

Design Resource

Kasuti Embroidery - Karnataka

Needle Handwork

by

Smt. Usha Pawar and Sanmati Hosure
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kasuti-embroidery-karnataka>



1. Introduction
2. Smt. Usha Pawar
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<https://dsource.in/resource/kasuti-embroidery-karnataka/introduction>

Introduction

Kasuti word is derived from the Kannada word 'Kai' means hand and 'Suti' is cotton thread meaning Kasuti is the handwork of cotton thread. Kasuti Embroidery speaks about the tradition, customs and people of Karnataka. This traditional form of folk embroidery is famous in many places, especially in the districts of Bijapur, Dharwar, Belgaum, Miraj, Sangli and Jamkhadi. The artwork depicted in Kasuti Embroidery depends on women's world. Motifs used in the folk embroidery are from surrounding areas, temple architecture, lotus flowers, chariots, and gopurams of South India. Bird motifs such as parrot, the peacock with spread plumage, the swan and the squirrel are commonly used. The sacred bull, the elephant and the deer are animal motifs used for Kasuti Embroidery.

Kasuti embroidery dates back to the Chalukya Period. In earlier days the women courtiers in the Mysore Kingdom in the 17th century were expected to be adept in 64 arts. Kasuti Embroidery is one of them. Folk designs influenced by rangoli patterns of Karnataka are featured in Kasuti embroidery. In the tradition of Karnataka, sarees embroidered with Kasuti were expected to be a part of the bridal trousseau of which one saree made of black silk with Kasuti embroidery called Chandrakali saree was of premier importance.

Many women artists practice varieties of embroidery. Smt. Usha Pawar from Bengaluru mastered the art of embroidery in Kasuti. Her passion for learning new things not only bring her into the limelight but also made a difference in people's lives. She fell in love with this art when she happened to come across a gorgeous Kasuti saree. Usha learned this art from her teacher Anita Chaudapurkar. In 1990 Mudra Coats held an event which became a turning point in her life. Usha was nominated for National Award in the Anchor embroidery contest in the year 1992.



Kasuti Embroidery.

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Smt. Usha with her award winning work.



Smt. Usha with her Masterpiece.

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National Award.



Artwork selected for National Award.

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Smt. Usha Pawar

Smt. Usha J. Pawar from Bengaluru is a very well-known artist of Kasuti embroidery. A 70-year-old national award winner is an inspiration for others. She is basically a homemaker who learnt traditional embroidery from her mother and aunts. Later she took formal training from her teacher. She has knowledge of other kinds of embroideries and cultivated the famous embroidery of Karnataka called Kasuti. She is teaching this art for more than 25 years which has taken her to a major height. Smt. Usha taught a number of women from all walks of life, and foreigners too. To name a few, Sumangli Seva Ashram, MEWS ladies club, and Karnataka State Co-operative Federation for Women. She has been actively participating and demonstrating in various exhibitions and organisations.

Smt. Usha's Kasuti work has been featured in local magazines like Woman's Era, and Priyanka and in-house magazines of Madura Coats called Needle N Thread. She has been covered by the regional channel, Udaya TV for her embroidery work during the year 2002. Her work is not only appreciated locally but also in other countries. She was nominated for the National Award in the year 1992. She is an Embroidery Consultant for Anchor threads (Madura Coats). Usha has been a judge for the All India Anchor Embroidery Contest twice. She has been involved in social work and is a member of Lioness Club Bengaluru and was the All India Lioness Conference President 2012-13. She trained a number of women for their means of living.



National Award - 2016.

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Smt. Usha at Lioness Club.

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Smt. Usha with her National Award.



Smt. Usha featured in Magazine.

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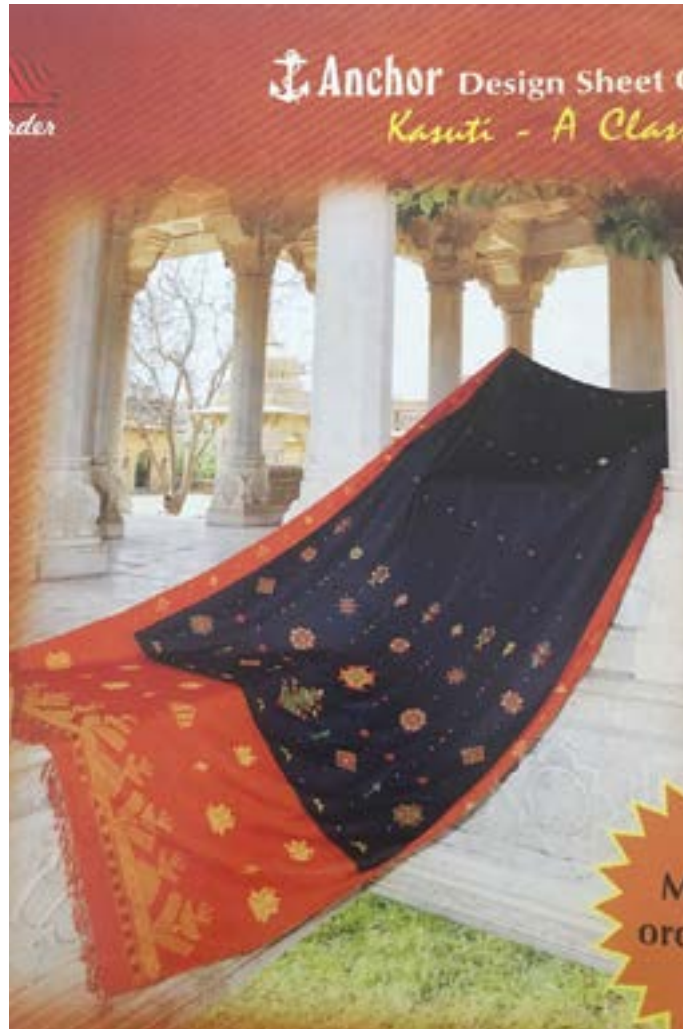
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Anchor Design Magazine.



Smt. Usha Pawar.



Needle and Thread Issue.

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Anchor Design Award.

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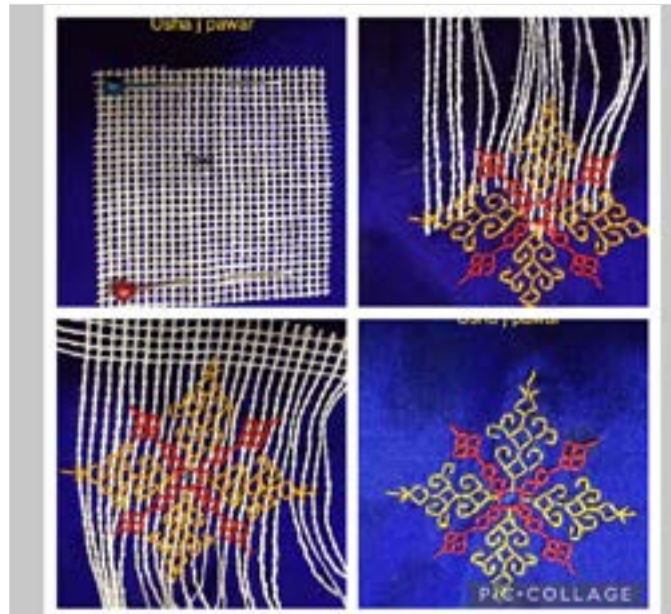
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Tools and Raw Materials

The tools and raw materials that are used for Kasuti embroidery are:

- **Cloth:** Hand-woven cloth or saree is used as a base material for Kasuti embroidery.
- **Needle:** It is used for stitching varieties of stitches.
- **Threads:** Earlier discarded silk threads were used for this art. Nowadays mercerized cotton thread such as Anchor thread is used for Kasuti embroidery.
- **Cotton Mosquito Net:** It is used to stitch design uniformly. Once the design is finished the cotton threads from the net are removed one by one.
- **Scissor:** It is used to cut extra threads.
- **Embroidery Hoop:** It helps in holding the fabric stiff and firm.



Cotton Mosquito Net.



A wooden embroidery hoop is used for holding the cloth stiffly.

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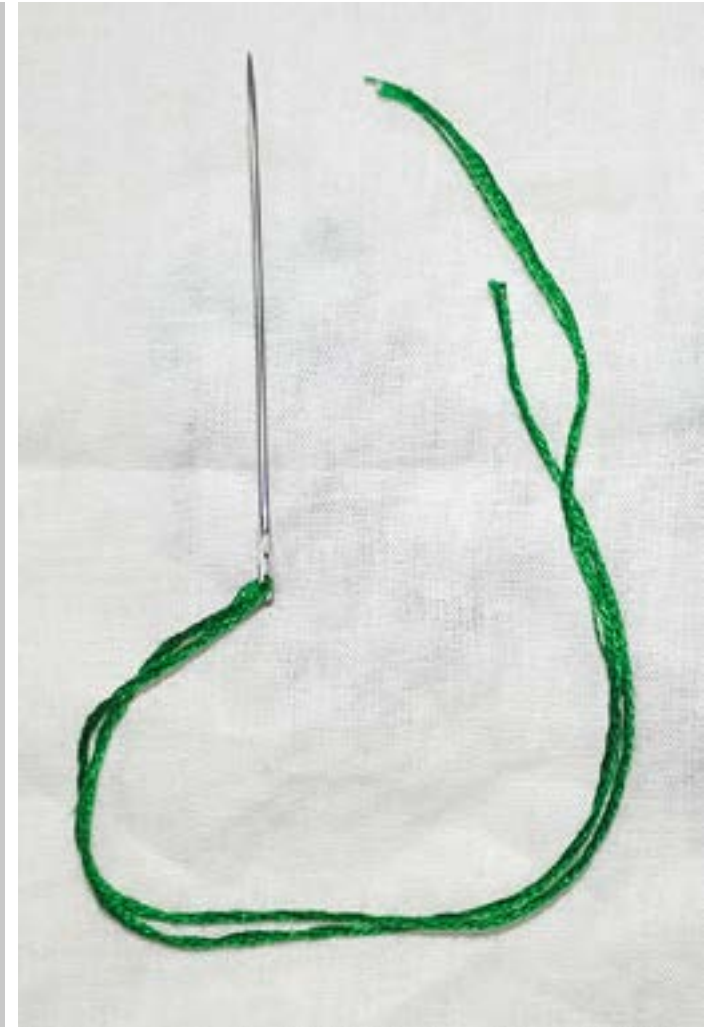
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Anchor Mercerized Cotton Thread.



The needle is used for hand sewing purposes.

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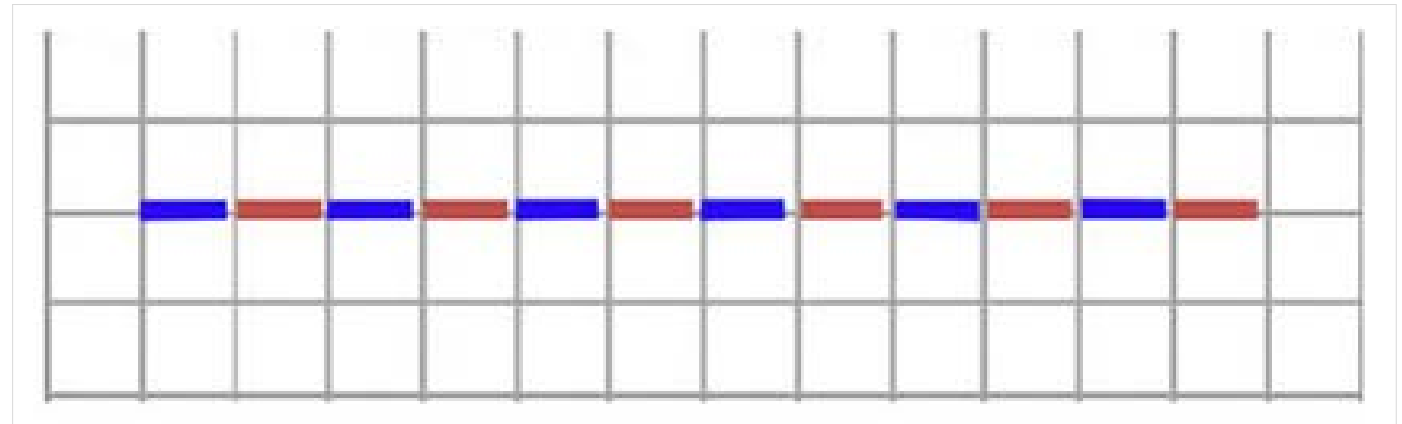
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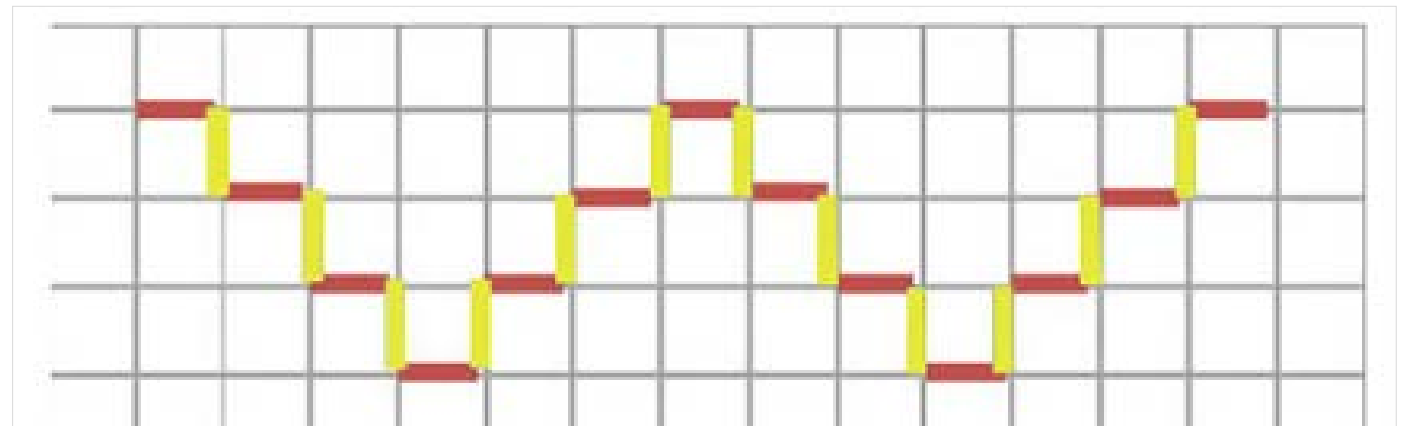
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Stitches

In olden times, women spare their leisure time for weaving and embroidery skills. Karnataka is famous for the silk industry. The discarded silk threads were used for Kasuti embroidery. The uniqueness of this embroidery is that the patterns are stitched without knots at starting or ending points. The reason behind this is that a pattern should look alike on both sides of the cloth. Different types of stitches are used to obtain the desired pattern. There are four types of stitches namely, Gavanti, Murgi, Negi and Menthhi.



Gavanti: It is the most common stitch. It is the double running stitch used for making vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines. The patterns are mostly geometrical. The designs appear to be identical on both sides of the fabric.



Murgi: It is a zigzag stitch and it appears like the steps of a ladder. The distance between the stitches remains the same as the stitches are of uniform size. The work in Murgi stitches is neat and tidy; hence the design appears the same on the right and wrong sides of the material.

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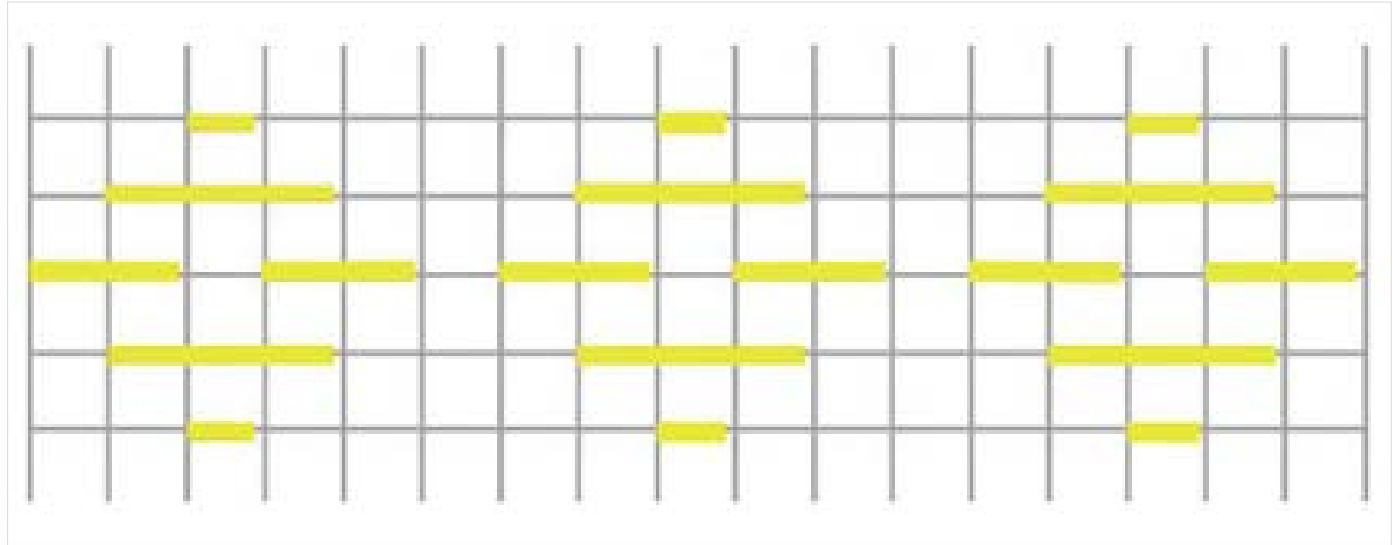
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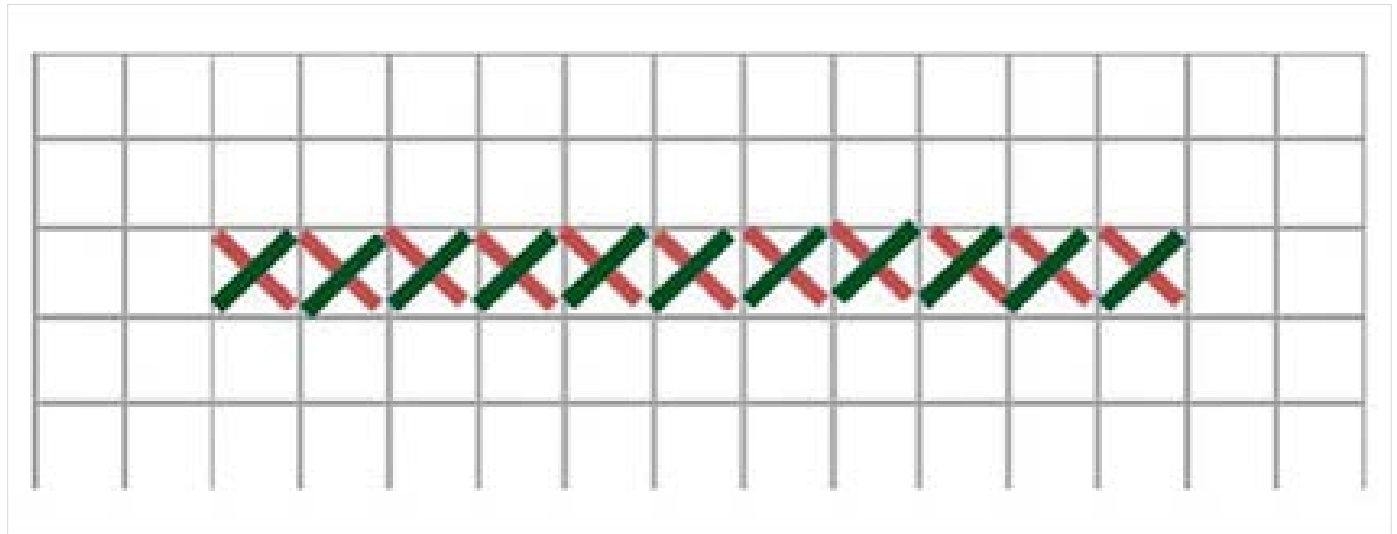
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Negi: It is an ordinary running stitch. Basically, it goes from right to left. This stitch is used for larger designs. The design created resembles woven patterns. It is worked in long and short straight lines hence the wrong and right sides of the design are not appearing identical.



Menthi: It is a cross stitch resembling fenugreek seeds. It had generally a heavy appearance so it is used for filling purposes. This stitch is not much used as a large amount of thread is required. It is commonly used to cover up the background areas of the designs.

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Tiny Embroidered Marvels on Black Fabric.



Kasuti Stitch.

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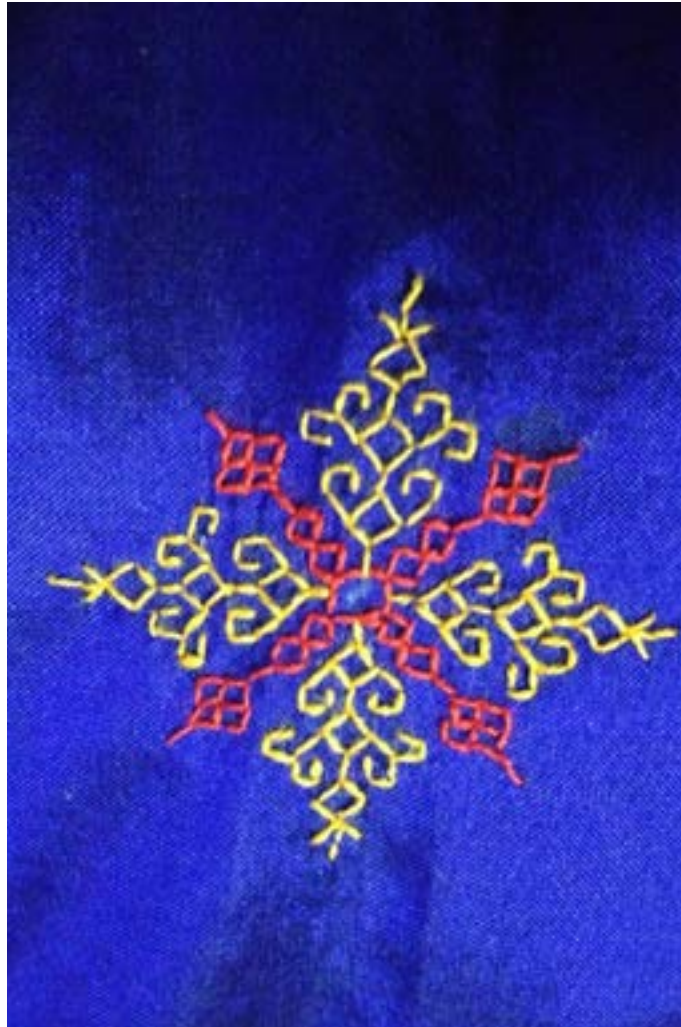
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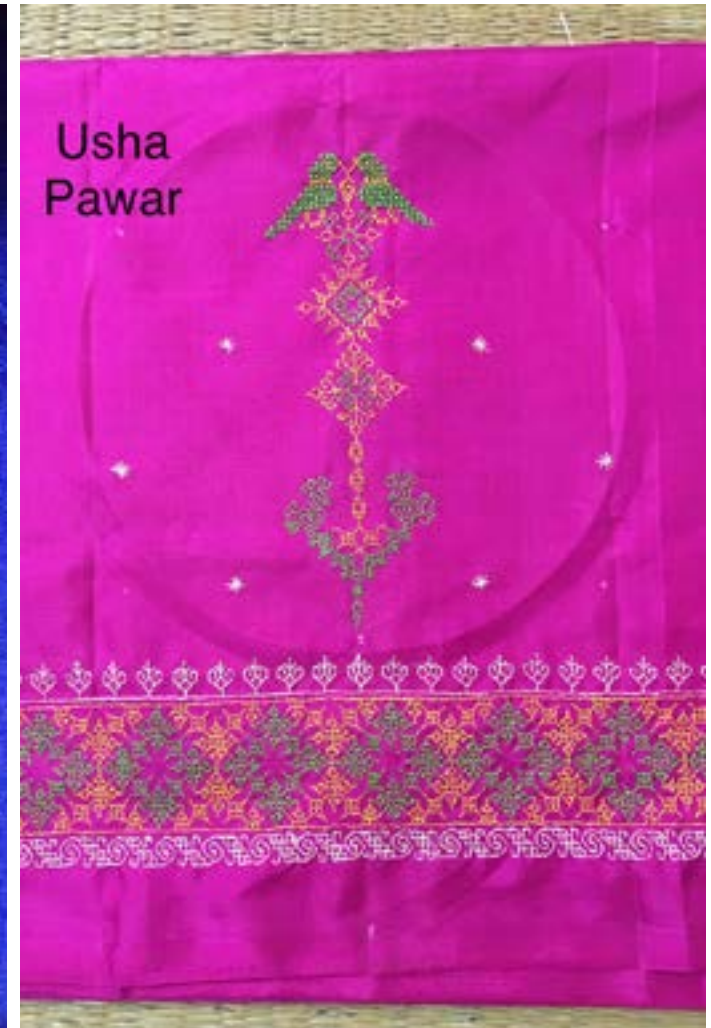
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Kasuti Stitch.



Kasuti Embroidery Pattern.

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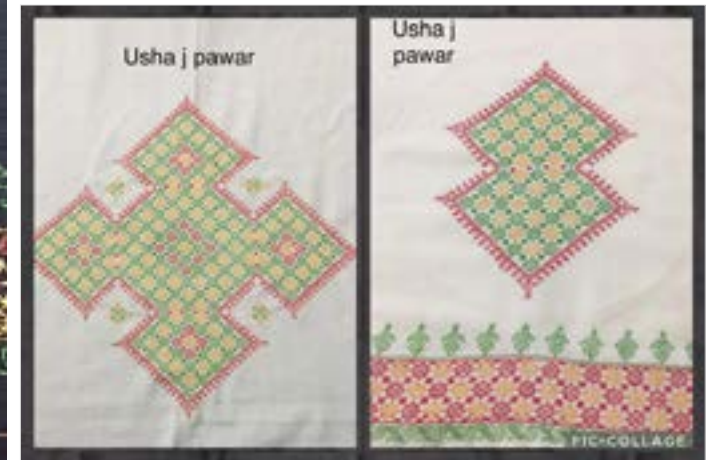
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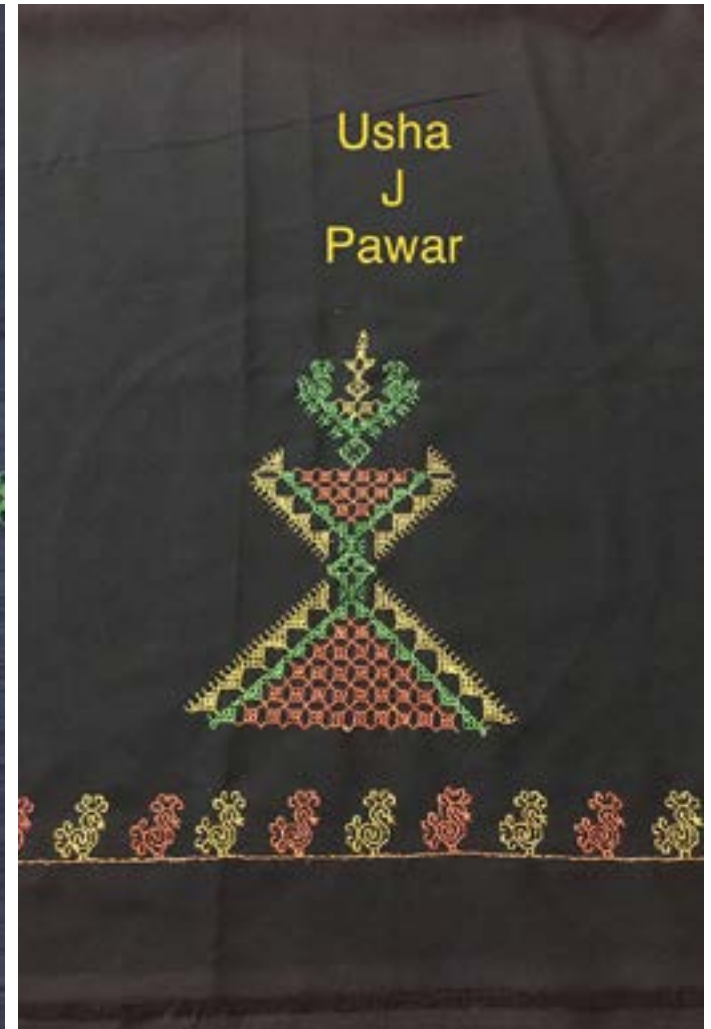
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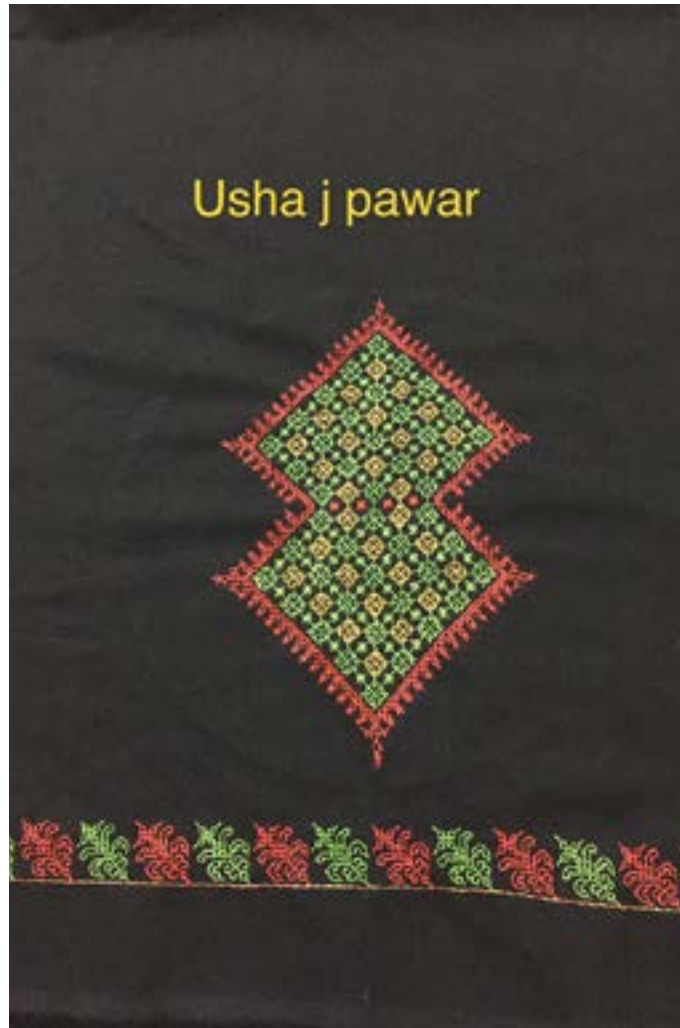
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Kasuti Embroidery Pattern.



Kasuti Diagrams.



Kasuti Design Symbols.

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Products

The topmost speciality of Kasuti embroidery is the designs are never traced. The design remains in the mind and is recreated on the cloth directly with the needle and thread. Previously there were no measuring tools used for this art. Artists were using their palms, and fingers for measuring the spaces and patterns. Kasuti is done by counting the number of threads. Kasuti has always been a domestic art. The traditional art form is passed from generation to generation. Due to intricate designs and exquisite hand work the art gained popularity across borders.

Prominent colours such as red, orange, yellow and purple are used for Kasuti embroidery. Formerly Kasuti embroidery was done on Irkal saree wear and Khanns were utilised as blouse pieces. Nowadays it is made on all types of clothes. Curtains, covers, clutches, tote bags, wall hangings and dress wear like Mysore silk, Angi or kurtas are adorned with Kasuti embroidery.



Kasuti Embroidered Blouse.

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Wall hanging.



Wall hanging.

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Traditional Yet Fancy Kasuti Embroidery Jacket.



Traditional but Chic Kasuti Saree.

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Saree with Kasuti Embroidery.



Potli embroidered with Kasuti.

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Masterpiece of Kasuti Embroidery, Skirt.



Kasuti Work on Saree.

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Kasuti Embroidery with Geometrical Motifs.



Kasuti Embroidery with Bird Motifs.

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Kasuti Embroidery with Animals and Birds.



Kasuti Embroidery with Animal Motifs.

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Kasuti Embroidery Skirt covered by Needle and Thread Magazine.



Kasuti Embroidery Sarees at Exhibition.

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Kasuti Embroidery Saree.

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Kasuti Embroidery Blouse.



Kasuti Embroidered Saree.

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Kasuti Embroidered Saree.



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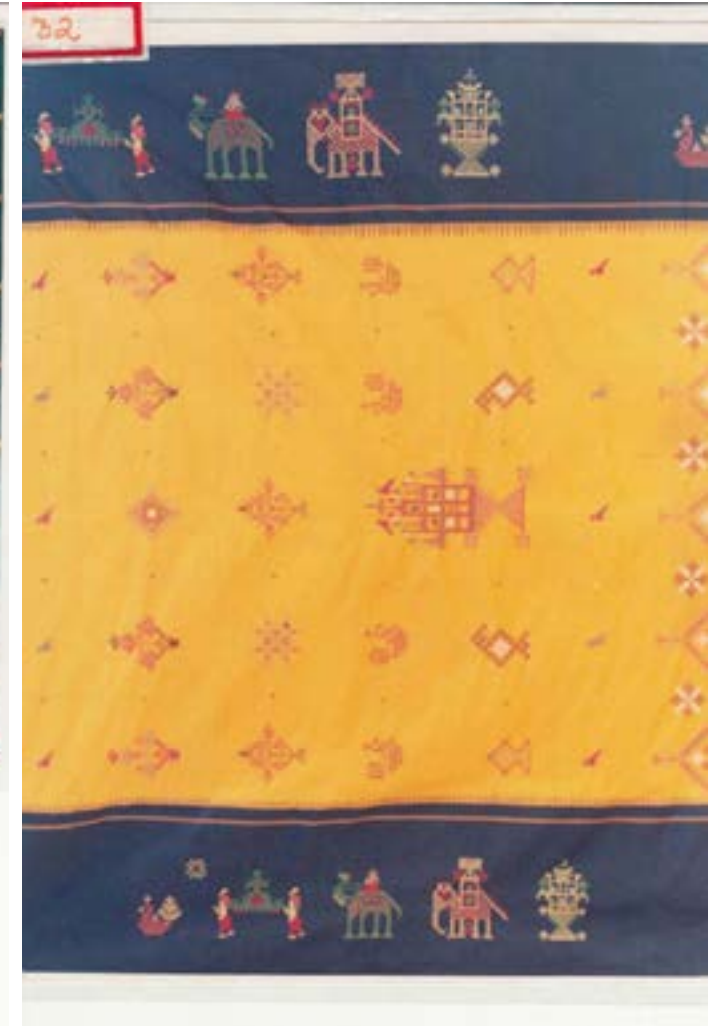
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Kasuti Embroidered Saree.



Kasuti Embroidered Saree with Contrast Borders.

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Kasuti Embroidered Purse.



Kasuti Embroidered Potli Bag.



Kasuti Embroidered Black Saree.

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Hair Accessory decorated with Kasuti Embroidery.



Beautifully Embroidered Saree.

Design Resource

Kasuti Embroidery - Karnataka

Needle Handwork

by

Smt. Usha Pawar and Sanmati Hosure
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/kasuti-embroidery-karnataka/products>

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Article featuring Kasuti Art.



Anchor Design Awards Poster.

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Beautiful embroidery on saree.

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Video



About Kasuti Art



Tips for Using Threads



Making Process



Kasuti Embroidered Saree Fashion Show

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National Award Ceremony

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Contact Details

This documentation and content was done by Smt. Usha J Pawar and Sanmati Hosure at IDC, IIT Bombay.

(Better images will be uploaded later)

You can get in touch with her at [ushapawar\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:ushapawar[at]hotmail.com)

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