



BRIDGING CULTURE THROUGH DESIGN

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ABOUT

We are the foremost socially motivated non-profit community committed to supporting artisans with meaningful, sustainable, and ethical approaches to design. We meet artisans at their point of need—whether in business or artistic development—helping them structure their ideas with clarity and purpose. Rooted in heritage, innovation, and social impact, we believe that true stewardship of our craft and planet begins with building strong, connected communities. We provide support for telling authentic stories and building artisan communities that reflect sustainable values that make a lasting impact through social innovation.





Pam Samasuwo-Nyawiri Judy Sanderson- Bernardo

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RELATIONSHIPS matter more
to US than owning **STATUS**
SYMBOLS, and we want to be
free to pursue them, no
matter what it takes.

OUR STORY

We are creative strategists who care deeply about building a new regenerative economy by advocating for resilient value chains and sustainable approaches rooted in Africa's rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship. essential to securing a dignified future for millions of artisans across the continent. We have an unmatched dedication to Africa's traditional crafts and the artisans who bring them to life. Every piece they create carries history, skill, and cultural identity and holds generations of knowledge, passed down through time. Protecting both the craft and the hands that shape it is at the core of what we do. We travel across the continent, seeking out craft forms that have been overlooked, reconnecting with makers in rural communities, and honouring the beauty of African craftsmanship. Along the way, we work with those who share our vision—artisan communities, cultural organisations, and craft-focused initiatives—to ensure these traditions not only survive but continue to shape the future.

THEY TALK ABOUT US



VALUES



Activating the Value of Preservation of Traditional Crafts

At 54 Faces, we recognize artisans as more than just producers; they are knowledge bearers, entrepreneurs, and innovators shaping the future of African design. Their work is often structured around kinship, identity, and community-led economies rather than formal institutions. By acknowledging and integrating these systems into modern economic frameworks, we move toward a more inclusive and equitable creative industry—one that values authenticity, sustainability, and cultural ownership.

The challenge lies not only in preserving the physical artefacts of craftsmanship but also in ensuring that the intellectual and technical knowledge underpinning these traditions remains relevant and valued. In an era dominated by visual-centric digital platforms, it is crucial to move beyond the aesthetic appeal of handcrafted objects and focus on the deeper significance of the artisanal process. The transmission of traditional skills must be actively incentivised within communities, ensuring that craftsmanship continues to provide sustainable livelihoods while maintaining its role as a vital cultural and economic asset.

WHY PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

In recent years, the shift toward sustainable living has sparked a renewed appreciation for traditional craftsmanship. As awareness of mass production's environmental toll grows, people are seeking more conscious alternatives—valuing quality, durability, and authenticity over disposability.

Artisanal preservation is more than a movement; it is a commitment to sustainability, cultural heritage, and local economies. It brings back the human touch to production, encouraging a more mindful and socially responsible way of living. Traditional craftsmanship is more than creating objects—it is a living archive of culture and heritage. Passed down through generations, each craft carries the imprint of those who came before, evolving while staying rooted in its origins. By continuing these time-honored techniques, artisans not only sustain their livelihoods but also safeguard traditions that might otherwise be lost. Every handcrafted piece is a testament to history, a bridge between past and future, and a reminder that culture is not just remembered—it is lived.



HOW WE WORK

The Decline of Traditional Knowledge and Skills

As younger generations migrate to urban areas in pursuit of modern education and careers, the deep-rooted knowledge of traditional crafts is at risk of fading. Without dedicated efforts to pass down these skills, invaluable techniques honed over centuries may gradually disappear, leaving behind a cultural void.

Challenge:

The shift away from heritage-based craftsmanship threatens the continuity of traditional knowledge, as fewer young people engage in learning these skills.

Solution:

Creating opportunities for knowledge transfer is essential. Apprenticeship programmes, workshops, and educational initiatives can inspire a new generation to engage with traditional craftsmanship. By integrating these skills into contemporary creative industries and highlighting their relevance, artisans can ensure that craftsmanship remains a living, evolving practice rather than a lost art. Support from cultural organisations, policymakers, and communities is key to sustaining these traditions for future generations.

Limited Access to Traditional Materials

Many traditional crafts depend on natural materials unique to specific regions. However, environmental changes, industrialisation, and resource over-exploitation have made sourcing these materials increasingly challenging. This not only disrupts production but also risks diluting the authenticity of time-honoured techniques.

Challenge:

The scarcity of traditional materials due to environmental shifts and industrial exploitation threatens the continuity of heritage crafts.

Solution:

Sustainable sourcing and conservation efforts are crucial to maintaining the availability of these materials. Research into alternative, locally available resources that preserve the integrity of traditional craftsmanship can provide artisans with viable solutions. Collaborative efforts between artisans, researchers, and policymakers can help protect both the craft and the ecosystems that sustain it.



CONTACT US

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