



MAIWA FOUNDATION

working worldwide to support artisans

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Project Dhamadka:
Traditional Ajrakh Blockprinting using Natural Dyes

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Water is vital to the production of Ajrakh cloth. Artisans take the cloth through a process that can involve over thirty separate steps as first the cloth is prepared, then mordanted, then dyed. Through each stage the character of the water will influence everything - from the shades of the colours themselves to the success or failure of the entire process.

The Khatri community in Dhamadka and Ajrakpur, led by three (now famous) brothers: Razzaque, Ismail, and Jabbar have come together to solve what amounts to a crisis for the traditional block-printers. Falling water tables and changes in quality of water have effectively forced the group to scout a new site for their “farm” or ajrakh studio. The relocation means the group must raise funds to purchase new land.

The three brothers are located in the Kutch desert on India’s western border. They are part of a family that can trace it’s blockprinting heritage back for nine generations. Razzaque has won the National Award for Craft (as did his father before him) and Ismail has received an honorary doctorate from De Montfort University, Leicester, UK.

The Maiwa Foundation is orchestrating fund-raising activities to assist in the land purchase. The Khatri’s have produced a collection of exhibition quality double-sided Ajrakh to be auctioned for the cause. Many guilds and other groups are working together with Maiwa to ensure that the artisans are able to relocate before the water at the present sites is either unusable or completely gone.

This is an appeal for donations. Donations to the Maiwa Foundation are tax deductible. The Maiwa Foundation is a Registered Charity and it issues receipts for donations over \$25.

Donations may be made by mail or by phone 1 (604) 669-3939 or through our on-line form.
<http://www.maiwa.com/foundation/donations.html>