

A MEMORIAL FOR THE NEW ECONOMY

Chinar Shah

On the 8th of November 2016, the Government of India demonetised all circulating 500 and 1000 rupee banknotes without warning. This move suddenly invalidated these notes, deeming them unusable in exchange for any goods or service. Instantly, India's heavily cash dependent economy found itself in an unstable position. In the months following this announcement, over a 100 people died as a consequence. These deaths were largely a result of the lack of accessibility to information and technological infrastructure, combined with the rashness that did not consider short-term consequences—such as the acute shortage of new currency in circulation.

This action by the ruling party, one steeped in divisive nationalist policies, was sold to the people under the rhetoric of a 'greater good'. Human 'suffering' was looked at as a 'virtue'—a subjectivity forced onto the oppressed. More than two years since the event, there is still no concrete evidence of its positive impact on the economy, nor has it been effective in tracing black money. What we are left with instead, is a denial of the violence of demonetisation and by extension, the denial of these deaths. Neither has there been a collective acknowledgement of them, nor has there been any mourning. As a society we quickly memorialise the consequences of human conflict, natural disasters and even of random acts of violence, but financial collapses and its human toll are often ignored or rendered invisible.

These lives that went largely ungrieved, were also stripped of their personal histories. We know nothing about them, except for a name that appeared in passing in newspapers. Within a scenario where these deaths were represented in the abstract, the question of whether they really even happened is constantly encountered. There were no floods, no famines, no riots, nor any killings—nothing tangible to have caused these deaths. Instead, only an abstract event acting upon an entity equally abstract—the economy.

Within this context, this publication brings together a series of photographs functioning as a public document upon which to register this event, along with its aftermath. Compiled from press reports, the names of each individual reported to have died as a consequence of demonetisation are embroidered on handkerchiefs sourced from the market. In addition to the names, these handkerchiefs also contain motifs found on the now invalid banknotes. The photographic reproduction of these handkerchiefs enable a document of circulation. Functioning in this way, the publication proposes a memorial that is neither a grand proclamation nor a fixed monument, but instead one that is dependent on systems of distribution, access and exchange.

A Memorial for the New Economy

Chinar Shah

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The publishers would like to thank Bilal Javeed, Arif Hashim and an anonymous donor for their generous support in establishing and founding Reliable Copy.

The artist and the publishers would also like to thank Devika G, Ajit Bhadoriya, Surabhi Vaya, Meenakshi Thirukode, Sonia Jose and Christine Tohme for their comments, suggestions and continued support towards this publication.

For more information, and to download *A Memorial for the New Economy*, visit:
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Reliable Copy #1 • A Memorial for the New Economy • Chinar Shah • 2019

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Dhorani



Sofil



TIRTHARATI



Badarsin





Haider



Sofil



Sofia

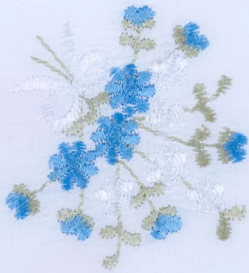






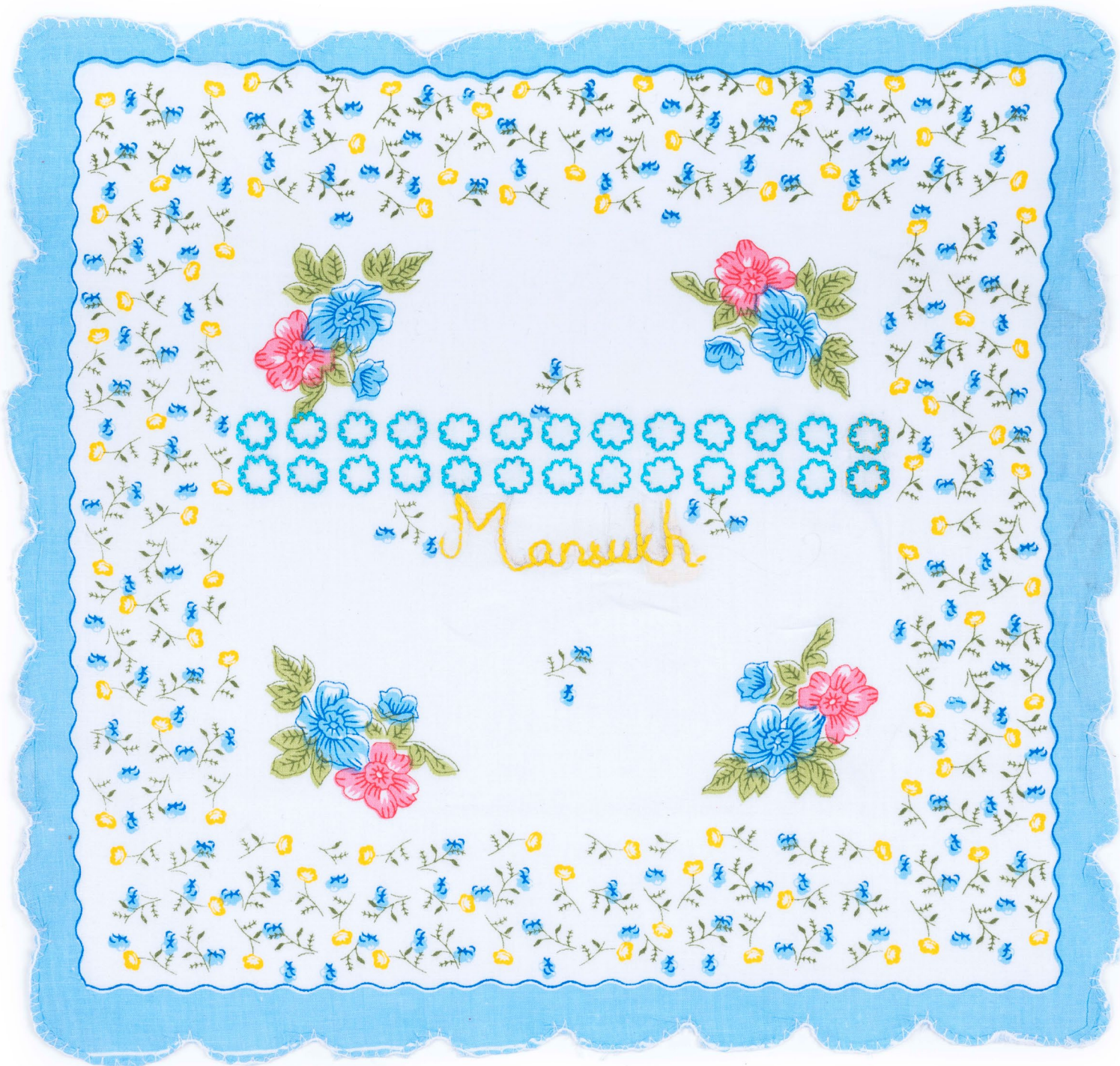
RAVI

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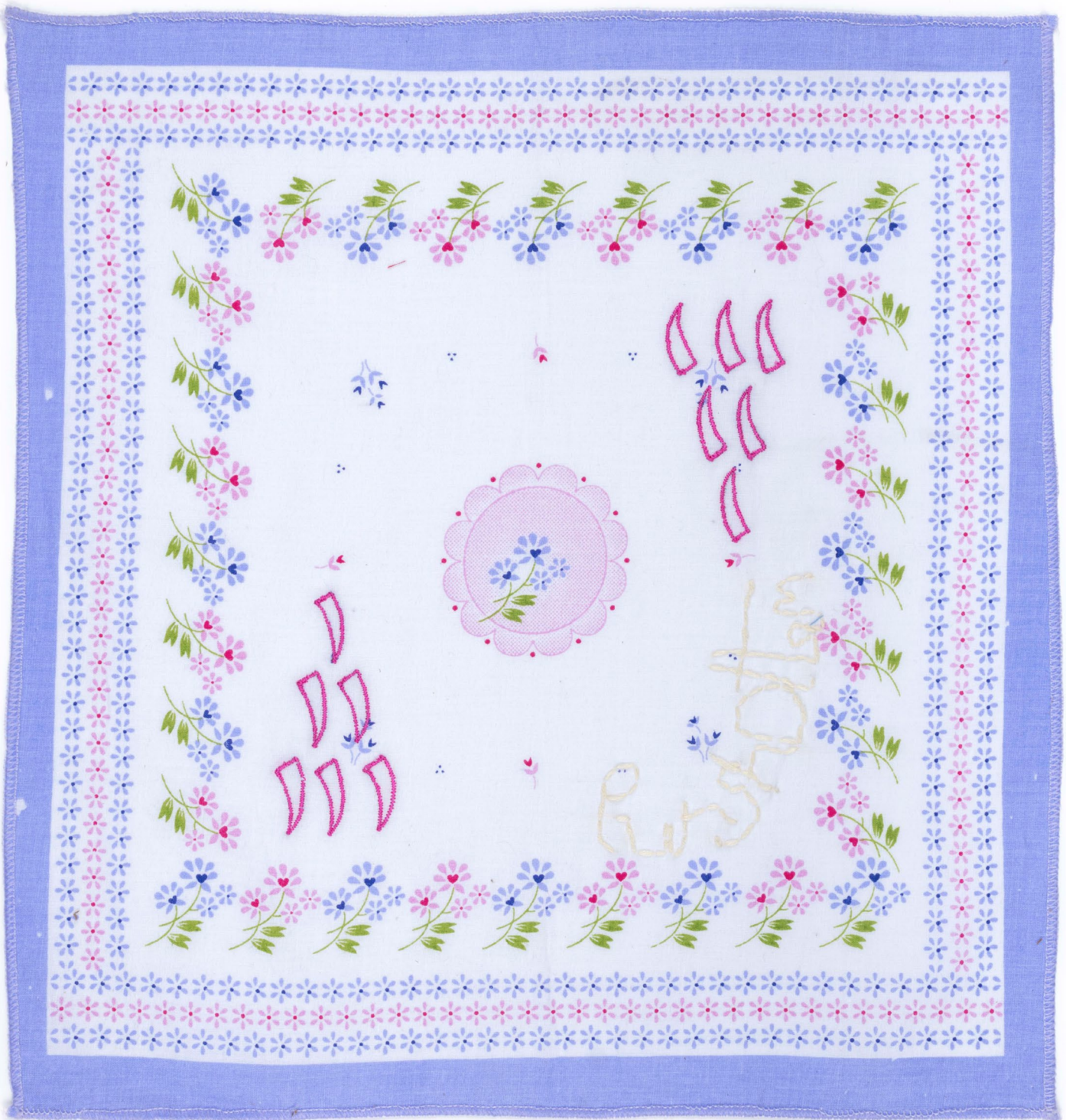


Masukh



Scofil











Halle

Shabana





Lakshminarayana

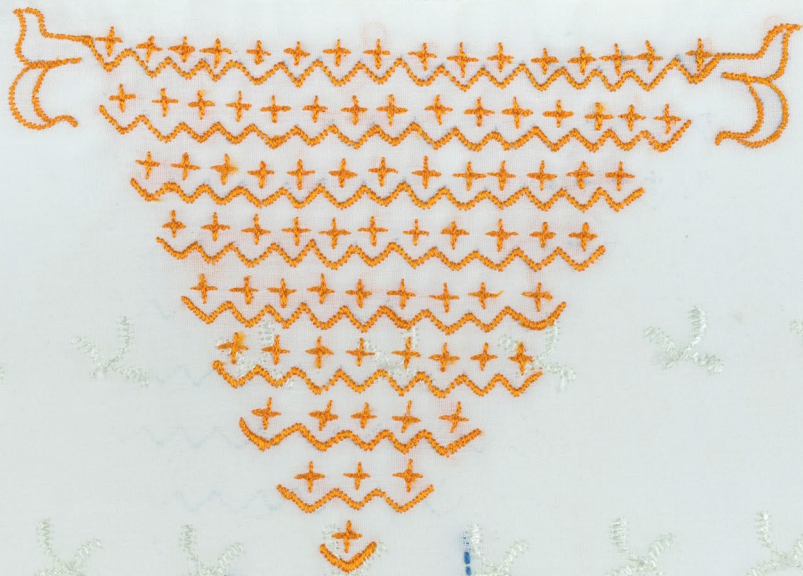




Babulal



Galair



lucky







Suresh





Deshraj



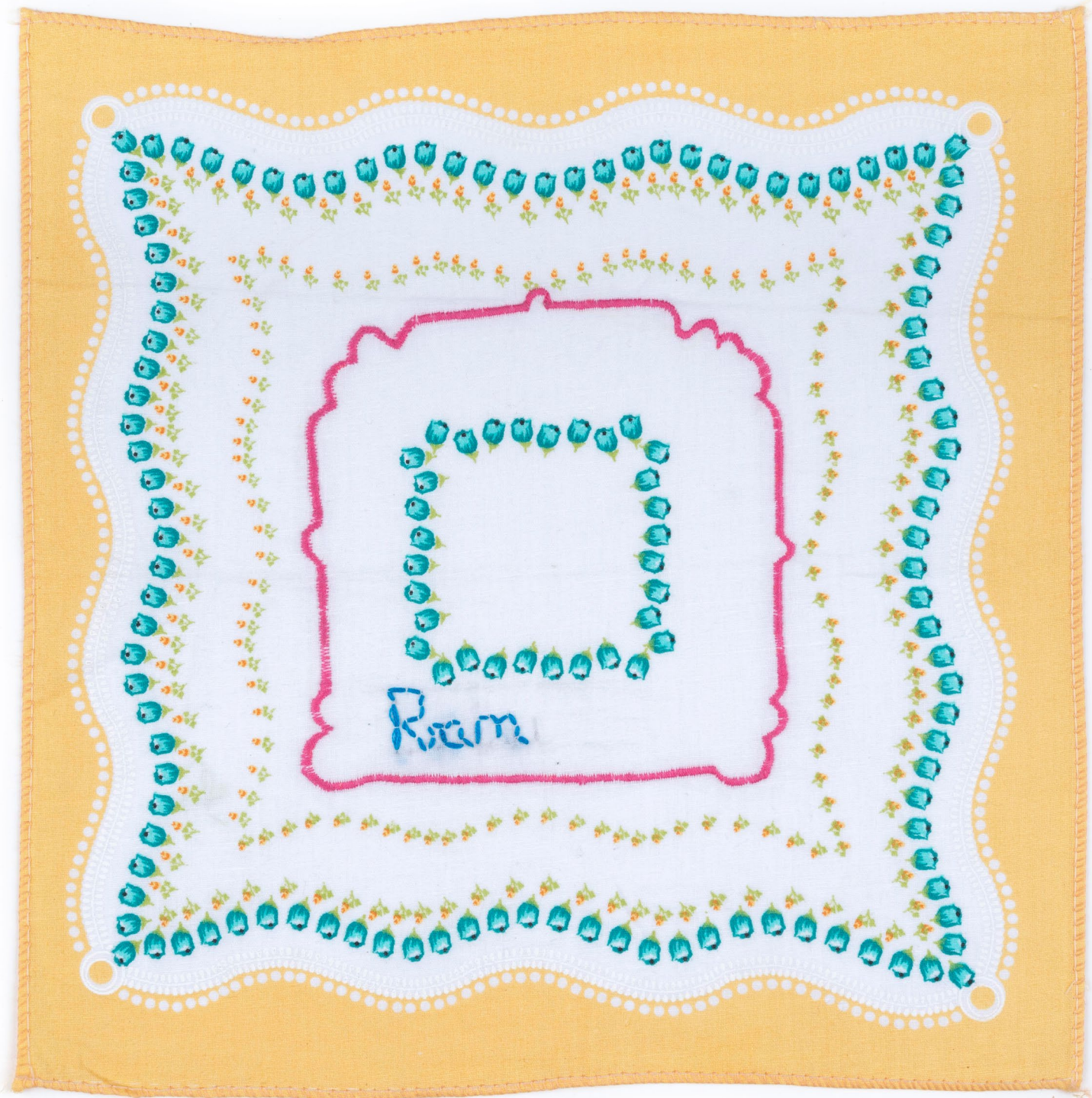
Ischard

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Debashish





Ram



Bishan







Piava



BACK TO SCHOOL

$1+1=2$

$2+2=4$

$2+1=3$

muneer

$1+1=2$



$2+3=5$

$2+2=4$



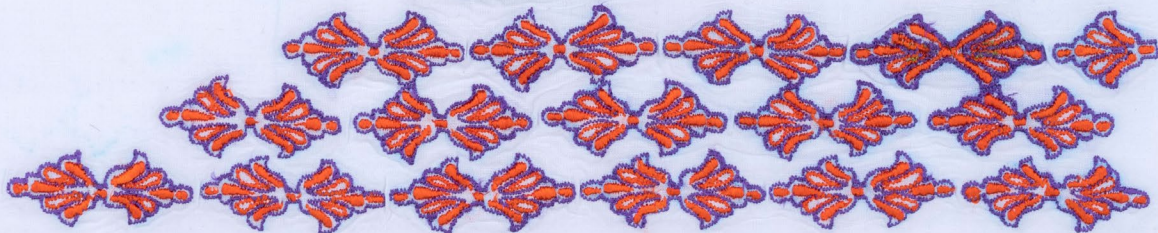
$2+1=3$

Lavkush

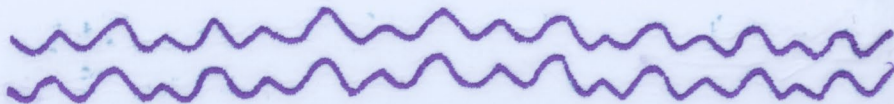




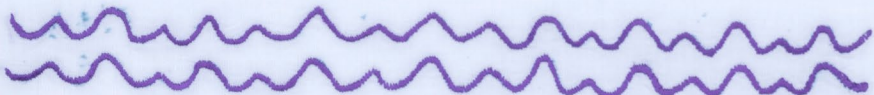
Kamal







tukaram





Anil

www.etsy.com



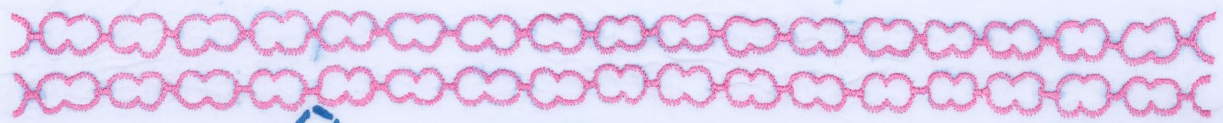


Aziz

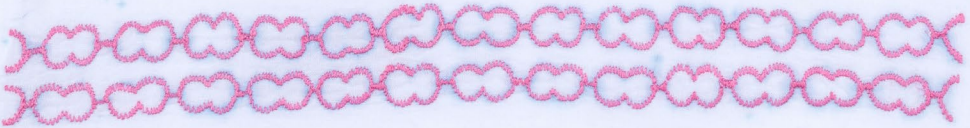
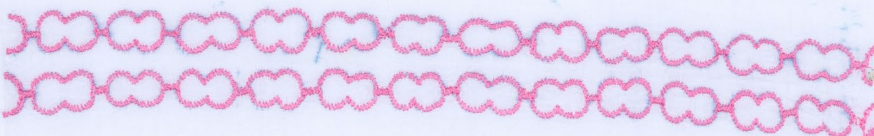
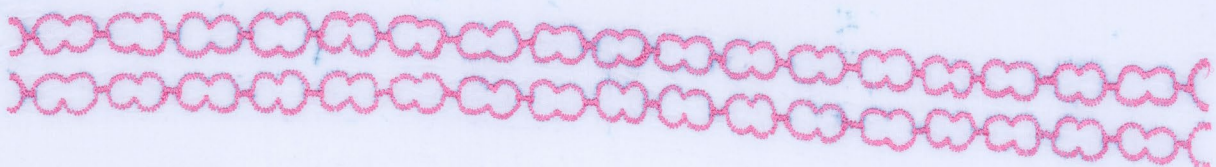
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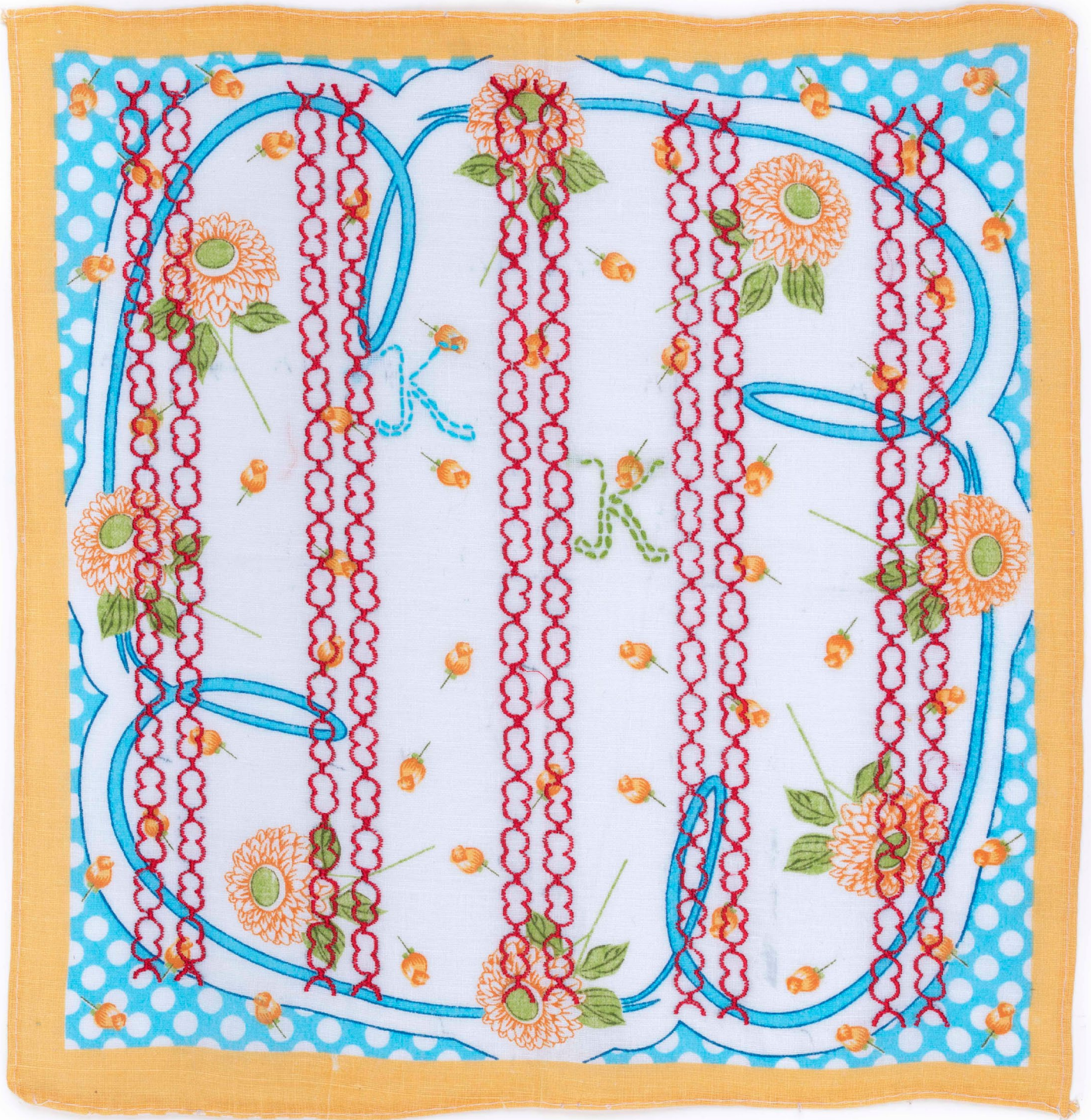


Mahesh/Abhoj



Simantā







Bhagwan





INDRASANI







Shobh







Malook





Chandrasekharan





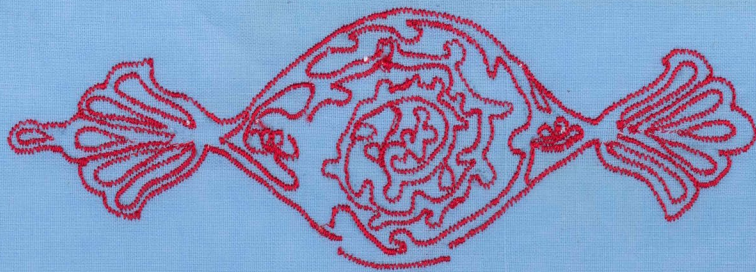
Laxman



Dinabandhu

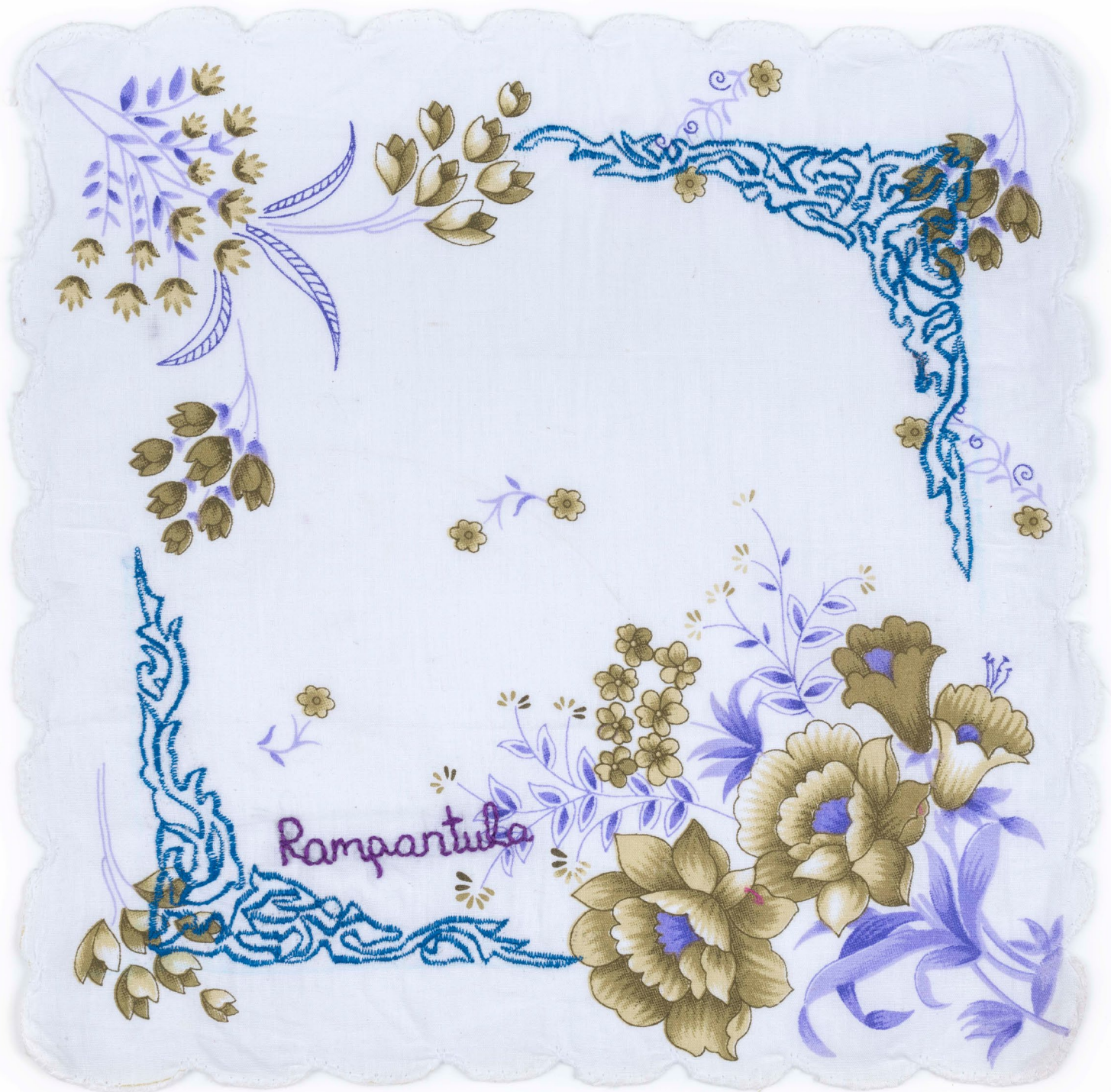






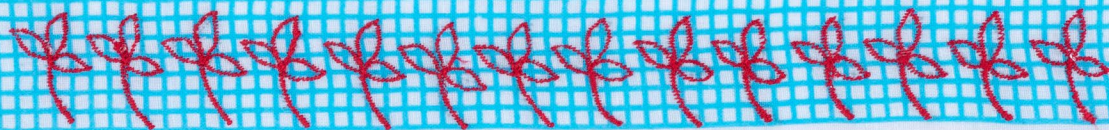
zakashi





Rampantula

SILKROAD



Sofil



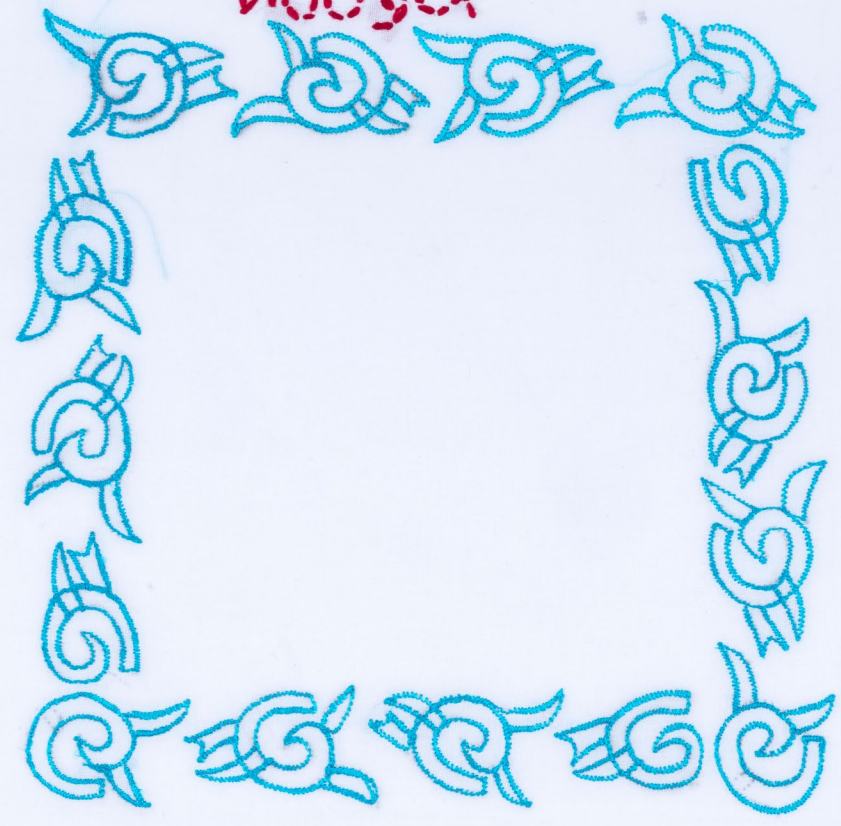
Balai



Am



विद्या







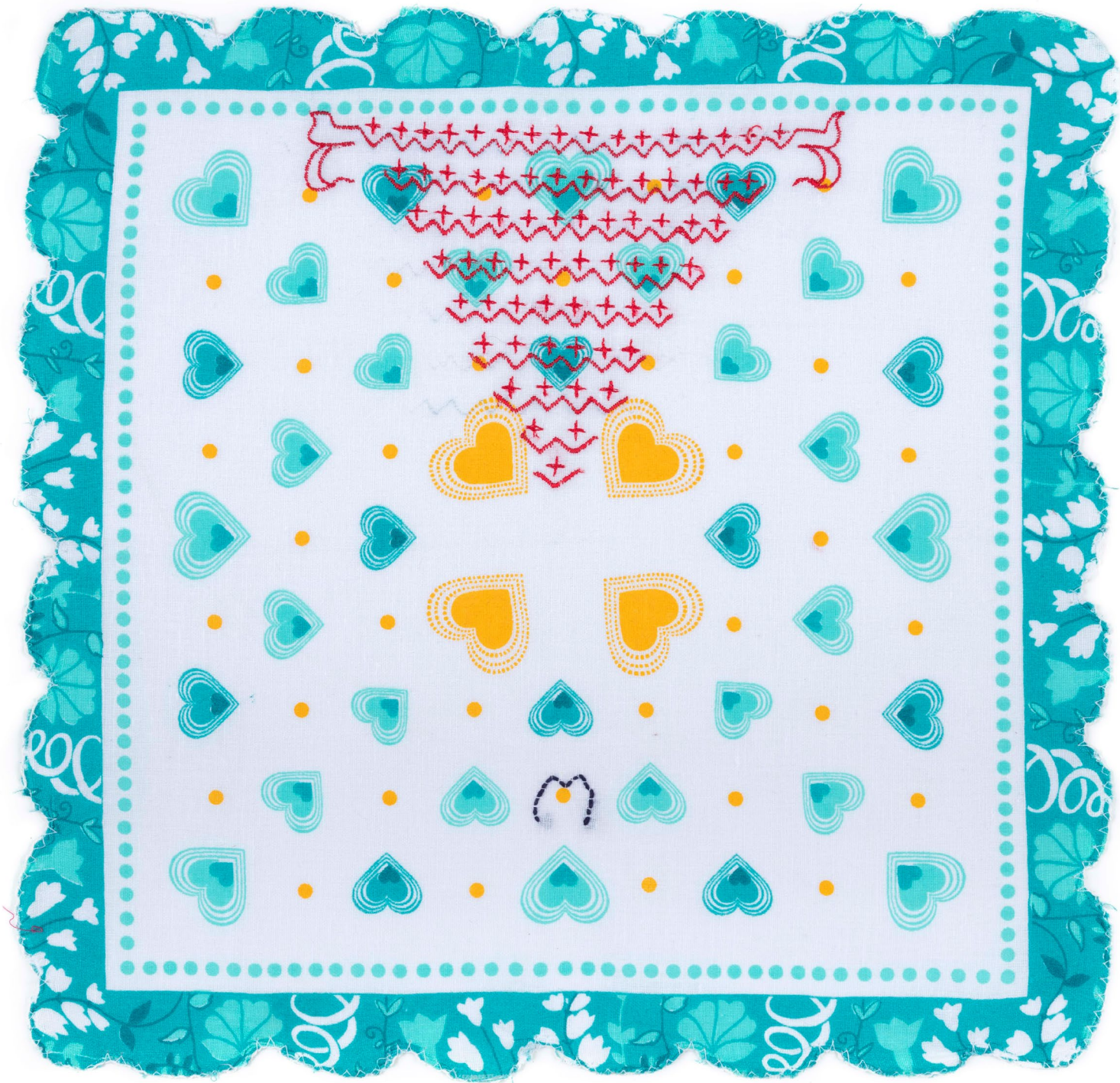




Sofil
100 % cotton

Deming





Dhaneshwar







GOPALA

GOPALA







Rabbi



Karthikayan

KARTHIKAYAN

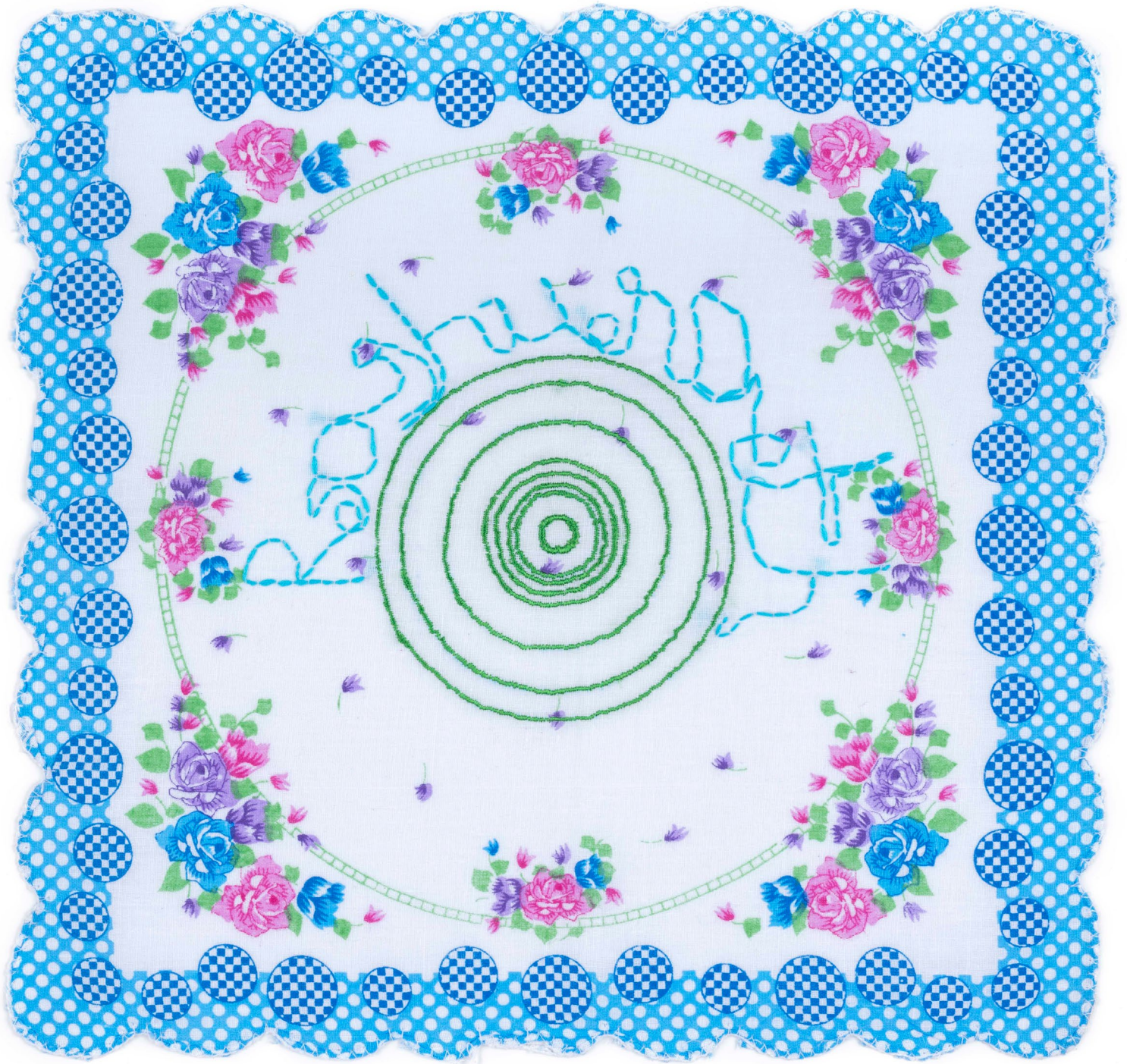


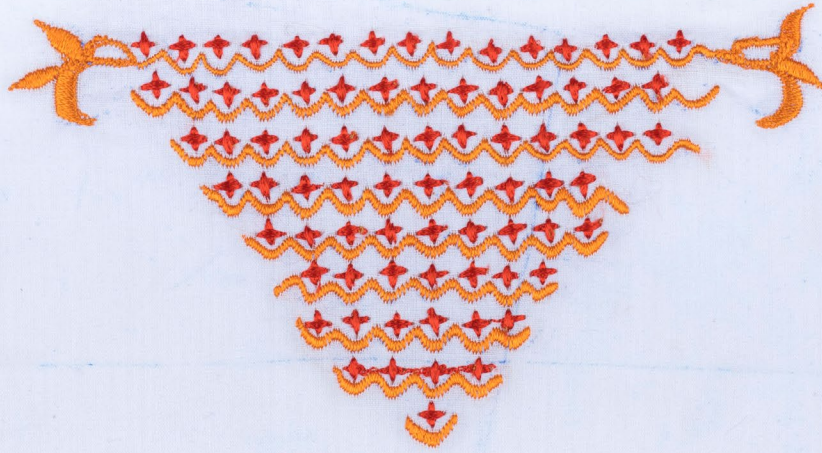
Deepak



Bismillah

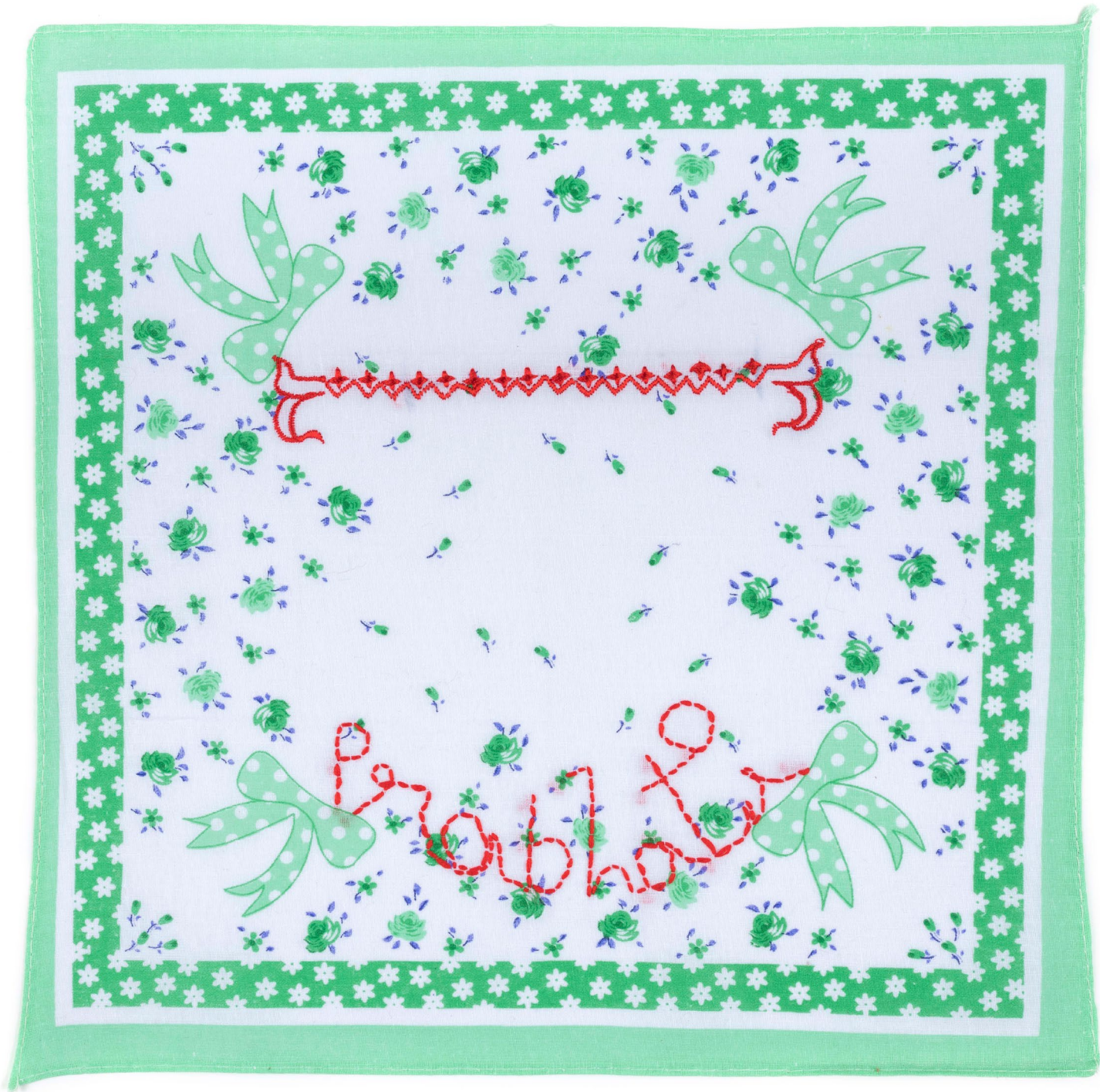






Khadiq







Darshean



Kallol

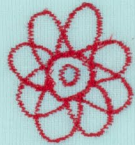


Chirariji





Ratna



Jagdish





Madhu

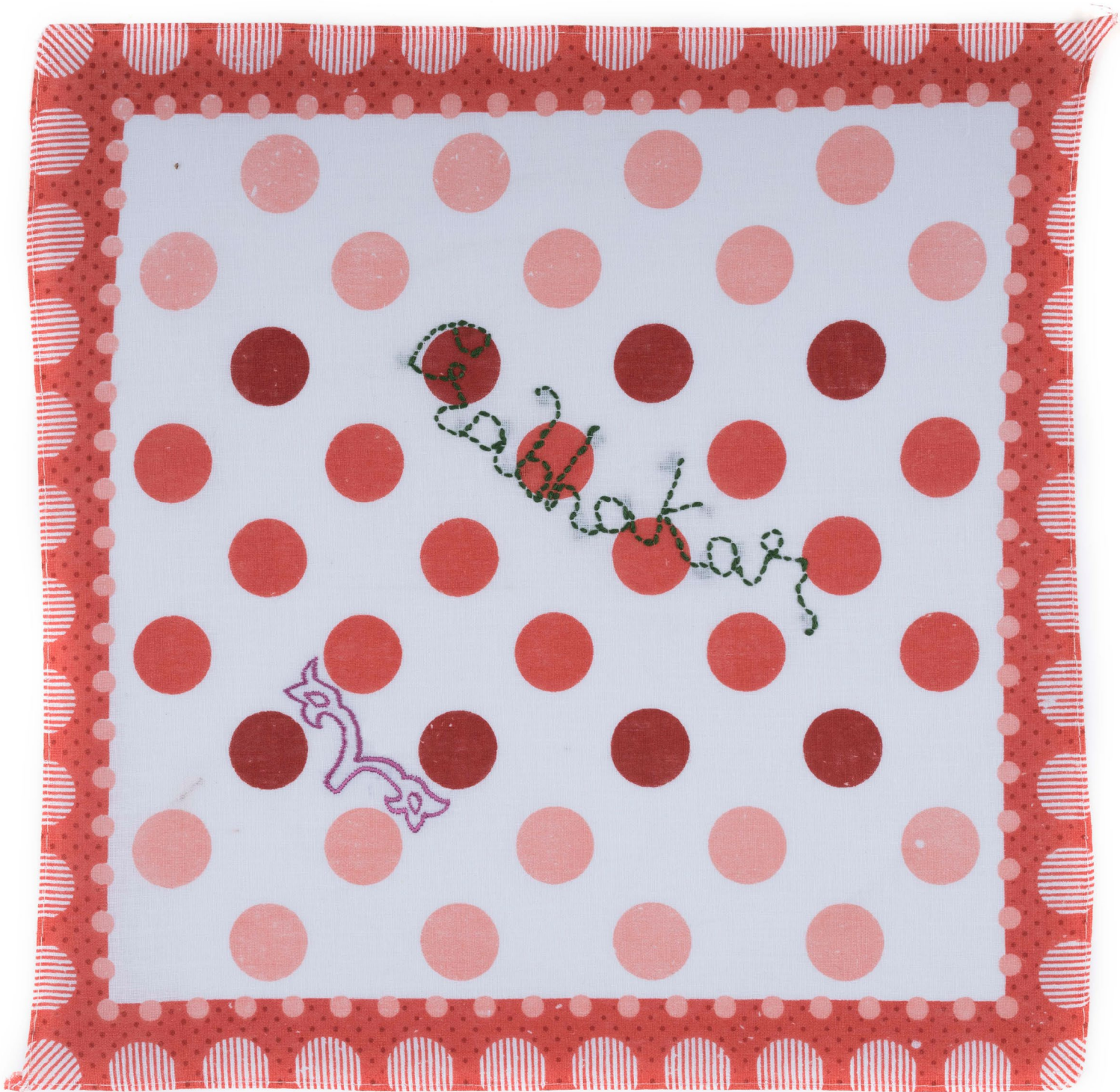






mohammad





Sukumar

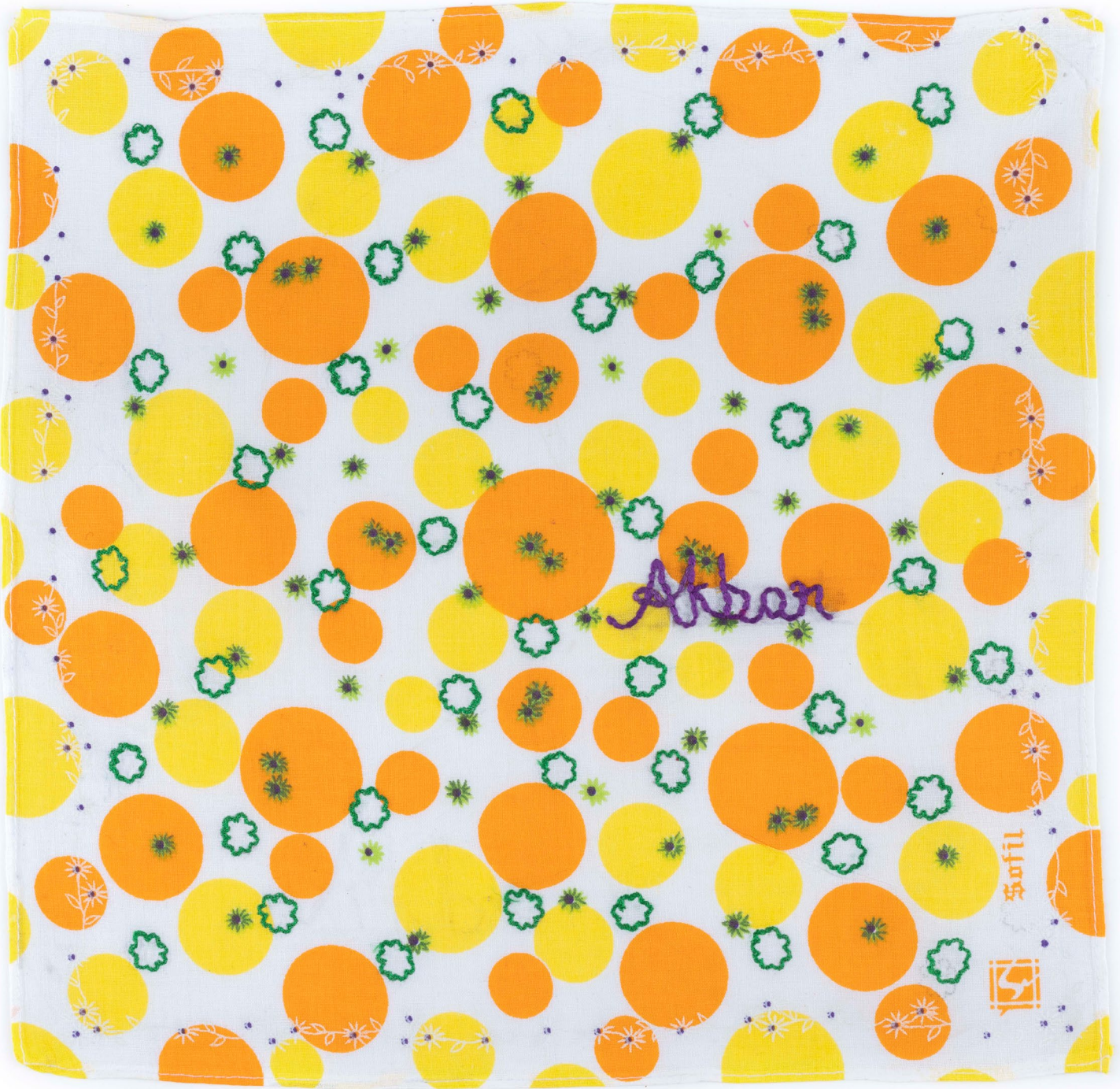




Khemabhai







Akbar

Sofil

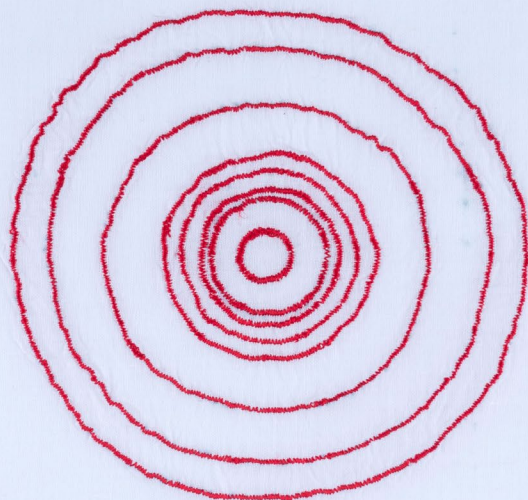




Bird







Gobinda





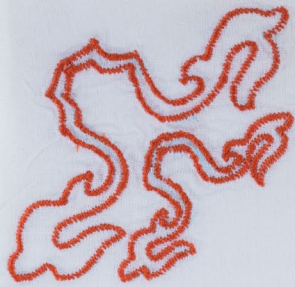


BABUL



Martha





Laxmi



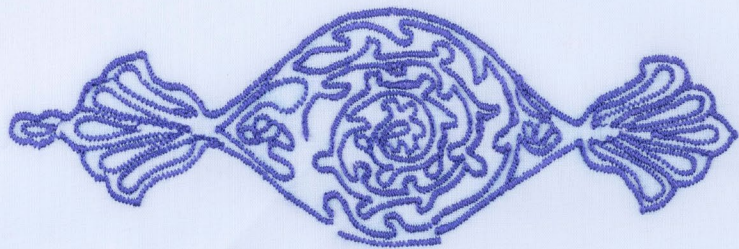
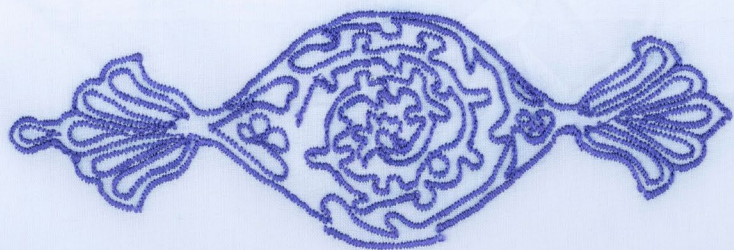


Sheikh



ISHTELYK



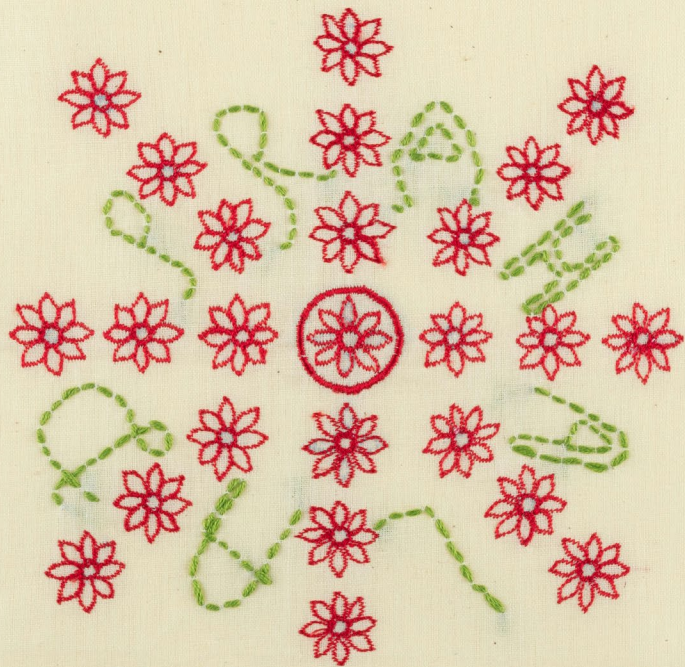






Hesperos









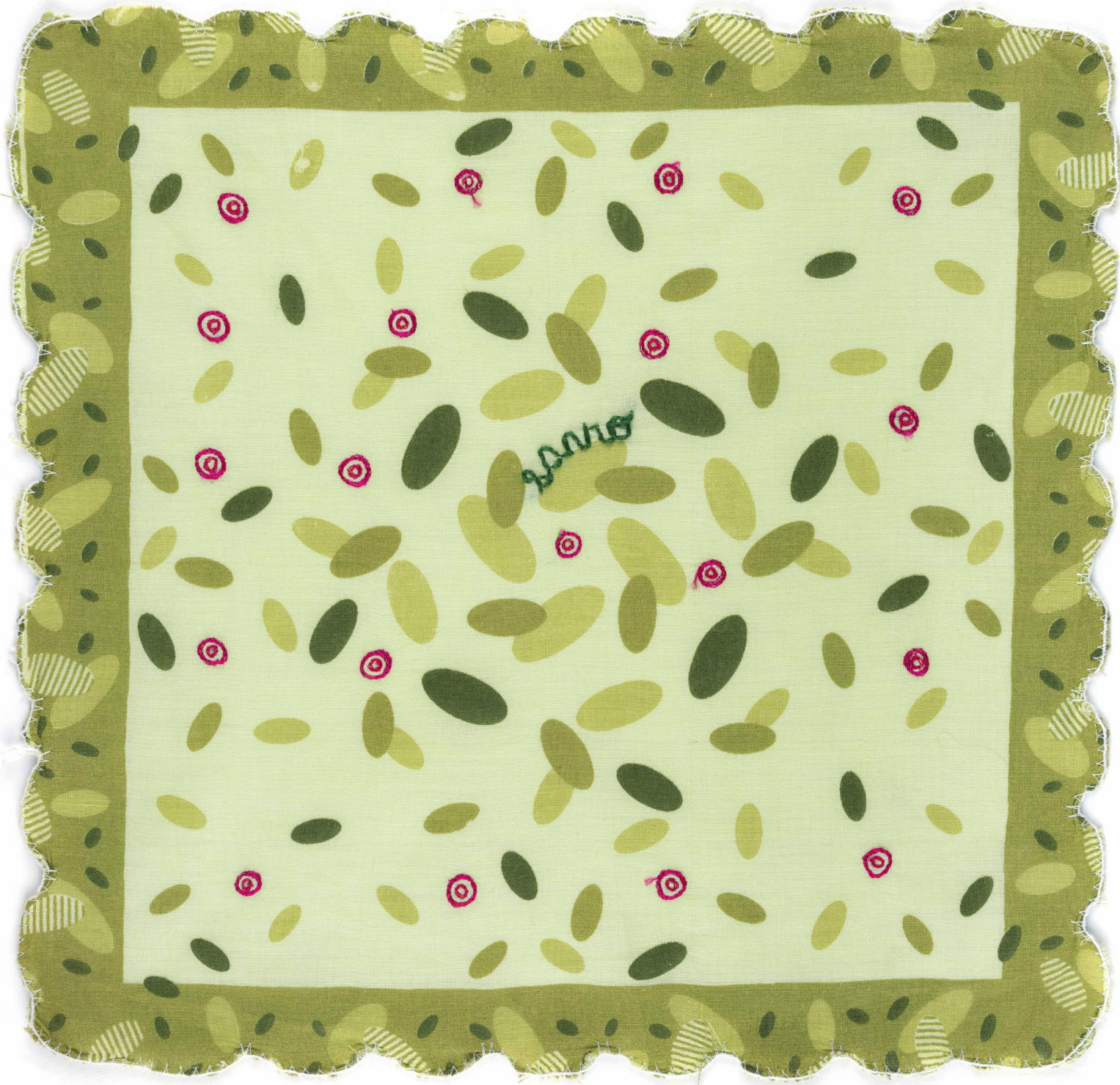
Siya



Kinsey



Digumbon



BANDS



Retna



Sofil





Barkat



Sumit



Virender



Mansukh



Sallek



Mohammed





Kamta





ASHA