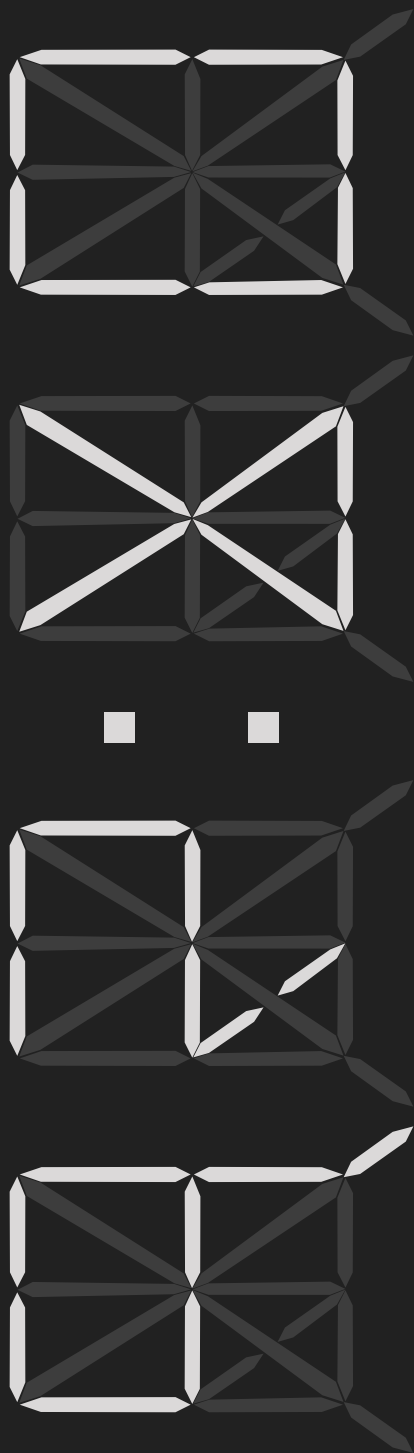




Positions through Contextualising

Kshitij Gotiwale

Type Designer Interviews. Part 5: Shiva Nallaperumal /
Portrait of a Nation II Maya K & Roxane Z/
Mahendra Patel: a 60-year journey of design in India /
Intercultural and decolonial: with Dr. Rathna Ramanathan
Bell Hooks – Cultural Criticism & Transformation /
Kenneth Goldsmith – ‘Revenge of the Text’ /
Francisco Laranjo – Critical Graphic Design /
Project Sama Devanagiri, Noopur Datye, Divya Kowshik /
Project Devanagiri Logos, @manvstype (Manav Dhiman) /
Project Ikat Devanagiri v0.1, @lipi (Lipi Raval) /
Project Felfel typeface, Boharat Type Foundry, Egypt



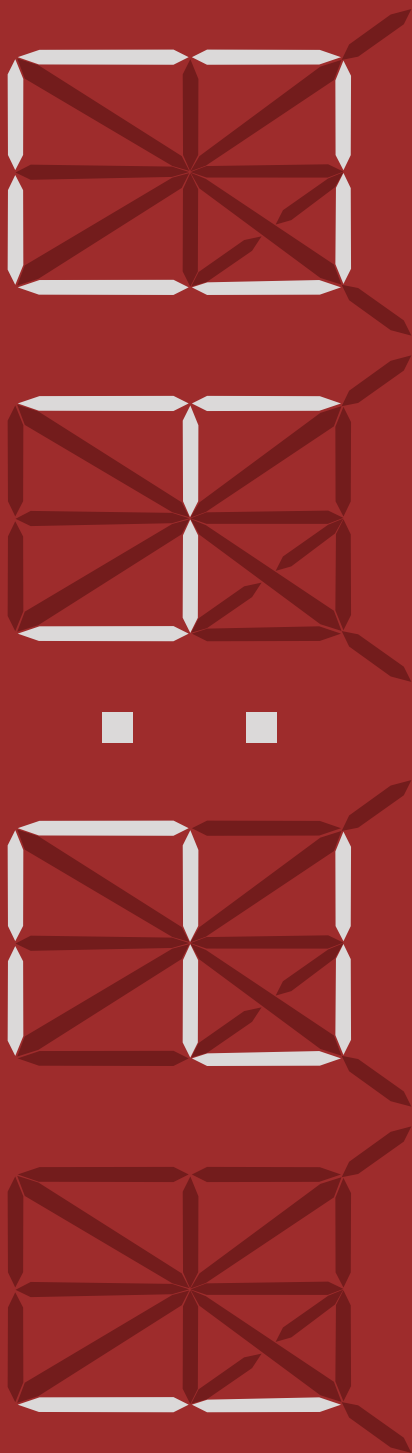
12:40 (Baarah Chaaalees)

बारह चालीस

The heart of this project lies in addressing the challenge of designing VFD typography that caters to multiple subcontinental languages, each with distinct scripts, characters, and cultural contexts. This challenge has become increasingly important as our world becomes more connected, and different cultures come into contact with one another more often. The project emphasizes the importance of ensuring readability for users while considering the cultural relevance of the text. It is vital to maintain visual consistency across different scripts and ensure that the typography is accessible to people of all backgrounds and cultures.

The process of designing typography for multiple languages was quite tedious. It required translating Devanagari script, which is known for its curves and forms, to a simple segmented display. This process was time-consuming and required considerable effort, but it was necessary to ensure that the typography was accessible to a wide range of users.

The project “12:40 (baara chalees)” is a profound act of reclaiming our cultural heritage. For centuries, our languages were suppressed and dismissed as inferior by colonial powers. But now, through this visual medium, we are breathing life into these languages and giving them the recognition they deserve. It is important to recognize the significance of this project and the impact it can have on preserving and celebrating our cultural heritage.



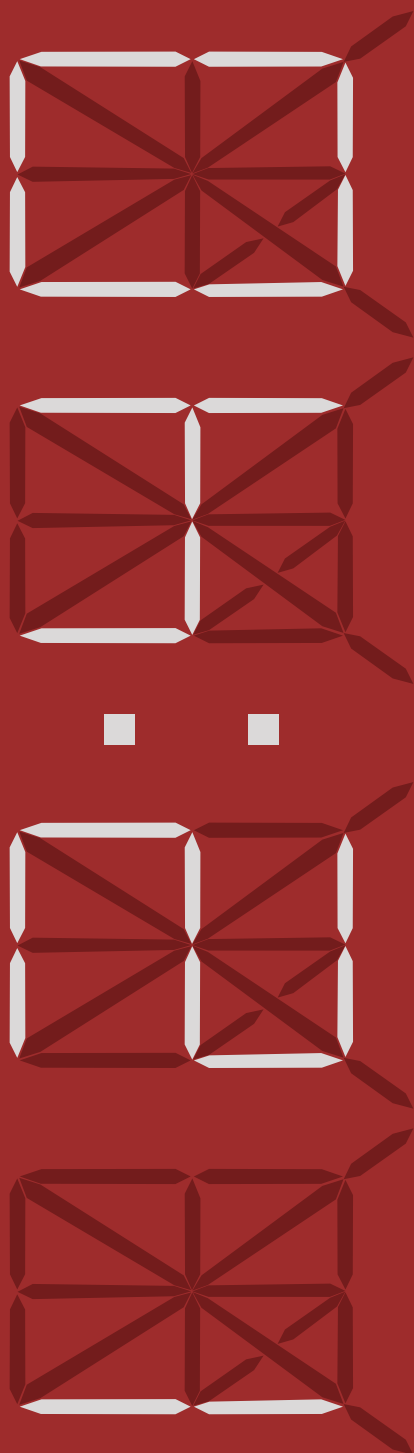
Intercultural & Decolonial: Exploring frameworks for typographic practice with Dr. Rathna Ramanathan

The video features Dr. Rathna Ramanathan discussing the topic of intercultural and decolonial frameworks for typographic practice. She explores the significance of typographic design in the context of the Devanagari script in a contemporary world.

Dr. Rathna begins by acknowledging the historical and cultural importance of the Devanagari script, which is widely used in India and Nepal for writing several languages, including Hindi and Sanskrit. She emphasizes the need to approach typographic design with an understanding of the cultural context and the colonial legacy that has influenced it.

The project discussed by Dr. Rathna aims to bridge the gap between traditional typographic practices and contemporary design approaches. She highlights the importance of developing an intercultural framework that acknowledges the diversity of typographic practices and challenges the dominance of Western design paradigms. This framework encourages the exploration and incorporation of non-Western typographic traditions, such as the Devanagari script, in contemporary design.

Dr. Rathna emphasizes the need to go beyond the superficial use of Devanagari script as a decorative element and instead understand its cultural and linguistic nuances. She advocates for an approach that goes beyond literal translation and considers the visual and symbolic elements of the script. This involves understanding the historical development of the script, its calligraphic forms, and its inherent design principles.



Intercultural & Decolonial: Exploring frameworks for typographic practice with Dr. Rathna Ramanathan

She also highlights the significance of decolonizing typographic practices. The impact of colonialism on typographic design has often resulted in the marginalization and erasure of non-Western scripts and aesthetics. Dr. Rathna encourages designers to challenge these power dynamics and create spaces for diverse typographic expressions.

The project aims to foster collaboration and dialogue between designers from different cultural backgrounds. Dr. Rathna emphasizes the importance of engaging with local communities and involving them in the design process. This approach ensures that typographic design is not merely an act of appropriation but a means of empowering and representing different cultures.

In the contemporary world, the Devanagari script holds a unique position. Dr. Rathna highlights its increasing use in digital platforms and its role in shaping the identity of Indian languages and cultures in the global context. She calls for an approach that combines tradition and innovation, respecting the legacy of the script while adapting it to contemporary communication needs.

Overall, the video presents an exploration of intercultural and decolonial frameworks for typographic practice, specifically focusing on the Devanagari script. Dr. Rathna Ramanathan emphasizes the importance of understanding the cultural context, engaging with diverse communities, and challenging Western-centric design paradigms. By doing so, she advocates for a more inclusive and empowering approach to typographic design in the contemporary world.



'Revenge of the Text' - Kenneth Goldsmith

Goldsmith, K. (2011). *Uncreative writing managing language in the Digital age*. Columbia University Press.

The article "Revenge of the Text" by Kenneth Goldsmith, featured in the book "Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in the Digital Age," explores the transformative impact of digital technology on contemporary writing practices. Goldsmith argues that in the digital age, the concept of originality and authorship has been challenged, and new forms of creativity have emerged. He emphasizes the importance of embracing appropriation, remixing, and repurposing existing texts as valid modes of artistic expression. Goldsmith encourages writers to engage with the vast archive of digital content, manipulating and recontextualizing it to create new meaning. By questioning traditional notions of creativity, Goldsmith calls for a shift in our understanding of writing in the digital era.

Critical Graphic Design: Critical of What?

Laranjo, F. (2014, December 13). *Critical graphic design: Critical of what?. Modes of Criticism*. <https://modesofcriticism.org/critical-graphic-design/>

The article titled "Critical Graphic Design" discusses the evolving role of graphic design as a critical practice. It explores the intersection of design and critical theory, emphasizing the importance of questioning and challenging societal norms through visual communication. The article highlights the need for graphic designers to move beyond commercial objectives and engage with social, cultural, and political issues. It emphasizes the potential of graphic design to provoke critical thinking, promote dialogue, and effect social change. The author also examines various case studies and examples of critical graphic design projects that have addressed pressing issues such as inequality, environmental concerns, and human rights. Overall, the article calls for a more conscious and socially engaged approach to graphic design.



Portrait of a Nation II: Beyond Narratives

Khalil, M. E., & Zand, R. (2022, January 21). *Portrait of a nation II: Beyond narratives*: 21 January – 16 April 2022. Mana Al Dowayan. <https://www.manaldowayan.com/exhibitions/7-portrait-of-a-nation-ii-beyond-narratives-abu-dhabi-music-arts-foundation-adma/>

“Portrait of a Nation II: Beyond Narratives” is an exhibition curated by Maya El Khalil and Roxane Zand. It explores the multifaceted identity of a nation beyond traditional narratives. Through various artistic mediums, the exhibition delves into the complexities of a nation’s history, culture, and people. It challenges stereotypical representations and aims to present a more nuanced understanding of the nation’s diverse fabric. “Portrait of a Nation II” invites viewers to contemplate the intricate layers that shape a nation’s collective identity, fostering dialogue and appreciation for its richness and diversity.

Mahendra Patel: A 60-year journey of Design in India

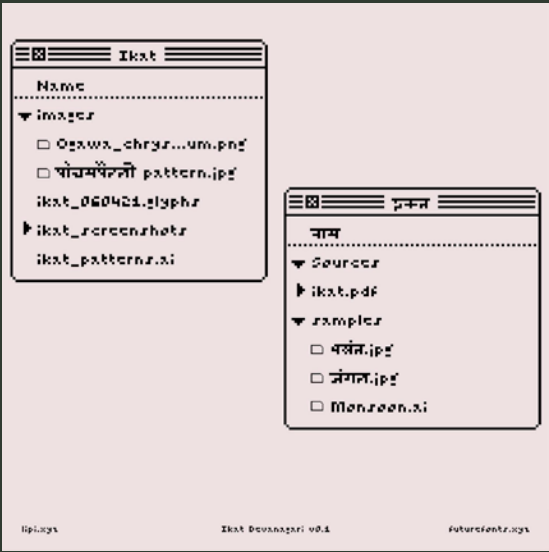
Vilhjálmsson, G., & Desai, S. (2022, May 4). *Mahendra Patel: a 60-year journey of design in India* [web log]. Retrieved May 18, 2023, from <https://gazette.universalthirst.com/home/mahendra-patel-a-60-year-journey-of-design-in-india>.

The article titled “Mahendra Patel: A 60-Year Journey of Design in India” explores the remarkable career of Mahendra Patel, a prominent designer in India. Spanning over six decades, Patel’s journey in design has made a significant impact on India’s creative landscape. The article highlights his diverse portfolio, including projects in industrial design, interiors, and graphic design, showcasing his versatility and innovation. It also emphasizes Patel’s commitment to promoting Indian aesthetics and craftsmanship, incorporating traditional elements into his modern designs. Through interviews and anecdotes, the article paints a picture of Patel as a visionary designer who has left an indelible mark on India’s design industry and continues to inspire younger generations.



Ikat Devanagari v0.1 by Lipi Raval

Project Ikat Devanagari v0.1, created by Lipi Raval (@lipi), is an exploration of Devanagari script in the form of 8-bit design. The project aims to investigate the possibilities and limitations of representing the complex Devanagari characters in a simplified, pixelated format reminiscent of early video games. By reducing the script to its basic building blocks, Raval seeks to challenge conventional notions of typography and push the boundaries of legibility and expression. Through this experimental approach, Ikat Devanagari v0.1 offers a unique perspective on how traditional script can be reimagined and adapted to contemporary visual languages, inviting viewers to reconsider the inherent aesthetics and visual potential of Devanagari in the digital realm.



Felfel Typeface by Boharat Type Foundry

The Felfel Typeface project is a journey of creating a versatile and dynamic Arabic font inspired by the Ruq'ah calligraphy style. The designer's exploration began with the discovery of an old book, leading to a deeper understanding of typography and the need for more Ruq'ah fonts in Arabic design. The font incorporates a modern twist while maintaining the beauty and richness of Arabic calligraphy. Felfel's innovative features include adjustable dots, advanced kerning, and support for various Arabic-script based languages. It solves the issue of cascading nature in Ruq'ah, allowing for efficient use of space and characters. Felfel celebrates the elegance and timelessness of Arabic calligraphy while offering creative

