



# BLOOMING RESILIENCE

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How to Read Flowers in Craft

A Curated Exhibition Booklet

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**Nishan Collective & Aklill Company**

This booklet is not a catalogue.  
It is a curatorial tool for looking, reading and reflecting.



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## How to use this Booklet

This booklet accompanies the exhibition as a guide for attention. Developed by Nishan Collective in collaboration with Aklill Company, it proposes ways of reading handmade work rather than explaining it.

Begin by looking before reading. Notice scale, material, repetition and variation. Return to the text after engaging with the objects. Meaning emerges through comparison memory and time.



## Curatorial Position

The Noble Comeback Project, presented by Aklill Company, is a living exploration of resilience in motion. What began as the making of a single sentimental carpet using an 80-year-old Ethiopian weaving technique gradually unfolded into a deeper engagement with craft, memory and transformation, a bridge between a heritage at risk of fading and a future shaped through shared making.

To get lost is to learn the way.

Over time, the project moved beyond object-making into a process of learning, unlearning and rethinking how a creative house can engage with communities. The story of this journey is one of adaptive growth, stepping outside a familiar path and

embracing the uncertainty of community engagement, with all its questions, challenges and emotional complexity. Early on, we faced a simple but difficult question: who are we to help? That reflection became a turning point. It shifted the work away from the idea of being a “savior” toward something more honest and grounded, becoming a partner.

Aklill operates here not as a rescuer, but as a collaborator. The artisans are not beneficiaries, but the authors of the work. Our role is to hold space, support process and grow alongside them.

The journey began with training a group of women in traditional carpet-making, opening a pathway for ongoing craft practice. From this group, five women were selected for this pilot collection. Each piece emerges from a balance between shared structure and individual freedom, resulting in one-of-a-kind carpets shaped by hand, time and lived experience. No two are alike. Their differences reflect the human process behind them, moments of learning, hesitation, rhythm and care-carried into each work as part of its making.

Rooted in Ethiopian wool-knotting traditions and local material practices, the project reflects on how heritage can remain alive through reinterpretation.

For the audience, the exhibition offers a space for reflection. It invites each viewer to consider their own experience of resilience, not as fixed, but personal and evolving. Each piece becomes a quiet mirror, open to different interpretations.

Presented through Aklill Company and curated by Nishan Collective, The Noble Comeback Project exists as both archive and opening: a record of a lived process and the beginning of an evolving platform for collaboration, learning and contemporary craft.



AKLILL

# Aklill Company: Brand and Practice

Based in Addis Ababa, Aklill (“Crown” in Amharic) is a creative company rooted in Ethiopian culture and environmental consciousness, expressed through contemporary design. We create a range of Ethiopian-inspired carpets, each translating heritage, symbols and stories into modern, functional pieces.

A pivotal force in our collection is the Adey Ababa carpet, a defining piece for the brand. Inspired by the iconic Ethiopian flower, it transforms a cultural symbol into a refined work of design, carrying meaning, hospitality and identity into both intimate homes and distinguished spaces, welcoming guests into Ethiopia and sharing its culture with the world.

Beyond design, Aklill is committed to social restoration through the Noble Comeback Project, a training-led initiative focused on reviving craftsmanship through training, collaboration and sustainable production, while creating market access through our platform and partnerships.

Discover more at [www.aklill.com](http://www.aklill.com)

# Aklill's Floral Themed Collection for Blooming Resilience





# The Noble Comeback Legacy

Before Aklill formalized this practice, the technique was carried by master makers and trainers within Etegey Tibebe, under what is now Ethiopian Enterprise Development. For decades, this institution has safeguarded and passed down traditional Ethiopian carpet-making through changing social and economic landscapes. Today, it is undergoing restructuring and relocation, marking a fragile transition for a living craft lineage. This knowledge remains the foundation of the work we engage with today, not as a static tradition, but one that continues through hands, memory, and practice across generations.

Working alongside these master trainers, Aklill entered not as an originator, but as part of an existing lineage. The Noble Comeback is therefore a continuation, not a reinvention, a reminder that when craft is held with care and shared responsibility, it becomes legacy.



## The Makers: Blooming in Resilience

The Noble Comeback Project is more than a revival of craft—it is a social foundation for making itself. At its heart are women artisans trained to build sustainable, home-based livelihoods. Many navigate different challenges while carrying the responsibility of supporting their families, transforming weaving into a pathway for dignity and stability. Their journey is one of social restoration, turning a vanishing 80-year-old Ethiopian rug-making technique into a vehicle for personal and economic empowerment.

This is where Blooming Resilience takes form.

Floral motifs appear across every carpet—not as decoration, but as language. In Ethiopian culture, flowers carry meanings of hope, renewal and blessing, woven into celebrations, rituals and everyday life. Within this collection, they become symbols of resilience in bloom.



## Reading Flowers

In this collection, flowers transcend their role as mere ornament. While they appear across cultures as universal symbols, here they function as a specific visual language, a system of signs where the organic is codified into the structural. This is not a passive reproduction of nature, but an active reading of it.



## Color

Color is not a fixed code but a reflection of materiality and instinct. Rather than adhering to rigid symbolic rules, the weaver's palette is shaped by the availability of materials, the intuition of the moment and the fragmented memories of a living landscape.



## Symbol and Motif

Floral motifs carry natural curves and fluid forms. Unlike geometric patterns, they require greater precision and a balance between discipline and intuition. Each flower becomes more than a form, it becomes an expression shaped by the hand and the story it carries.





## Pattern

A pattern is textile shorthand for the laws of nature. To read these designs is to witness a profound exercise in patience, where the weaver's effort translates movement into a structured reality. Through rigid constraints, the rug's growth is refined into something deliberate and nice. A beauty born from practice. Within this framework, every form must find its resolution; the pattern is an intentional journey that must eventually close, proving that resilience lies in creating a harmonious world even when space is strictly defined.

# Material, Time and Labor

The physical character of each rug is a direct result of its raw materials and disciplined labor required to shape them. Wool is selected not only for its historical ties to heritage but for its natural durability and structural memory, which allows it to maintain its form over decades of use. The high level of detail in these designs is achieved through the precise interlacing of wool and cotton, where the material's quality provides a clean, lasting finish.

Every part of the rug represents hundreds of hours of focused, repetitive knotting, a dense archive of manual discipline visible in the consistent tension of the surface. For example, a 100cm x 100cm rug has approximately 40,000 total knots. This labor is the fingerprint of a resilient maker, proving that the rug was born from a rigorous, hand-crafted process. For the weaver, mastering these intricate patterns is a foundation for the future; each completed work builds the confidence and technical mastery necessary to reach even greater heights as they continue to evolve their artistry on the loom.





# Guarded Path

*62 cm x 103 cm*

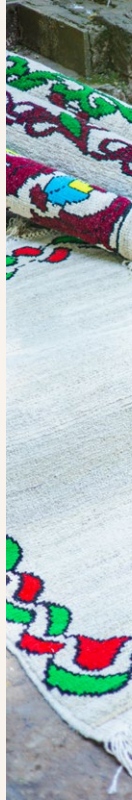
*61 cm x 97 cm*



This rug is the silent anchor of the collection. It doesn't shout with color; instead, it uses the natural warmth of the wool to create a calm space. The jagged edges are symbols of protection; they show the weaver's goal to create a safe place. By keeping the floral details only at the edge, the weaver puts a steady order on the wild growth of a garden, showing how simple materials can express deep endurance.

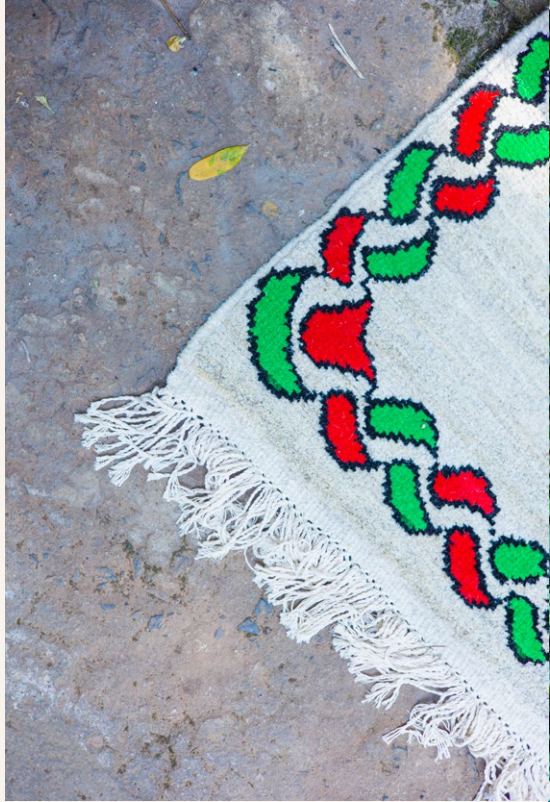
*Reflection:*

*Every life has its thorns. Does this sharp border remind you that staying strong requires setting a boundary?*



# Silent Field

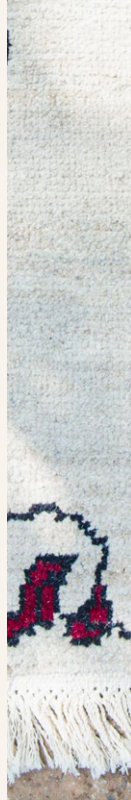
*102 cm x 147 cm*



This piece is about balance and the slow work of the loom. The colors were chosen by the weaver's instinct and memory rather than strict rules, creating a surface that feels like a solid floor. The repeating pattern is a shorthand for the laws of nature, showing that the rug is built to last. It is a work of *knowing when to stop*, where the hard work is felt in the calm, heavy center of the rug.

***Reflection:***

*There is a steady rhythm in these repeating colors. In your own life, which routines help you bounce back from hard times, and which ones are you ready to let go of?*



# Winding Flower

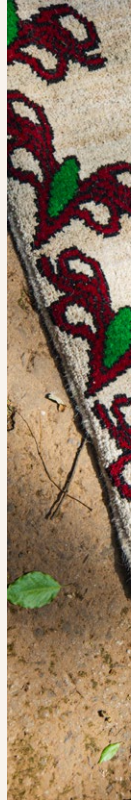
*62 cm x 110 cm*



This rug serves as a poetic silhouette of the garden. The border features an elegant, winding vine using dark wine and charcoal colors. By stripping away literal petal colors, the weaver attempts to trace how a plant grows even within the straight lines of the loom. It is a story of persistence highlighting the grace and fluidity of a plant's organic growth against the light.

***Reflection:***

*Following the vine is like walking a path. When you face a setback in your path, do you focus on the problem, or can you see the beauty in the long, winding journey towards resilience?*



# Ivory Reach

*102 cm x 134 cm*



This work represents a radical deconstruction of the floral form, shifting the focus from the *object* to the *gesture*. Rather than populating the field with blossoms, the weaver has pushed the botanical elements to the extreme periphery, allowing the vast, textured ivory void to become the primary subject.

***Reflection:***

*The work is hidden in the thick, heavy ivory wool, proving that even when things are stripped away, your core remains strong. When life feels empty or overwhelming, how do you recognize your inner strength?*



# Brown Garden

*104 cm x 128 cm*



The repetition of the three identical bouquets suggests a rhythm of seasons or a meditative focus on a single, perfected form. It reflects a *home-curated* aesthetic where the weaver captures the fleeting beauty of a garden in a permanent, tangible medium.

***Reflection:***

*By dividing the garden into panels, the weaver creates a sequence of time. As you move through changes in your life, how do you decide which traditions to keep and which parts of yourself to change?*



# Symmetrical Vine

*104 cm x 104 cm*



In this complex composition, the weaver explores the *skeleton* of the garden. The deep green vine structure creates a fence-like effect that houses bright yellow blossoms. It is a reading of nature as a structural force—dense, interconnected and thriving in freedom and support system.

***Reflection:***

*This fence is both a support and a limit. Who are the people in your life—family or friends—that help you bend without breaking when things get tough?*



# Formal Meadow

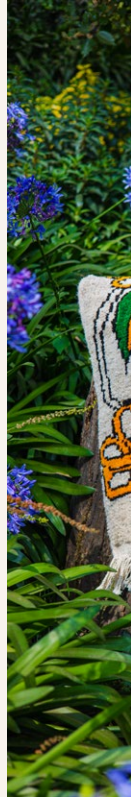
*100 cm x 100 cm*



This rug arranges stylized vines into a central colorful burst. The four-way radial balance suggests a formal garden plan, capturing the moment when nature achieves a temporary, perfect order.

***Reflection:***

*Nature is rarely still, but it finds moments of perfect balance. When your world feels chaotic, what small steps do you take to find your own center of peace?*



# Radiant Petals

*100 cm x 105 cm*



Using a high-contrast palette of orange and green, this rug glows with energy. The mirrored floral boundary is a vivid look that represents how life keeps going no matter what. The stylized color choice of the flowers forms are bold and graphic, representing the *shout* of the garden before the colors begin to turn.

***Reflection:***

*There is no stillness in this pattern; it moves forward. When you face a challenge, do you see it as a threat, or an opportunity to show your own strength and energy?*



# Red Frame

*106 cm x 105 cm*



Here, the flowers are at their most confident. They are no longer just decorations; they have become the strong frame that holds the whole rug together. It shows a type of strength where the edge is made of the very thing it is protecting. The thick red color shows that nature can be a strong force that defines its own space.

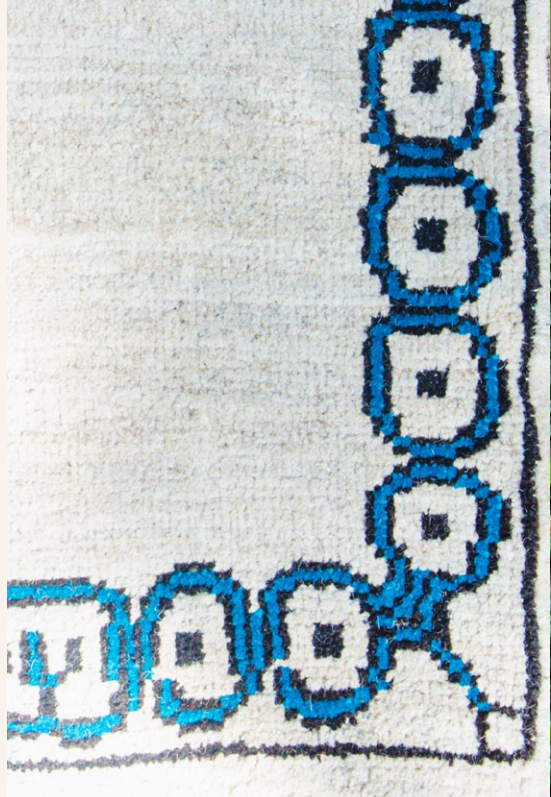
***Reflection:***

*In this piece, the flowers have become the very thing that hold the rug together. What is the one value in your life that acts as your main support helping you stay confident when the world changes around you?*



# Blue Keeper

*72 cm x 102 cm*



The floral theme becomes symbolic and protective. The border consists of deep blue circular motifs resembling the centers of the eye or the heart of flowers. It reads as a portal, using the nature to create a sacred interior space. The blue color was chosen by instinct to signal a safe spot built through long, repetitive work.

***Reflection:***

*These blue shapes seem to look back. As you rebuild your own strength, do you feel the steady gaze of your community (your family and friends) giving you the courage to keep going?*



# Floral Echo

*100 cm x 145 cm*



This design is a study in patience and rhythmic repetition. By mirroring three pairs of vibrant blooms, the weaver demonstrates a high level of technical consistency, ensuring each echo of the flower bloom remains as close as possible to the the first. It is a work that finds beauty in a steady, predictable and pleasant order.

***Reflection:***

*There is comfort in a beauty that repeats. When your world feels unpredictable, do you find strength in the small, consistent routines—the "echoes" of your day?*



# Symmetric Pulse

*110 cm x 100 cm*



A sophisticated display of balance, this rug represents a profound challenge of effort and skill; every pulsing curve must be perfectly answered on the opposite side to achieve harmony. As the weaver moves down the loom, the design must eventually close within the constraint, forcing a resolution where the organic flow of the flower meets the rigid boundary.

***Reflection:***

*This rug shows two sides of a story meeting in perfect balance. In your own life, how do you align your outward actions with your inner truth to create a harmonious path that stays true to your boundaries?*



# Floating Flowers

*62 cm x 100 cm*



The narrative ends with memory and air. Isolated, dark-petaled flowers float across the textured ivory field, breaking away from the border. It represents the wild flowers—scattered, singular and beautifully uncontained as the season closes. It shows the finish of a cycle, the slow work that is visible in the way each flower sits alone, like a memory of a flower field starting to fade.

***Reflection:***

*When the structure of the vine disappears, only the petals remain. Can you find beauty in the moments when you must let go of the old to make room for a new season?*

# Your Purchase

For more than two years, The Noble Comeback Project has grown into a training-led initiative focused on reviving traditional techniques and materials as a pathway to sustainable livelihoods. While rooted in an 80-year legacy of carpet-making, the vision extends beyond it, bringing heritage crafts back to life through training and opportunity. This is not just about selling or showcasing crafts, but about equipping women with the skills and tools to create from their own homes. Each piece reflects that journey—of learning, resilience, and renewed possibility.

*Blooming Resilience* is an invitation to be part of something larger. Your purchase directly contributes to covering the cost of training new hands, allowing more women to join the practice, innovate through craft and participate in future collections.

To support more, please contact us:



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# Blooming Resilience

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[nobel comeback.com](http://nobel comeback.com)

