



Partner State:
Telangana

8TH NATIONAL FORUM 2021

REVIVING THE ECONOMY
REIMAGINE. REBOOT. REFORM
21ST & 22ND OCTOBER, 2021

Presented by

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Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

Session 5 - Reviving the Creative Economy

Thursday, October 21, 2021

1800 – 1855 Hrs

Panel



Anjana Somany

Craft Council of India and Mango Tree,
Somany Tiles

Anjana Somany brings forth her strengths, learning and commitment through forty years in the field of craft and textiles. She is Founder-Director *Mango Tree Tours and Exhibitions*, a Company involved in craft and design, imparting education with a difference through curated cultural study tours and workshops that create cultural awareness amongst youth. Its recently launched branch, *Craft Stories Under the Mango Tree*, comprises of events and exhibitions which value cultural diversity, promote cultural engagement, sustain traditional knowledge and nurture artistic expressions. An avid researcher, she has presented several papers at both National and International fora and assisted in craft publications. Anjana's curatorial signature are her internationally held researched historical exhibitions that connect to our living craft traditions.

She is Past National President FICCI-FLO, Immediate Past President of the Delhi Crafts Council and is on the Advisory Board of Creative Dignity, an all India impact and outreach group for artisans, formed during the pandemic, a Board member of Somaiya Kala Vidya, a unique design school for artisans and *CSR Head of Somany Ceramics Ltd*, one of the largest manufacturer of tiles and sanitaryware in India.

Details

Exhibitions Curation and Talks

International exhibitions curated:

- *The Indigo Story* (Johannesburg, South Africa, 2008)
- *Painted Narratives from India: Preserving History through the Art of Story-Telling*, (Johannesburg & Durban, South Africa, 2009)
- *Earthwise-India* section, at Indo-Korean Natural Dyes Symposium, (Chennai, 2009)
- Co-curator *Adornment Head to Toe: Indian Tribal Silver Jewellery* held at *Abhushan: Design Dialogues in Jewelry* (New Delhi 2010, a World Crafts Council Meet)
- *Seeds, Beads and Silver*, at the Africa-India Summit (in Ethiopia, 2011)
- *Indigo, in the Arab World*, (Kuwait 2012)
- *Kerala Sutra: Craft and Design*, a craft-based design project with corporate engagement. (New Delhi, 2014)
- Co-curator '*Chamba Rumal: Life to a Dying Art*'- IGNCA (New Delhi, 2015) & Bhau Daji Lad Museum (Mumbai, 2016) and *Jamdani Tradition and Technique, an introduction to a Historical Textile, Bikaner House*, (New Delhi, 2017- an initiative of the Delhi Crafts Council)

Cultural Study Tours

Mango Tree's specially designed cultural tours are typically accompanied by a scholar guide of repute to view the historical or craft sites through the eyes of an expert. Some of the tours undertaken

- Buddhist Sites on the Silk Road (China)
- Roof of the World (Tibet)
- Indian Influence on Cambodia
- Marvels of Java
- Hampi, Paddakal, Aihole & Badami (Karnataka, India)
- Terracotta temples of West Bengal
- Kutch, a haven for Craft (Gujarat)

Music and Theatre, Events and Workshops

Anjana has been prominent in the culture field in each city she has lived in.

- Trustee *Sanskar Arts Trust* – Co-created *Hyderabad Festival of Arts* - a five-day festival with maestros in music and dance.
- *Somany Tiles Natya Utsav*, a pioneering idea, the very first in Delhi.
- *Bharat Gaurav* - her producer-directorial debut on the big stage; a musical drama tracing the history of India from Mohenjodaro till Independence
- *Workshop-Performances*, transforming young lives by connecting them to our culture.

CSR at Somany Ceramics

CSR activities of Somany, spans several villages near the Company's facilities in Gujarat and Haryana. Some of the programmes spearheaded-

- 'Tile Master' skilling initiative imparted to around 5000 masons each year in tile laying techniques
- Education Programmes in local schools
- Computer Literacy and Sports for youth
- Women's Self-Help Groups
- Health Clinics and necessary machines installed in local hospitals.
- Facilitated laying of sewage pipes connecting five villages in Jhajjar District of Haryana

Philanthropic Work

Through her Mother's and her own Foundation, she reaches out to the disadvantaged, with a focus on education that helps nurture responsible citizens.

Some of these are-

- *Masons Training programme*, designed for unemployed youth for a means of livelihood.
- *Tech-Shala*, computer education in aided schools impacting up to 500 students each year.
- *Documentary Film Making*, a unique Techno-Craft amalgamation where Digital Interfaced Media helps take a participative journey through craft awareness.
- *Entrepreneurship Development Programmes* in craft pockets covering topics of banking & finance, rural marketing, design development and product diversification

Education

History and Political Science graduate from Kolkata University; Honours Diploma in Art History from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Personal Growth

A mother of three with a large age gap between each child, has helped her grow, experience, and adapt to the changing world. A firm believer in the phrase 'learning is for a lifetime', Anjana continues to learn through both experiential and academic endeavours.