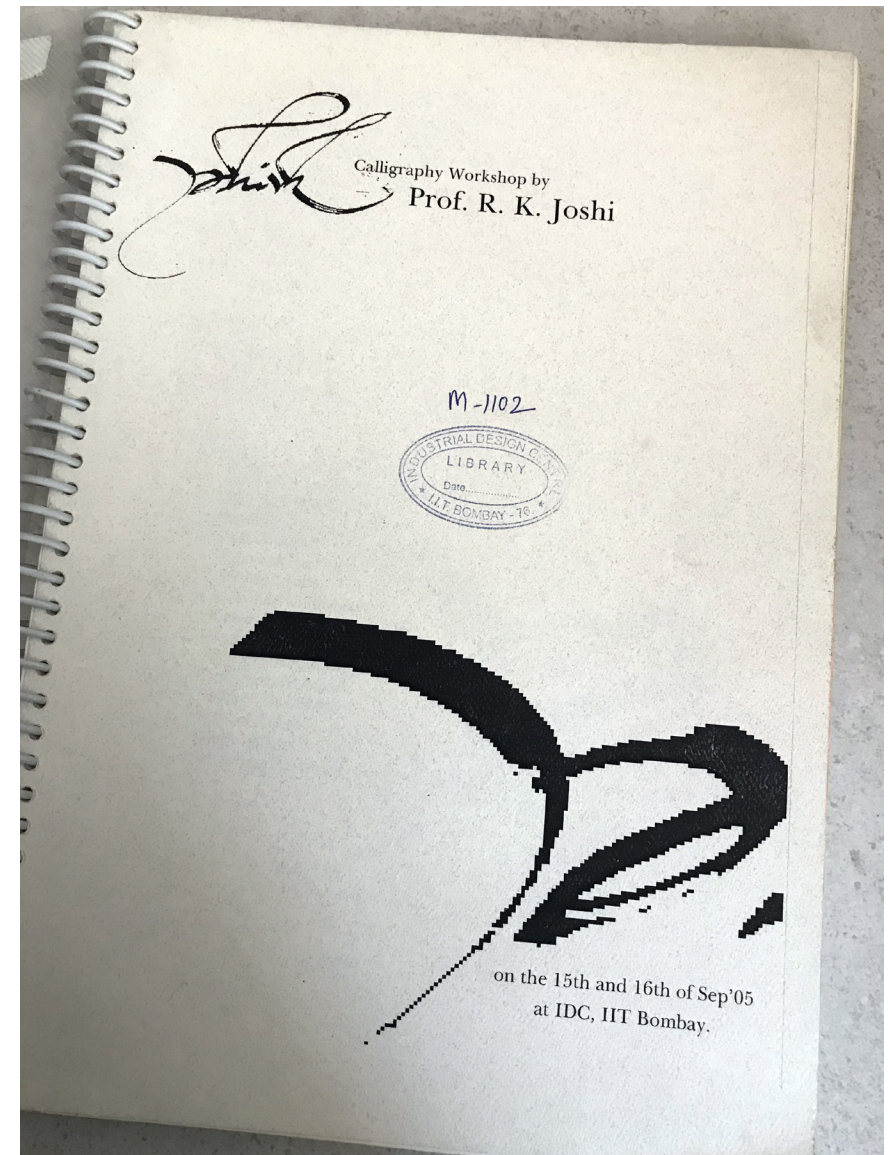
Caltis

Calligraphy, Lettering and Typography of Indic scripts are a series of books that were published in the 1900s. These books have various articles or research papers that have been written by different people in the field of Indic Scripts.



**Calligraphy Workshop by
Prof. R. K. Joshi**
By IDC, IIT Bombay

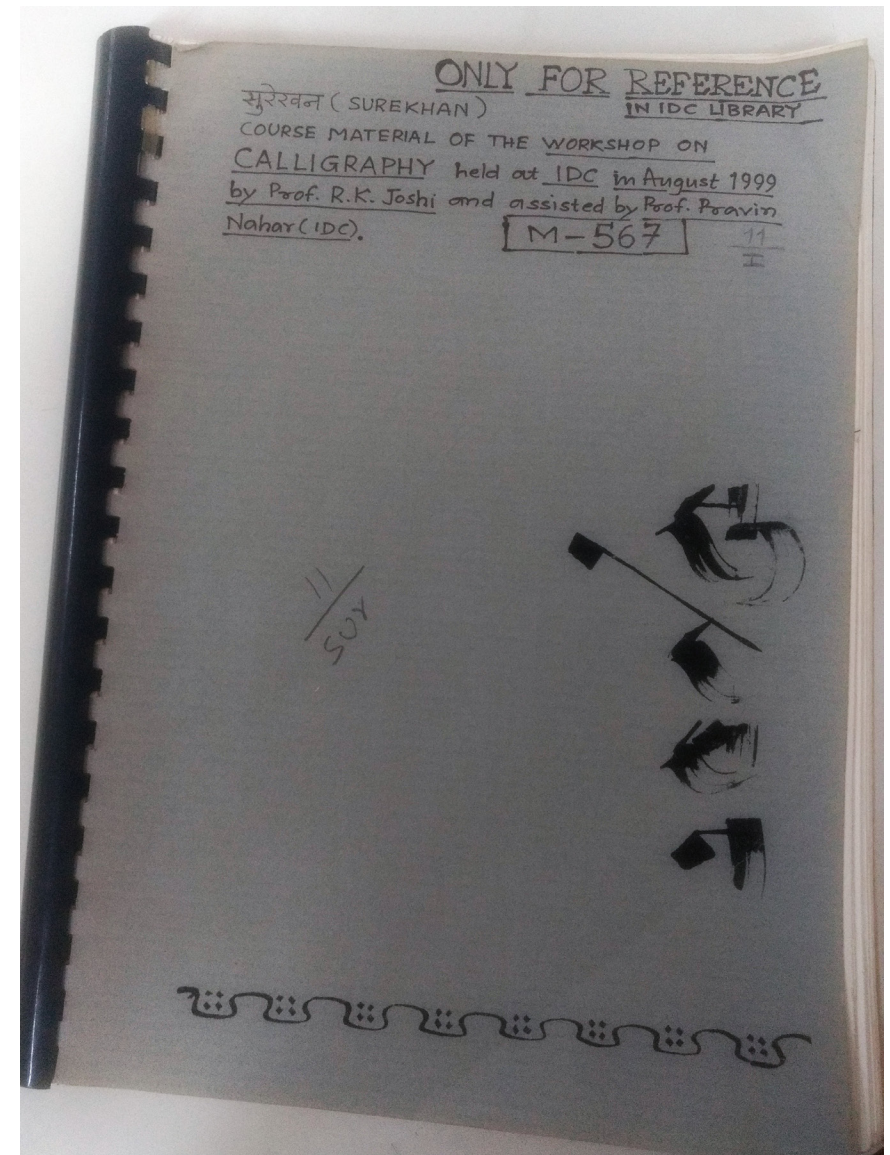
This book is documentation of the work done in a workshop at IDC, IIT Bombay. The workshop was conducted by Prof. R. K. Joshi in 2005. The book documents calligraphic interpretations of various subjects and is available to see in the IDC library.



Surekhan

By IDC, IIT Bombay

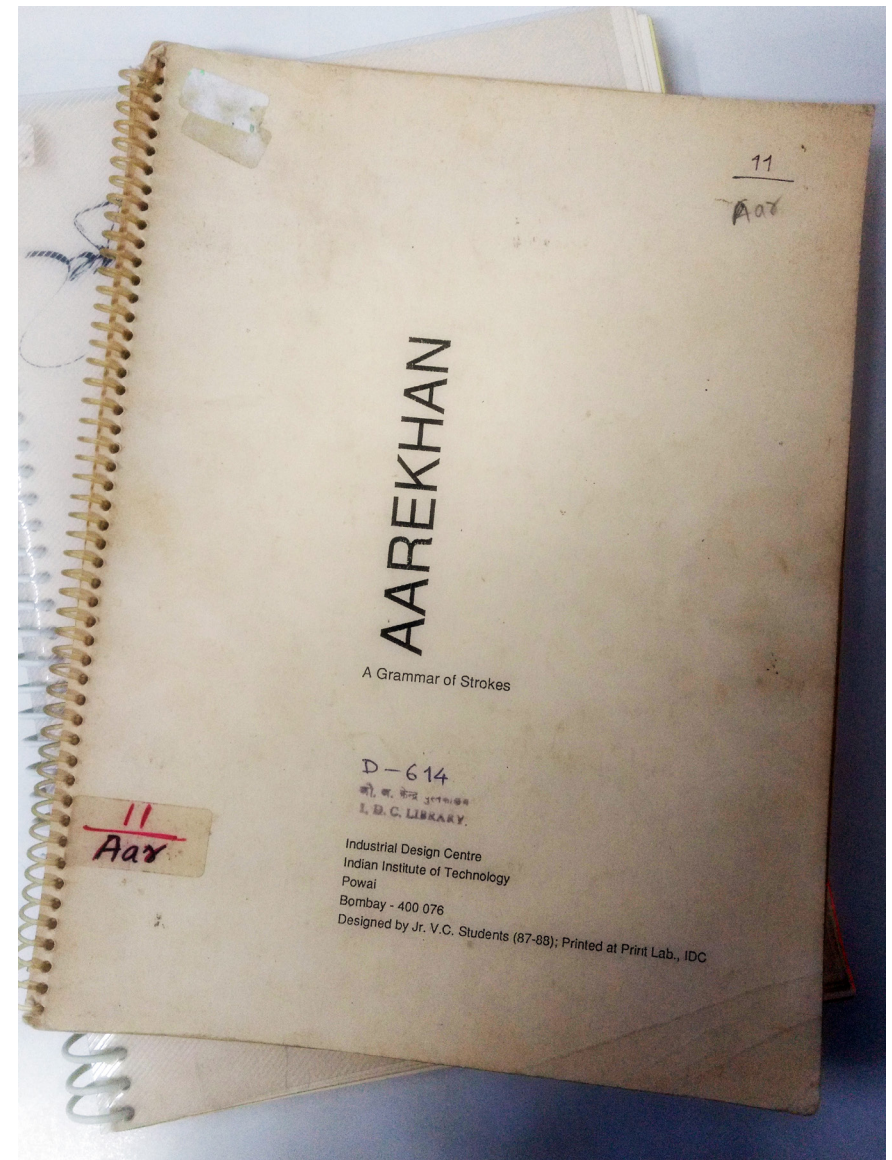
This book is documentation of the course material of a workshop conducted at IDC, IIT Bombay. The workshop was conducted by Prof. R. K. Joshi and Prof. Pravin Nahar in 1999. The book is available in IDC library.



Aarekhan

By IDC, IIT Bombay

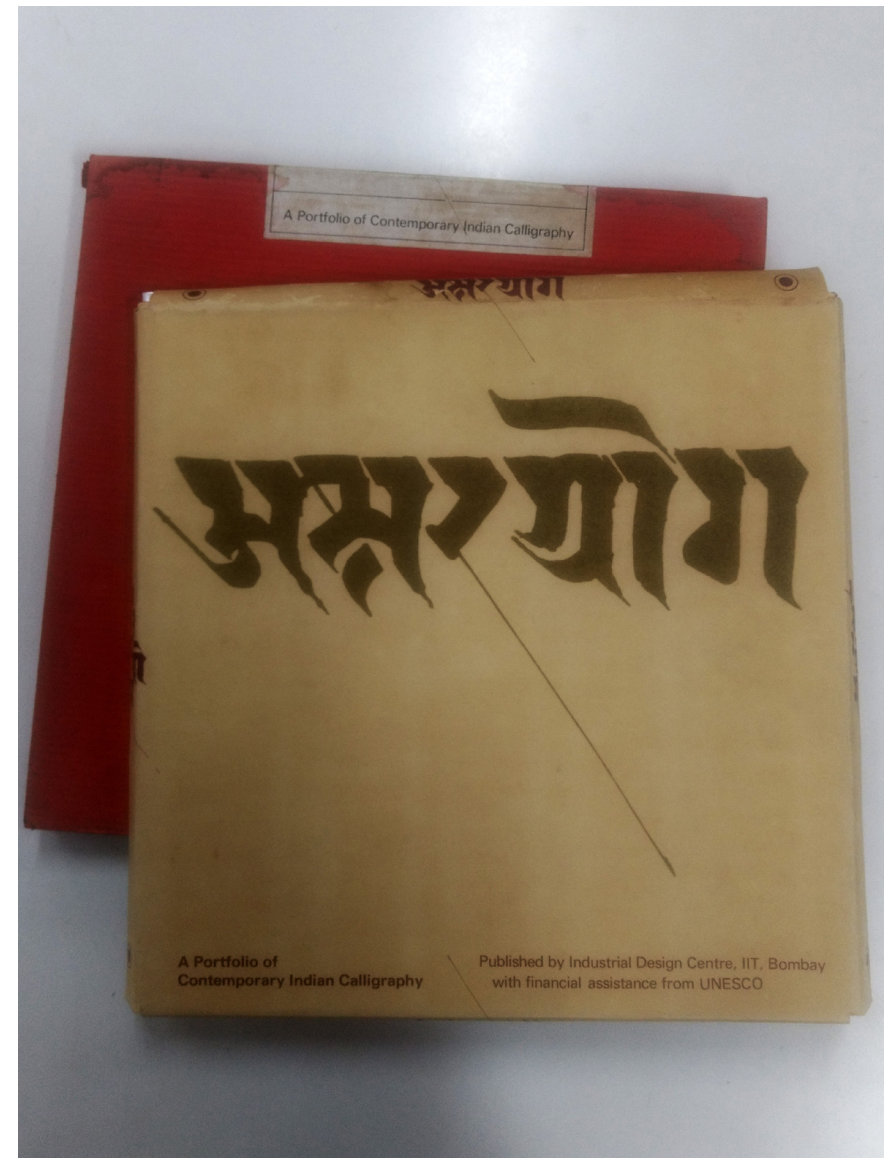
This book is documentation of the exploratory assignment to probe into the manifestation of strokes given to students in the 1987-88 batch.



Aksharyog

By IDC, IIT Bombay

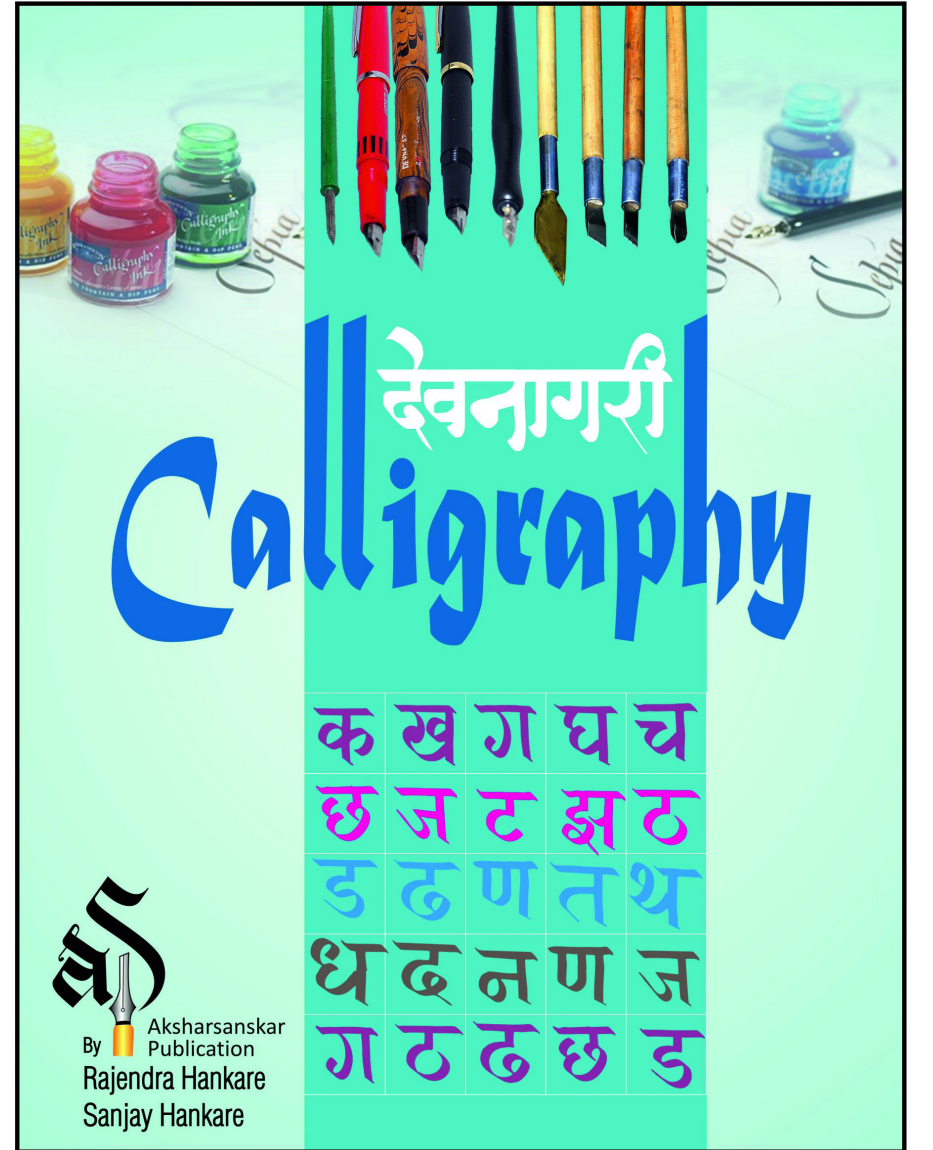
This is a portfolio of contemporary Indian calligraphy. It is a documentation of calligraphic pieces created during a three day workshop held in 1986. It was the first calligraphic workshop held in India, followed by a seminar on calligraphy and typography.



Devanagari Calligraphy

By Rajendra & Sanjay Hankare

This is a book that shows and teaches basic Devanagari calligraphy. It has been published by the Aksharsanskar Publication.



(Image courtesy: Google)

8 Conferences and Meetups

In the past few years, there have been workshops and conferences held for students and professionals for typography and calligraphy in India. Some of these conferences are once every year, while some have been conducted only once.

AKSHARSANVAD

Aksharsanvad are trimonthly or quarterly talks that are organized by Aksharaya - Letter Conscious People. Different people from the field of Typography and Calligraphy are invited to talk about a particular subject or their work. Previously, there have been talks in Aksharsanvad by Dr. Girish Dalvi, Prof. Mukund Gokhale, Kamal Shedge, Prof. Mahendra Patel, Prof. Vinay Saynekar, Prof. G. V. Sreekumar, Dr. P. V. Radhakrishnan, Hanif Kureshi, Sarang Kulkarni, etc



(Image courtesy: aksharaya.org)

TYPOGRAPHY DAY

Typoday or Typography Day is an international conference that is devoted to addressing issues faced by type designers, type users and type educators. The conference includes presentations by speakers, eminent academicians, blind juried papers, industry professionals, research scholars and students. The event also hosts an exhibition of selected posters and typographic works of students and faculty members from Design Institutes. The event features a day of workshops on typography and calligraphy that are conducted by different people from all over the world.



(Image courtesy: designfabric.in/design-log/charting-new-horizons-for-indic-typefaces)

CALLIFEST

Callifest has been organized three times by Achyut Palav School of Calligraphy. The purpose of the event is to bring into light the potential of Indian Scripts in addition to an exhibit of various applications of calligraphy with a contemporary styled display of designs by amateurs and masters. The aim of the event is to explore Calligraphy and promise the audience a festival of remarkable beauty.

CALLIHUNT

Callihunt was organized by Achyut Palav School of Calligraphy in 2016. It was a nation wide hunt for upcoming calligraphers. Taking into consideration the immense potential in the art of calligraphy that India has, the aim was to give calligraphers a chance, a proper platform to nurture and flourish.



(Image courtesy: Google)

MUMBAI TYPOSTAMMTISCH

Newly started in India, in the city of Mumbai, Typostammtisch is a monthly meet-up for type designers and letter enthusiasts to discuss about typography and designing letters. The meet-up is an informal session with different fun activities each time. Different people are invited to talk about chosen subjects or their on-going work.

AUDIOGYAN

Audiogyan is an Indian pod-cast show for those interested in Design, Philosophy & Arts. Audiogyan pod-casts are mainly one to one discussions or question - answer sessions with people who have devoted their life in these fields. It started in December 2016 and has podcasts with people like Dr. Udaya Kumar, Prof. Mahendra Patel, Shiva Nallaperumal, Prof. G. V. Sreekumar, Prof. Santosh Kshirsagar, Achyut Palav, Noopur Datye etc.



(Image courtesy: www.cityshor.com)

9 Previous Calligraphy Projects done in IDC

Calligraphic interpretation of five elements of nature

By Rahul Sharma - 2017

The aim of this project was to understand the basic fundamentals of all the five elements (Panch Mahabhuta) and come up with his own interpretation in the form of a calligraphic expression/ artwork. It also involved the process of finding and understanding Indian elements and how they are represented in different forms, symbols & icons across the nation and across different cultures.

Teaching Devangari calligraphy to children

By Kanika Kaul - 2015

This project documents a series of workshops conducted to teach children between the ages of 10 & 12 Devanagari calligraphy with the intent to sensitize them to the art of calligraphy

and writing beautiful letter forms as well as generate awareness about calligraphy not just as a hobby or craft activity but also a creative process of expression.

Conversations through calligraphy

By Fatema K. Barot - 2007

The project was an attempt to understand and establish a relationship between written forms and the present context. The project was an installation where actual conversations that take place in a given space are visually translated through calligraphy.

Calligraphy - an aesthetic insight

By Dev Anand - 1995

Calligraphy - a teaching aid

By S. Paliwal - 1993

THE PROJECT

10 Ideas for the Project

After deciding that the area of the project will be related to calligraphy and the Devanagari script, I started brainstorming for ideas. Some of the ideas have been mentioned below.

- Evolution of Devanagari script
- Taking a manuscript and deriving a calligraphic style from it
- Affect of different environments while working on calligraphy
- Video tutorial to teach Devanagari calligraphy (or other scripts)
- A website on Indic calligraphy that will include learning aid, examples of calligraphy, etc.
- Different thoughts of calligraphy
- Journey of different calligraphers
- A narrative - with calligraphic expressions
- Different ways of teaching calligraphy

FINAL IDEA

I decided to work around the different thoughts of calligraphy and Devanagari calligraphers. The final idea is a book that captures basic information of calligraphy and brings forward the journey of some calligraphers, their thoughts and philosophy about the subject.

11 Purpose of the Project

People started exploring calligraphy as an art many years ago. There has been a good amount of work done by people in the field of calligraphy. Different people have explored the letters of Indic scripts and done calligraphy for print media such as headlines of advertisements or posters, calligraphy for logos, etc.

A lot of documentation has been done outside India on Roman scripts and its calligraphy. Several books have been published about many particular calligraphic styles and calligraphers. It is very rare to see such books for calligraphy done for Indic scripts.

In India, there have been several exhibitions on calligraphy, but there is hardly any documentation of these for people to see today. Although people have explored the art of calligraphy, very few attempts have been

made to document the process or artwork of calligraphers so that students or people interested in calligraphy can see it.

Through this project, I want to make information available about Devanagari calligraphy and calligraphers. Through documentation, one can gather material that provides information at one place. I want to understand different thoughts on calligraphy and put them forward.

As artists and designers, we look for inspiration everywhere. Due to the Internet and a wide number of social media platforms, it has become very easy to follow people who are working in fields that interest us. But, there are many people who stay away from this trend of social media. Also, we can see a person's artwork on their website or page, but it becomes difficult to understand the process or thought behind it.

This project is not merely a documentation project, but an attempt to put forward information and thoughts of the people who inspire me.

The purpose of the project is to make information available, and putting forward thoughts about calligraphy. The aim is to encourage students who see the book to try calligraphy themselves. Through this book I hope to make people realize that calligraphy is more than just drawing letters.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Design students
- Art students
- Calligraphy enthusiasts

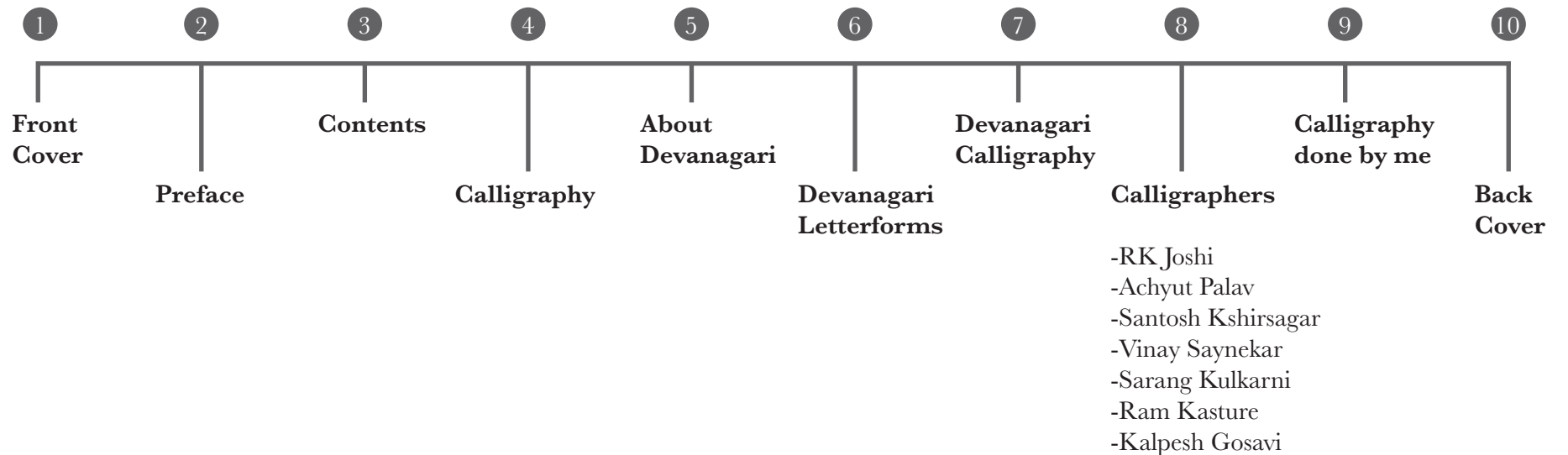
WHY CALLIGRAPHY?

The main reason for choosing calligraphy as a topic is that I am keen to learn calligraphy. While doing calligraphy I have felt a sense of complete freedom as well as complete restrictions. These two completely opposite feelings make calligraphy very interesting for me. It is not only an art about drawing letters, but is an act of patience. It is rigorous and requires concentration. It is a way of expressing oneself and can help the artist to put forward his views .

THE BOOK

12 Structure of the Book

After finalizing what the book should be about and what all the book should include, the structure of the book was finalized. The structure is as follows:



13 Conversations with Calligraphers

After finalizing that I will be making a book on calligraphers, I needed to collect information about them, hear their thoughts and understand their journey in calligraphy so far.

I started with reading about each calligrapher on the Internet. I collected basic information about each calligrapher before meeting them. Instead of sending a questionnaire and asking calligraphers to fill it out, I thought about meeting them and talking to them directly. I didn't want to structure it like an interview, but rather preferred to have a conversation with them. The reason for this is that this would give me a chance to know even small stories that affected their way of thinking. It would also help me understand what factors and people shaped them to become a person interested in calligraphy. Along with information, I collected pictures of some of their artworks / calligraphy pieces.

Some of the points that were discussed were:

- How did you start doing calligraphy?
- How did you develop interest?
- What is calligraphy for you?
- What tools and mediums do you usually use?
- Relation between surface, medium and tool?
- What is your process? Do you sketch before drawing?
- Where do you look for inspiration?
- Role of calligraphy in design education
- Future of Indic calligraphy
- Place of calligraphy in today's world, where things are slowly changing to digital mediums
- Landmark design projects where calligraphy was used
- Opinion about how calligraphy is taught in our country
- Is calligraphy being properly documented, studied, analyzed and passed to the future generation of students
- Advice to next generation of calligraphers

R.K. Joshi



(Image courtesy: Google)

Professor R K Joshi was a calligrapher, type designer, graphic designer and an educator. He was an expert on ancient scripts and linguistic theory in general. He graduated from Sir J. J. School of Applied Art, Mumbai and went on to be a professor at Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay. He has designed many Indian fonts used in Microsoft Windows.

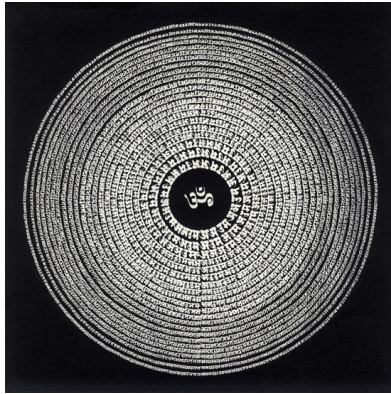
He is considered to be the master of Devanagari calligraphy. I started reading about R. K. Joshi on the Internet and in Kohei Sugiura's book - Books, Letterforms and Design in Asia.

RK Joshi started calligraphy by copying calligraphic manuscripts for three years. He is known as a master of Siddham script. The experience of Siddham calligraphy started with self-exploration – both exploration by himself and exploration of the inner self. He

believed that calligraphy is a ritual, you have to get totally involved in the art form, physically and spiritually.

He considered calligraphy as a spiritual experience. He said that the act of breathing in and out also matters in calligraphy. First you dip the pen in the ink pot. Then you visualize your breath, try to judge how much to take in, but you don't know. You take a breath again, concentrate and then dip the pen in the ink pot once more. You visualise how much breath and ink is within, and then put the pen on paper.

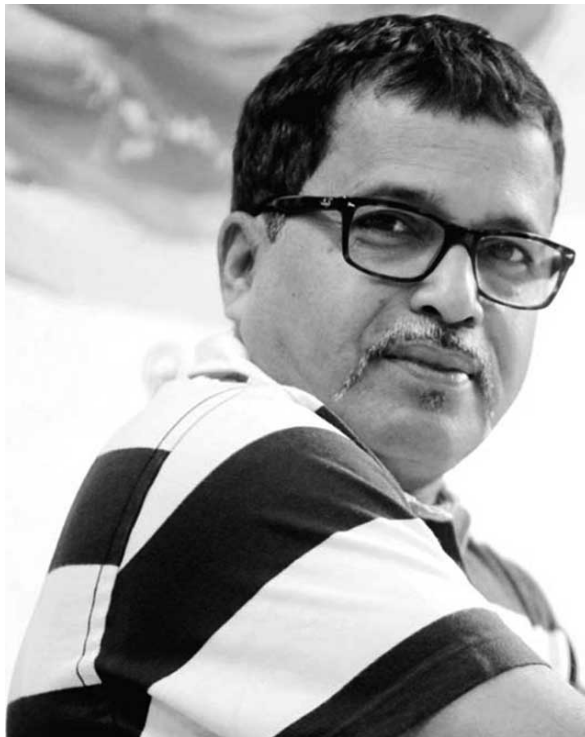
RK Joshi believed that the starting point is important. Then how you traverse the space, in which direction, what angle and stress matters. Unless you know that, drawing letters is impossible.



The chapter on R. K. Joshi has information from Kohei Sugiura's book - Books, Letterforms and Design in Asia and the interview on the website www.designinginindia.net

(Image courtesy: Google)

Achyut Palav



(Image courtesy: Google)

One of the most well-known and respected calligrapher of India, Mr. Achyut Palav completed his graduation from Sir J.J. School of Arts, Mumbai in 1982. After completing graduation, he got a research scholarship from Ulka Advertising for thesis on Modi script.

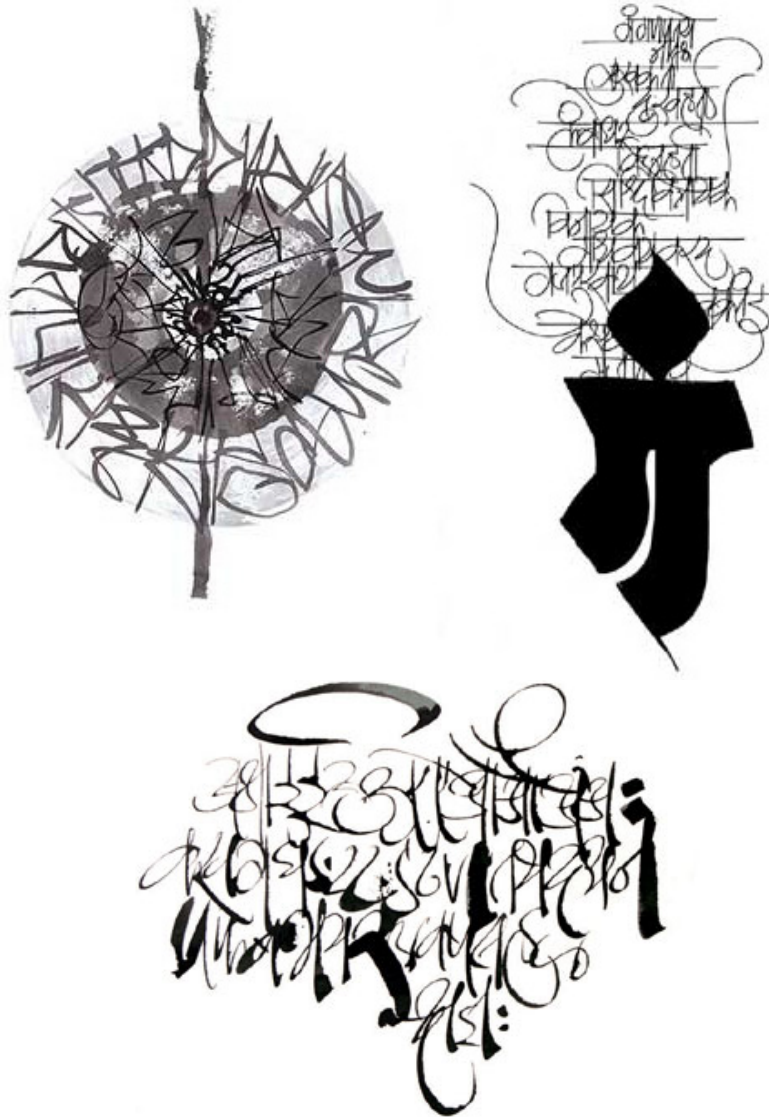
He is a calligrapher, a teacher, and an artist. He teaches many students from different backgrounds in his calligraphy school. His work can be seen on many corporate calendars, invitation cards, movie posters, book titles, paintings, etc.

He has been a part of many solo and group exhibitions in India and Abroad. He has helped many of his students put up their own exhibitions. He has been holding calligraphy exhibitions and workshops like Callifest. The next Callifest is scheduled for December 2018 in Navi Mumbai and is open to all.

He has published many books and diaries that showcase his work, or are books to learn calligraphy styles.

After completing twenty-five years in the calligraphy industry, he went on a tour all over India known as 'Calligraphy Roadways'. He held workshops and gave live demos in many different art colleges and art galleries of India.

Mr. Palav says that calligraphy came naturally to him. He believes that scripts are the fundamental of calligraphy. But calligraphy tools can be used to create artistic strokes that may or may not resemble letters. After all calligraphy is the skill of discovering art hidden in scripts.



Achyut Palav feels that calligraphy teaches manners and brings out a good behavior. It is like a form of artistic meditation. Calligraphy teaches to observe and understand. He feels that one can use calligraphy to express emotions and what influences the mind.

He regularly conducts workshops and demos where he shows calligraphy on different mediums like umbrellas. He takes courses on calligraphy and has his own School of Calligraphy in Vashi, Navi Mumbai. He is actively involved in Typography Day and also conducts Callihunt and Callifest.

(Image courtesy: Google)

Santosh Kshirsagar



(Image courtesy: Google)

Santosh Kshirsagar is a calligrapher, typographer and designer. He did his bachelor's degree in Applied Art specializing in Typography and Calligraphy, and a Master's degree in Teaching Methodology from Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai. He recently submitted his Phd. Thesis to IDC School of Design, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, on handwriting mechanisms which is titled - 'Learning to write. Methods and Devices - How children learn to write their first script In Devanagari'.

Santosh Kshirsagar is extremely passionate about scripts, letters and language. He has been teaching in Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai. He is an active member of Aksharaya - Letter Conscious People, an NGO that works towards preserving and spreading knowledge about Indian scripts and letter-forms. He has been involved with Typography

Day and has also conducted workshops at the conference many times.

Apart from being a calligrapher and typographer, Santosh Kshirsagar loves acting and writing poems. He enjoys discussions about letters, scripts, poetry, theatre, academics and teaching.

Santosh Kshirsagar believes that our country has very rich knowledge. He feels that the people in the past have worked wonders and there is a lot to learn from them. He teaches his students that calligraphy is much more than just a skill. Calligraphy helps one express and realize what he or she wants to say. Daily calligraphy practice documents our day to day moods and nuances. Calligraphy helps one analyze and understand themselves.



He feels that there is a huge need to document the work that people are doing, and more important to document their thoughts. He feels that documenting all this helps preserve the information and makes it available for future generations to read.

Over the years, he has worked on many projects, as well as guided many of his students projects. He encourages everyone to always keep learning and never leave behind their passion and love.

(Image courtesy: Google)

Vinay Saynekar



(Image courtesy: Vinay Saynekar - Facebook)

Vinay Saynekar was born, brought up and educated in Mumbai. He was a student of Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art from 1977 to 1981. Initially he wanted to become an advertising professional but became a teacher. In his diploma year in 1981, he studied indoor and outdoor advertising, illustration and photography. He was mildly interested in typography and calligraphy then.

After completing his studies, he was interviewed by Prof. R. K. Joshi for the position of a junior visualizer in Ulka, now the Ad Agency is known as FCB-Ulka. He also offered him the option of working with a leading Handmade Paper dealer, Chimanlals Pvt. Ltd as a designer, which was more interesting for Vinay Saynekar. This proved to be the turning point in his career and life.

Prof. Joshi (he prefers to refer him as RK, who was also his Guru) used to look after some the art projects of Chimanlals Pvt. Ltd., where he started assisting him as a designer. As RK's associate, it was but natural for him to be interested in the letter-forms and scripts.

In 1984, he got employed with Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art and his career as a teacher began. He was assigned the responsibility of teaching calligraphy and typography as a specialization subject at graduate level. The responsibility developed into interest and later created passion for letter-forms.



Initially calligraphy was just a part of his studies of graphic design. Later the interaction of the calligraphic tools with medium and surface started appealing to him and created lasting impressions on his sensibilities. He always liked doing experiments with letter-forms, which continued in his calligraphic practice. But he confesses that he was never a hard-core calligrapher, never demonstrated the art, never conducted workshops and never earned his livelihood from it.

(Image courtesy: Vinay Saynekar)

Ram Kasture



(Image courtesy: Ram Kasture)

Ram Kasture is a calligrapher and painter. He is known for his huge calligraphic paintings. He studied art from Government School Of Fine Arts, Aurangabad, during 1981-85. Ram Kasture has been doing calligraphy for more than twenty-five years. He has put up many solo exhibitions since then, and has been a part of many group exhibitions as well.

Other than paintings, he has also done calligraphy for the textile industry. He has designed invitation cards, diaries, book and television show titles, etc.

Ram Kasture has been holding calligraphic workshops since many years. He often gives calligraphy demos in art schools and corporate offices. He has been taking classes on every Sunday for people who are interested to learn calligraphy. He teaches primary school students how to write correctly and neatly, thus

improving their handwriting. He also teaches different styles of Latin and Devanagari calligraphy to his students.

Ram Kasture was first attracted to calligraphy and lettering when he saw a sign board painter doing Devanagari calligraphy with a round brush. He was amazed to see that instead of the easily available flat brush, the painter was using a round brush which is never used for Devanagari calligraphy. He started practicing the same, and slowly over the years mastered the skill to write with a round brush.



In his childhood days, Ram Kasture was taught the Vedas by his grandfather. The knowledge of the Vedas, paved the path for his thinking towards life and concepts in calligraphy. In his career as an artist, he has taken a lot of inspiration from ancient scriptures and expressed them in his paintings.

He often takes inspiration from these scriptures and scripts and derives his own style of letter-forms. He believes in understanding the existing form and then drawing the letters in his own style.

(Image courtesy: Ram Kasture)

Sarang Kulkarni



(Image courtesy: Google)

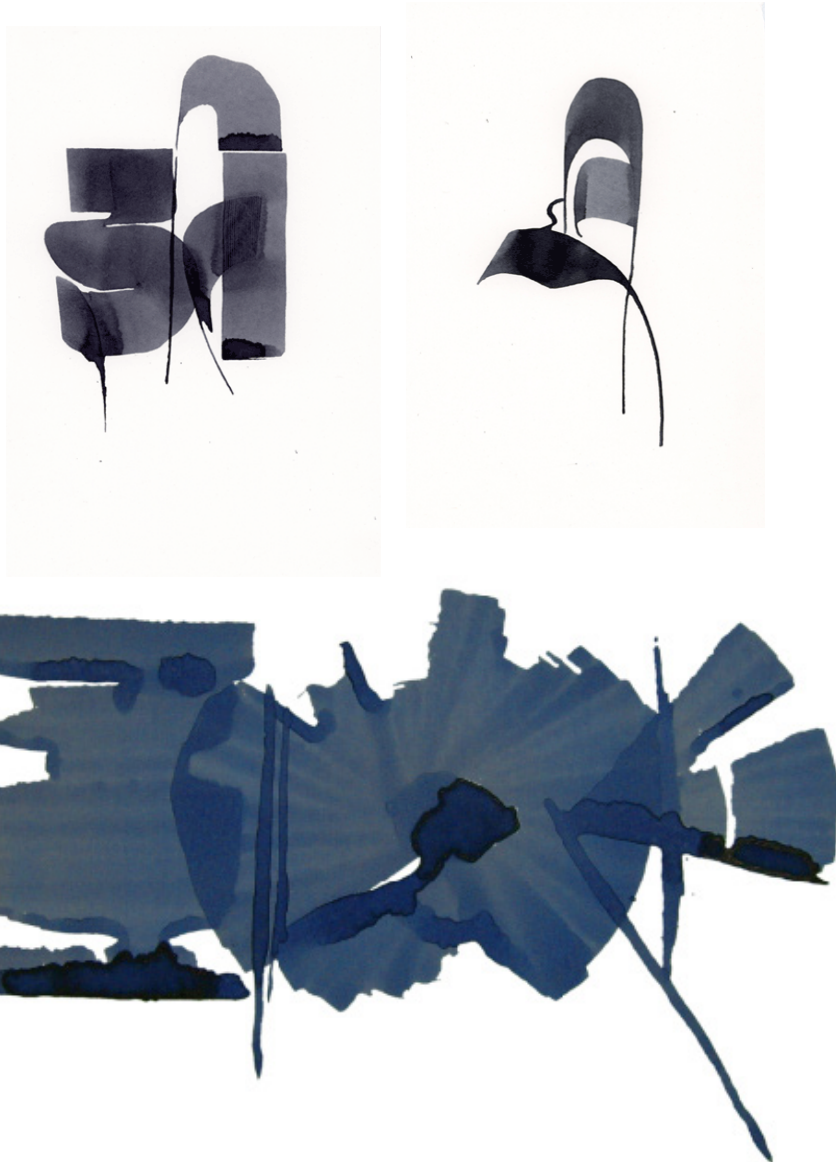
Sarang Kulkarni is a type designer, calligrapher and designer based in Mumbai. He has studied from Sir. J. J. Institute of Applied Art with a specialization in lettering, calligraphy and typography.

In 2005, he founded 'WhiteCrow' – a type foundry and design studio based in Mumbai known for multi-lingual branding, designing custom typefaces across Indian scripts and calligraphy. He is the co-founder of the EkType foundry and has designed many fonts like Modak, Baloo, Gotu, etc.

He is also a part of 'Aksharaya - Letter Conscious People', an NGO that documents, promotes, explores and creates awareness about Indian scripts, typography and calligraphy. He is actively involved in Typography day, and has given presentations and held workshops at the seminar. He has also

presented his work at the TypeCon conference in United States of America. His works has been awarded at the Kyoorius Design Yatra and D&AD Awards, London. His work has been features in many books and websites such as Typographica, JJ Amaze, etc.

Sarang Kulkarni has been an educator as well. Every year he opens his firm for internship where he guides student interns on subjects like type-design, calligraphy and lettering.



Sarang Kulkarni is very passionate about calligraphy not only of Devanagari script, but other scripts as well. He is also a part of the Aksharaya calligraphy manuals which are small booklets to learn basic calligraphy in different scripts. He is also a part of Letterbox, a group on social media which is involved in lettering and designs different letters each day and uploads them.

(Image courtesy: Google)

Kalpesh Gosavi



(Image courtesy: Kalpesh Gosavi)

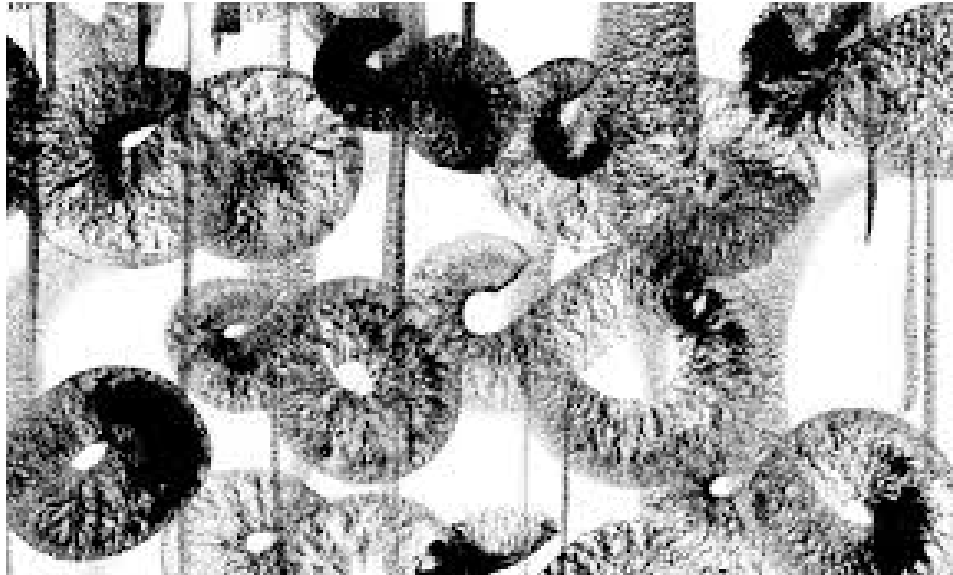
Kalpesh Gosavi is a calligrapher, letterer and typographer based in Mumbai, India. He is also passionate about writing. He graduated from Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art in 2010, and further pursued MFA in Typography from the same institute. Since then he has been teaching typography and design in Sophia Polytechnic, Mumbai.

Until now Kalpesh Gosavi has taken various workshops and lectures on Devanagari and Latin calligraphy. His workshop 'Sensible Stroke' started few years back. He teaches students to experiment with the shape of the letter by exploring the surface, tool and also the medium. Kalpesh Gosavi has been a part of many group as well as solo exhibitions and given demos to a live audience. He has been a speaker and presented his work in Typography Day several times. His yearly workshop 'Sensible Stroke' gives people a chance to come

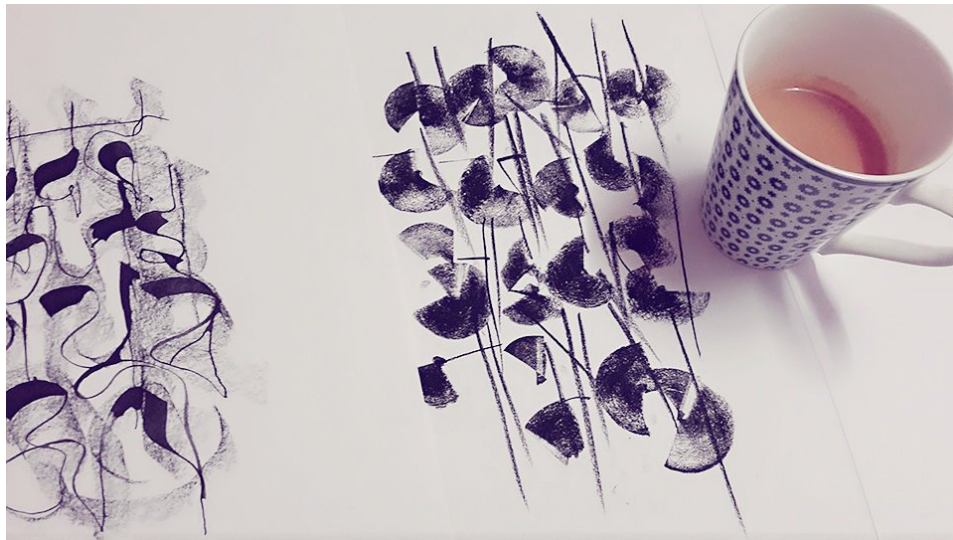
and explore calligraphy through different tools and on different mediums.

He has done calligraphy for newspaper articles in Loksatta, logos and invitations.

Kalpesh Gosavi always visualizes what he wants to draw before putting it down on paper. He programs his visualization, decides the parameters and then starts working. This has helped him in creating a discipline for himself, and helped him become what he is today.



He thinks that calligraphy helps in learning design, and design helps in learning calligraphy. He believes that one cannot think about design by leaving out letters. Learning calligraphy can help design students become sensitive towards typography.



He believes that calligraphy helps one become a better designer, and also teaches a person to observe minute details. He says that calligraphy teaches a person how to observe and makes them aware about their surroundings.

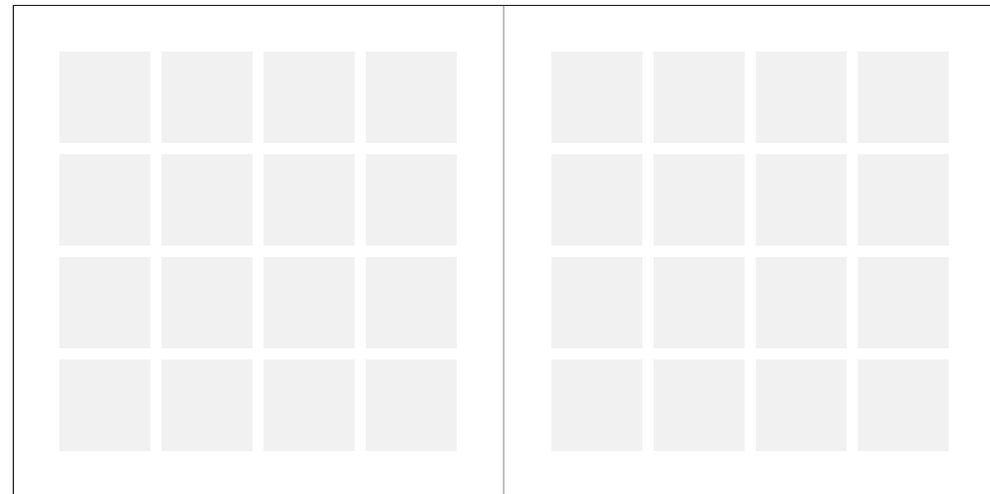
(Image courtesy: Google)

14 Size and Grid of the Book

INITIAL DESIGN

Initially, I started with a 8 * 8 inches square book, with a 4 * 4 grid. After designing a few pages and adding images, I realized that a square book is not the best option for a calligraphy book which documents works of various calligraphers. The reason for changing the size of the book is that most of the images were rectangular and not square.

Also, since it is a reading book, a longer book makes more sense as it is comfortable to read and carry.



Initial book size: 8 * 8 inches

Initial grid: 4 * 4



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sed erat. Suspendisse purus augue, posuere ut urna sit amet, rutrum tincidunt diam. Curabitur efficitur sed diam quis ornare. Quisque sed justo libero.

These are examples of some of the pages that were designed initially. After seeing various books, and suggestions from my guide, I understood that the baselines of the text need to match. Hence, the text alignment was changed so that the last lines from both columns are aligned from the bottom.



ACHYUT PALAV



"Ut ultricies velit ipsum, vitae iaculis turpis euismod vitae. Nunc sollicitudin vestibulum magna non tristique. Curabitur interdum neque at est tempor euismod. Proin tempus"

Ut ultricies velit ipsum, vitae iaculis turpis euismod vitae. Nunc sollicitudin vestibulum magna non tristique. Curabitur interdum neque at est tempor euismod. Proin tempus, risus eget iaculis rutrum, felis velit pretium purus, at aliquam ante augue at leo. Proin volutpat fermentum arcu, id facilisis nibh eleifend eu. Suspendisse convallis laoreet nunc, in vulpate massa mollis at. Integer lobortis lectus ut odio gravida, vitae gravida nunc.

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sed erat. Suspendisse purus augue, posuere ut urna sit amet, rutrum tincidunt diam. Curabitur efficitur sed diam quis ornare. Quisque sed justo libero.

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One of the main reasons to change the size of the book was that the art pieces of calligraphers was getting cropped. The book size did not compliment the images that I had. There was no separate introductory page to the calligrapher. I have tried to do these things in the new design of the pages.

ACHYUT PALAV



Ut ultricies velit ipsum, vitae iaculis turpis euismod vitae. Nunc sollicitudin vestibulum magna non tristique. Curabitur interdum neque at est tempor euismod. Proin tempus, risus eget iaculis rutrum, felis velit pretium purus, at aliquam ante augue at leo. Proin volutpat fermentum arcu, id facilisis nibh eleifend eu. Suspendisse convalis laoreet nunc, in vulputate massa mollis at. Integer lobortis lectus ut odio gravida, vitae gravida nunc.

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sed erat. Suspendisse purus augue, posuere ut urna sit amet, rutrum tincidunt diam. Curabitur efficitur sed diam quis ornare. Quisque sed justo libero.

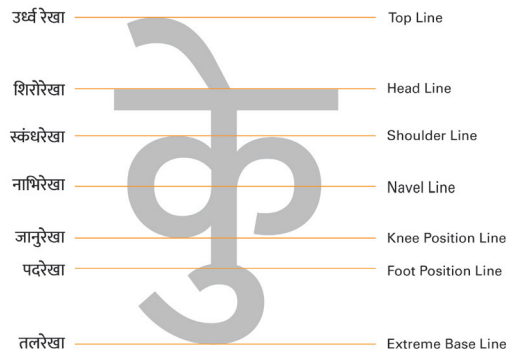
6

“Ut ultricies velit ipsum, vitae iaculis turpis euismod vitae. Nunc sollicitudin vestibulum magna non tristique. Curabitur interdum neque at est tempor euismod. Proin tempus”

Mauris eleifend aliquet lectus vitae malesuada. Etiam tincidunt rhoncus urna, a ullamcorper purus porttitor sed. Vestibulum sed blandit diam, ac accumsan ex. Praesent condimentum fermentum tellus nec rutrum. Sed ac neque sagittis dui ornare eleifend quis sed erat. mcorper purus porttitor sed. Vestibulum sed blandit diam, ac accumsan ex. Praesent condimentum fermentum eifend aliquet lectus vitae malesuada. Etiam tincidunt rhoncus urna, a ullamcorper purus porttitor sed. Vestibulum sed blandit dia.

TYPEFACE

Initially, I had used a sans serif typeface Univers for the book. I used Univers 55 for the body text and Univers 65 for the headings. I realised that it is better to use a serif font for long texts as it makes reading easier. Hence I changed the body text font to a serif - Minion Pro at 11.5 point size.



Initially, I had used Ek Mukta for the diagrams of all the Devanagari letters. Since it is a book about calligraphy, I decided to draw the letters in calligraphy instead of using a font.

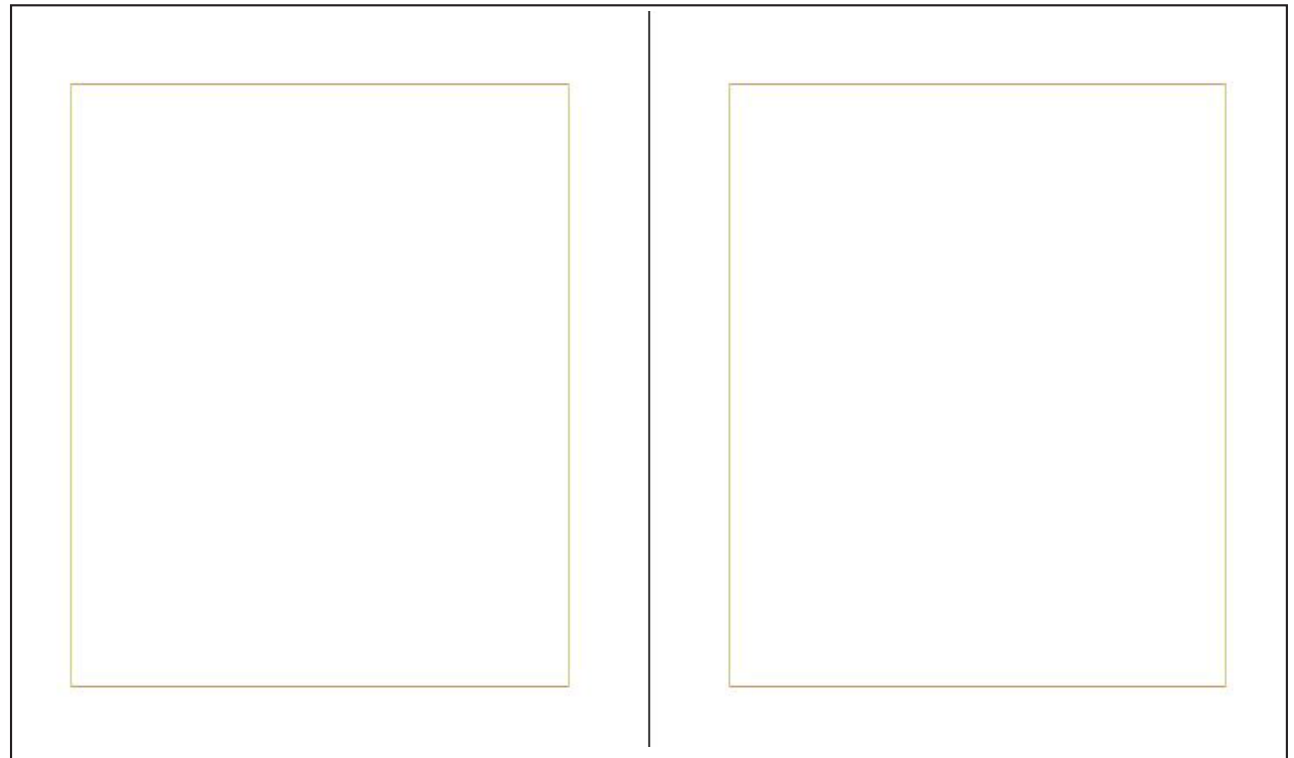


Initially, I had used Ek Mukta to show parts of the Devanagari letters. Since it is a book about calligraphy, I decided to draw the letters in calligraphy instead of using a font.

FINAL BOOK SIZE

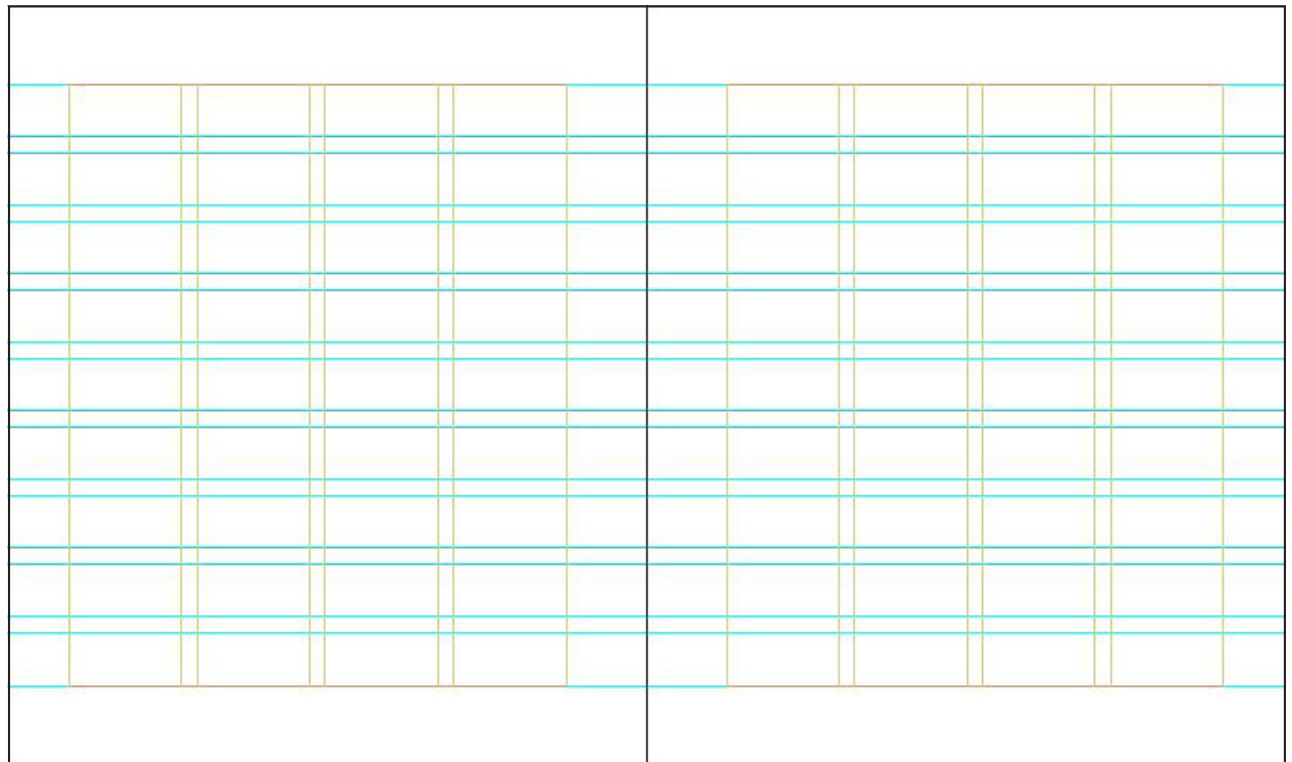
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Double Spread size : 8 * 19 inches

Top & bottom margin : 1 inch
Inside Margin : 1 inch
Outside Margin : 0.8 inch





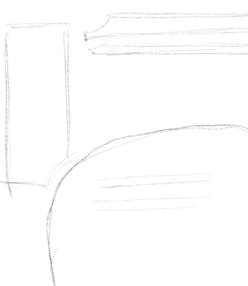


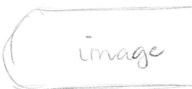

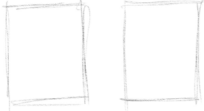



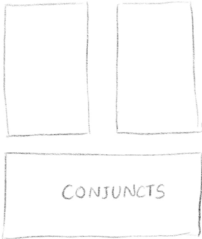


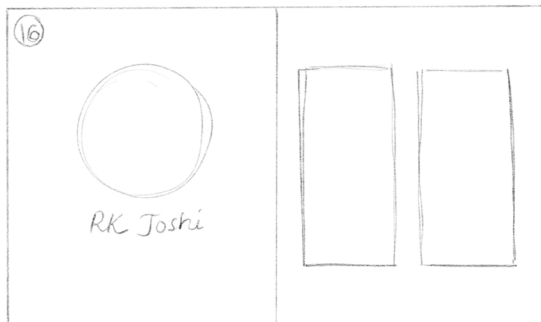
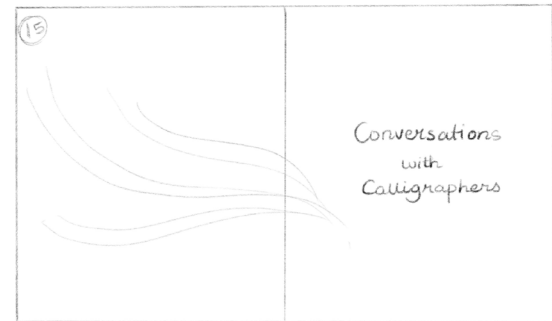
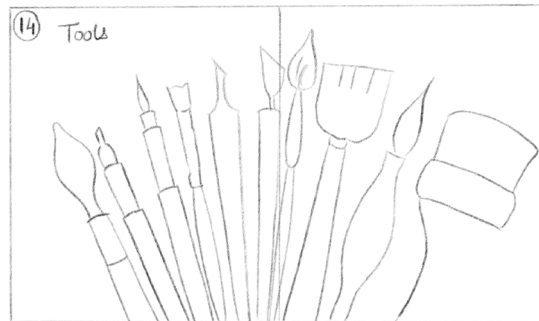
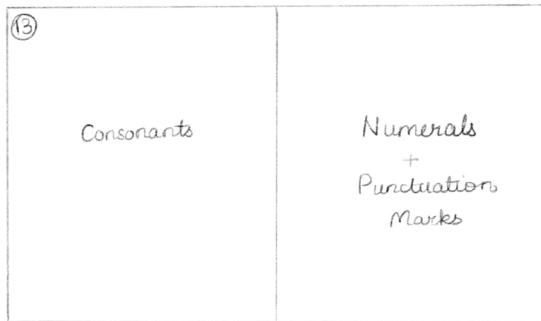
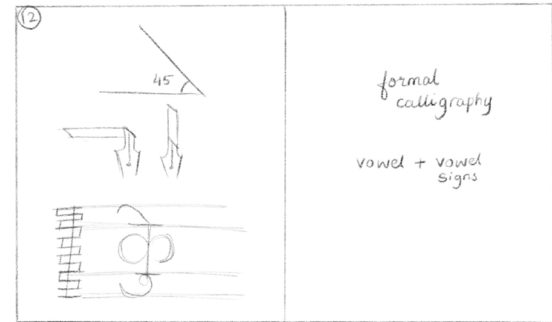
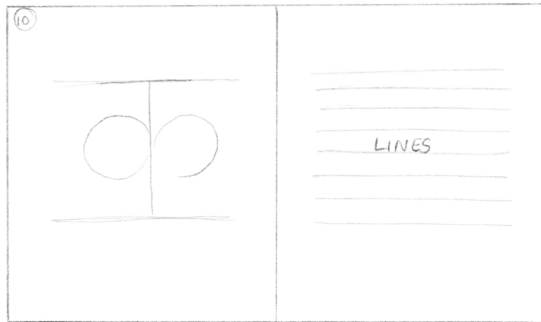
Number of columns : 4
Gutter : 0.1969 inch

Number of Rows : 9



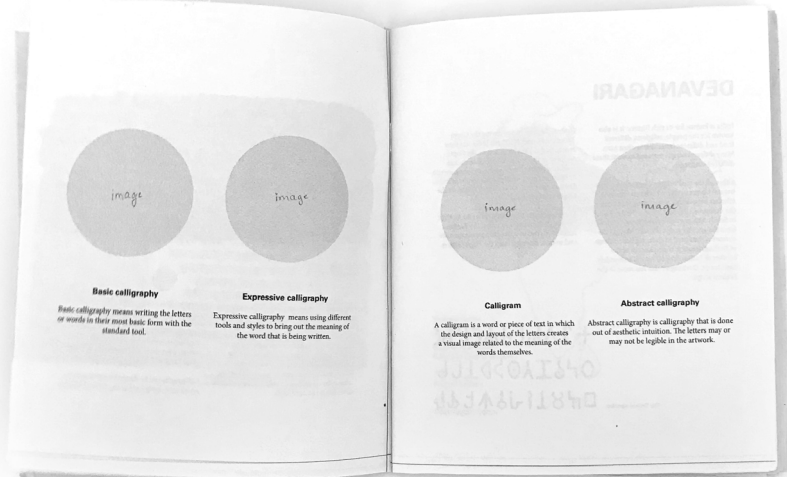
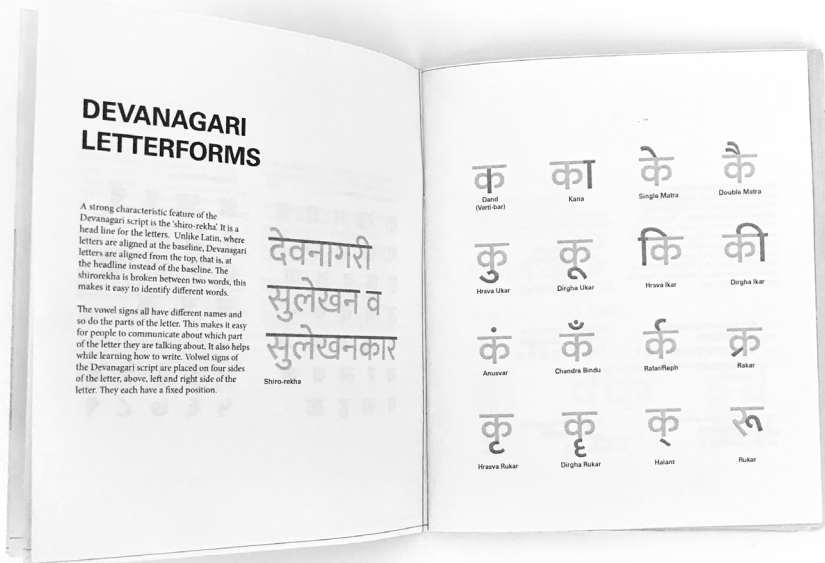
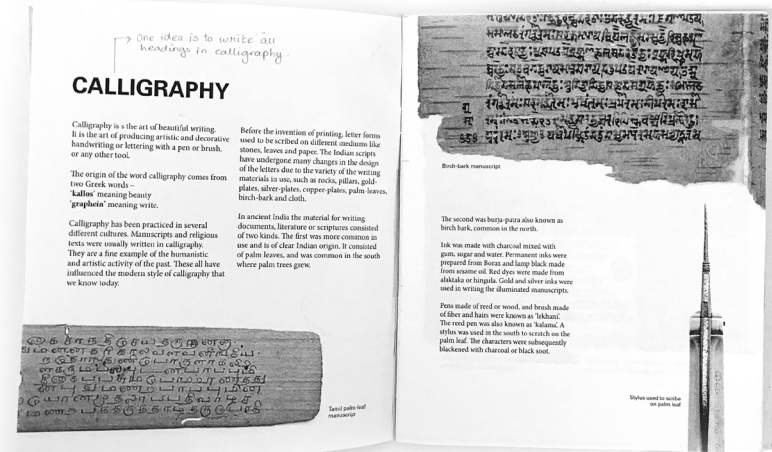
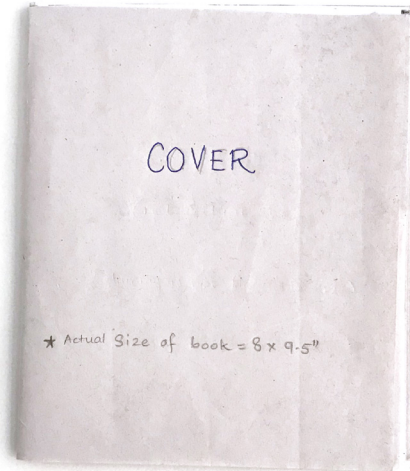
15 Planning the Pages

	<p>info</p> 		<p>CONTENTS</p> 	<p>Calligraphy</p> 	
<p>image</p>  	  <p>image</p>	<p>Types of</p> 	<p>Calligraphy</p> 	<p>Devanagari</p> 	
	<p>Consonants</p> <p>Vowels</p> <p>Numerals</p>	<p>Devanagari Letterforms</p>  <p>Shirorekha</p>	<p>different signs</p> 	 <p>VERTIBAR</p>	 <p>CONJUNCTS</p>



16 Dummy

The initial dummy was made to understand what information goes on each page.



17 Typography

BODY TEXT

The font that I have used for the book is Minion Pro at point size 11.5 for body text in regular style. Minion Pro is a serif typeface designed by Robert Slimbach.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

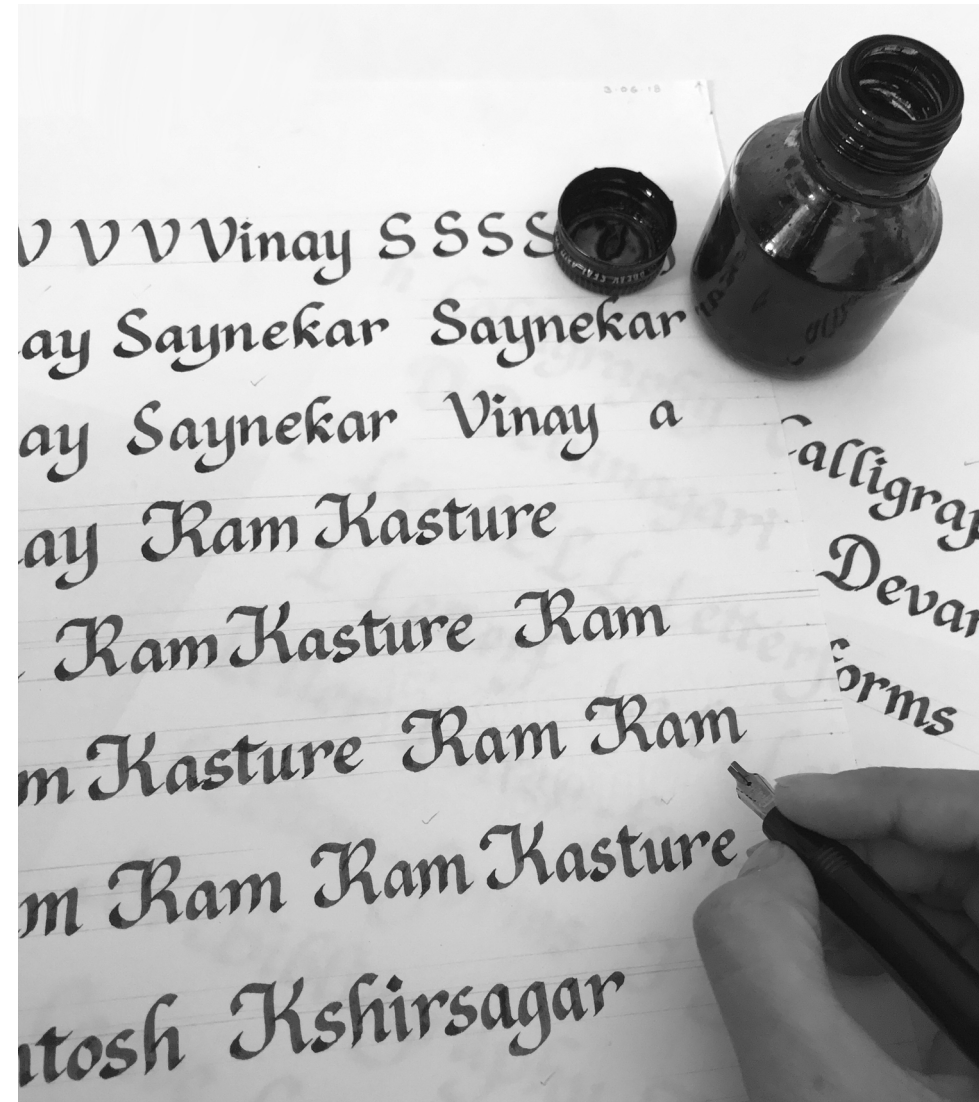
lmnopqrstuvwxyz

012345689

Minion Pro

HEADINGS

For headings of the chapters and name of calligraphers, I chose not to use any font. Instead I decided to write the words in calligraphy, scan them and use them in the book. After all it is a book about calligraphy!



Preface
Devanagari
Letter - forms
Calligraphy
Conversations with
Calligraphers
Bibliography

R.K. Joshi
Achyut Palav
Santosh Kshirsagar
Vinay Saynekar
Ram Kasture
Sarang Kulkarni
Kalpesh Gosavi

HIGHLIGHTS

For the quotes in the chapters I chose not to write the sentences in calligraphy, scan them and use them in the book.

“Indian calligraphy has a lot to offer, there is a lot to learn from our scripts. Calligraphy does not work or help a person in one angle, but helps in a heterogeneous way.”

“The most important thing is knowing when to stop”

“One should not accept all that is western blindly, not at the cost of Indianess.”

“Calligraphy is not just about using the tool, but it is about using the heart and mind”

“The human element has the upper hand. Working by hand gives a personalised meaning to the artpiece.”

18 Pages of the Book

Calligraphy

Calligraphy is the art of beautiful writing. It is the art of producing artistic and decorative handwriting or lettering with a pen or brush, or any other tool.

The origin of the word calligraphy comes from two Greek words:
kallos meaning beauty
graphein meaning write.

Calligraphy has been practiced in several different cultures. Manuscripts and religious texts were usually written in calligraphy. They are a fine example of the humanistic and artistic activity of the past. These all have influenced the modern style of calligraphy that we know today.

Before the invention of printing, letter forms used to be scribed on different mediums like stones, leaves and paper. The Indian scripts have undergone many changes in the design of the letters due to the variety of the writing materials in use, such as rocks, pillars, gold-plates, silver-plates, copper-plates, palm-leaves, birch-bark and cloth.

In ancient India the material for writing documents, literature or scriptures consisted of two kinds. The first was more common in use and is of clear Indian origin. It consisted of palm leaves, and was common in the south where palm trees grew.

The second was burja-patra also known as birch bark, common in the north.

Ink was made with charcoal mixed with gum, sugar and water. Permanent ink was prepared from Borax and lamp black made from sesame oil. Red dyes were made from alataka or hingula. Gold and silver inks were used in writing the illuminated manuscripts.

Pens made of reed or wood, and brush made of fiber and hairs were known as 'lekhanis'. The reed pen was also known as 'kalama'. A stylus was used in the south to scratch on the palm leaf. The characters were subsequently blackened with charcoal or black soot.



Birch bark manuscript




Tamil palm leaf manuscript

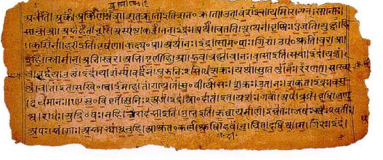


Reed pens
Stylus used to scratch on palm leaf

In India, calligraphy was practiced since a very early time. Many manuscripts and religious documents were written in different styles of calligraphy. The **Radveda** and the **Jain manuscript Kalpastara** are some of the examples of manuscripts where the beautiful art of calligraphy can be seen.



Calligrapher on a folio of the Kalpastara Manuscript



Calligraphy seen on a folio of the Vedas

From the days of writing on palm leaves and clay surfaces, calligraphy has come a long way. From ink made of soot, quill pens and reed pens to today's fountain pens and markers, calligraphy has developed in terms of style, writing material, surfaces and the basic philosophy behind it. From hand-written manuscripts and scriptures, to taking calligraphy on different mediums, the art form never fails to amaze people.

Contemporary calligraphy practices see calligraphy as an expressive way to show written words or texts. Calligraphy is done for logos and logos, wedding invitations and event invitations, masthead of newspapers, book covers, calendars, certificates and greeting cards to name a few. Calligraphy can be divided according to the styles, tools used or the concept behind them.

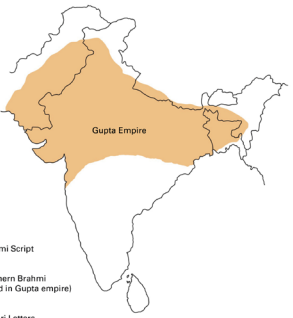
Devanagari

India is known for its rich history. It is also known for the people, religions, different food and different languages spoken here. Many different scripts are used to write these different languages.

Although the true origin of writing in India has not been ascertained with any certainty, scholars believe that the starting point was the Brahmi script. Many scripts that are used in South Asia are said to have been developed from the ancient script Brahmi. Most of the current scripts used in India are descendants of Brahmi, hence it is also known as the 'Mother of Indian scripts'. An old and widely used script, Devanagari also has roots in the Brahmi script.

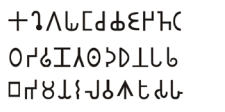
Brahmi that was in use during the Gupta Kingdom all over Northern India was then recognized as the Gupta script. The Gupta script gave rise to the Nagari, Sharada and Siddham scripts. These scripts in turn gave rise to many of the most important scripts of India. The emergence of Nagari letters is seen on the Gupta inscriptions.

The modern day Gurmukhi script for Punjabi Language, the Assamese script, the Bengali script, the Tibetan script, and Devanagari are said to have emerged from the Nagari letters.



Gupta Empire

Brahmi Script
 ↓
 Northern Brahmi (Used in Gupta empire)
 ↓
 Nagari Letters
 ↓
 Devanagari Script



The Brahmi alphabet

The term 'Devanagari' came to be used to describe the new script as late as the ninth century A.D. It is derived from Devan Nagaram, that is two Sanskrit words 'dev' and 'nagar', meaning God and city respectively. Hence, Devanagari means 'script from the city of Gods'.

Devanagari is a widely used Indian script which is used to write more than hundred languages. Some of the languages that are written in Devanagari are Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Bhojpur, Nepali, Konkani, Marathi, Rajasthani and Prakrit, making it one of the most used and adopted writing systems in the entire world.

The form of writing in Devanagari has evolved over a period of more than two thousand years. This Indian script has undergone many changes in the design of the graphemes due to the variety of the writing materials in use, such as rocks, burnt clay, pillars, gold-plates, silver-plates, copper-plates, palm-leaves, birch bark and cloth.

Devanagari is written from the left to right direction in a horizontal way. Being an abugida, the script is divided into vowels (Svaras) and consonants (Vyanjanas). Each letter in Devanagari represents a consonant with an inherent vowel 'a'.

According to the book, 'Typography of Devanagari' written by Bipuroo Naik, the Devanagari alphabet is composed of thirty-four consonants and fourteen vowels. The Devanagari numerals are also different than the Latin numerals.

Consonants / Vyanjanas:

Vowels / Svaras:

क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	अ	आ	इ	ई	
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण	ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	
त	थ	द	ध	न	अं	अः	लृ		
प	फ	ब	भ	म	Numerals:				
य	र	ल	व	श	०	१	२	३	४
ष	स	ह	ळ		५	६	७	८	९

Tools

Although the formal tool for Devanagari calligraphy is the *brush*, calligraphers have been using many other unconventional tools to get different effects and expressions. Not all tools are available in markets. Calligraphers often make their own tools with the material that is around them. Syringes, droppers, shaving brushes, sponges, etc. make excellent tools.

Many calligraphers believe that it is important to always be observant about what materials are available around us as they can make good tools. Makeup brushes, accessories from the kitchen and garage can also be calligraphy tools. One must be creative when it comes to making tools.



According to him, India is a very complex. Everyday, every minute, everything is changing. India is full of diversity, dynamism is constantly surrounding it. Even though his inspirations and exposures were western, he always applied that knowledge back home.

He felt that Indian designers should be true to the real India. We have a strong and complex philosophy, traditions, culture, we need to therefore imbibe and take those forward. He strongly believed that design should be incited from the grass root levels, from the very fundamental beginning.

'One should not accept all that is western blindly, not at the cost of Indianness.'



He coordinated the calligraphy workshop Akshar yoga in 1986 at IDC School of Design, IIT Bombay. It was the first calligraphic workshop held in India, with participation of twenty-five Indian and four international calligraphers. Akshar yoga was organized in order to establish the academic and professional significance of calligraphy and to identify practicing calligraphers from all over the country. R. K. Joshi believed that the interaction of creativity and technology is very essential. He said that we have design as such a wonderful tool, which is a human centered activity and technology only helps.

Although he agrees that technology is great and we should salute the people who invented it, but at the same time he feels we must also salute the guy who first drew that line on land, and when sun fell on it, a play of shade and light was created and he exclaimed "oh it looks beautiful".

His advice to students was to always enjoy what you do. But enjoy what is yours, what belongs to you and is part of your culture, enjoy it, don't ignore it.

'You are not a master of your own creative work, the master is your assignment. You do your work and then leave this world.'



Achyut Palav

One of the most well-known and respected calligrapher of India, Mr. Achyut Palav completed his graduation from Sir J. J. School of Arts, Mumbai in 1982. He is a teacher, a calligrapher and an artist. He teaches many students from different backgrounds in his calligraphy school. He has taken part in many exhibitions and helped his students put up their own exhibitions.

His work is seen on many corporate calendars, movie posters, invitation cards, logos, calligraphy books, book titles and paintings. After completing twenty-five years in the calligraphy industry, he went on a tour all over India known as Calligraphy Roadways. He held calligraphy workshops and gave live calligraphy demos in many different art colleges and art galleries.

As a child, he never enjoyed studying. A back benchers in school, the teacher once asked Mr. Palav to write the "Saraswati" - thought of the day on the black board. He believes that was his first experience in creative writing in its simplest form.

Slowly he started reading these thoughts and understood their meaning. He recognized that each word and form gained its power from the meaning it had. This broke open the barriers of letters and he started blending the forms with the meaning to create artistic depiction of the words. Letters became more beautiful structures; with time calligraphy manifested.

He explored calligraphy as an art and dedicated himself to expanding its horizons. It became a means to imagine, create and sever the boundaries of rigid letters and scripts. He says that calligraphy has sculpted him into the person he is today.


Mr. Palav says that calligraphy came naturally to him. He believes that scripts are the fundamental of calligraphy. But calligraphy tools can be used to create artistic strokes that may or may not resemble letters. After all calligraphy is the skill of discovering art hidden in scripts.





He believes that there is a very big difference between calligraphy that is done on paper and on electronic devices. Like the chutney that is made in a mixer is always different than the one that grandmothers would make on the stone 'pati'. Hand done calligraphy is personal and gives no chance of erasing the stroke which is possible on the computer and hence looks alive. He believes that calligraphy can be a very nice career but in India, children are not exposed to this field of work. The lack of proper documentation of Indian calligraphy doesn't allow students to be exposed to the subject. He believes that art and design schools should take up this subject more seriously and imbibe the art form in their curriculum.

"Only with rigorous practice can one truly achieve the skill of composing letter after letter spontaneously."

Santosh Kishirsagar

Santosh Kishirsagar is a calligrapher, educator, typographer and designer. He did his Bachelor's degree in Applied Art specialising in Typography and Calligraphy, and a Master's degree in Teaching Methodology from Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art. He recently submitted his PhD Thesis to IDC School of Design, IIT Bombay on handwriting mechanisms.

As a child, he says he did not have a good handwriting. He didn't care much for marks, but always cared about learning new things. He liked to observe people in his class and would enjoy imitating them. He sat on the first bench in the corner just so that he could observe the entire class from there. He loved story-telling and expressing himself.

By his second year in college, Santosh Kishirsagar had completed basic assignments of calligraphy like strokes and letters. He was very disappointed when he came to know that he had not been selected to take part in Aksharyog - a calligraphy conference happening in DC, IIT Bombay. After talking to his teacher, he understood that Prof. K. K. Joshi was in charge of the conference. He went to Prof. K. K. Joshi to ask why he wasn't selected. This was his first encounter with his guru. After his assignments were called 'dumkey work' by Prof. K. K. Joshi, he was angry and decided to try new approaches to calligraphy so that he could impress his guru.


After one week of day and night calligraphy, he showed his work to Prof. K. K. Joshi who allowed him to attend the conference. Aksharyog was a turning point in Santosh Kishirsagar's life as he got to see a world of calligraphy in those two days.

Santosh Kishirsagar believes that 'Art of beautiful writing' is a definition for calligraphy of one era. He says so because there was no printing and hence the liability of a good looking letter was more. Books

were reproduced by calligraphy. Knowledge and thoughts were preserved through calligraphic writing. Calligraphers took care of the letter, consistency and readability.

He says that there are stages in calligraphy as well. First you need to learn the script. Script is a fundamental invention of human beings. It has sustained for a long time and is still serving the society today. The script is a vehicle of civilization, means it is not only a representation of a civilization, but is responsible to transport the civilization to other geographical parts of the world. A script is responsible for passing on the identity, information, culture and commerce of a civilization.

In India, knowledge was transferred verbally. The need for writing down information was important because the guru or priest could die in natural calamities or wars, and the information would go along with them. Letters sustained this knowledge.



He teaches his students that calligraphy is much more than just a skill. Calligraphy helps one express and realise what he or she wants to say. Daily calligraphy practice documents our day to day moods and mancies. It helps one analyse and understand themselves.

He believes that learning calligraphy means learning and following a rigorous discipline. It means drawing the guidelines, using a specific tool, using it in a certain manner, looking at the form and its balance, comparative visual space, in-between letter space and understanding all negative and positive spaces. Calligraphy makes one visually sensitive because of following a certain discipline. It teaches maturity and a balanced temperament of the mind.

According to Santosh Kishirsagar, the four stages of doing calligraphy are - understanding, practicing, enjoying and continuing. A calligrapher should be able to write, compose and draw the letters himself. It is not necessary that all calligraphers write, but after a certain stage they should try. Just like a singer, a calligrapher should be able to have multiple options of one single composition. He should use himself as a tool just like the singer's voice. Good calligraphers also turn out to be sensible graphic designers, since they have their own discipline that they will always follow.

According to him, to have a good understanding of the tools, materials and surfaces, one must discipline himself. One should try tools one after the other or he/she might get overwhelmed. There is a lot of material around us, one must try them at a stable pace. After all, letters are already there; humans just evoke them on the paper. The body is the tool through which they evoke the letter. One just needs to leave behind the inner fear, and start!



To come up with new ideas, he says that inspiration is all around us, what we need is to be sensitive and conscious. Most of the time he aimless wandering in the realm of letter forms enables him to see the unusual and further experiments give him the inspiration that he needs.

According to Vinay Sanyal, the future of Indic calligraphy appears to be bright. But Indic calligraphy has to compete with Roman for many reasons. Today's generation is techno-savvy and can master the required skills well. What is needed is to create proper program to initiate them into exploring and experimenting with the craft. He also strongly feels that calligraphy, whether Indic or Roman, should be taught as something that can earn money beyond motivations and citations for its practitioner. He firmly believes that though hand-tool skills and digital mediums have very little in common, they are complementary. He does not feel that digital medium should be considered as threat that will spoil the craft and need not be feared. According to him one should understand the technology with its limitations. Calligraphy plays important role in design education. It creates awareness about balance, composition, layout, space and obviously discipline as well as concern about the final output. Calligraphy also acts as a foundation, for the study of letter design, lettering and finally typography. Calligraphy has been used as an important key factor in many designs and projects.

According to Vinay Sanyal, calligraphy is largely considered as either one of the means of earning money or an individual's expression of art in India. The former reflects in the teaching of the subject at Art School level. In the curriculum of art, calligraphy is one of the many subjects which is taught with the help of uninteresting and repetitive exercises. Very few calligraphy-enthusiast teachers may take students in a different direction to enhance their understanding but many of them stick to routine exercises which are traditionally conducted in the art schools. He has also observed that the teaching that is only exercises of calligraphy are by and large limited to vaguely appearing humanistic hand of Roman script, keeping away other classic styles. In this scenario Indic scripts are very rarely practiced.



Kalpesh Gosavi

Kalpesh Gosavi is a calligrapher, lettering artist and typographer based in Mumbai, India. He is also passionate about writing. He graduated from Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art in 2010, and further pursued MFA in Typography from the same institute. He is a professor at a Sophia Polytechnic, Mumbai, and has been teaching typography and design since 2010.

During his school days, Kalpesh Gosavi took part in many art competitions. He was fond of drawing and would always doodle on the last page of his notebooks. He took a lot of care while writing his books and academic journals. He always made sure that he writes in his best handwriting and in the neatest way possible. Since that time, he was drawn to art and writing.

Mr. Gosavi was introduced to hand-lettering by the few samples in the book 'Sudho Chhainiala' while preparing for his drawing exam. He got very attracted by the title-design in the newspapers. Very soon, he saw Achyut Palav's interviews on Zee Marathi. He was mesmerized and calls Achyut Palav his source of inspiration.

He started studying in Sir J. J. Institute of Applied Art. He had a keen interest in photography and calligraphy. He believes that photography is an art, but the photographs depend on a lot of technical aspects. Unlike photography, calligraphy is about the way your hand moves. He thinks that it is easy to find photographers working in a similar way, because the tools help a lot. In calligraphy, you have the tool but the manipulation has to be made by the calligrapher. It is not only the skill that makes calligraphy beautiful, but the affection towards the work matters more.

During his first year at college, he was introduced to formal calligraphy by Santosh Khatrisagar. He started attending exhibitions by Achyut Palav and got a chance to attend his workshop. He took inspiration from his work and practiced somewhat similar kind of calligraphy.

He says that he had great affection and madness for this art form. This affection not only made his calligraphic pieces beautiful on paper, but made it beautiful in his heart as well. He wanted to be very promising at calligraphy but continuously struggled in order to make his calligraphy look good and attractive among the class. This was a very crucial and tough period he said. He had started chasing his dream of creating promising calligraphy and achieving mastery over the tools.

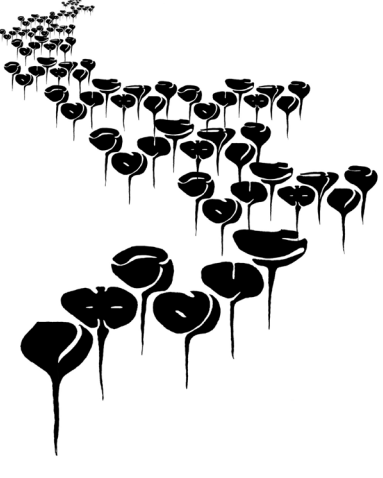
"The happiness that I receive while living through the experience of creating an art piece is much more than the happiness that I receive when someone appreciates my work"



During third year of college, he was lucky to have Santosh Khatrisagar as his professor again. Kalpesh believes that Santosh Khatrisagar is very experimental and discovers a different kind of calligrapher and academician. This time he got a chance to learn about the philosophy of letter-forms and calligraphy. Vinay Sawarkar sir taught him a disciplinary and structural approach towards the work. This helped Kalpesh to reshape himself and try new methods of working. With Sawarkar sir's guidance, he developed three new styles of Devanagari calligraphy as his final project. That was a major point in his journey of becoming a calligrapher.

He also had guidance from Kamal Shedge and Mohini Gokhale, which gave him a different insight about letter-forms.

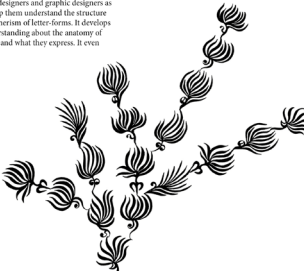
Today when the world is shifting from hand skills to digital work, Kalpesh Gosavi believes there is still place for hand-lettering and calligraphy. He believes that there is place where you want to create place, and where it is really needed. Mediums and platforms will change and be more versatile with time, but hand skills are going to be alive due to its different dimensions.

Kalpesh Gosavi visualizes what he wants to draw before putting it down on paper. He programs his visualization, decides the parameters and then starts working. He says this has helped him in creating a discipline for himself, and helped him become what he is today. He loves to work with structures, experimenting with layouts and experimenting with various mediums, tools and surfaces.

He says that calligraphy can be very helpful for type-designers and graphic designers as it can help them understand the structure and mannerism of letter-forms. It develops the understanding about the anatomy of the letter and what they express. It even forms a relation with visual design and creates understanding about space-division, composition and layout. This helps in understanding arrangement, proportions, symmetry, asymmetry and many other design principles.

Calligraphy creates an understanding about the tool's relation with the surface and medium. Handling all these, one cultivates as a good person who can imbibe aesthetics.



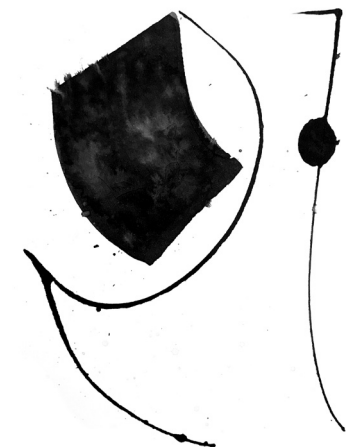
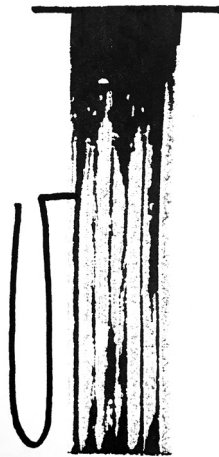
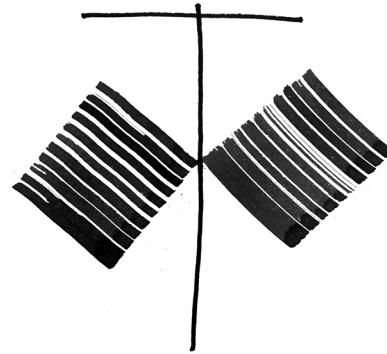

He thinks that calligraphy helps in learning design and design helps in learning calligraphy. One cannot think about design by leaving out letters. Learning calligraphy can help design students become sensitive towards letters, typography and various design implementations. It helps in understanding the variety of possibilities while playing with the form of letter or shape. Applying the design mind on letter form design, one can achieve many different and innovative results.

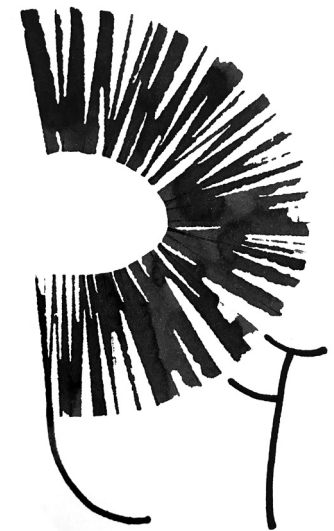
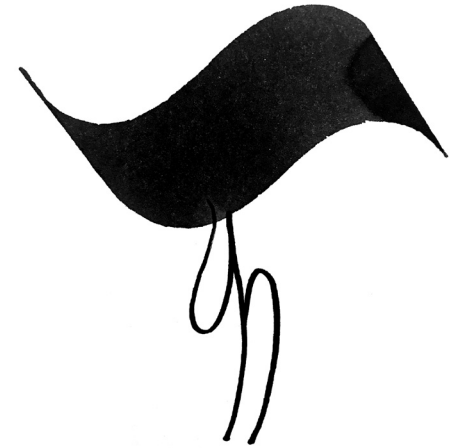
Kalpesh truly wishes to depart whatever he has perceived from his journey so far, to the upcoming young talent. He aspires to learn and innovate hidden perspectives of Indian calligraphy through his work and teaching his students. India has a rich tradition of scripts and languages. Our country demands more aesthetics for its own traditional scripts which can impart new definitions and mold them to new forms and their usages. This opens up a very wide scope for the upcoming pack of calligraphers.

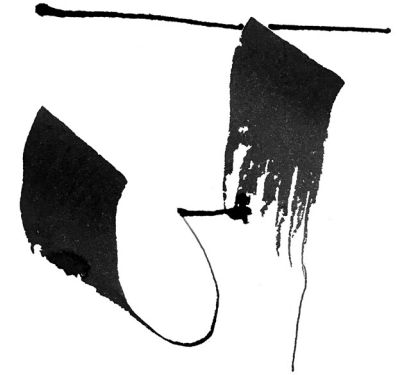
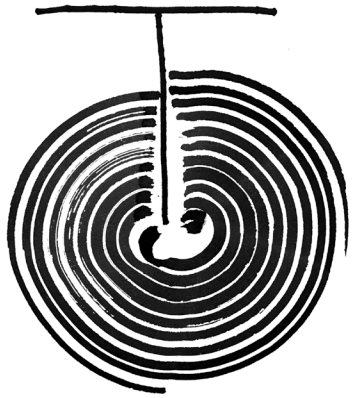
"Indian calligraphy has a lot to offer, there is a lot to learn from our scripts. Calligraphy does not work or help a person in one angle but helps in a heterogeneous way."

19 Calligraphy Explorations

These are a few pieces of calligraphy that I did during this project. Different tools such as boxwell, brush, hair color brush and sponge have been used to draw these letters.







20 Conclusion

This project has given me a chance to learn so much about the Devanagari script and calligraphy. It has given me the wonderful opportunity to meet calligraphers, spend time with them and get a sneak-peak into their thoughts. Every person thinks differently and has their own way of thinking, that is what makes them special. This is a very important point that I have realized because of the project. It has given me the motivation to try new things without wondering what the correct way to do it or with wondering how the world is doing it.

I have always liked calligraphy, and I often try Latin calligraphy many times. This communication design project has encouraged me to spend time with our Indian scripts as well. There is a lot to do, one just needs to look around. I have learned much more about calligraphy than just the dictionary definition. After all, calligraphy is not only the art of beautiful hand writing, it is much more!

This was my very first time to design a book. I am glad I got to learn rules about how a book is designed. In the process, I became more observant about other books and print media and saw how they were designed. I have enjoyed every minute of the chaos, stress and hard work behind this book. I have enjoyed the entire process from reading, to talking to calligraphers, drafting the chapters to doing calligraphy and designing the book, and have learned a lot of this entire project journey. Being a part of each step of the process, I have learned that book design requires discipline and immense hard work and dedication.

To get better at any skill, one must not only practice but also be sincere about it. Only then can one gain mastery over the particular skill. The subject calligraphy has taught this to me even better. I have understood how important documentation is. It is up to every person to document whatever they

can, be it our grandmother's recipes or a scientist's experiments. Knowing about different thoughts about a particular subject helps one to get a deeper understanding of the subject. It helps one widen their horizons and look at things in a different perspective. It helps us to get inspired, think in a different way and stand out of the box, or even redefine the box!

Last but not the least, I hope this book can help other people to know about Devanagari calligraphy. I hope that by reading different calligrapher's journeys, they are inspired and get guidance on the subject as well.

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THANK YOU