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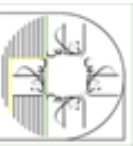


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MY INDIA IS GLOBAL

Amrit, the model-artist from Punjab, a self-confessed camera-shy recluse who just happens to be one of fashion's most sought-after faces, speaks with Divya Bala on finding peace in beauty and her place in the Parisian spotlight.

*Photographed by Boo George
Styled by Priyanka Kapadia*

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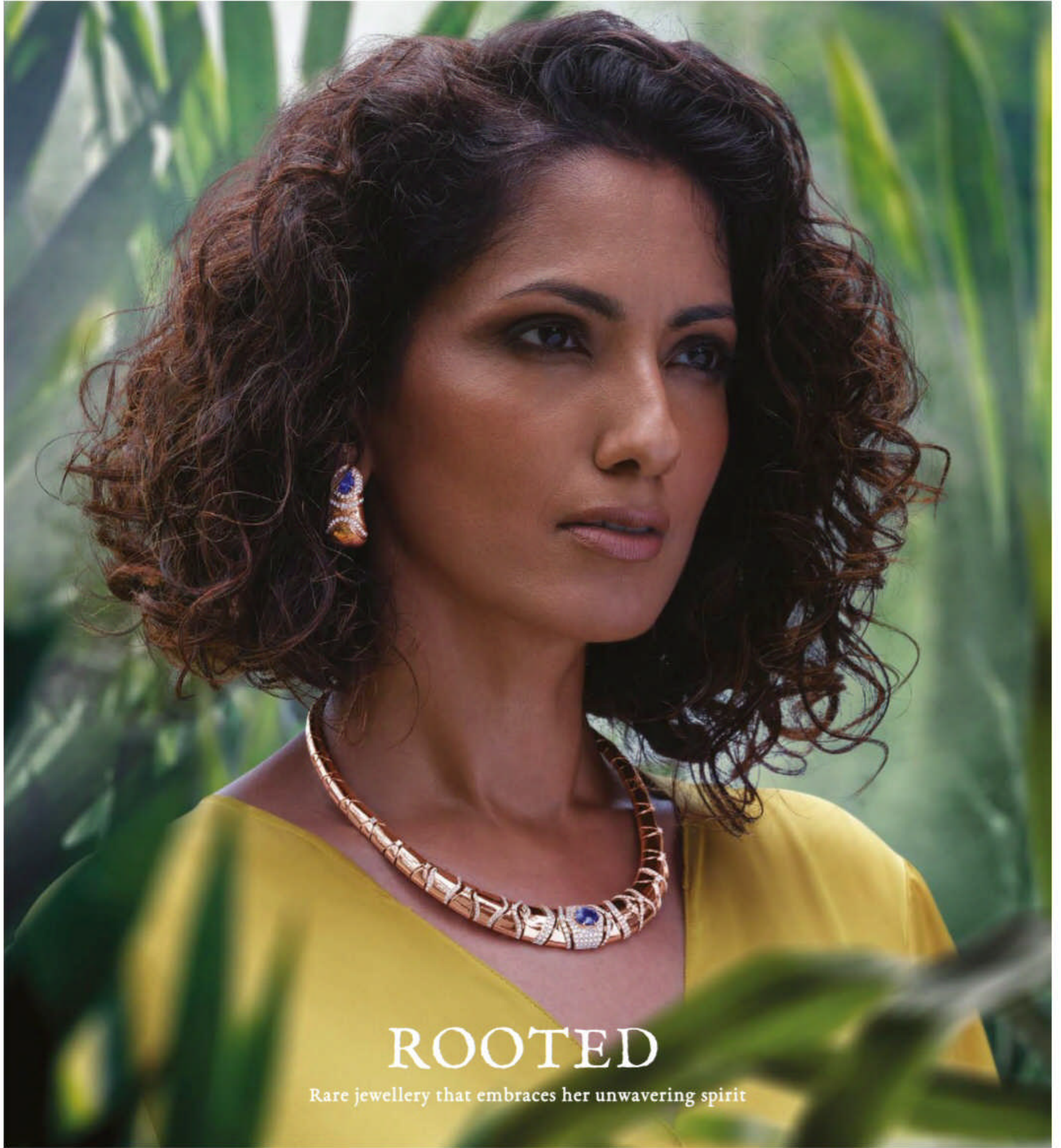


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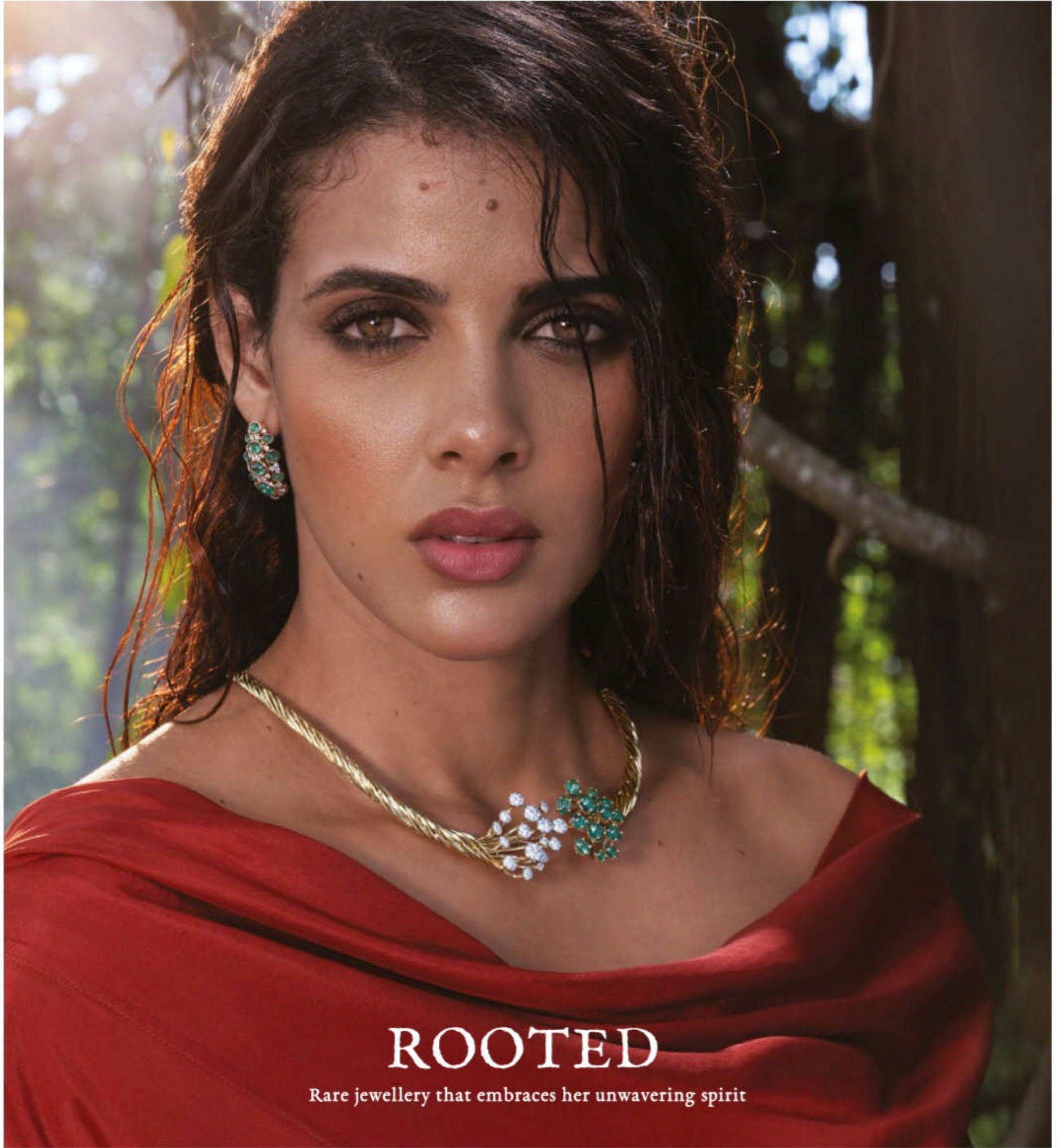


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COVER LOOK

Floral dress, **Péro**. 'Virgine' hat, **Maison Michel**. Bracelets, **Tohum**. Hair: Sebastien Bascle/Calliste Agency. Makeup: Laure Dansou/Walter Schupfer Management. Creative production: TIAGI. On set producer: Vera Massias. Photographed by **Boo George**. Styled by **Priyanka Kapadia**

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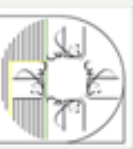


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TARUN TAHILIANI

A NEW VOICE OF TRADITION

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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EDITOR'S LETTER



When we launched *Vogue* in India 13 years ago, the world was a different place. Remember 2007? It was the year when the iPhone launched, when low-rise jeans (and those dreaded peeking thongs) were part of public discourse, when Shilpa Shetty made global headlines on *Celebrity Big Brother* and when astronaut Sunita Williams set new goals by becoming the first woman to be in space for 195 days. It was so long ago, there was no Instagram, no Swiggy or Zomato, no Uber, Amazon Prime or Disney+ Hotstar.

These past 13 years have been built on great memories; *Vogue* India had a great childhood, a beautiful journey we have documented through our 155 issues (and many supplements). But like any worried parent watching their child enter their teens, this month, as *Vogue* India enters its teens, I have to confess that it comes at a troubled time.

2020 will go down as the year of unease, global turmoil and widespread grief and pain. But this dark time has also illuminated the way ahead. It has reminded us of the strength of storytelling in ways that hold up a mirror to the times we live in. So even as fashion continues to be the hook upon which we hang our legacy brand, our future calls for a more responsible, honest and conscious edit. And so, throughout this issue—and the ones to follow—we support the small and home-grown, promote emerging talent and bring you stories of the extraordinary in the ordinary.

In these past years, India has changed, and we wanted the magazine to reflect this evolving narrative of our times. So when it came to considering the people for this anniversary issue, who could encapsulate our 13 years in India, we chose those as unique as our national identity. We asked 13 leading voices—fashion designer Aneeth Arora, digital czar Byju Raveendran, rapper Divine, chef Garima Arora, writer Pico Iyer, comedian-commentator Hasan Minhaj, author-philanthropist Sudha Murty, filmmaker Mira Nair, activist Trisha Shetty, Cipla's Samina Hamied, Jio's Isha Ambani Piramal, adman-writer Freddy Birdy, and model and cover star Amrit—to share their ideas of India, which celebrate the country in all its diverse and multifaceted glory.

These 13 voices redefine India and what it means today. Their essays remind us that we live in a land of immense opportunity and talent, and one with immense hope. In times like these, this resilience of ours to rise above is a silver lining that makes us remarkable. It's what makes bringing up this 13-year-old equally remarkable for me. So take this issue as our tribute to India and the people who represent it. And thank you for sharing this incredible journey with us.

Priya Tanna

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BOO GEORGE

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TARUN TAHILIANI

ALL THAT WE WERE, AND MORE...

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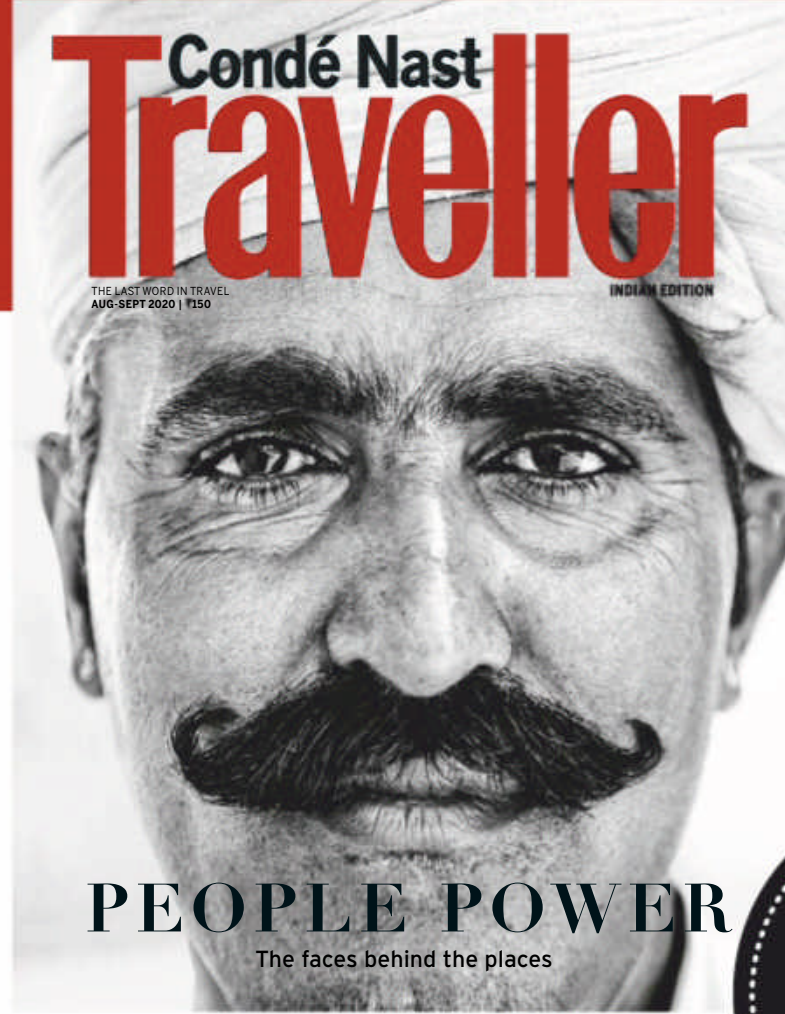
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Condé Nast Traveller

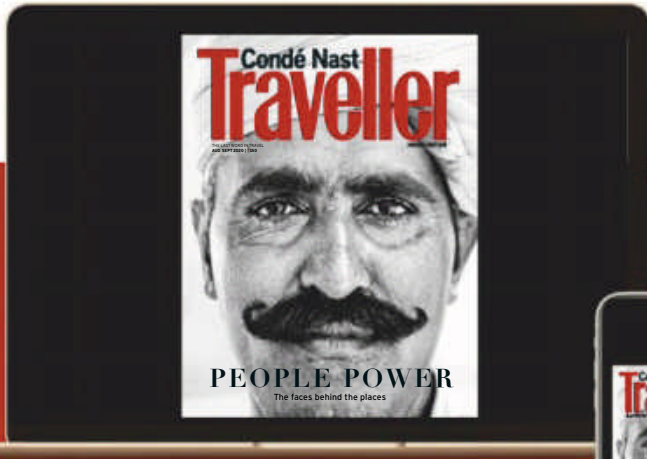
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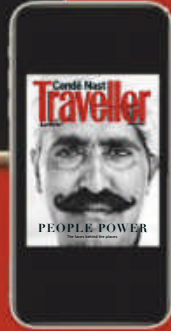
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MY INDIA IS
GLOBAL

MEET THE MOST UNLIKELY COVER GIRL: A SELF-CONFESSED CAMERA-SHY RECLUSE WHO JUST HAPPENS TO BE ONE OF FASHION'S MOST SOUGHT-AFTER FACES. **AMRIT**, THE MODEL AND ARTIST FROM PUNJAB, SPEAKS WITH **DIVYA BALA** ON FINDING PEACE IN BEAUTY AND HER PLACE IN THE PARISIAN SPOTLIGHT

ABSTRACT PRINTED SHIRT, EMBROIDERED CORSET; BOTH SAAKSHA & KINNI. BRACELETS; ALL TOHUM. 'LANA' HAT, MAISON MICHEL

Photographed by **BOO GEORGE** Styled by **PRIYANKA KAPADIA**

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Jacket, trousers; both **Ahluwalia**.
Chain link earrings, **Alberta Ferretti**.
Sandals, **Simone Rocha**





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Velvet dress, **NORBLACK**
NORWHITE. Cuff,
Schiaparelli. 'Augusta'
hat, **Maison Michel**



Blazer, trousers; both **Dhruv Kapoor**.
'LV Volt Upside Down' ring, **Louis Vuitton**
Fine Jewelry. Cuff, **Schiaparelli**.
'Kiki' pumps, **Aquazzura**



Blouse, **Ekà**. Trousers, **Bodice**.
Earring, **Dior**. Studded wrap
belt, **Alberta Ferretti**



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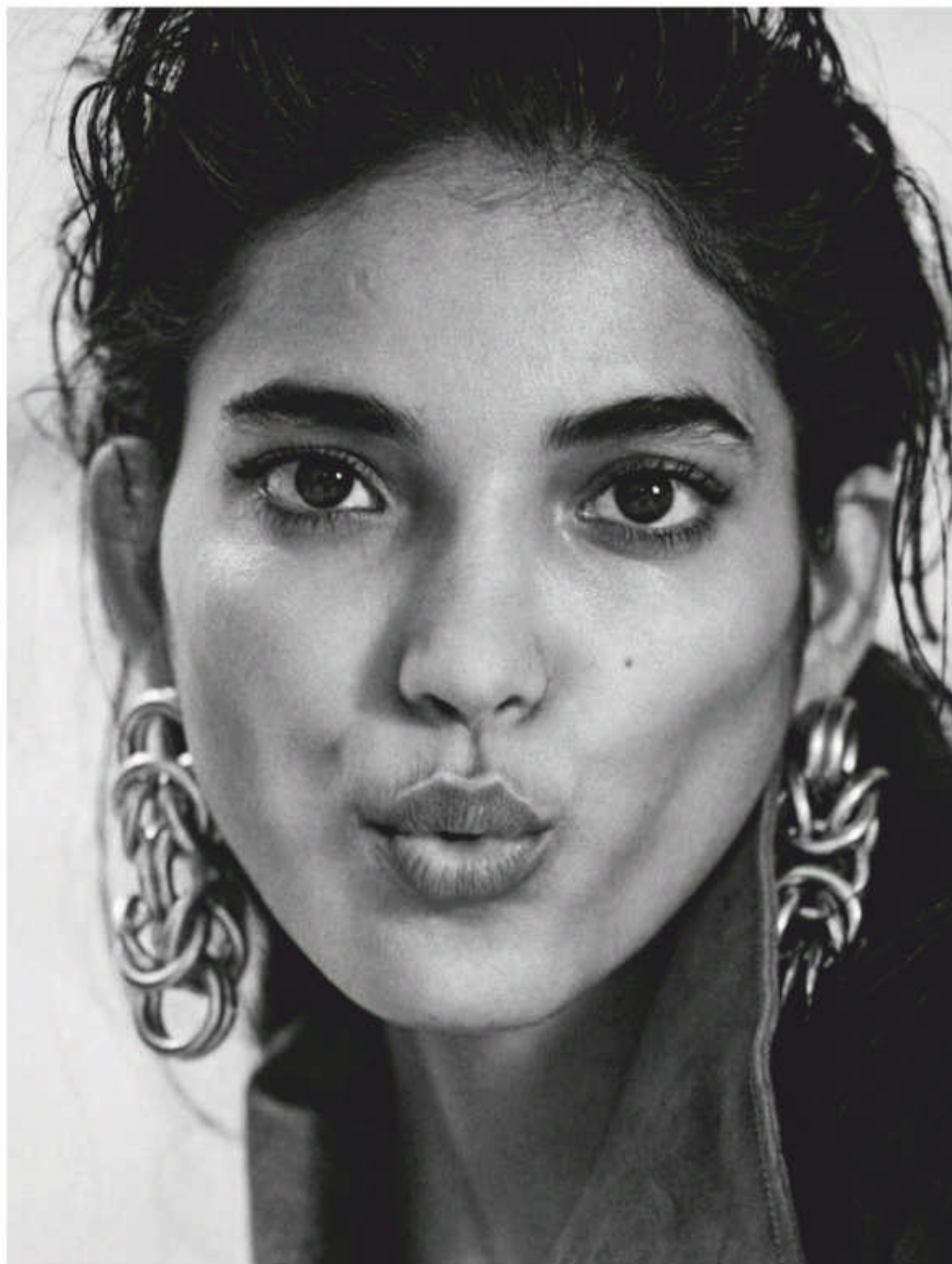


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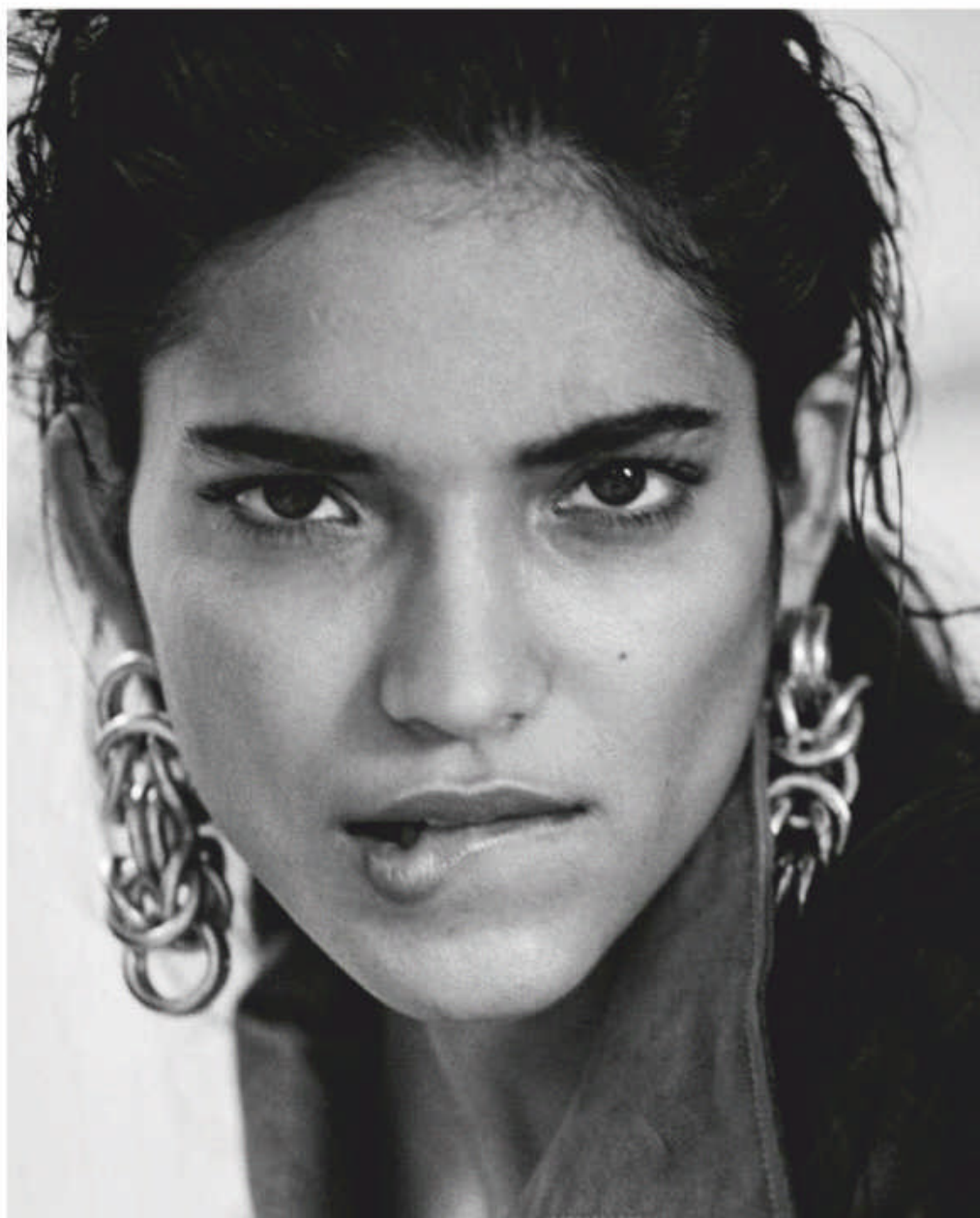
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Jacket, **Ahluwalia**.
Chain link earrings,
Alberta Ferretti



Turtleneck blouse, joggers, coat; all **Two Point Two**. 'Concha Columbra' shell earrings, **Tohum**. 'LV Volt Upside Down' ring, **Louis Vuitton Fine Jewelry**



Blazer, trousers; both **De Castro**.
'LV Volt Upside Down' earrings,
Louis Vuitton Fine Jewelry.
'C Chain Bootie' boots, **Casadei**



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Pleated blouse, **Lovebirds**. 'Tortuga'
pearl necklace, **Begum Khan**



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Yes, Amrit has an exquisite face. There are her features, both fine and full of character, her skin a deep caramel, framed by a slightly wild mane of hair that would make Kali proud. There's a quiet calm to her beauty that makes you lean towards her, as though she's whispering and you are straining to hear more. But right now I can't see her, separated as we are by COVID restrictions and the width of the city of Paris; with Amrit on the other end of a call from the apartment she shares with model colleagues near the Eiffel Tower.

That I can't perceive what is one of the most buzzed-about faces this year is strange, certainly. But I quickly hear that I'm not the only one. Until this year, the model's best friends hadn't even seen her face (they had met on Instagram through Amrit's selfie-free poetry account and, despite sharing long phone calls and intimate discussions, never a portrait was passed). I quickly learn, however, simply stopping at Amrit's physical beauty would fall short of what makes this 22-year-old truly intriguing.

Amrit speaks six languages, including that of her adopted country, France. She grew up playing a symphony of instruments, both Indian and Western. When asked as a teen what she wanted to be in life, she said, instinctively, "A revolutionary," without realising why. Now, in Paris, she spends her free time writing poetry, painting and drawing (she lists Frida Kahlo as a particular inspiration) and seeks to complement her modelling career with acting in the near future.

There may be one small hiccup though, according to Amrit. "I'm very antisocial," she divulges. "Besides my family, people don't know if I exist. I'd go to the temple with my parents late in the evening or early in the morning and people would ask them, 'Who is she?'" When I ask why she kept herself hidden, she explains, "I believe there are many reasons behind that. One is, when you live in India, [people] have different opinions of beauty. For example, back home, I'm [considered] the ugliest in my family. I would get this comment [from extended family members], 'You would be more beautiful if you bleached your skin.'"

Amrit describes a recent challenging moment, when, following a topless (though it must be said, tasteful) shoot for Rosh Mahtani's London-based jewellery brand, Alighieri, the backlash from some of her home-grown audience was brutal, to say the least: "You're bringing shame to all of us' or 'You don't deserve to be Indian', and I'm like, 'What gives you that right?'" she says, elaborating that members of her family had been telephoned with what can only be described as death wishes for the model. Fortunately, her parents hung up and continued being supportive of their daughter's achievements.

"This is my life and I'm going to exist the way I can, the best way I know. I'm grateful that [other South Asian models like] Bhumika [Arora] and Pooja [Mor] paved the way for me. I had some insight that Bhumika had similar struggles, coming from Haryana, but she and Pooja stood their ground and so should I. I never allow anyone to make people like me invisible. That's something I cannot allow."

Fortunately, when she moved to Paris in late 2019 from her hometown of Kapurthala, her way was quickly paved with a coveted editorial for *Vogue* Paris with photography legend Alasdair McLellan, no small feat. Soon after came another, then *Vogue* Spain, *Vogue* Ukraine, campaigns for Fenty, runway for Chloé, Jacquemus and Christian Dior. And, most recently, the cover of *Vogue* India.

"The kind of place where I come from, Punjab, and to be on the cover of *Vogue*, I don't think anyone would ever think I would be that girl. I'm humbled by it. From [not being considered beautiful], to this space, all it taught me was to be myself. I didn't have to change the way I look, take this selfie, wear that dress. I don't have to let in anyone's opinion. I don't have to entertain someone's remarks about what they feel about my face or anyone else's," she says. "I'm just being myself."

And with those four words, at a time when a woman's beauty can be debated and defined in the court of public opinion, she performs the most revolutionary act of all and defines it for herself. ■



Bodysuit, skirt; both **Supriya Lele**.
'LV Volt Curb Chain' necklace, 'LV
Volt Upside Down' earrings; both
Louis Vuitton Fine Jewelry

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AN ODE TO ROYALTY

With a legacy dating back a century and collections comprising the most exquisite designs, heritage luxury jewellery label The House of MBj is a force to be reckoned with. Now, with the launch of its eponymous app, the brand is redefining the jewellery buying experience, making it even more exclusive and interactive

It's no secret that India has always maintained a long-standing, unwavering relationship with jewellery over centuries. In fact, some of the world's most precious jewels that today find themselves in museums across the world have their origins in our country. Steeped in royal legacies, and inspired by heritage motifs, Indian jewellery continues to captivate international audiences. And credit for this goes to our skilled artisans, who have innovated with designs and perfected techniques over the years to craft statement pieces that have their roots in tradition, but exude a contemporary charm.

And if there's one jewellery brand that's been an integral part of India's glittering past and continues to shine bright and appeal to modern sensibilities, it's The House of MBj.

ROYAL RAJASTHANI BEGINNINGS

Founded over a century ago, in 1897, The House of MBj boasts a rich 120-year-old legacy that traces its origins to



Ratangarh in the Churu district of Rajasthan, where *swarnkars* (or goldsmiths) were appointed to the courts of the royal family to craft masterpieces that reflected the grandeur of the kingdom.

Over the decades that followed, this iconic jewellery label has kept pace with changing trends and has cemented its position in the market as the epitome of Rajasthani royalty. Today, its headquarters in New Delhi aside, The House of MBj's retail outlets can also be found in Jaipur and Kolkata, along with impressive manufacturing units in both the Pink City and the capital. And if that doesn't spell exclusivity, the brand's by-appointment-only boutique in New York sure will!

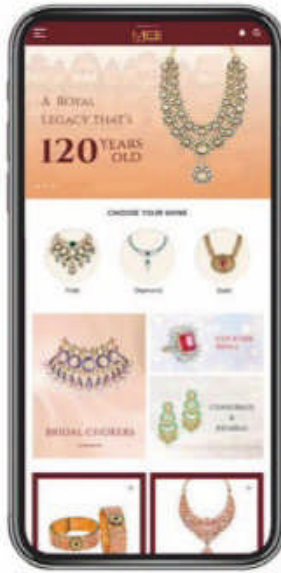
HERITAGE INSPIRATIONS. CONTEMPORARY INCLINATIONS

Spurred by the power of imagination and a pursuit for excellence, the creations from The House of MBj are characterised by age-old know-how coupled with in-depth design knowledge and modern craftsmanship techniques, resulting in jewellery that's heirloom-worthy. Flaunting versatile designs and detailed motifs in a rich colour palette, the indulgent jewels can be worn as singular statement pieces or paired with other items from their collections and adorned with both festive Indian wear as well as classy Western attire.

It is this ability to strike a fine balance between the old and the new that has seen hordes of Bollywood celebrities



THE HOUSE OF MBj GOES DIGITAL



As the world gears up to adjust to a “new normal” way of life, brands have been forced to reassess their approach to business. Recognising the consequences of the current pandemic on the luxury jewellery industry, Gautam Soni and his team at The House of MBj have astutely decided to foray into the digital space by launching a nifty app for their centuries-old label. Available for download on the Google Play Store and the iOS App Store, this one-of-its-kind app is by-invitation-only and reserved for the label’s illustrious clientele—both Indian and international—to ensure that their jewellery shopping habits remain unencumbered and their experience continues to be an exclusive, enjoyable one.

HERE'S WHAT'S IN STORE ON THE APP:

PERSONAL ATTENTION: The House of MBj promises to personally cater to each client’s needs and requirements, so as to ensure that their expectations are met.

A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION: The House of MBj app is replete with a wide selection of the label’s most versatile statement pieces, including gorgeous jewellery from its festive and high-end collections.

EASE OF DELIVERY: With pan-India shipping available, as well as options for shipping to key international locations, the app guarantees a hassle-free experience in delivering your favourite jewels to your doorstep.

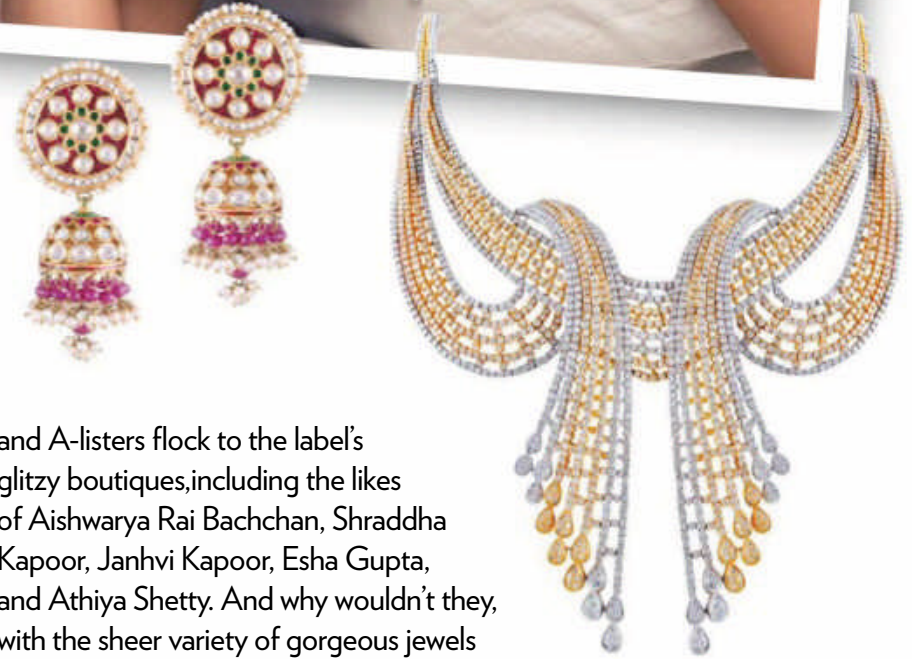
A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE: To make the app as user-friendly as possible, the brand has added several significant features such as a 100 per cent buyback option, a convenient exchange policy, a round-the-clock WhatsApp chat facility, and a video calling facility with its jewellery consultants.

IMPRESSIVE GUARANTEES: Recognising the inherent

apprehensions clients may harbour with respect to purchasing precious jewellery digitally, the app offers complete transparency in operations and ensures all necessary diamond certifications and gold hallmarking standards are met.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE: In the event that clients would like to instantly connect with any of The House of MBj’s retail outlets, a toll-free number on the app facilitates the same quickly and efficiently.

Scan the QR code to download the app



and A-listers flock to the label’s glitzy boutiques, including the likes of Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Shraddha Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor, Esha Gupta, and Athiya Shetty. And why wouldn’t they, with the sheer variety of gorgeous jewels on offer? From intricately handcrafted bridal pieces that include choker sets, *rani haars*, bracelets, bangles, and extravagant suites encrusted with emeralds, pearls and rubies to arresting *polki* necklaces, beautiful *kadas*, and envious dangles, The House of MBj leaves you spoiled for choice.

A BRIGHT, SHINY FUTURE

Magnificent jewellery aside, what’s most impressive about The House of MBj is how it has managed to stand the test of time and retain its position as one of the country’s most sought-after jewellery labels. Today, managing director Mayank Soni—a man of immense creativity, sharp business acumen, and keen foresight—leads the charge, with fellow managing directors Gautam Soni and Gunjan Soni managing the north zone and Abhishek Soni and Aayush Soni being torchbearers of the brand’s legacy in the east. Together, they are carefully navigating a heritage label that is now rapidly diversifying into myriad categories, with sub-brands tailored to cater to the modern luxury consumer’s lifestyle.

THE HOUSE OF
MBj
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For more information, visit Mbj.in, call 18001039500 (toll free) or follow @thehouseofmbj on Facebook and Instagram

They mean business

These incredible women juggle their day jobs with side hustles, virtual learning with virtual meetings, tradition with technology and social good with commerce. From San Francisco to Nairobi via London and Stockholm, these Indian-origin entrepreneurs are laying the foundation of the brands of the future. **Priyanka Khanna** unearths their inspiring stories

MEENA HARRIS

35, FOUNDER AND CEO, PHENOMENAL
 📍 SAN FRANCISCO

"I often joke that growing up in my family was like the opening scene of *Wonder Woman* (2017), where a community of strong, brilliant women ran around helping each other succeed...and basically saved the world together," says Meena Harris. And she's not exaggerating. The women she is referring to are her late grandmother, Shyamala Gopalan, a breast cancer researcher and civil rights activist; her mother Maya, a civil rights and public policy advocate and lawyer; and her aunt, Kamala—yes, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, Harris's achievements are no less impressive. A lawyer, entrepreneur (she is the founder and CEO of Phenomenal, a grassroots initiative started in 2016 to encourage activism), author (her children's book, *Kamala And Maya's Big Idea*, inspired by a true story from her mother and aunt's childhood, is a *New York Times* bestseller), and a mother ("As the mother of two black daughters...we need more characters who look like my girls.") Harris says, "I learnt at a young age what activism looks like. My grandmother taught me a key lesson that has now become the central line of my book: "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."

A while ago, Harris shared a billboard from Tamil Nadu that congratulated her aunt. For Harris, her Indian heritage is incredibly special. "My grandma instilled that cultural identity. Because of her influence, I studied Bharatanatyam for over 10 years. I've been dying to pick it up again."



ESHA CHHABRA ▶

37, CO-FOUNDER, ALAYA TEA 📍 LOS ANGELES

Delhi-born and California-raised Esha Chhabra, the co-founder of Alaya Tea, began her career in DC newsrooms, but moved to more grassroots stories. That's also how she returned to her roots. "I ended up in Uttar Pradesh looking at public health issues with WHO, UNICEF and Rotary. That led to a career that's taken me all over the world telling stories on mission-driven companies, social inequalities, and more. The inspiration for Alaya came from visiting so many farmers in India—how could we build a brand that invested in their health and the importance of organic farming in this era of climate change?" The last few months have seen her go back to the root, quite literally. "I've been learning how to grow more fruit and veg. I've always been drawn to gardening and the outdoors. At the beginning of the lockdown, I ordered about 40 packets of seeds and started cultivating them. Now I've got everything from cucumbers and strawberries to sunflowers and zinnias popping up. I like the rhythm of nature; it's slower, undeterred by what's going on around it. It teaches you to be patient, slow down, and not be so caught up in the world of deadlines."

JUSTIN BETTMAN



RIYA GROVER

32, CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, FEEDR

📍 LONDON

At the time of this interview, Riya Grover had just days prior given birth to her second child. But that isn't the only exciting news for her. In March, her four-year-old company, Feedr, a food tech start-up was acquired for a reported US\$24 million dollars. "I saw an opportunity to integrate more health data and meal personalisation as part of people's daily food choices," says the Oxford and Harvard graduate. "We've grown into an enterprise software platform that enables companies to set up flexible, personalised and nutrition-centric meal plans for their workforce. I've stayed on as the CEO to help integrate our technology with the parent company," she says. But it's not to say that Grover is resting on her laurels. "I found personal time to reflect on my long-term entrepreneurial ambitions," she adds, saying that opportunities in artificial intelligence and machine learning as well as a focus on social good are what she is currently exploring. "As an entrepreneur I've been lucky to have flexibility, so every day looks different, but juggling mummy and CEO also means life is a balancing act," she says, adding that the busy mum wardrobe of Lululemon, Silou and Sweaty Betty sees her through. In the evenings, she opts for Roland Mouret or Stella McCartney. Currently, she's enjoying the new baby haze, looking to pick up tennis again, and plan a holiday. This time, as a family of four.



◀ SMITA SATIANI

36, CO-FOUNDER, ALAYA TEA

📍 LOS ANGELES

"I've always been a disciple of work-life balance. So for every hour I spend working, I try to spend at least half amid nature," says Smita Satiani, who has been splitting her time between Los Angeles and the family home of her boyfriend, the filmmaker Aneesh Chaganty, in the Bay Area. Satiani, whose day job is at X, Alphabet's Moonshot Factory, and who has previously worked at the White House during the Obama administration, is the co-founder of Alaya Tea, a direct to consumer brand. Ohio-born Satiani moved to Mumbai and then back to California at the age of five. "Chai is a daily ritual in our homes, so we started Alaya to create a fresher, kinder option. Social good has always been an important aspect of my work, and at Alaya, we buy tea directly from farms that are focused on incorporating regenerative agriculture practices in ecosystems that are increasingly being impacted by climate change." Echoing this mindfulness sartorially, she's partial to Levi's high-rise Re/Done jeans, white tees and local labels such as Rachel Pally and Cuyana. So what's in her cuppa? "At 7am, it's a biodynamic Assam black tea with milk and lavender honey. At 4pm, a pot of our Darjeeling, delicate and floral, and my nightcap is herbal. Drinking tea is more than just about the act. It's about slowing down, appreciating nature, where the leaves come from, and enjoying where you are." >



SOITI ROY ANDERSON

39, ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS
DEVELOPER 📍 BROOKLYN

"2020 forced me to face critical questions," says the Burmese-Bengali Soiti Roy Anderson. She now calls the US home, but she grew up in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Singapore and the UAE as a result of her father's work as a cross-border attorney. "We need to live a gentler life by making conscious everyday decisions," a direction that she has been championing professionally and personally. "Reduce, reuse, rebuild is our mantra," says the realtor and architect who is in the process of completing two historic townhouse renovations in Brooklyn and an energy-efficient home in Woodstock, New York. "I believe you can make beautiful, luxurious design by reusing overstock items, being mindful of waste, and using local artisans. My fashion sense, too, is about living a low-impact life. I like to reuse hand-me-down or vintage finds and add my own elegant twist." Her looks, she says, are similar to how she would design a building: "Playing with geometry and texture." Labels such as Stella McCartney and Helmut Lang make up her wardrobe, while architects like Louis Kahn and Tadao Ando make up her mood board. For someone who works with such a visual canvas, she admits, "I am a voracious reader...words create colours and shapes of my own imagination."



SANA JAVERI KADRI

26, FOUNDER AND CEO, DIASPORA & CO.
📍 OAKLAND

Sana Javeri Kadri grew up in South Bombay, attended UWC, Wales, and studied visual art and food systems in Southern California. "I'd always felt that the point of a privileged global education was to make an impact at home, but California reeled me in." In 2017, realising the potential for ethically produced high-quality spices, she started Diaspora Co. with 350kg of turmeric from one farmer outside Vijayawada. "I find the current natural farming movement that's sweeping across India to be led by such an incredible wave of young, sustainability-conscious farmers." Pre-pandemic, Kadri spent nearly five months in India, travelling the country to source, and always squeezing in visits to the family tailor, tasked to transform Mangaldas Market fabric buys into jumpsuits and dresses. "My Andhra ikat, Tamil Kanjivaram and Bengali Jamdani sari collection has grown formidably," she says, "I love the maximalist Indian kitsch aesthetic. Our packaging and branding was born out of a desire to create a fun, accessible, non-stereotypical, distinctly Indian brand." When not at work, food is still on her mind—gardening and growing her own bounty. "I'm planting fruit trees to enjoy in a few years. Growing food makes me feel so happy to be alive." >

AUBRIE PICK





Label
DIPLO KIMAB

FESTIVE / WINTER 2020

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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SOFIA SHONALI MEHROTRA

27, FOUNDER AND CREATIVE DIRECTOR,
MEHROTRA 📍 STOCKHOLM

Born to a Swedish mother and Indian father, Sofia Shonali Mehrotra says that the contrast between her dual heritage and traditions was the starting point for her eponymous label, Mehrotra. The designer, who trained at Acne Studios in London, visited the *Vogue* India offices several years ago, armed with samples for her then-fledgling label that has now expanded into bags (the standout is her sustainable one-of-a-kind bucket bag), jewellery and scarves. "A big part of the inspiration came from my grandmother, who continued to wear her traditional saris on special occasions and always mixed her Indian heritage with Swedish culture in a beautiful way. I wanted to mirror this mix. For example, our mini straw bags are made by hand in Manipur and detailed with upcycled silk saris. These two elements make each bag unique," she says. "My go-tos are neutral pieces that are transeasonal and the kinds I know I will love. I pair these with accessories I've designed." The Row is a label she appreciates for its inspiring sphere of influence. Mehrotra's conscious approach also bleeds into her lifestyle: "I love to spend time in the Stockholm archipelago or the mountains of France, surrounded by nature. It rejuvenates me and gives me a boost in finding stillness."

NISHA KANABAR

32, FOUNDER AND CEO, INDUSTRIE AFRICA
📍 DAR ES SALAAM

A fourth-generation Tanzanian of Gujarati heritage, Nisha Kanabar's childhood was a mix of Indian and Swahili experiences in an international school environment. In 2016, she moved back home after stints at *Vogue* India and *Style.com* in Dubai to launch Industrie Africa, spotlighting designers from the region. "I'm proud of the collaborative, commerce-meets-content platform that blends a curated experience, a brand's own retail storefront and the marketplace method of fulfilment. It keeps our relatively seasonless business extremely agile," she says. "We are celebrating a multitude of African identities, cultures and design nuances. It's important to tell these modern-day sartorial stories and also offer transparency in your discovery experience." Kanabar walks the talk when it comes to her own wardrobe. "My obsession for emerging labels has taken a rather work-from-home turn—oversized matching loungewear from Amsterdam-based Les Coyotes de Paris, utilitarian hand-dyed jumpsuits from Kenyan label KikoRomeo, and off-duty separates from Nigerian brand Orange Culture. I like layering and playing with proportions as well as mixing luxury staples with emerging international labels and contemporary African designer pieces." Like any young founder, Kanabar is living and breathing her business. As we speak, she's in the midst of planning a trip to Ruaha National Park in Southern Tanzania, where she says she'll "be immersed in nature and my laptop with a drink in hand." >



TOBIAS LUNDKVIST





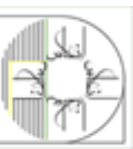
RITU KUMAR

Autumn | Winter 2020

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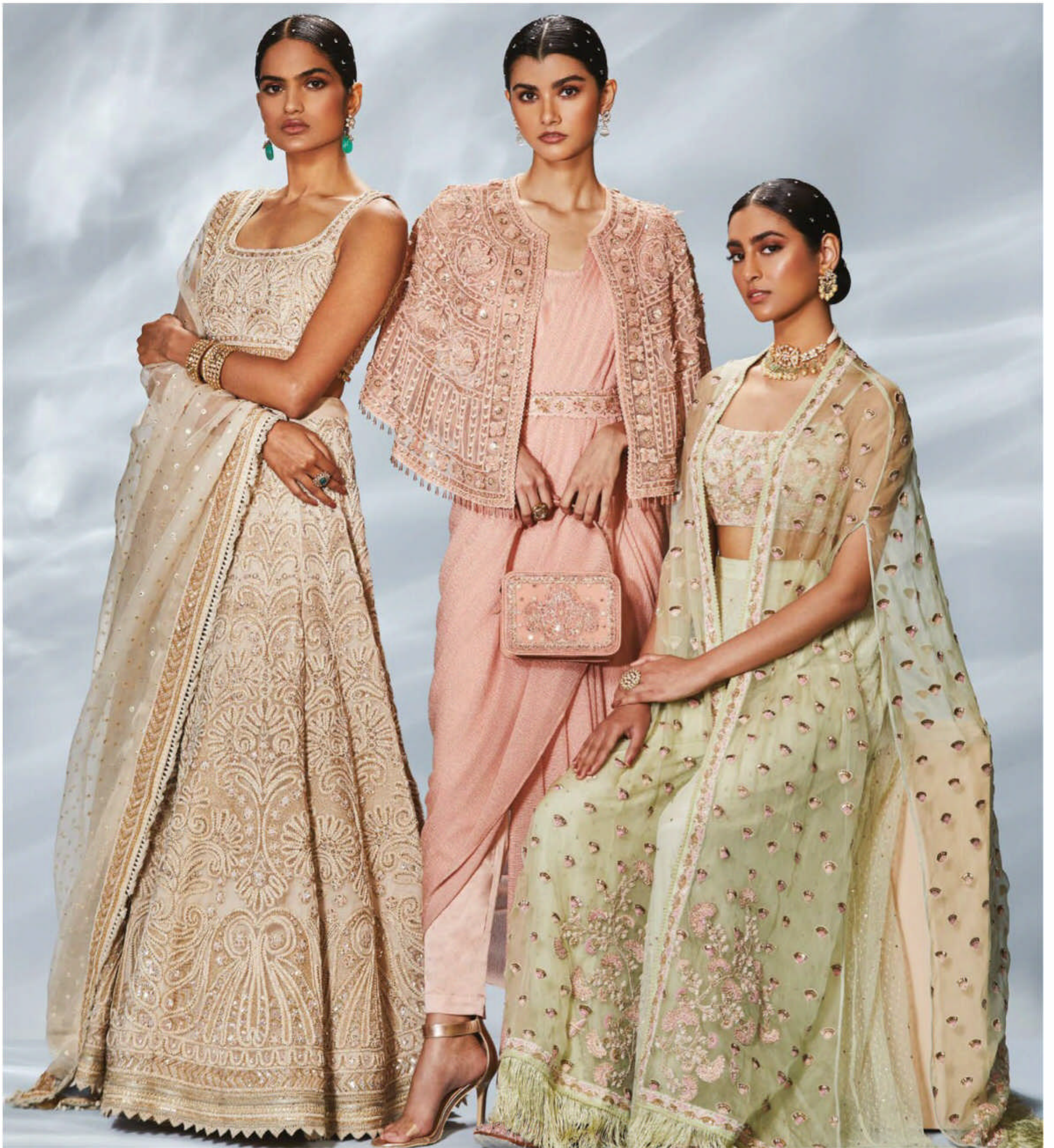


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RI·RITU KUMAR

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ADITI SHAH

30, PELOTON INSTRUCTOR AND
WELLNESS EXPERT 📍 NEW YORK

For Aditi Shah, who was planning to get married in Rajasthan this March, the pandemic threw quite the curveball. Instead, she found herself connecting deeper with her fiancé. "Surely the pandemic has shown us that what matters in life is not our social media photos, but our relationships, resilience and community. It's not what life looks like from the outside but what it feels like on the inside." Currently the yoga and meditation instructor at fitness and media brand Peloton, Shah started her career as a model and actor, and is now focused on growing her connection with the 2.6-million plus community "In some small way, I hope that my presence at Peloton can change the way we think about what a 'yoga teacher' looks like, and that my voice can shed some light on the richness of these traditions and practices," she says, adding that she's in the midst of launching a free virtual satsang. "At the moment, my entrepreneurial endeavours are all about building my brand." Naturally, athleisure for her is almost an occupational requirement. Her biggest learning? "It's easy to confuse productivity with self-value. It is essential to refill your cup. Every single day doesn't have to be about balance. If you're passionate about something, it can be truly joyful to put in that work in the pursuit of your dreams."

AMI DOSHI SHAH

DESIGNER AND APPLIED ARTIST
📍 NAIROBI

"Not having to commute in Nairobi's traffic is quite liberating," says Ami Doshi Shah on the silver lining of this pandemic—an aspect to which most of us in India would also relate. She has instead taken this time to become an avid gardener. You'll find her outdoors, usually in the early hours of the morning. It's this time that gives her moments of respite and also informs the direction of the jewellery label she started six years ago, after spending a decade in advertising. "Coming back to making and creating was cathartic. I work with locally sourced materials, and in some way, my aim is to bring to life the natural and human beauty of our country," says the trained jeweller whose mix of texture and form has garnered praise. "I work with standard metal-smithing techniques, but love to mix materials and processes, and use leather, wood, uncut stones and crystals as well as oxidation methods such as patination on brass. There is always a sculptural element to the work." With two boys at home, her days have been busy, but she's not one to let it come in the way of how she puts her looks together. "Nowadays, I do make an effort to style up. I wear Kenyan or African labels. My favourites include Katush, Selfi and Maisha Concept, which I mix with basics from brands like COS." >



WINI LAO



GET, SET, GOPRO

Looking for a unique way to document your wedding? Invest in a GoPro camera. While everyone loves to travel with a GoPro, you should want one for your wedding as the pocket-sized camera allows you to share real-time content from your wedding festivities on your social media feed, without having to wait for content from wedding photographers

Clothes, jewellery, food, venue and guests—planning a wedding can be a tedious affair. Of the innumerable duties that you are assigned as a bridesmaid, perhaps your most important job is capturing picture-perfect moments from the couple's big day. Here's where a GoPro—a camera that amounts to half the size of your palm comes in handy. Consider investing in GoPro's newly launched HERO9 Black—a pocket-sized, rugged waterproof, durable camera that comes with a new 23.6MP sensor that delivers crystal clear videos with a resolution of 5K and crisp 20MP photos.

While most wedding photographers tend to take months to deliver photos and videos, with the GoPro app you can get professional quality content automatically for your social media. Capture everything from spectacular shots of the wedding and behind-the-scenes videos of the sangeet to candid shots from the cocktail night. At the end of the eventful day, you can just kickback as the GoPro app magically delivers a wedding film for you to post on social media, thanks to auto edits, licensed music, smart editing styles and highlights.

To get the best shot, you can experiment with different mounts. For example, GoPro's magnetic swivel clip lets you mount the camera on a serving tray or wear it using a chesty. Since the GoPro is waterproof, too, you can dunk it in the pool to take underwater shots or even strap it to a champagne bottle. For that spectacular group selfie, GoPro's super-wide lens and SuperPhoto mode is your best friend. You can also livestream your ceremony via the GoPro app or use GoPro as a webcam, so that your close ones who couldn't make it to the wedding don't feel left out. And, the fun doesn't end there! You can take along the HERO9 Black for your exotic honeymoon and capture memories for life.



Check out the coolest features of the **HERO9 Black**:

- A front facing color display and larger rear screen let you frame your wedding selfies perfectly.
- A 30 percent longer battery life ensures that you cover all wedding celebrations without the HERO9 Black losing power midway.
- HERO9 Black comes with SuperPhoto for capturing incredible stills and SuperView which is great for capturing wide videos.
- The MAX lens mod lets you Max out your stabilisation and field of view—combining unbreakable Max HyperSmooth stabilisation with an ultra-wide 155° FOV digital lens.
- Horizon lock keeps your videos on the horizontal or vertical axis, even if your camera is mounted off-center or rotates a full 360°.
- With Power Tools like HindSight, capture and save up to 30 seconds of video before the shutter button is pressed.
- Take screengrabs from a video using the GoPro app, and get high resolution photos up to 14.7 MP.



HERO **9** BLACK



AISHWARYA IYER

34, FOUNDER AND CEO, BRIGHTLAND
 📍 LOS ANGELES

"My aha moment was realising the importance of a standing desk at home," says Aishwarya Iyer with a laugh. Like many of us, she has rotated through her wardrobe of loungewear (from Loup and Merna Maita). Iyer, who has lived in the east (Massachusetts), the Midwest (Chicago) and the southwest (Texas), landed on the West Coast (Los Angeles) to launch Brightland after a professional epiphany. In 2014, while working at L'Oreal, she realised that supermarket brand olive oil was giving her partner and her consistent stomach pains. "I discovered that nearly 70 per cent of olive oil Americans consume is already rancid due to a fraud-ridden industry with little to no transparency. So I moved to Los Angeles to create a bold, elevated, and traceable solution." Brightland officially launched in 2018 to champion California-made extra virgin olive oil. "We partner with family farms that implement organic practices and pay fair wages." What also sets Brightland apart is its clean, minimal design. "Our bottles do not look like traditional olive oils," she says of the very Insta-friendly packaging that you've seen on the counter tops of any chef (home or otherwise) worth his or her salt. So, what does Iyer like to cook? "I have a major sweet tooth, but I also love simple meals with a lot of vegetables." Dressed with Brightland, of course.

SHEENA SOOD

36, TEXTILE DESIGNER AND
 FOUNDER, ABACAXI 📍 BROOKLYN

One of the most important skills for a business to survive the pandemic is its ability to pivot. But what do you do when your brand is just off the ground? Sheena Sood found out first-hand. "I planned the launch of abacaxi for Holi this year, but instead I had to change my focus to making fabric face masks from my home. That decision led to a whole new project," she says, admitting that she's gone through the pandemic cycle of being depressed, worried, stressed and busy through these trying times. Her label, which emerged from a trip to Rajasthan in 2012, started with a brightly hued capsule collection that put together remnants of fabrics and embroidered textiles before soon developing into a full-fledged line. "As a textile designer, I'm a fabric snob who mostly wears natural fibres. I have an obsession with tie-dye that began during my childhood and it continues to be a favourite," says the Brown University graduate who would love to expand into jewellery and homeware in the near future. "True to my brand, I like to layer bright colours with touches of traditional silver jewellery. Many of my designs are either convertible or can be worn in several ways and the styles can fit a wide variety of sizes, which is actually more sustainable and creates less waste." >



MARISSA ALVES



FASHION THAT INSPIRES

As the country starts to open up, get ready to face the “new normal” in style and with grace. Embrace positivity with ethereal ensembles from homegrown fashion label Aks’ latest collections Nilofer and Banarasi Tales. Designed using natural fibres, the outfits flaunt flattering silhouettes that promise to make an elegant statement this festive season

The pandemic-induced lockdown is steadily being lifted across the country and life is slowly starting to return to some semblance of normalcy—a “new normal” though it may be. And now, with the festive season right around the corner, there’s no better time to give your wardrobe a chic—and long overdue—update. Consider injecting personality into your closet with beautiful ensembles from homegrown fashion label Aks’ newest collections Nilofer and Banarasi Tales.

Available in a vibrant colour palette and flaunting feminine, flirty silhouettes, the outfits from both collections are the perfect blend of style, functionality, and comfort, making them just what you need to fill you with those happy festive feels. Never one to compromise on comfort in the name of fashion, Aks’ Nilofer and Banarasi Tales collections have been crafted using handpicked fabrics made from natural fibres. Not only does this translate to superior comfort but it also goes a long way in Aks’ pursuit of transitioning to becoming a sustainable fashion label.

Speaking about the collection, founder and creative head of Aks, Nidhi Yadav, elucidates, “With Nilofer, we’re trying to offer peace and serenity. When you wear those beautiful water lilies, you feel like you’re one with nature, and there are few feelings that top that. Banarasi Tales, on the other hand, is all about showcasing your inner beauty and radiance boldly to the world.”

NILOFER

Feminine and elegant, the label’s Nilofer collection is an ode to the beautiful aquatic flowering plant, Nilofer (or water lily), that is native to Kashmir. Choose from a selection of easy, breezy outfits in myriad hues that are replete with gorgeous prints of the alluring



flower. In keeping with its reputation as being one of the country’s foremost fusion wear fashion labels, Aks is, through this range, offering both ethnic and Western silhouettes, including draped saris, suits, and cropped tops with skirts.

BANARASI TALES

No one can dispute the refined elegance of a Banarasi garment. Steeped in history and tradition, a Banarasi ensemble is a permanent fixture in every Indian woman’s wardrobe, and rightly so. And now, Aks brings its patrons an exquisite array of Banarasi attire in its poetic Banarasi Tales collection. Think striking lehengas and dresses in Banarasi brocade flaunting intricate lacework paired with dreamy sheer organza dupattas.

So, slip into these gorgeous ensembles and step out to celebrate the festive season in absolute style!



For more information, visit Aksclothings.com or follow [@aksbynidhi](https://www.instagram.com/aksbynidhi) on Instagram

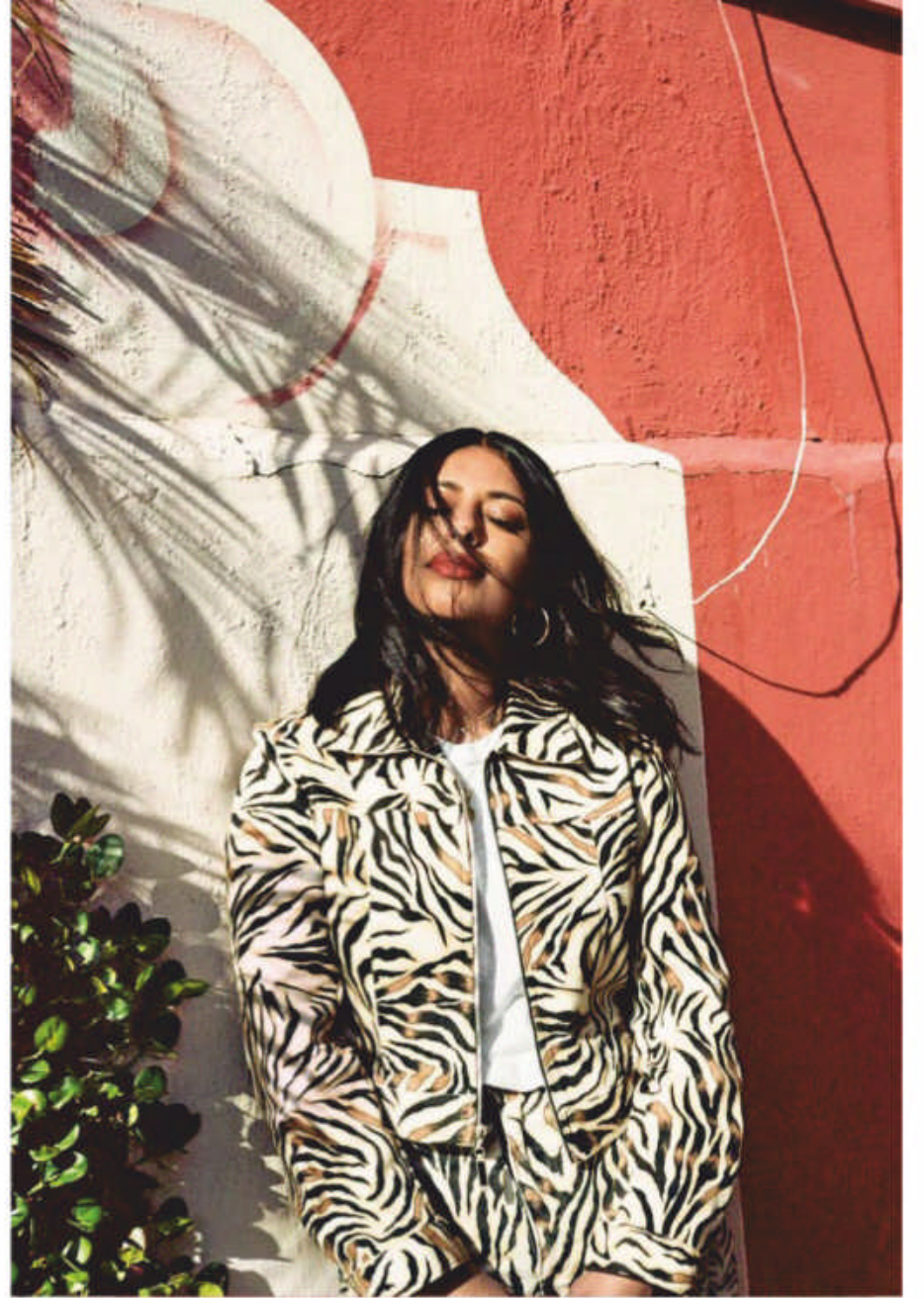


ZARNA SURTI

33, FOUNDER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,
TONAL JOURNAL

📍 BETWEEN LOS ANGELES AND PORTLAND

"I wanted a place to celebrate our stories, share our beauty, and honour our joy," says Zarna Surti, the founder of *Tonal Journal*, which seeks to remedy the lack of representation of colour in fashion. "My work was focused on digital fashion and beauty, and at the time, I truly missed the physical connection. On a flight, the idea for the format just came flowing out." So how does it work? "Each volume is dictated by colour (the debut was nude; the next will be red), the emotions it evokes, what it represents and the stories that come out of it." For Surti, whose day job is the global brand narrative director at Nike, *Tonal Journal* led her down a different creative path. "I want to be sure the work I'm creating can give back to communities in a positive way," she says. She's as particular about her fashion choices as she is about the narratives she structures. "I love finding vintage pieces and getting them tailored. My favourite textile is white linen. On weekends I love feather-cuffed dresses, silk sets and stilettos." Those stilettos may be gathering dust at the moment, but Surti is finding little joys: "It's difficult to find moments of personal clarity but I'm making sure to continue educating myself, move my body, cook nourishing food, and reflect."



DR DEEPIKA CHOPRA

37, THE OPTIMISM DOCTOR®

📍 LOS ANGELES

When it comes to cool professional titles, Dr Deepika Chopra wins hands down. And let's face it, at this moment, an optimism doctor is the only kind we want to see. Holistic practices from her Indian heritage, compounded with an interest in science, led Chopra to create a blend of two often opposing fields as a professional psychologist and founder of Things Are Looking Up™ (which creates "beautiful, functional, everyday products that increase proactive mental well-being"). The first product is a deck of 52 Optimism Cards. The podcast Looking Up With Dr Deepika Chopra is "full of raw human storytelling as well as expert tools". "I certainly did not get here in a linear fashion," she says, listing jobs in A&R at a punk music label, in capital markets, and at a healthcare company before pursuing her psychology degree. And Chopra admits to moments of burnout while parenting a young child and juggling many hats. "I am focusing on purpose over productivity and practising what I teach clients: to focus on strengths." When it comes to her wardrobe, filled with LA-girl-loved labels like Rachel Pally, Dôen and Jenni Kayne, matching sets (elevated versions of sweatpants, as she says) are key. So what does a day in her life look like? "Many meals prepared and shared, emails answered as well as unanswered, trips to the toddler toilet, puzzles, dishes, Zoom chats, podcast recordings, spontaneous solo dance parties, hugs, kisses, and more dishes." >

KATE BERRY

CELEBRATING COLOUR, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY

Gujarat's cultural tapestry is a vibrant, diverse one, and its animated handicrafts industry is one of its brightest gems. Even as the custodians of its culture face increasing threats to their trade today, they persevere. Here, we celebrate four artisan families that are actively engaged in keeping alive four of Gujarat's most treasured craft forms

The cultural identity of any state is shaped by a number of factors—from its historical sites and culinary offerings to its wealth of literature and, most importantly, its distinctive handicrafts. And it's no secret that Gujarat's handicrafts industry is one of the country's oldest and most impressive. Here, tricks of the trade have been passed down the generations by families of artisans over centuries. Every Gujarati craft tells a story that's unique to the community that practises it, and there is significance and purpose in every weave, colour, technique, and motif of every craft native to this charming state.

Now, with the demand for mass-produced fashion, further exacerbated by the economic impacts of the current pandemic, Gujarat's artisan numbers are witnessing a steady decline, and there is a real threat that not only could our artisan communities fade into oblivion, but, in the process, Gujarat's cultural heterogeneity, too.

Even in the midst of these looming uncertainties and mounting challenges, four artisan families continue to labour tirelessly to keep alive four rare crafts integral to Gujarat's cultural tapestry. It is this show of unceasing determination and unrelenting passion that reminds us just why it's so important to look after, encourage, and support our country's culture custodians.

THE KHATRIS: THE ROGAN EXPERTS

A time-consuming centuries-old craft, Rogan art is all about flooding the canvas of garments like *ghagras* and *odhanis* and even household items like bedspreads and wall hangings with a riot of colours. This craft form is so painstaking that just one square foot of Rogan art can take up to a month to make! Today, the only practitioners of this exclusive craft are the descendants of Abdul Gafoor Khatri, who reside in Kutch's Nirona village. Six Khatri family members continue to perfect this rare craft, abiding by the original eco-friendly method of deriving the gluey colours that are pasted on the fabrics.

THE PRAJAPATIS: THE BLOCK MAKERS

Hand block printing involves meticulously carving wooden blocks (traditionally smoothed teakwood) with detailed geometric and floral patterns. Such is the dexterity required that today, only 12 members of Gujarat's Prajapati family practise this handicraft that continues to find shelf space in some of the country's most high-end fashion boutiques. Versatile in nature, these blocks can be used for a variety of purposes, including the mass production of block printed garments, discharge printing, and batik, among others.

THE CHITARAS: THE KALAMKARI VIRTUOSOS

The origins of Kalamkari are interesting, to say the least. Back in the day, certain communities were restricted from visiting village temples, and so, circumvented this by building their own makeshift temples such as the Mata ni Pachedi and Mata ni Chadarvo. Hardly surprisingly, then, that the highlight of any Kalamkari handiwork is the goddess. What's most fascinating about Kalamkari is that it is a truly familial craft. And Gujarat's Chitara family bears the distinction of being one of the last remaining families to practise it, with each family member performing a specific task—from creating a design and carving out blocks to preparing the colours and executing the block printing.

THE SALVIS: THE PATOLA PUNDITS

A labour-intensive process involving resist dyeing the weft and warp threads before running them through the loom, the art of double ikat is a tricky, painstaking one. Credit for the continuity of the Patola craft in the country goes to the Salvi clan, who hailed from Maharashtra's Jalna region before settling down in Patan. Today, only three Salvi families in Patan, and one in Vadodara, carry on this tradition. Colours and technique aside, what really distinguishes Patola handiworks and gives them an air of exclusivity is their semblance to the cave paintings of Ajanta—a nod to their Maharashtrian lineage.

GLOBAL INDIANS

CHITRA AGRAWAL

41, CO-FOUNDER, BROOKLYN DELHI

📍 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

The name of Chitra Agrawal's food brand best encapsulates the collision of two cultural worlds. In 2009, while working in marketing at American Express, she started blogging family recipes on *Abcdsofcooking.com*, which led to a cookbook, *Vibrant India: Fresh Vegetarian Recipes From Bangalore To Brooklyn*. "The project began with me learning family recipes and led me to incorporate local ingredients and collaborate with local chefs. In 2014, I launched Brooklyn Delhi," she says about her line of condiments and simmer sauces. "Throughout those years, cooking gave me comfort and a way to bond with family, but it never dawned on me that I could actually pursue it as a career. I have bootstrapped this business with my husband, a packaging designer, creating our look inspired by hand-painted Indian truck art and Brooklyn bodega signage," she says. At the time of writing this, Agarwal is currently managing the brand along with two small children, and also a move. So, getting food on the table, even for someone who loves cooking, is no easy feat. "We put our achaars on everything. My favourite is with nachos. Lately, we have been leaning hard on our simmer sauces." Her dream collaboration is one that gets to the very basics: "I grew up eating achaar with plain yoghurt, so partnering with a brand like Chobani would be a dream."



PALLAVI GOLLA

36, FOUNDER-CEO, LARK ADVENTUREWEAR

📍 PITTSBURGH

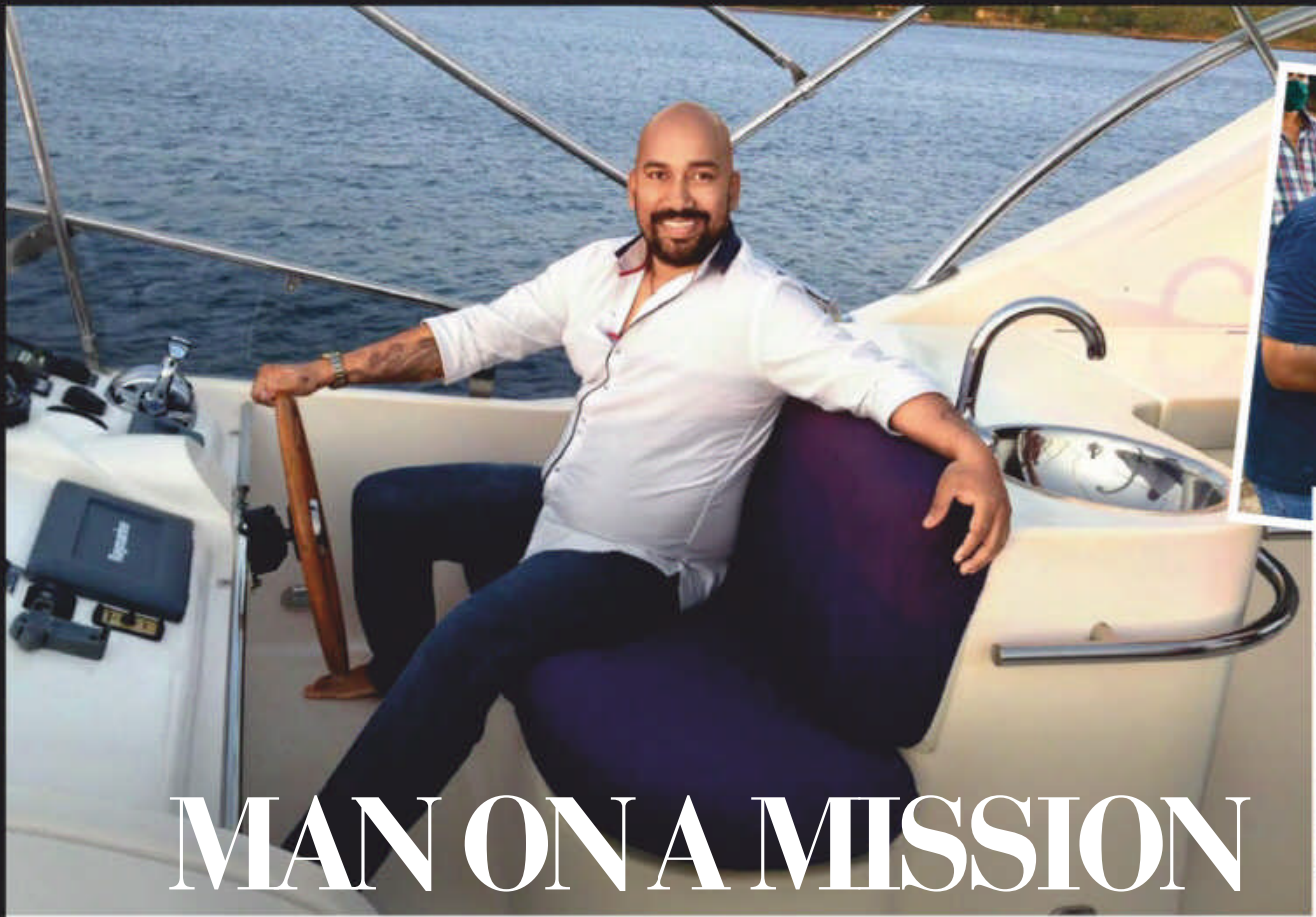
"I spent most summers till the age of 14 in Andhra Pradesh, visiting my grandparents," says Pallavi Golla. "I used to beg to not come home." Golla, the daughter of two doctors, was raised to appreciate both cultures and spent weekends learning Bharatanatyam and Carnatic music. With stints at a hedge fund and in wine production and management, Golla founded Lark Adventurewear after the birth of her elder son. "We had just moved back to Pittsburgh from Los Angeles. When we'd go on hikes, I'd find him hot and uncomfortable in traditional cotton baby clothes. I looked for options, but most activewear is made from synthetic fabrics and chemicals that are unsafe for children." A mum on a mission, she set out to find a solution, a patented cotton-bamboo blend, Softek, that creates a cooling effect without chemicals, is stain-resistant, and UPF-50 sun safe. Call it an occupational hazard, but activewear forms the basis of her wardrobe too, dominated by Alo Yoga, Marine Layer, and Summer Salt. "The biggest perks of owning an activewear label for kids is that there is no dress code. And as a busy mum, I have way too many pairs of AllBirds sneakers." The past few months have been incredibly busy. "As an e-commerce brand selling children's essentials, we have been able to grow. As a parent, it's been difficult to navigate running a business and having my children at home." >

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MAN ON A MISSION

The pandemic has cast long shadows and left many of us harbouring feelings of hopelessness, uncertainty, and anxiety. But Mumbai resident Mauris Noronha has emerged as a ray of hope in these dark, challenging times. Taking up the responsibility of serving society's most vulnerable sections, Noronha has dipped into his own savings to aid those in need across the city and state. Vogue catches up with the social hero to learn more about his selfless deeds

The current pandemic has wreaked havoc on our lives and extracted a heavy toll on our overall well-being. But in the midst of the reigning chaos that's been fuelled by an increasingly uncertain environment, Mumbai resident Mauris Noronha has emerged as a beacon of hope.

A businessman by profession, but philanthropist at heart, Noronha has, since early March, solely dedicated his time to caring for those unable to care for themselves, even forgoing his plans of emigrating to the States. Working with a team of equally dedicated volunteers, Noronha has personally delivered essential food rations, medical supplies, and protective equipment to a number of zero-income families across the city. But perhaps the most commendable bit about Mauris's mission is the fact that he has relied entirely on his own savings to fund his many social causes. What started as a personal mission, with Noronha supplying essentials to over 120 families in his own housing society, steadily grew to include society's most vulnerable sections; and, as of today, he has helped over seven lakh people and families across both city and state.

Now, his selfless efforts are being recognised and rewarded, with artist Ashutosh Hadkar memorialising him with a striking wall mural at Lok Bharti Road in Marol, Andheri

East—a fitting tribute to a man who has proven that the generosity of the human spirit can work wonders.

In conversation with Mauris Noronha....

What prompted you to abandon your personal goals in favour of aiding the city's most vulnerable?

The spread of the coronavirus and the lockdown that has accompanied it has sparked a human tragedy. Millions are out of work, unable to feed themselves or their families. The images of starving families and migrant workers desperately trying to reach their native villages broke my heart. I had the means and the motivation to do something about the situation, and so I did.

Tell us about how your team has contributed to helping you help others that much more.

From almost the start, I've been blessed with a wonderful team of volunteers, and together, we have accomplished so much more than I ever could have alone. Lately, we've even expanded our efforts to other cities in Maharashtra, including Pune, Ahmednagar, and Shirdi. This expansion in our efforts has also seen us buy a fully-equipped ambulance, which any citizen can use in case of an emergency. There are so many people in



need—labourers, domestic workers, the elderly. We help everyone we can in any way we can.

Your job is a tough, demanding one. What sort of challenges do you continue to face, and what keeps you going despite that?

The biggest challenge I struggle with is the knowledge that no matter how much I do, I still won't be able to help everyone who needs it. Before the crisis began, I had planned on emigrating to the US with my family, and was in the process of applying for my visa. I have even forsaken the plan to clear the home loan that I was thinking of settling in full. The money I had set aside for this process, and for starting a business in the States, has helped me do so much good right here at home. Although the work is physically exhausting, I've never had a better night's sleep.

What has been your biggest learning over the last six months?

The strength of the human spirit, and just how unbreakable it truly is. I've visited some of the worst-hit areas of the city, and no matter how bad the situation is, I've always been greeted with a smile. That's what drives me.

What do the next few months have in store for you and your team?

Despite the government's best efforts, the situation doesn't look as though it will improve any time soon. Until it does, my team and I will continue to work as we always have. Everyone needs a helping hand in times like these, and we're only too happy to do our part.

For more information, follow @maurisbhai on Instagram



VATSALA MURTHY

38, FOUNDER, INDIAN GOODS CO.

📍 FRANKFURT

"I'm not a minimalist. I'm more of an 'enough is better' person. This translates into having what I need and 'sparks joy', as Marie Kondo famously put it. That helps making decisions and getting things done so much easier, be it laying the table for dinner or getting dressed. When everything works with everything else, there's not that much thinking needed anymore," says Vatsala Murthy, the founder of Indian Goods Co., a design label borne from a need to "indulge in beautiful objects, with my interest in Indian aesthetic, both contemporary and traditional". For Murthy, who counts Ilse Crawford, India Mahdavi, Nipa Doshi and Jonathan Levien, and Fien Muller and Hannes Van Severen as influences, admits that she's most inspired by products we encounter daily. "There are so many humble objects that are so well designed that we take their function and the genius behind them for granted." It's a philosophy she adopts for her wardrobe, a tight edit, a great brand story as well as a larger purpose. Currently in a unicolour (white, black and blue) palette, Runaway Bicycle, Bhaane and The Summer House top her list. "I like simple yet interesting silhouettes, unusual combinations and the feel of the fabric on my skin." Like many, Murthy has been taking the last few months to regroup. "Fewer distractions have given me a better understanding of where things stand for me, for better and for worse. Now I need to put all that knowledge into action."

ESHITA KABRA DAVIES

29, FOUNDER AND CEO, BY ROTATION

📍 LONDON

"I came up with the idea of By Rotation, the Airbnb of designer fashion rental, while on honeymoon with my English husband in my home state of Rajasthan," says former investment banker Eshita Kabra Davies of her barely year-old start-up. While packing for her trip, she was surprised at the lack of options to rent statement, quality pieces. "On the trip, I was upset by the level of textile waste I saw and felt guilty about my own habits," she says, about founding By Rotation while juggling a career in finance. Last October, when the app launch was featured in the *Business of Fashion*, she quit to focus on By Rotation. In the last few months, Kabra has seen her user base and listings grow by over 80 per cent and 65 per cent, alongside an organic collaboration with Stacey Dooley and stories in *British Vogue* and *Business Insider*. She has also ditched tailored dresses and suits, finding her fashion groove in high-waisted jeans, a plain T-shirt, and loafers from labels like Jacquemus, The Vampire's Wife, Rejina Pyo and Reformation. "I love independent labels, second-hand and vintage. Needless to say, I share everything I own and rent too." While she works out of a Marylebone studio that is open for styling appointments, she goes to the countryside to rejuvenate. "I need space to recharge, whether it's at the barre, getting out of the city, or scouring vintage interiors at antique fairs." >





Alexander Seitz

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH DRY CLEAN(ING)?

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that climate change is real and the way forward is sustainability. Let's start with our wardrobes—by investing in natural, more durable items and taking good care of them by placing your trust in a renowned dry cleaning and cobbler services brand like Pressto. In an engaging discussion with German fabric and leather cleaning specialist Alexander Seitz, *Vogue* understands why slow fashion and responsible dry cleaning will be critical in our “new normal” reality

The current pandemic has taken a toll on all of us. That said, the resulting lockdown has taught us much, too. More than anything else, it has opened our eyes to the brutal realities of climate change, and, in the process, prodded us to make more responsible lifestyle choices as we embrace our “new normal” way of life.

Sustainability has been a buzzword for a few years now, but never has it carried more significance than it does today. Since it's important to start small, consider reassessing your wardrobe choices, foremost. Fast fashion has long been one of the biggest environmental polluters; and it's time we realise that and start making more conscious choices. Opting for a sustainable wardrobe is a lifetime investment and choosing to buy organic rather than synthetic items is worth it in the long run, for they promise both durability and longevity and also contribute to substantially less environmental waste.

To keep your prized possessions in tip-top condition, place your trust in renowned

dry cleaning and cobbler services brand Pressto. Although dry cleaning has been associated with being a major contributor to environmental waste, the recent years have brought in eco-friendly innovations to limit chemical waste and guarantee a smaller carbon footprint. At Pressto, the experts adopt responsible processes to restore your favourite wardrobe essentials to their former glory, so that they find pride of place in your cupboard for years to come.

In conversation with German fabric and leather cleaning specialist Alexander Seitz....



“The pandemic has woken us up. It is great to see attention being given to sustainability. After all, sustainable fashion is not just a trend; it's the future.”

—Esther Lennaerts,
Founder and Director
at Pressto

Why is dry cleaning a necessity today?

The cleaning method of a garment is decided by its fabric and composition. Certain materials like wool and silk damage easily if washed, and hence, have to only be dry cleaned. While dry cleaning cleans the fabric by moving the solvents over the fabric, water expands the fabric and can therefore damage the material. Also important to note here is that the industrial equipment a dry cleaner uses to clean fabrics is predominantly inverter drive equipment that is power efficient.

What eco-friendly measures has Pressto implemented to ensure a negligible carbon footprint?

Foremost, we have moved our new stores to dry cleaning with hydrocarbon. Secondly, the solvent waste that is generated is collected and centrally disposed of through a specialist waste management company. Thirdly, we ensure efficient operations to minimise electricity consumption in our stores. Fourthly, we have stopped using plastic altogether; our packaging material is now made from compostable corn starch. And finally, we have invested in good-quality, power-efficient equipment.

Going forward, why is it important that people invest in “slow fashion”?

The fashion revolution of the last couple of decades was all about “fast fashion” and synthetic materials like nylon and viscose. But we need to realise the damaging effects synthetic fibres have on the environment—from water and air pollution to high-energy consumption...not to mention the fact that they are made from fossil fuels and are not biodegradable.

That aside, we also have to realise that the garments we buy have travelled all over the world—from the source of the material to where the fabric is manufactured to where the garment is stitched, then on to a central warehouse, and finally, to a retail store. So, the carbon footprint of fashion is very high. Hence, it's important we don't consume “fast fashion” and buy repeatedly. Instead, we should invest in good quality garments and focus on maintaining them.



All *GQ* and *Vogue* readers can avail of a 10% discount at Pressto and Cobbler by Pressto outlets across India using the promo codes 'Conde Nast Pressto 10%' and 'Conde Nast Cobbler 10%'. Terms and conditions apply. For more information, Call/WhatsApp 9167188355

PRERNA GUPTA

38, FOUNDER AND CEO, HOOKED
📍 SAN FRANCISCO

"I grew up in Shawnee, a conservative town in Oklahoma, and I felt the pressure to assimilate. But over time, I began to embrace my Indian heritage. Growing up in a place where I was different taught me to always be true to myself, and that life lesson helped me become a successful entrepreneur," says Prerna Gupta, the founder and CEO of Hooked, a mobile chat fiction format. "My husband and I were on a beach in Costa Rica, surfing and writing a novel with a female Indian protagonist set in a futuristic Silicon Valley. My goal was to create the next *Harry Potter*—an iconic story that inspired millions to follow their dreams—featuring an Indian girl as the hero. But there was one problem: young people weren't reading anymore, they were spending all their time on their phones," she says about the format which tells stories through texts, has 100 million viewers across social media, a short-form video streaming app Hooked TV, and has received funding from Ashton Kutcher, Mariah Carey, LeBron James and Jamie Foxx to name a few. "Art is a reflection of humanity. Modern life is being experienced increasingly on mobile phones. Hooked's stories are the truest expression of this brave new world. Especially during the pandemic, when so many of us are feeling isolated and afraid," she adds, while working from her home (clad in Alo Yoga, James Perse, Vince or a jumpsuit from A Peace Treaty), with her husband Parag and their 16-month-old son.



RESHMA CHATTARAM CHAMBERLIN

35, CO-FOUNDER, CHIEF BRAND AND
DIGITAL OFFICER, SUMMERSALT
📍 ST. LOUIS

"My grandmother was Shobhana Samarth, the actor who helped change the perception of women in the film industry in the 1930s and was very entrepreneurial," says Reshma Chattaram Chamberlin. She credits being raised by a single mother and surrounded by female influences for giving her a strong foundation. After a decade in brand building and strategy for other direct-to-consumer brands such as Rockets of Awesome, Chamberlin took the leap and co-founded Summersalt with Lori Coulter. Summersalt aims to "reinvent the narrative and shopping experience around swimwear and apparel by creating affordable products that empower women to feel joyful and sexy on their own terms," says Chamberlin. "We believe in one-on-one communication. We want a woman's feedback and this informs our product roll-out. When we design, we're thinking of transitional pieces, such as the perfect shirt dress cover-up that can also pair with jeans to dinner. This helps us make the best choices as well, for sustainability." The year has had a mix of highs and lows for Chamberlin: a COVID-19 diagnosis and recovery for her husband, an award from *Fast Company*, and keeping up with the positive press and demand (Jennifer Garner and Kate Hudson were papped in Summersalt's suits). "If anyone is thinking of starting something new and they have the luxury to do it, I'd say go for it. There's no reward without risk. You're going to fail over and over before you succeed, and that is so important to get where you need to go." ■

CARLEY RUDD



DESIGNER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Trendsetter, stylist and founder of architectural firm Skaid Designs, Kish Dusharla is multi-faceted with a passion for architecture and interior design, antiques and art, fashion and lifestyle. With a sophisticated aesthetic and flair for design, Dusharla's creative pursuits have led him to take the path less travelled. *Vogue* caught up with the creative genius to know about his work, his perception of fashion and more

You are the founder of an architectural firm, a stylist, and have several other interests. How have your multiple passions helped you shape your career?

My extreme explorative curiosity in everything that interests me has redefined me many a times. I am aggressively passionate about my interests and I am truly inspired by everything. Travel, fashion, history, architecture, nature, people and so on goes the list. I have moulded my way of thought and living which comes across in my work. Our designs are about people and the forgotten way of living.

How would you best describe your aesthetic sense?

I most definitely belong to the old school of thought juxtaposed with modernism. I often say there is certain bravery and romance that I like to play on. My aesthetic is about raw and refined, playful and sophisticated, witty and elegant.

Is it tough to constantly find creativity to be innovative and original?

There is inspiration everywhere around if we wish to look for and I believe most of the inspirations are found in the foundations of architecture and design. Every project and every client is unique, which in itself helps us create something individual and exquisite. The absolute rush of what we do keeps us inspired.

“I LOVE TO SURROUND MYSELF WITH THINGS I LOVE AND NOT BY THE CONVENTIONAL PERCEPTION OF HOW ONE SHOULD BE”

Social media has made it impossible for plagiarism to go unnoticed. As a designer, how do you tackle this?

We have always lived in our own world and we are chasing our next fix. There are very few things that we repeat in our designs, creating every element unique to the project and the client. So we focus on our work rather than worry about somebody recreating our work.

Do you follow fashion trends or are you someone who prefers to stick to the classics?

It's always the mood and the environment that sets the pace for our trends, with vintage and classics being invariably in the mix.

Our footprints left behind are inspired by Christopher Hyland, Jean-Michel Frank, Peggy Guggenheim and Yves Saint Laurent.

You are a trendsetter and have quite an unconventional personality. What pushes you to break stereotypes, experiment and take the path less travelled?

I love to surround myself with things I love and not by the conventional perception of how one should be. Most are slaves to peer pressure and societal acceptance, and let go who they are. I indulge in my passions without inhibitions.

To check out Kish's work head to Skaid.com or follow @skaiddesigns on Instagram

MASTER THE ART OF FASHION

If you've got a passion for fashion, sign up for the exclusive Myntra Insider Masterclasses. Brought to you in association with *Vogue*, this one-of-a-kind collaboration brings together nine of the country's most celebrated stylists to dish out advice on the latest in fashion to help you up your style quotient

When it comes to offering up style solutions bar none, no one does it better than Myntra, India's leading fashion and lifestyle destination. And now, the nifty platform joins hands with *Vogue* to bring its audience a fabulously fashionable experience par excellence—Myntra Insider Masterclasses.

A unique proposition ahead of the festive season, it will see two powerhouses, Myntra and *Vogue*, come together to transform the landscape of fashion in the country. Expect exclusive masterclasses with nine of India's most illustrious stylists, who, through a series of 18 gripping videos, will redefine the way you approach fashion and populate your wardrobe by curating and deconstructing some stellar looks, even offering pro style tips on the latest trends in the industry. To keep things interesting, the video clips will also include a bunch of fun segments. Think a mystery box challenge wherein the stylists will have to put together a look using the latest fashion items on Myntra and a budget styling challenge with a twist that will see the stylists trying to curate a cool look with Myntra's fashion items, albeit on a tight budget! That's not all. Also in store is the *Vogue* Fashion Dictionary segment—a comprehensive guide that will get the stylists to decode fashion's biggest buzzwords, just for you—as well as Double Trouble, which will take you through how to style one garment in two ways!

A truly engaging, interactive and immersive experience, you, too, can get in on the action—the Myntra Insider Masterclasses will let you partake in live sessions with your favourite stylists through a seamless Q&A module. So, go ahead and update your fashion knowledge in style. The best part? Products featured in each of the 18 episodes will populate the 'Products' section of the Myntra app, allowing you the golden opportunity to add to cart or wishlist, as you so please!

Here's a lowdown on the nine celebrated stylists participating in this year's edition of Myntra Insider Masterclasses.




INSIDER
MASTERCLASS

ABHEET GIDWANI/ VOGUE INDIA

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AASTHA SHARMA

One of India's premier stylists, Aastha Sharma is the founder of Wardrobest and co-founder of The Wedding Style Project. Her clientele includes Bollywood's cream of the crop—from Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Disha Patani and Kajol to Kiara Advani, Sonakshi Sinha and Preity Zinta. Some of her noteworthy projects include the Cannes Film Festival, Amazon Prime's *Four More Shots*, The Kingfisher Calendar and Jacqueline Fernandez's Hollywood debut *According to Matthew*. Sharma has also been an integral part of brand campaigns for L'Oréal, Lodha, Myntra and Ponds and has worked closely with other brands like Panasonic, Casio, Gillette and Puma, too.



AMANDEEP KAUR

A leading celebrity fashion stylist and image consultant, Amandeep Kaur has styled some of the biggest names in Bollywood—from Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Alia Bhatt and Kangana Ranaut to Sonam Kapoor, Sonakshi Sinha and Parineeti Chopra—for innumerable magazine shoots. The National Institute of Fashion Technology, Delhi alumna started her career with *Vogue* before working for other lifestyle magazines. Based in Mumbai, Kaur's clientele has expanded to include Vicky Kaushal, Taapsee Pannu and Yami Gautam. Having styled celebrities for editorial shoots and events for over a decade, she is now venturing into costume designing for films.



AMI PATEL

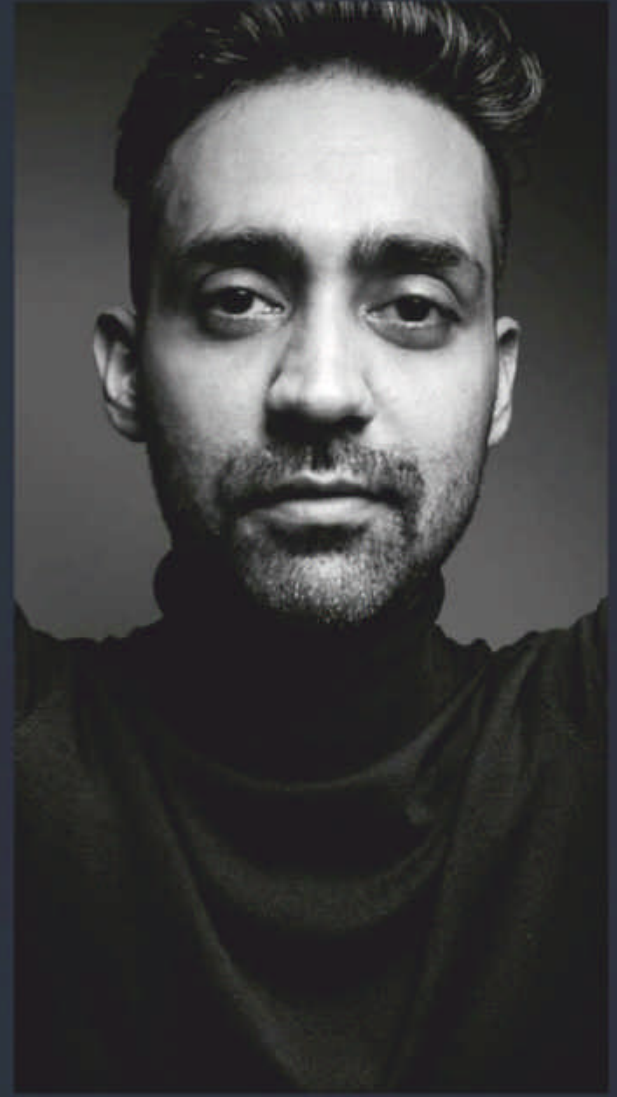
A celebrated celebrity stylist who has held key positions at several of the country's top lifestyle publications, Ami Patel's name is, today, synonymous with Bollywood's crème de la crème. Patel believes in helping individuals bring out their best by offering them style solutions that reflect their personal style and individuality. For her, styling is an expression—a way to say who you are without having to speak. Today, her brand StylebyAmi caters to the who's who of Bollywood, including Alia Bhatt, Madhuri Dixit Nene, Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Katrina Kaif, whom she has styled for red carpet events, photoshoots and social gatherings.





◀ LAKSHMI LEHR

A prominent name in the Indian fashion styling industry, Lakshmi Lehr is also a popular Bollywood costume designer who is represented by StyleCell. In the last seven years, she has worked on several Bollywood blockbusters, including *Bang Bang* and *Dear Zindagi*, and has also orchestrated a number of cover and editorial shoots for several magazines. Her list of clients is a star-studded one, replete with Bollywood A-listers like Kareena Kapoor Khan, Hrithik Roshan, Kiara Advani, Alia Bhatt, Sara Ali Khan and many more. Lehr has also worked closely with international brands like Maybelline, Puma, Myntra and TBZ for campaigns.



▲ MOHIT RAI

Owner and style director at MRStyles and Grain Fashion Consultancy, Mohit Rai is one of India's most well-established stylists and has served as the official stylist at both Lakmé Fashion Week and Lotus Fashion Week. Over the course of his career, he has worked as a celebrity stylist and creative consultant, and his clients include Kareena Kapoor Khan, Janhvi Kapoor, Disha Patani, Kiara Advani, Vaani Kapoor and Sonakshi Sinha. What's more, Rai has also worked closely with some of the biggest brands in the fashion industry, including Calvin Klein, Tarun Tahiliani, Amit Aggarwal, Outhouse, Shivan & Narresh and FILA.

▶ NITASHA GAURAV

With a strong background in fashion, celebrity stylist Nitasha Gaurav holds a master's degree in textiles and clothing as well a degree in fashion journalism from the London College of Fashion and has also worked briefly at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. Since 2011, she has been styling Bollywood's leading ladies and gents for red carpet appearances, shoots, and campaigns. Her patrons include Alia Bhatt, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Madhuri Dixit Nene, Katrina Kaif, Sonakshi Sinha, Vidya Balan, Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar, Ayushmann Khurana, Arjun Kapoor, Siddharth Malhotra, Varun Dhawan and Ranveer Singh, among others.





◀ SANJAY KUMAR

Popularly referred to as 'Shnoy' by those in the fashion industry, Mumbai-based stylist Sanjay Kumar's journey to becoming a stylist has been an inspiring one. Hailing from a small village in Madhya Pradesh, Kumar has come a long way to realise his dreams. For the last six years, he has been working as head stylist at fellow stylist Ami Patel's brand, StylebyAmi. During this time, he has styled Bollywood's leading ladies, including Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Kangana Ranaut, Alia Bhatt, Athiya Shetty and Ananya Panday, among others, for a slew of glittering red carpet events as well as for brand commercials.

▶ SHALEENA NATHANI

Stylist to the stars, Shaleena Nathani's illustrious career as a fashion stylist and creative director has spanned a decade. She is best known for curating some of the most iconic looks for Bollywood's leading ladies, in particular, Deepika Padukone. Given her prolific experience, Nathani's network is an established one that extends to include both homegrown and international brands, production houses, agencies, and Bollywood. While she is renowned for her impeccable styling of film stars, Nathani has also played stylist to some of India's most prestigious industrialists; and today, she is one of the most sought-after names in the Indian fashion industry.



▶ TANYA GHAVRI

An alumna of Parsons School of Design, New York, Tanya Ghavri is one of the country's most influential fashion forecasters, having worked extensively with Sonam Kapoor, Katrina Kaif, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Disha Patani, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and many more. She has also styled celebrities for pre and post Oscar parties and the Cannes Film Festival and has even endorsed brands like Calvin Klein, H&M, Reebok, JW Marriott and Gehna Jewels. In 2015, she launched The Dhoom Dhaam Trunk Show, which has successfully put together nine shows across India, reaching out to over 500 designers and 75,000 visitors.



INSIDER
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WATCHES



1. 'Tradition Dame 7038' watch, **Breguet** 2. 'RM 52-05 Manual Winding Tourbillon Pharrell Williams' watch, **Richard Mille** 3. 'DolceVita' watch, **Longines** 4. 'Pasha de Cartier' watch, **Cartier** 5. 'Happy Hearts' watch, **Chopard** 6. 'Lady Heart Flower Powermatic 80' watch, **Tissot** 7. 'Royal Oak Offshore Selfwinding Chronograph' watch, **Audemars Piguet** 8. 'Oyster Perpetual 36' watch, **Rolex** 9. 'De Ville Tresor' watch, **Omega**

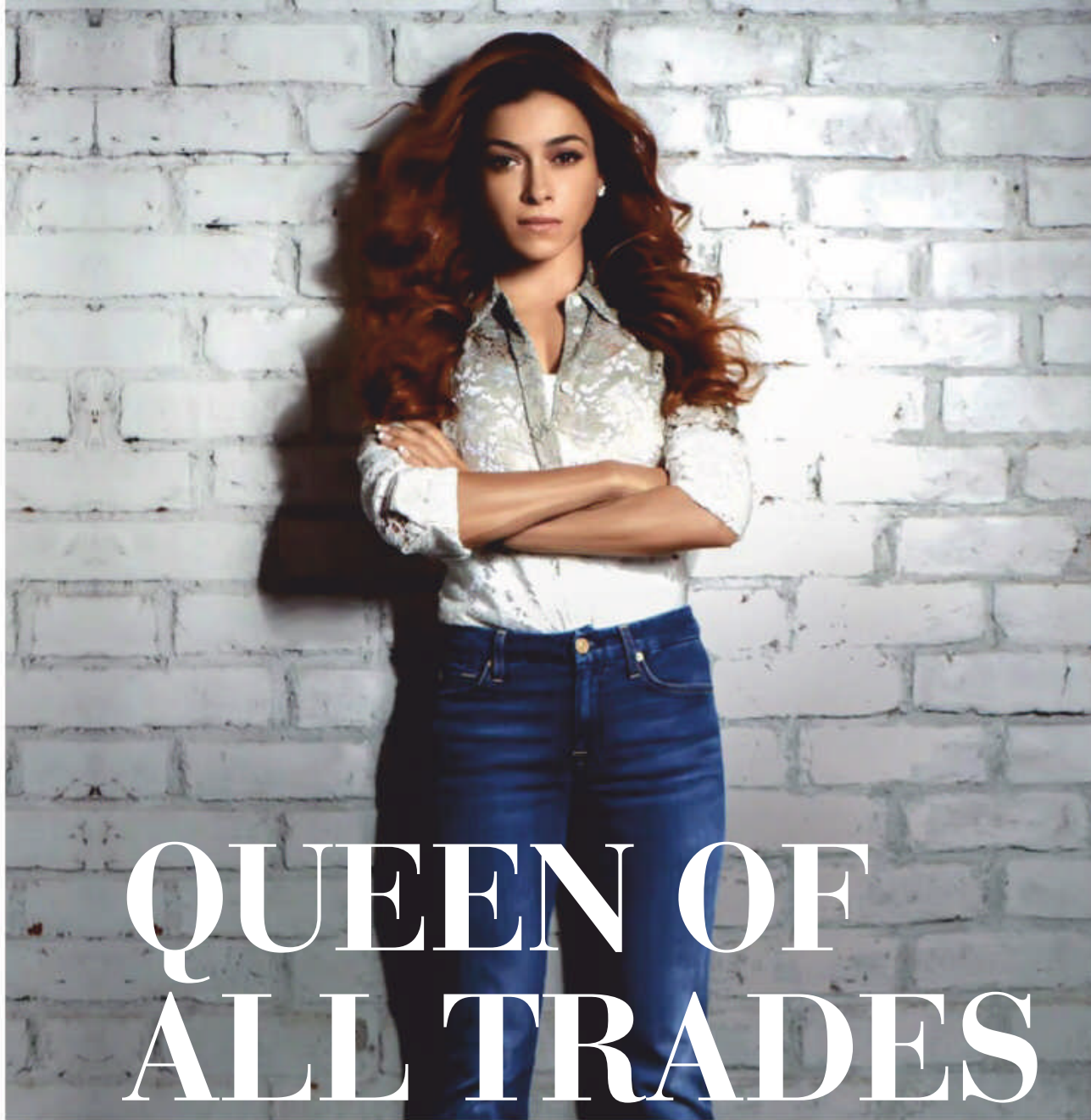
VIKRAM KUSHWAH

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QUEEN OF ALL TRADES

The first female Indian film distributor, a philanthropist, a fashionista and a fitness enthusiast, Sangeeta Ahir is an inspiration to many. In a freewheeling chat with *Vogue*, Ahir discusses her many ventures and how she juggles multiple roles with ease

Sangeeta Ahir wears many hats, and does so in style. She's an established Bollywood producer, a fitness expert and nutrition enthusiast, a fashionista who regularly does the rounds of Mumbai's social circuit, and, in addition to all of that, a social entrepreneur.

Ahir made inroads into the world of filmmaking in the '90s and rose swiftly to become one of the first female film distributors in the industry. Sitting at the helm of her company, Sangeeta Ahir Moviez, she has been involved with countless Bollywood hits, including *Prahaar*, *Golmaal Again*, *Baadshaho*, and *Total Dhamaal*, in addition to distributing regional and international blockbusters such as *Baahubali* and *Batman vs Superman*. Aside from her expertise in film distribution, Ahir is renowned for her impeccable fashion sense and is a regular at a number of events organised by luxury fashion houses of the likes of Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Christian Dior. In fact, in 2018, she was the only invitee from India's film industry at the launch of the Gucci Garden event in Florence, Italy.

Professional pursuits aside, Ahir is also a philanthropist; and, alongside her husband, Sachin Ahir, has founded numerous charities. As co-founder of the Shri Sankalp Pratishthan and the Maitree Charitable Trust, she has made great strides in improving the social wellbeing of the less fortunate. Ahir is also a firm supporter of women's empowerment initiatives and has launched several public awareness campaigns for women. She is also the Indian ambassador of HERA – The Light of Women, a global project aimed at improving the condition of women across the world. That isn't all. An avid fitness enthusiast, she is also founder of NEED Supps by Energia Lifestyles LLP—a fitness supplement brand—and recipient of the Global Fitness Icon Award at Sheru Classic Latin America.

As someone who's established several successful ventures and made a name for herself in industries traditionally dominated by men, Ahir is an inspiring example for women everywhere.

In conversation with Sangeeta Ahir...

A multitasker through and through, how do you juggle your many roles?

The secret to success is finding something you're passionate about, and devoting yourself to it completely. Every project that I take on speaks to me on a personal level, and that drives me to make the time and succeed. Over the years, I've learned to manage my time better. That allows me to slot each new project into my daily routine.

Why are women's issues so close to your heart?

As a businesswoman and a mother to two girls, the advancement of women's rights is an issue that's very close to my heart. Women in our country have faced barriers to their advancement for centuries, be it societal, cultural, or educational. Through our foundations, we work towards dismantling them. Women need to lead the change they want to see.

Can you tell us about your brand NEED by Energia Lifestyles?

I've always believed in the importance of fitness, and follow an intensive cardio and weights training routine six days a week. NEED is a brand of fitness supplements that Energia Lifestyles launched in partnership with bodybuilding legend Sergi Constance. Healthy living has never been more important, and it transcends any geographical or political boundaries. The COVID pandemic perfectly illustrates that. And NEED offers the best quality materials to help everyone achieve their fitness goals.

What does fashion mean to you?

Fashion is a vehicle through which women can express their identity, personality, and uniqueness. I think fashion is best showcased through grace and poise, and I try to incorporate that philosophy into all my outfits. My ideal ensemble would be a structured outfit in a neutral colour palette, paired with statement accessories like a pair of chunky earrings or a heavy necklace.

How do you strike a balance between your professional and personal life?

My mantra is to give my all to whatever I do. There are some women who choose to prioritise their career, and others who dedicate themselves to their families. Both choices are equally valid. But I never wanted to have to make that choice, and so I make the time for both sides of my life.





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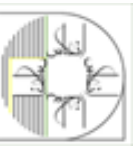
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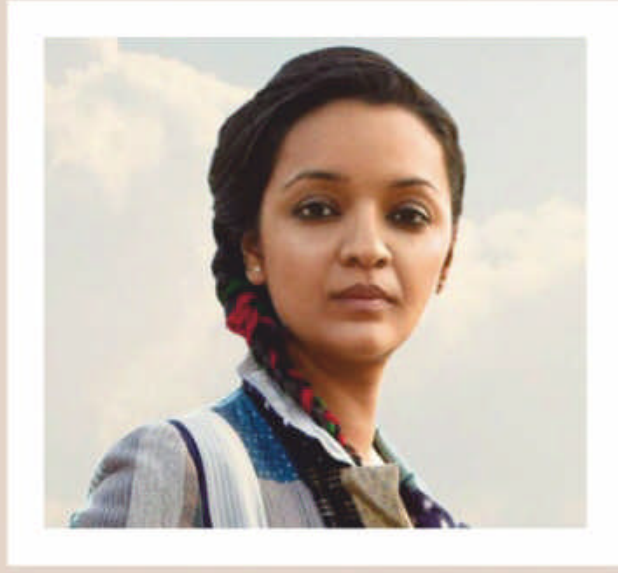
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Handmade is the opposite of repetition, of sameness, of mass production. Every piece of clothing has a story of its own. How can it not, when you think of how many hands have touched that very piece. It makes every piece of clothing more than just something you wear. It becomes a totem for taking forward important narratives.

In my experience as a designer and creator, I've seen that no two pieces are ever the same. And that's where their beauty lies. Each creator, each artist, each craftsperson brings their perspective, their life experience and a part of their soul to the pieces they create.

Each piece is unique. Each piece is individual. Each piece is handmade with love.

As a student at NID (National Institute of Design), I chose to focus my studies on the trousseaus made by the women of Kutch for their daughters. These trousseaus, gifted on the occasion of their daughters' weddings, were made over a period of years starting at their birth. The women engaged weavers and dyers but embroidered every piece themselves. The region had a dress code, and while every trousseau had a similarity in the fabrics and the cuts used, the embroidery was different in every case. Every woman, every mother brought forth her life, her struggles, her triumphs and her unique fingerprint to her piece. It gave me goosebumps then and it still gives me goosebumps now.

Today, even as the world is collectively united in this pandemic, no two experiences are the same. When we look back at this time, we'll view it from our own lens. I do think what will be common is the change in our outlook. All this time, we've been buying, wearing and doing not for ourselves but for others. This moment of pause, I believe, has forced us to all look inward and realise that making ourselves happy, indulging ourselves and taking care of ourselves is paramount.

Going forward, we will celebrate being true to ourselves, to our values and to our individuality. And that's why pieces embedded in traditions, pieces created with love and pieces that are unique will be prized. Standing out will trump fitting in every time.

Made in India today stands for more than just a label. It delves into the diversity of this vast country, of its crafts and cultures, its traditions and rituals. After all, what it means to be Indian is a collective and unique experience at the same time.

Aneeth Arora launched her label Péro in 2008 and is considered one of the country's most accomplished designers for her work in craft and textile. In 2012, she was the winner of the first-ever Vogue India Fashion Fund

"GOING FORWARD, WE WILL CELEBRATE BEING TRUE TO OURSELVES, TO OUR VALUES AND TO OUR INDIVIDUALITY. AND THAT'S WHY PIECES EMBEDDED IN TRADITION, PIECES CREATED WITH LOVE AND PIECES THAT ARE UNIQUE WILL BE PRIZED"

MY INDIA IS HANDMADE WITH LOVE

A CELEBRATION OF THE
CULTURE OF CRAFT
THAT IS PASSED DOWN
FROM GENERATION TO
GENERATION.
BY ANEETH ARORA



Photographed by **PRIYANKA SHAH**

Art direction **SNIGDHA KULKARNI**

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THE STAGE IS SET

Young, bold, ambitious and unstoppable. Meet Mohak Narang, Ashnoor Kaur, Arishfa Khan and Aadil Khan—the social media sensations making a splash on India’s biggest homegrown Indian app for short videos, Moj. Built by ShareChat, and founded by IIT Kanpur alumni Ankush Sachdeva, Farid Ahsan and Bhanu Singh, Moj is the ultimate destination for short-form videos, offering its 80 million monthly users fun content creation tools, an enormous music library, cool camera filters and much more. *Vogue* catches up with four of the app’s most popular content creators to understand how Moj pushes them to be their creative best and produce entertaining content



MOHAK NARANG

 @MOHAKNARANG
VIDEO VIEWS: 196.6M

The 19-year-old youngster from Hisar, Mohak Narang, is known to India’s digital audience for his romantic, comedy and lightweight videos. He’s one of the fastest growing digital talents on YouTube with his videos peaking at as high as #7 on YouTube Trending charts.

Who, according to you, is the coolest content creator on Moj?

Baba Jackson has always managed to amuse me with his talent. It is really cool to see how he matches Michael Jackson’s trademark choreography with Bollywood beats.

What are the challenges of working with another person as opposed to making solo videos?

On Moj, I create different types of content – couples’ videos, solo videos, with friends, etc. It’s a challenge when one has to generate content based on what people demand versus what you personally want to create. We can have creative differences, but as long as it’s constructive, it’s all good. Luckily, we all get along well and share mutual trust so ultimately it falls into place.

“IT’S A CHALLENGE TO GENERATE CONTENT BASED ON WHAT PEOPLE DEMAND VERSUS WHAT YOU WANT TO CREATE”



ARISHFA KHAN

 @ARISHFAKHAN138
VIDEO VIEWS: 386M

17-year-old Arishfa Khan, who worked as a child actor in TV shows like *Veera*, *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*, *Jennie Aur Jaju* and *Baal Veer* is now one of the most popular content creators on Moj. Her lip-syncing videos on *shayaris*, dub smashes, and fashion and makeup related videos are extremely popular with audiences. Khan also appeared in the Bollywood film *Saheb, Biwi Aur Gangster 3*.

Your profile on Moj has a lot of fashion and makeup related content. What does fashion mean to you?

Fashion, for me, is not technical. I don't put a lot of thought into it because choosing outfits is like falling in love at first sight. When it comes to clothes, I think one should wear outfits that reflect their personality because only then will they be able to carry it off well.

How has Moj helped you connect with your followers?

After TikTok was banned, my biggest worry was maintaining my relationship with my millions of followers. And then Moj happened! In a short span, they launched a viable platform to ensure we could stay connected with our followers. Their constant efforts to improve the platform have ensured that we are connected with our followers.

“AFTER TIKTOK WAS BANNED, MY BIGGEST WORRY WAS MAINTAINING MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY MILLIONS OF FOLLOWERS. AND THEN MOJ HAPPENED!”





AADIL KHAN

 @AADILKHANN
VIDEO VIEWS: 85.2M

27-year-old Aadil Khan from Delhi, worked as a background dancer in a musical before he carved his way into being a popular content creator. After he moved to Mumbai, his videos on dance and fitness gained popularity on social media. Khan is an aspiring actor and has featured in music videos with Tseries, Zee Music, Sachin-Jigar and Hatke Records. As a choreographer, he has worked on various ad films.

What, in your opinion, sets Moj apart from other apps?

Moj helps us creators in understanding the current market. From the coolest music to user-friendly features, the app is always on top of the latest trends. Moj's interface has all the features necessary for shooting and editing directly on the app, which makes for a seamless experience.

Do you keep yourself up-to-date with what other content creators are doing on Moj?

Moj's content creators are all talented and dedicated to the art of creating something unique for their audiences. It's fun when your entire community is motivated because it pushes you to create more. Moj also encourages collaborations between creators, and this fosters a healthy community.

“MOJ'S CONTENT CREATORS ARE ALL TALENTED AND DEDICATED TO THE ART OF CREATING SOMETHING UNIQUE FOR THEIR AUDIENCES”



ASHNOOR KAUR

@KAURASHNOOR
VIDEO VIEWS: 55M

Mumbai-based 16-year-old Ashnoor Kaur is an actress, anchor and social media influencer. Kaur began her acting journey with television and has been part of shows *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai* and *Patiala Babes*. She was also part of Bollywood movies *Manmarziyan* and *Sanju*. Kaur is popular for creating comedy, dance and fashion related videos.

How would you describe your personal journey as an Moj influencer?

Honestly, I wasn't very active on 15-second (short-video) platforms before Moj. But now, since we have this app and all my fans insist that I be regular with my content, I felt like Moj is the best option. My personal journey on Moj has been a lot of fun. The amount of love that I am receiving is so overwhelming. I can see that people are having fun watching the content I create, and that makes me feel like it is all worth it.

What are your most favourite features on Moj?

There are a lot of features to play around with on Moj, and they all help generate interesting content. But my personal favourite is the challenges feature on Moj! Every day there is a new and different challenge on the app, so it's fun to go about trying to create new content on different themes each day. It is a matter of pride to be associated with Moj because they're the biggest homegrown Indian app for short videos.

“THERE ARE A LOT OF FEATURES TO PLAY AROUND WITH ON MOJ, AND THEY ALL HELP GENERATE INTERESTING CONTENT”

The Moj app is available on
iOS/Android app stores



Heroes of home-grown

By championing the new voices of Indian design, these women are front runners in the movement to shop local, support what's handmade and preserve a generation of skills for the future. By **Butool Jamal**

Rarely have our fashion choices been under so much scrutiny as they have during the ongoing pandemic, which is ironic given most of us have spent the last few months primarily in sweatpants. With the fashion industry upended, the decision of what and where to shop holds more weight than ever, which is why it seemed like the perfect time to turn the spotlight on the women who are championing a new generation of Indian designers.

Apart from being a loyal clientele, these women also support their favourite labels through the work they do as curators, business advisors, advocates and more. Home-grown fashion has become their way of standing out from the crowd, yet fitting in (wherever they might be in the world), supporting the craft community and taking part in the movement to shop more mindfully.

There are plenty of choices for a discerning shopper. There are those like Rashmi Varma, Vaishali S, Payal Khandwala and Medium, who are giving Indian wear a new design vocabulary; labels such as Verandah by Anjali Patel Mehta, SWGT by Shweta Gupta and Saaksha & Kinni, which use traditional craftsmanship to make wearable contemporary silhouettes; and Bodice, Lovebirds, Anomaly, and Ikai by Ragini Ahuja, which create streamlined essentials for the modern woman.

So the next time you weigh in on what to buy, remember that there's rarely been a more diverse array of options should you choose to shop local.

Radhika Kapoor wears **Simar Dugal** and **Asmita Marwa**, shot at her home in Delhi



ARCHANA WALAVALKAR

FASHION ENTREPRENEUR AND CO-FOUNDER, STYLECRACKER



Label love: Torani, Dhruv Kapoor, Saaksha & Kinni, Huemn, Kumari
Signature style: Beach-ready fashion, tailored for city life. Cue feminine frills, off-shoulder silhouettes, wrap tops

If anyone understands the fraught journey that is finding your style, it's 35-year-old Archana Walavalkar. A former magazine and film stylist, Walavalkar democratised her talents when she co-founded a personal styling service, StyleCracker, in 2013. Along with helping customers solve their wardrobe dilemmas, the company also organises the StyleCracker Borough, an annual fashion festival that's a hub for new design talent. "I wanted to build something that would be a resource for those looking to find affordable, home-grown fashion," says Walavalkar. "In a way, supporting young labels is our responsibility." Her list of favourite brands runs the gamut from those making stylish, contemporary pieces—"Torani, Kumari for their saris"—to basics from Bhaane and India-modern labels like Saaksha & Kinni and Huemn. An outfit she keeps going back to is an unstitched draped dress from Button Masala by Anuj Sharma, an Ahmedabad-based label. "It is one of the sexiest pieces I own. Plus, it uses an entire length of fabric, so nothing is wasted in its construction," she says.



Archana wears Sakshi & Kinni, shot at her home in Mumbai

RADHIKA KAPOOR

JEWELLERY DESIGNER



Label love: Simar Dugal, Injiri, Ekà, Payal Khandwala, Dhruv Kapoor, Vaishali S
Signature style: Eclectic, bohemian pieces with outfit-elevating staples

A regular on *Vogue India's* best-dressed list for her distinct style that seamlessly strings together Balmain and boho, jewellery designer Radhika Kapoor is an avid advocate for home-grown fashion. "I love mixing my Indian brands with something very high-end or high-street," she says. That might mean a crochet jacket from Verandah by Anjali Patel Mehta paired with pleated Zara trousers or a sheer Ikai by Ragini Ahuja kurta worn over skinny jeans with an embroidered bag from Jaipur-based Vipul Shah. "The lockdown, in particular, has suddenly made me feel very guilty about the money I've wasted on labels rather than craft. I think, after this, my style is going to be even more proudly Indian," she reflects. But Kapoor's penchant for mixing styles is not new. It began more than 25 years ago when she started rediscovering the textiles in her trousseau and wearing her grandmother's treasured odhanis or her mother-in-law's phulwari jacket with jeans. While her first big Indian designer buys were more ornate pieces by JJ Valaya and the late Simar Dugal (a dear friend and inspiration who introduced her to the beauty of textiles), from the newer generation she's partial to names like Payal Khandwala, Vaishali S, Ekà and Injiri. "They make beautifully crafted wearable clothes and the focus is less on embellishment, which can be a little restrictive." >



ANKUSH MARIA, HASHIM BADANI



PATRICIA DHAR

FOUNDER, ARMAYLA



Label love: Anavila, Akaaro, Bodice, D'Ascoli, Ekà, Integument, Sartorial by Swati, Divyam Mehta, Suket Dhir, Urvashi Kaur

Signature style: Easy-to-wear separates and roomy dresses in handloom textiles

London-based Patricia Dhar isn't just wearing a new generation of Indian labels; she's also taking them around the world. A former finance professional, the 55-year-old has hosted Indian designer pop-ups in New York, Greenwich, the Hamptons and London, introducing new audiences to Indian designers. The pop-ups were a natural extension of Dhar's blog Armayla, which she started two years ago to document her adventures with home-grown fashion. She says, "I'm not a model, and I think that makes it easier for people to relate to." Dhar, whose parents are South Korean but who grew up in the US and lived in Delhi for nine years, discovered Indian fashion through the traditional saris worn by her mother-in-law. The first sari she bought for herself was an Anavila linen version along with pieces from labels like Ekà and Akaaro. "The intricate techniques, stunning craftsmanship and sustainable materials that come out of India are mind-blowing. If women love the story and understand it, they appreciate it even more," she says.



Patricia Dhar wears **D'Ascoli**, shot in Connecticut



Amrita Thakur wearing **Khanijo**, shot in Paris

AMRITA THAKUR

DESIGNER AND CURATOR



Label love: 431-88, Rara Avis by Sonal Verma, Lovebirds, Rimzim Dadu, Saaksha & Kinni, Khanijo

Signature style: Streamlined staples uplifted with statement accessories

"When I chance upon a piece that can take me from a formal event to a fabulous cocktail party, to a sangeet night, I call it a 'golden buy,'" says Delhi-based Amrita Thakur in a video to her over 94,000-plus Instagram followers. With her eponymous Indianwear label, the designer started sharing her daily looks and making practical styling videos in 2018. "I wanted to simplify the meaning of style," she says. That often means pairing high-street or luxury fashion with her favourite Indian designers. So a 431-88 skirt with a Zara crop top, a Jodi summer dress with Adidas sneakers, or a Rara Avis by Sonal Verma maxi with an Anya Hindmarch clutch. "Versatility is paramount, and I'm always questioning that while buying anything," she adds. Thakur understands that the need of the hour (for Indian fashion labels) is to make pieces that people can re-wear, reimagine, and reuse. Her list of favourite designers includes Rimzim Dadu and Saaksha & Kinni, as well as a host of young accessory labels such as Swapna Mehta, Kichu, Ritika Sachdeva, Chicory Chai and Studio Metallurgy.

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SRILA CHATTERJEE

INTERIOR STYLIST, DESIGNER,
CURATOR AND CO-FOUNDER, BARO

Label love: 145 East, Cochin Blue, Vilaasinie, Parama, B Label by Boheco, Bhomra, Pradeep Pillai, Rwitvastra, Pranay Baidya

Signature style: Layers of colour and print in anti-fit silhouettes

For 56-year-old Srila Chatterjee, good design is about storytelling. Even when selecting the brands for her Mumbai-based furniture and design store Baro, she eschews well-known names, preferring instead to "focus on small-batch designers who handcraft their things, are original and do not have a mass platform. We only want people and labels whose products tell stories and who enrich communities." This includes Kolkata-based 145 East, which is giving the traditional gamcha a modern makeover; Pranay Baidya, who is revitalising old sari weaves, and streamlined separates by hemp producers B Label, among others. Chatterjee's own style naturally reflects this passion for originality and craft. She favours comfortable tunics, loose, tailored separates and saris, often in vibrant patterns and colours accented with layers of necklaces or stacks of bright cuffs. Her choices, she says, are shaped by "everything I experience and everywhere I go. It evolves all the time, based on experience, travel and my size."



Srila Chatterjee wears 145 East, shot at her home in Mumbai

MALIKA VERMA

BRAND STRATEGIST



Label love: Rashmi Varma, Bodice, Raw Mango, Itoh, 11.11/eleven eleven

Signature style: Retro tailoring meets modern Indian draping

The sari has long been an object of interest for Montreal-born, Bengaluru-based Malika Verma. Ever since she read the book *Saris: Tradition And Beyond* by Rta Kapur Chishti, Verma has been obsessed with the traditional drape—filling her wardrobe with it, launching The Sari Series online in 2017, working with brands like Raw Mango that champion it and, as of last year, even making her own deconstructed version with designer Rashmi Varma for their label, Kumari. The founder of brand consultancy and digital media platform Border & Fall, Verma's work revolves around supporting and promoting the new generation of Indian labels. "Most young designers are required to contend with the overwhelming combination of operational, commercial, promotional and sales activities alongside having raw talent," she says. "I believe that talent is enough to ask of someone to fully explore." Verma's own style is a laid-back, modern mix of East and West—saris layered with shirts, high-waist trousers worn with jackets or blouses woven with local textiles or embroidery. She's got her eye on three new labels: "Medium, Harago (menswear by Harsh Agarwal) and Kritika Manchanda are ones to watch." ■

MAMTA RANA; MEREDITH EVES FLYNN; MAHESH MATHAI



Malika Verma wearing 11.11/eleven eleven, shot in Vermont



From left: The 'Iris' motif came to Singh after her first encounter with a wild flower on a walk in Manali; Singh at work in her studio



Living legacy

Patron of the crafts **Brigitte Singh** celebrates 40 years of creating some of the finest hand-block prints in the world. As inspired by tradition as she is by memory, India's leading textile designer shares her renewed vision of finding perfection in simplicity. By **Priyanka Khanna**

“**W**hen young designers are interested in what the older generation is doing, it's refreshing. You don't feel like an old crony,” says Brigitte Singh over the phone from her home in Jaipur. We are chatting about the now out-of-print *Brigitte Singh: The Printress Of The Mughal Garden* edited by Bishwadeep Moitra (Mapin Publishing), an almanac documenting her pioneering work with hand-block prints, which came out in 2018. Singh tells me how the book serves as a gratifying recognition of her life's work from experts and peers such as Laila Tyabji. They are unanimous in singling out her contribution to Indian textiles. That is what won her admiration by the Rajasthan and French governments with the Prashasti Patra award (2011) and

the Ordre National du Mérite (2015), and led to her 'Atamsukh' poppy print coat being featured at the V&A (2015) and showcased in her native Angers.

When we speak, Singh is in the first week of reopening her eponymous atelier in Sanganer, the epicentre of hand-block printing in Jaipur, after nearly three months in lockdown. “With a *mini-mini* team,” she stresses. “I'm taking a risk doing this, financially and health-wise,” says the 65-year-old. “Our orders stand cancelled and our hospitality projects are on hold. Unfortunately, everyone is in the same boat,” she rues. The last few months, spent at home with her 16-year-old daughter, and one of her three brothers has been the longest pause in her four-decade-old career. Like most of us, this time saw her family morph into “cooks, gardeners and cleaners”, but pre-pandemic, like us again, Singh had many plans. First was to commemorate her cross-continental domicile this October—the French artist moved to India 40 years ago as a student of miniatures. “It was going to be a big celebration for my French family to meet my Indian family. But now I think I'll treat myself and my daughter to a special trip in India,” she says.

MEMORY LANE

Rewind to 1980, and Singh was a 25-year-old art student, who made her way to India from France on a scholarship. Once in Rajasthan, she fell in love with block printing, married a Rajput and soon >

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Clockwise, from top left: Singh with printer Bhagat in Sanganer (1981) shot by her photographer-painter friend, the late Jules Kilcher; quilting, which Singh refers to as piqué, is used on cushions, tables and bed throws; the 'Mehrab' motif as seen on tableware; the 'Posht-rose' poppy is another hallmark of her designs; floral home furnishings form a large part of her repertoire; the final sketches on tracing paper to be given to the block maker

"I am a doer. I fell for the technique behind the making of a beautiful print"

made India her home. After marriage, she was yet to find her creative outlet, when on a trip to visit her family in Paris, she decided to gift them hand-printed scarves. This box unknowingly set the ball rolling on what would become one of India's most iconic textile labels.

"I am a doer. I fell for the technique behind the making of a beautiful print," she says about her humble beginnings. She notes that she was naive at first, not having come from a business family. "I am a Jane of all trades. I supervise everything and that's what has been recognised—uncompromising attention to detail and a classic product that you can hand down generation after generation, which only becomes better with time."

Initially, Singh focused her yardage for interiors. "I looked at printed cloth with the eye of someone who wanted to create a beautiful aesthetic. My clients took it for whatever their need was—furnishings or garments," she adds. Later, by popular demand, she created a collection of garments.

With no experience in designing clothes, her designer friends aided her with pattern-making. She recalls, "Most traditional garments are shaped keeping in mind the climate, culture and functionality, and are always made to last. That dimension touches me deeply. All the garments I do are akin to costume, so I started with traditional Afghani and Turkish coats." At present, garments make up 25 per cent of her collections, along with accessories

and soft furnishings. While she accepts appointments at her studio, Singh currently stocks on her website (BrigitteSingh.com) as well as at Kashmirloom.com in India, Aletaonline.com in the UK and multiple stockists in Japan and Kuwait. "In 1986, all my stock went to the famed Le Jardin Moghol in Paris. Now most of what I make remains in India, where my clientele knows their textiles. I wish that it remains so and that the extraordinary skills and expertise do not vanish for machine-made."

NATIONAL TREASURE

Longevity and legacy are important to Singh, whose body of work is extensive, borrowing from different influences, be it Mughal and Persian histories, architecture or flora. Somewhere along the process, she has created an aesthetic that is undeniably her own. "I work on my whim. People associate me with the Mughal era, and that was my inspiration... Earlier, I did pyramidal compositions, motifs dense at the bottom, rising progressively. Now I prefer to keep it simple because it's peaceful and perfect."

But even in her spontaneity lies great depth, from fabric and print to product. For instance, she chooses to work with handwoven cotton for its rustic, long-lasting quality, ensuring that her pieces become part of your personal landscape—more an emotion than just a garment or upholstery. "It's there to comfort you," she affirms. Even the floral motifs are constructed carefully, balancing a per-

COURTESY BISHWADEEP MOITRA; THE MUSEUM OF PRINTING, MULHOUSE; BRIGITTE SINGH; PRINTRESS OF THE MUGHAL GARDEN, EDITED BY BISHWADEEP MOITRA AND PUBLISHED BY MAPIN PUBLISHING, AHMEDABAD



sonal and collective memory. Take the iris pattern she found on a walk through the cedar forests of Manali 30 years ago, or the poppy that shows up in many iterations from the Posht-rose to the Tara (which had Singh, a colour purist, dedicated to finding the perfect ground red) in her work.

Tradition is a word that comes up often in conversation with her. She's aware of her role in carrying forward centuries of skills and techniques through her incredible work with textile printing, and she continually reiterates the importance of collaboration between designer and craftsman. "In India, you have a million craftspeople—it's a natural treasure, and it is endangered. We are in the 21st century and what's very important now is to keep that skill alive. The designers and the craftsmen have to work together to create something beautiful. It's the responsibility of future generations to keep this going."

THE WAY AHEAD

As the economy reopens, I ask Singh about her plans to promote the crafts. "Craft of very high quality doesn't go well with the idea of consumerism, which comes with an incredible appetite. Crafts need to be organic. When it is pressured, it becomes complicated. That is the beginning of compromise on quality because of the factors of price and time. It needs awareness and education," she says, hinting at why she's remained small even after success.

But the fact is that Singh has been able to create a brand which gives an identity to her unique style of printing that has over the years been wildly and often illegally emulated. She admits that has been her most significant learning: "In India, as designers, little belongs to you. We are less protected," she rues. How does she combat this? By remaining fiercely protective of her work ethic and freedom to design: "I have sold my work like a studio potter. I have served my printing, and I've never taken orders for a design that wasn't decided by me."

For Singh, business is built on a set of principles, her design identity, and trust. From the start, back when Le Jardin Moghol in Paris, owned by her friend Béatrice Jaunet, was the only retailer who stocked her creations, she says, "Everything I sent her was my choice and we worked together for 25 years." It's an approach she follows to date. Her recent collaboration sees her designing textiles for the Ahhichatragarh Fort in Nagaur, with Lady Helen Hamlyn (the British philanthropist known for restoring heritage monuments) leading the project. "She had this incredible vision and called me to do the textiles. My work relates to the monument, so it's fitting. It's been pure joy," she adds.

Even after four decades, countless hurdles, frustrating dealings with capitalism and an ensuing lockdown, her enthusiasm is inspiring. So what does the next decade look like for the icon? She chuckles and says, "It has endless possibilities." ■

"In India, you have a million craftspeople—it's a natural treasure, and it is endangered"

Fabricating a future

The Indian fashion industry completes 35 years in 2021. From its roots in textile revival to the rise of luxury prêt, we pin down the looks that defined generations, with a glimpse into what the future may hold. By **Akanksha Kamath**



Vogue India's December 2007 cover featuring Indian designers worn by the country's top models

Compared to the hallowed houses of international fashion, the Indian fashion industry as we know it—organised, governed, systematic—is a developing one. But what sets it apart, beyond its agile nature (a positive side effect of being small in size), is the diversity of its dress. To understand this veritable quality, you only have to look within your homes.

Now in her mid-fifties, my mother's tried and true quotidian uniform is mulmul kurtas and tunics with light-as-air palazzos. My nani, a product of the freedom fighter generation, wears a crisp silk sari (cotton in summer) even when it's only home that's on the agenda. And then there's the wardrobe that comes with being a millennial who grew up in a globalised India. A vacillating generation, we've imbibed a shrinking world's many influences—from blue jeans to white T-shirts, plus a concept sari or

two stashed away for special occasions.

To then think of the designers who began with the birth of the Indian fashion industry, is to understand the mammoth endeavour they were tasked with. Some, like Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla, used the textile maps created by the revivalists before them as their proverbial crafts compass. Others like Monisha Jaising and Tarun Tahiliani had to preempt the needs of the Indian woman, while informing her along the way. Almost four decades later, many of these designers still dress these distinctly disparate generations.

In contrast, a new crop of designers predicts and captures an ever-evolving Indian woman's culture and its resultant aesthetic. We spoke to industry insiders, leaders and experts on how clothes, beyond their nostalgic quality, have always been a bellwether for the way we've lived, moved and dressed.



ANAITA SHROFF ADAJANIA

Fashion and costume stylist

"I remember when *Vogue* India started 13 years ago, the country was just becoming part of the global conversation. At that time, Anna Harvey, then the editorial director of Condé Nast, predicted that in 10 years we would see our models on international catwalks and campaigns. How right she was."



TARUN TAHILIANI

"In 1987, Sal [Tahiliani's wife, Sailaja] and I met Rohit Khosla for the first time and laid down the plans for the store of the future. With Ensemble, we wanted to bring an international shopping experience to the Indian woman. In the '80s, women were wearing yoke kurtas, short achkans, kalidar kurtas and leg-of-mutton sleeves. People were not trying to be western, they were western in an Indian way. A spectacular sight at lunch hour would be ladies wearing saris with sexy cholis. They wore chiffons and showed off their bodies. A hair was never out of place—no one stepped out with chipped nails."



A front row at Ensemble's early shows that became the precursor to the fashion show today



RITU KUMAR

"In the '50s, women were wearing printed yardage in fake Indian patterns made in Lancashire, England, or chiffon saris painted in France. There was nothing to show for our amazing textile heritage. Mapu [Martand Singh], Rakesh [Thakore] and I took on the task of reviving craft clusters. When I opened Ritu's Boutique, it caught the imagination of printers in Benares and Surat, who began printing paisleys in place of polka dots on the borders and pallus of saris."

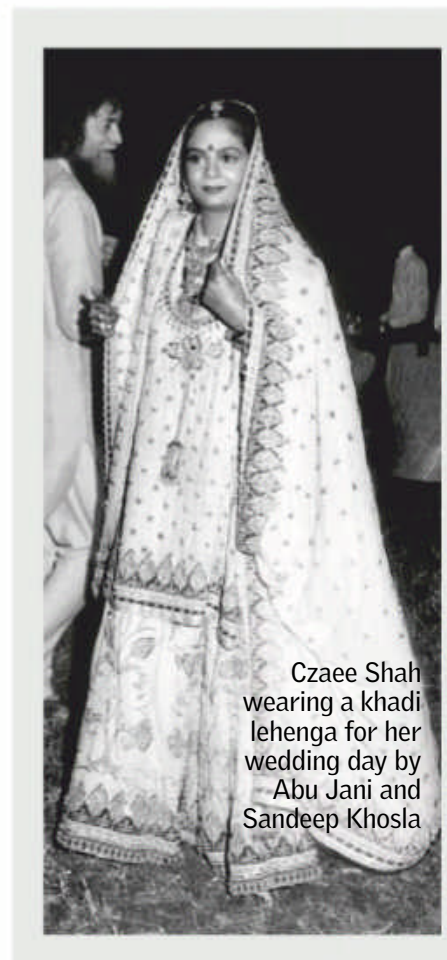


Clockwise, from left: Women wearing Ritu Kumar in the '60s; the designer working with a craft cluster after researching in museums overseas to find out what India had to offer the world



SANDEEP KHOSLA

"For a long time, we were ghost designers, darzis for society women. We had to shift mindsets completely. Women were shopping at Kala Niketan and Karol Bagh for ghagras made in Bareilly, cut in the bias, with three tones of gold on one circular skirt. At my aunt's studio in Lucknow, we began recreating chikankari on pure georgette, chiffon and silk, versus the synthetic fabrics of the time. We took khadi from Khadi Gram Udyog in Lucknow and made it mainstream in Mumbai."



Czaee Shah wearing a khadi lehenga for her wedding day by Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla



FARROKH CHOTHIA

From left: Aishwarya Rai Bachchan modelling for the brand's campaign; Gauri Khan sporting the kurti



MONISHA JAISING

"It's important to understand the way women shopped. Every family had their in-house tailor, always available for alterations and quick designs. As an exporter, I was commissioned to create beach cover-ups in the '90s. On holiday along the coast, I saw women getting into the water with their kurtas, their long panels floating along with them. I thought of the kurta in that instant as a cover-up—something short enough yet comfortable. The next thing I knew, it was flying off the shelves." >

MILESTONE



Clockwise, from left: Raw Mango by Sanjay Garg brings textile to the contemporary fashion lexicon; Mehr Jesia wearing Rohit Khosla at an Ensemble fashion show

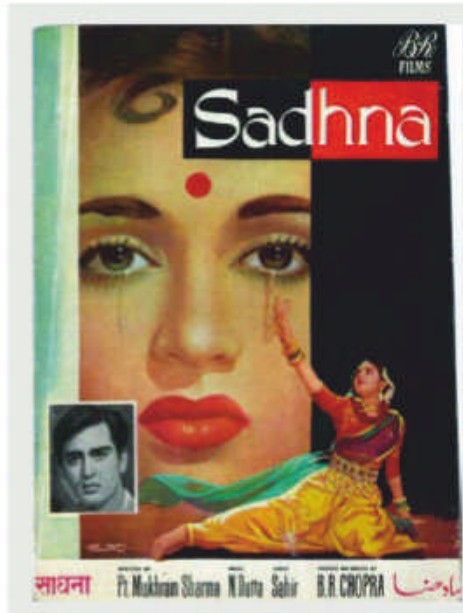


TINA TAHILIANI PARIKH
Executive director, Ensemble



SUJATA ASSOMULL
Journalist and author

"Bollywood was a strong catalyst for fashion. A film like *Sadhna* (1958) gave twenty-somethings Vyjanthimala's bangs as a rite of passage and a new silhouette of kurtas and tight churidars. Even the era of 'mill fashion shows' by Bombay Dyeing, held before the official fashion weeks that we now know, were an intersection of fashion and film. The songs of movies were reimagined for the fashion show stage, with equally complex choreography to match."



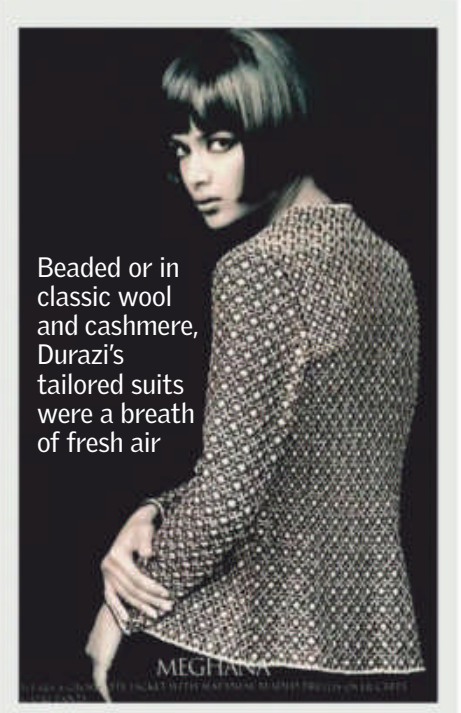
Left: *Sadhna* (1958); Former supermodel Anna Bredemeyer in an Only Vimal ad campaign

"We've witnessed a few waves in Indian fashion, like Manish Malhotra and the era of Bollywood, and the digital revolution led by Tarun [Tahiliani]. The last decade has been dedicated to the marketing of the fashion brand and a rise in contemporary luxe wear like Lovebirds, Bodice, and Chola, and a crossover between textile and contemporary fashion by labels such as 11.11/even eleven and Urvashi Kaur. Another key turning point was the opening of NIFT, India's first government-owned fashion education system that produced a new genre of designers to aspire to."



SHAHAB DURAZI

"When I started, traditional Indian clothes were everywhere, and my attempt to diversify was viewed as professional suicide. Pantsuits for the evening was an unheard phenomenon. It only took a few stylish women—some of my earliest clients like Kavita Khanna, Maureen Wadia and Ayesha Shroff—to courageously opt for my pantsuits and the trend was set. I miss the seriousness with which the industry viewed talent. Unfortunately, today, a designer's talent and credibility are measured in Bollywood units and their followers on social media."



Beaded or in classic wool and cashmere, Durazi's tailored suits were a breath of fresh air



Clockwise: Eka's light textiles fashioned in contemporary silhouettes; Singh's work with the weavers of India



RINA SINGH

"As Indian women, the colour of our skin, our hair, and our body language is so distinctly Indian that I think the clothing choices we explore can be unique and special for the rest of the world. We don't always have to be dressed in a heavy sari; we can wear something contemporary, easy to wear and yet Indian that anybody else in the world can aspire to wear. What we add to design is an extremely dexterous skill set. The textile crafts of India, be it handlooms or handweaves of the finest counts, set us apart." ■





THE TEXTILE TRAILBLAZER

Through keen foresight, smart leadership skills, and a relentless pursuit of innovation, Suchita Oswal Jain, Vice-Chairman and Joint Managing Director of Vardhman Textiles, has successfully established her company as one of the country's leading textile conglomerates and, in the process, set an inspiring example for young girls everywhere

If you ask Suchita Oswal Jain what makes an organisation excel, she'll tell you it's the ability to be flexible, responsive, and fleet-footed. As Vice-Chairman and Joint Managing Director of Vardhman Textiles—one of India's foremost textile conglomerates that manufactures yarns, fabrics, sewing threads, and garments—Suchita is the embodiment of ambition, confidence, passion and persistence. A third-generation entrepreneur, she is the daughter of Padma Bhushan awardee Shri S P Oswal.

A large part of Suchita's business success can be attributed to foresight—to her ability to predict trends and take tough leadership calls. When she joined Vardhman Textiles back in 1990, it was primarily a manufacturer of yarns. Today, the company continues to be a leader in the yarn manufacturing business, exporting to over 75 countries and flourishing with a spindle count of 1.2 million—the largest in the country. Innovation and development are norms at Vardhman Textiles; and, recognising the importance of forward integration, Suchita set up the

firm's first fabric manufacturing plant in Himachal Pradesh, circa 1992. Back then, the fabric business was uncharted territory for the company; but, under her watchful eyes, the greige fabric business grew rapidly. However, her ambitions didn't stop there. With her mind set on cementing Vardhman Textiles' position as a one-stop-shop for all fabric needs, she established the company's first fabric dyeing and processing unit in partnership with Japanese group Tokai Senko, and later added a fabric printing line, too. Today, Vardhman Textiles caters to a slew of international retail giants, including brands like GAP, Esprit, Marks & Spencer, Uniqlo, Target, and Kohl's. Further, to help her company keep pace with evolving market trends and consumer needs, Suchita expanded the company's offerings by investing heavily in product development and innovation. Thanks to a canny twin strategy involving diversifying the product portfolio and targeting quality-sensitive foreign markets, Vardhman Textiles currently boasts an annual fabric processing capacity

of 180 million metres, making it one of the largest fabric producers in India.

To stay progressive and competitive, Suchita has now turned her attention to three key areas—sustainability, digitalisation, and CSR. Her relentless pursuit to implement measures to lower the company's carbon footprint has won Vardhman Fabrics, Budhni two awards for sustainability this year—Frost & Sullivan and TERI bestowed the company with the Challenger's Award for Large Business, Process Sector as well as the Jury Special Mention Award for Water-saving Initiatives for its projects like the India water partnership with GAP & cKinetics and Women+Water. Today, given the situation with the pandemic in the country, Suchita has nudged her company to venture into the PPE kit and face mask manufacturing business to help the medical sector by manufacturing medical gear using antimicrobial fabrics that offer comfortable protection.

Being a businesswoman of her stature, Suchita understands the responsibilities that come with her job. Away from business, she devotes a large share of her attention to philanthropic activities centred on holistic development. She places emphasis on providing quality education to all; and, in a bid to offer an enabling environment to students, the Group, under the Vardhman School Development Program, has provided several government schools with everything from classroom blocks, computer labs, and furniture to washroom complexes and water coolers with RO. A fierce advocate for women's empowerment, she has also implemented a number of projects to improve literacy among her female workforce, besides launching Project Nandini to increase awareness and promote menstrual hygiene among women, particularly young girls.

With such an impressive body of work, it's hardly surprising that Suchita has had many accolades showered on her. Only recently, she was awarded the Women Empowerment Entrepreneur 2019-20 Award by AsiaOne Magazine. Not one to rest on her laurels, she is always eager to learn and expand her skillset, and has participated in London Business School's and INSEAD Paris's Leadership Development Programmes.

An astute businesswoman, Suchita is proving that with determination and hard work, nothing is impossible. A successful woman entrepreneur, she is running the show exceptionally well and flourishing while at it!



T O W N A N D C O U N T R Y

At the foot of the Himalayas, in the state of Uttarakhand, lies Dehradun—a sleepy hill station that became the gateway to Mussoorie for the British. A hangover still exists: tea time takes up late afternoons and rose gardens bloom in the front yards of house-proud residents. Clock towers and crisp temperatures, vintage cars and cosy bakeries, cobbled driveways and small-town ways—this is the simple Dehradun of the '70s. Photographer Ashish Shah travels back to his roots to bring us frames from the past, in a time-warped town where people watching is a poignant pastime. Where clothes are fashioned out of herringbone tweed and sweaters over salwars, and problems are forgotten with butter biscuits dunked into steaming cups of tea.

Designers are returning to the past to revive a forgotten weave, a craft, a technique. With the backdrop of a sepia-toned Dehradun of the '70s, we trace the new direction of India by design

Photographed by **ASHISH SHAH** Styled by **RIA KAMAT**



JOY RIDE

The capital's culture clash percolates the closets of its people. It's a happy marriage of traditional dress mixed with winter pieces.

On Suhani: 'Bhavika' kurta set, **Anita Dongre**. Knitted tweed coat, **Dhruv Kapoor**. J'adior pumps, **Dior**



A FLOWER FRONT

Every day is a good day for a picnic. Squat in the evening sun in matching kurta sets. Cricket jumpers are a must.

On Megha: 'Bentota Jaal' kurta pant set, **Kshitij Jalori**. *On Deeksha:* 'Lunuganga Jaal' kurta pant set, **Kshitij Jalori**. Wool and sequin sweater, **Péro**



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PICKING THOUGHTS

In a field of dreams, take a moment to pause and wonder. Seen here, a quintessential A-line coat and a snood scarf for those northern winds.

On Archita: Velvet jacket, pleated skirt; both **Yavi**

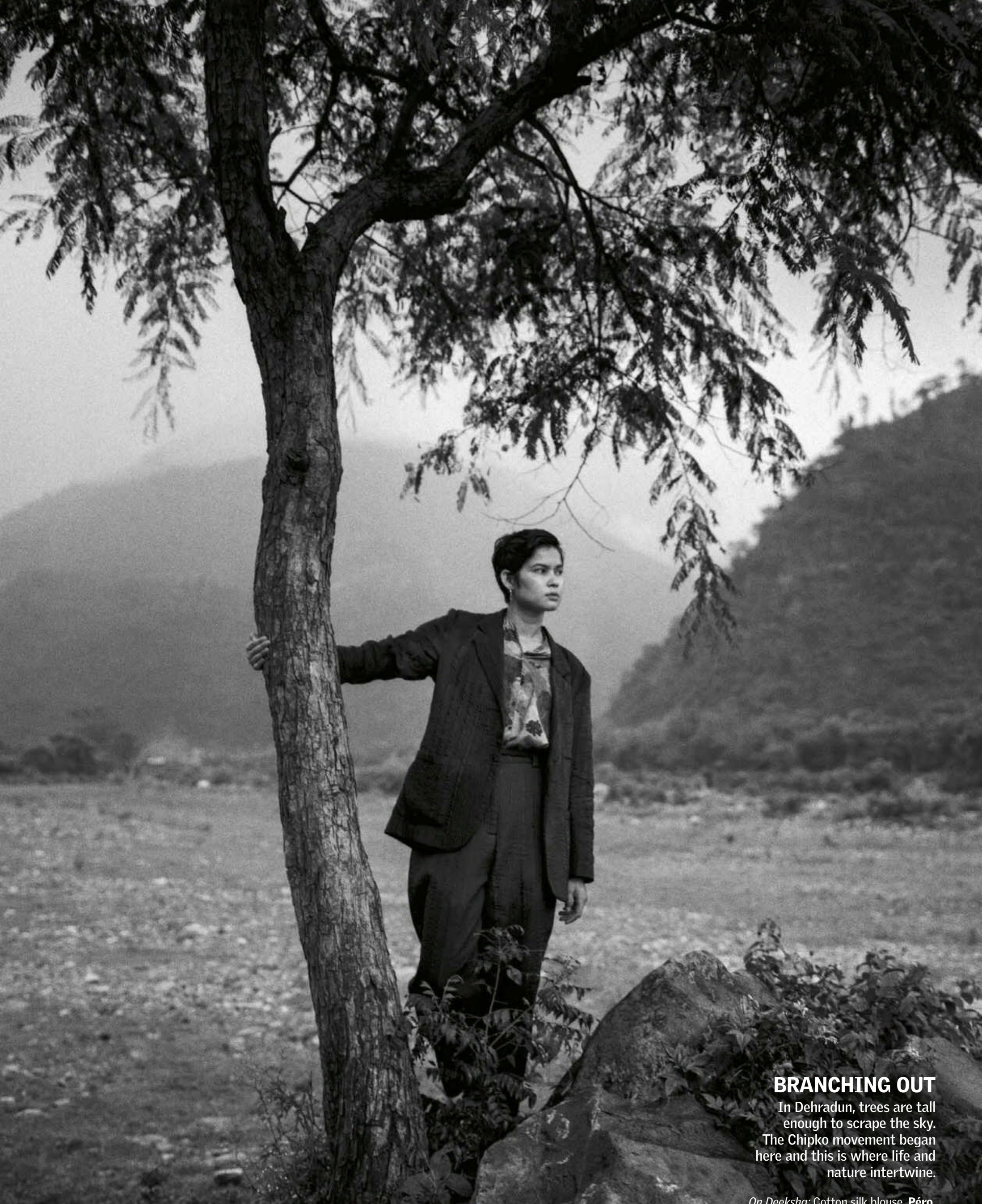


THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

Find the best seat in the house—
one that comes with a view of
the Tehri valley.

On Abhay: Shirt, vest, trousers, bag; all
11.11/eleven eleven. *On Aparna:* Cotton
silk blouse, **Péro** Jacket, **Lovebirds**





BRANCHING OUT

In Dehradun, trees are tall enough to scrape the sky. The Chipko movement began here and this is where life and nature intertwine.

On Deeksha: Cotton silk blouse, Péro.

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KNITTING DREAMS

Between strolls and siesta is the perfect moment for meditative needlework. The outfit? A study in contrasts.

On Aparna: Embroidered jacket,

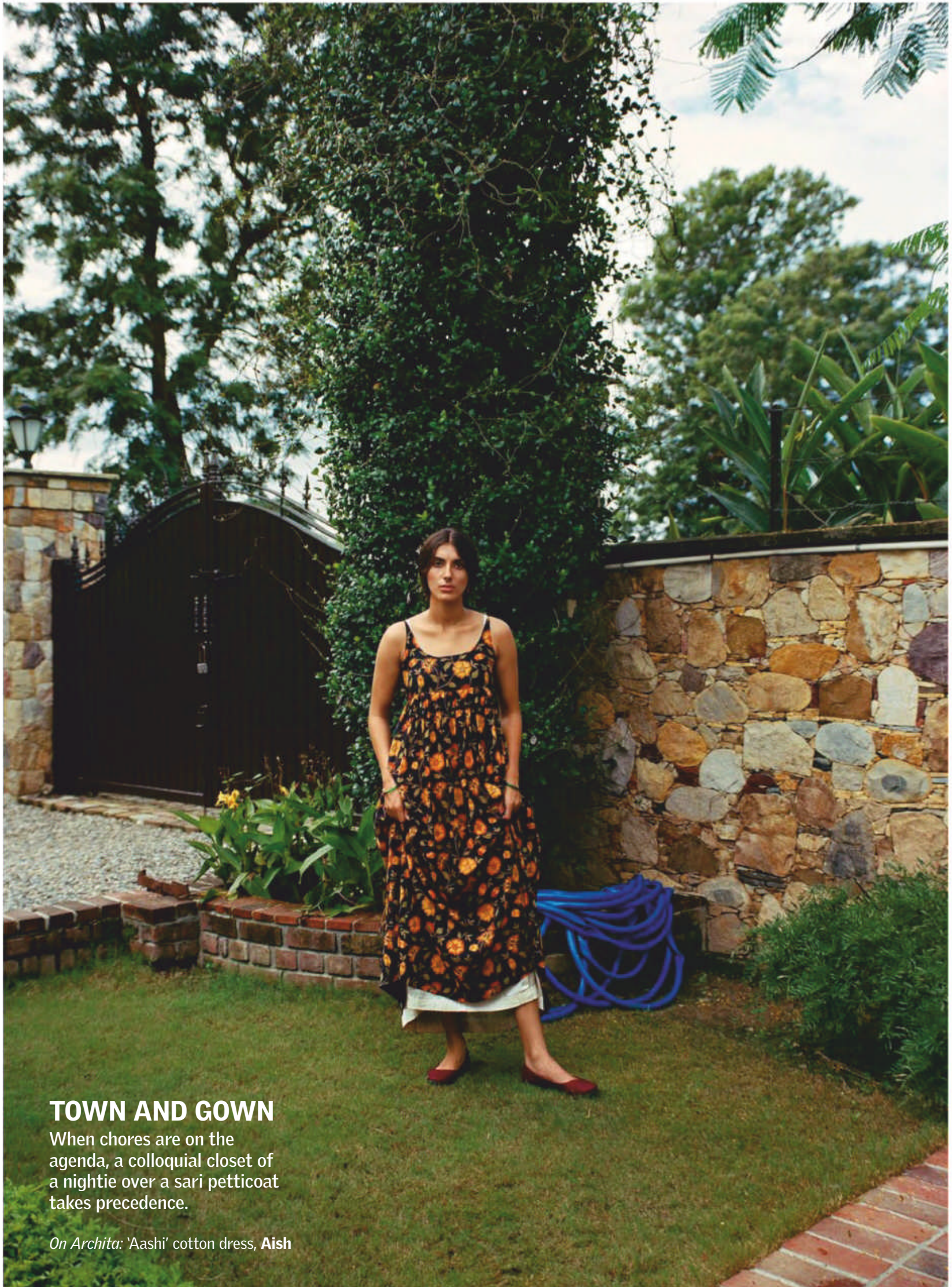


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TOWN AND GOWN

When chores are on the agenda, a colloquial closet of a nightie over a sari petticoat takes precedence.

On Archita: 'Aashi' cotton dress, Aish



COUPLE'S RETREAT

Dressed in shapes of squares,
a newly-wed couple stands
against their hearth and home,
on the brink of marital life

On Deeksha: Bandhani sari, **Injiri**.
Handwoven wool jacket, **Péro**.

On Tashi: Shirt, **Itoh**. Sweater, **11.11/
eleven eleven**. Blazer, **Bloni**. Trousers,
Two Point Two. Shoes, **Gucci**



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STOP AND STARE

As they watch the world go by, Garhwali women take respite by the roadside, wearing typical drapes of half saris tucked away for functionality.

On Shashi: Mashru sari, shirt; both **Raw Mango**. *On Deeksha and Megha:* Mashru sari, blouse; all **Raw Mango**





SPINNING TALES

Rani pink and burnished gold make for a charmed life. Add a pouch for lipstick and powder on the go.

On Shashi: Embellished dress, coat; both
Ashish: 'Oblique Bobby' bag, Dior



CANDID CAMERA

The last stop on this journey through a local lens is a cinematic landscape, with costumes of retro florals and crocheted cardigans to match.

On Neelesh: Ajrak and brocade kurta, 'Dogri' pants; both **Good Earth Sustain**.
On Abhay: 300-count hand spun kaapas jamdani suit and shirt; all **Suket Dhir**

Hair and makeup: Bishu Sinha; Paramita Sinha
Photographer's assistant: Abhishek Rao
Assistant stylist: Ruhani Singh
Bookings editor: Prachiti Parakh

Models: Deeksha Thapa, Archita Mahalwal/Purple Thoughts; Abhay Rawat/Anima; Megha Thapa; Suhani Singh; Neelesh Mehrotra; Aparna Tomar; Shashi Bangari



Behind the seams

The talented weavers who make the clothes we wear are facing an uncertain future. 'To India, With Love' is a special initiative that will unite the global fashion community to raise funds for India's karigars

WHO: Anna Wintour, Giorgio Armani, Sabyasachi Mukherjee, and Maria Grazia Chiuri, among others. Visit [Vogue.in](https://vogue.in) for a complete list of participants.

WHAT: A global fundraiser by *Vogue* India and the Natasha and Adar Poonawalla Foundation, in the form of a fashion film with shoppable items, the proceeds of which will go towards the Indian crafts community via our charity partner GiveIndia.

WHY: From intricate zardozi embroidery to hand-woven Benarasi silk cloth, India's crafts have covered the world's catwalks. However, the COVID-19 curveball has endangered the position of our karigars, many of whom have lost their livelihoods and homes. The very fabric on which fashion is built, is faltering.

To educate people about their unique talents, to start a conversation about fair compensation, and to celebrate our love for their artistry, *Vogue* India, the Natasha and Adar Poonawalla Foundation and charity partner GiveIndia bring you 'To India, With Love', a global fundraiser. With designers pledging archival pieces or creating something entirely new, this is your chance to own beautiful pieces of fashion.

HOW: Viewers can buy one of these designer items or donate live on Facebook on October 9 at 7pm, and for the following weeks via GiveIndia at <https://vogueindia.giveindia.org/>

WHERE: Going live on *Vogue.in* on October 9 at 7pm, plus catch the film on 

VOGUE
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
NATASHA AND ADAR
POONAWALLA FOUNDATION



PRIYA TANNA,
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,
VOGUE INDIA

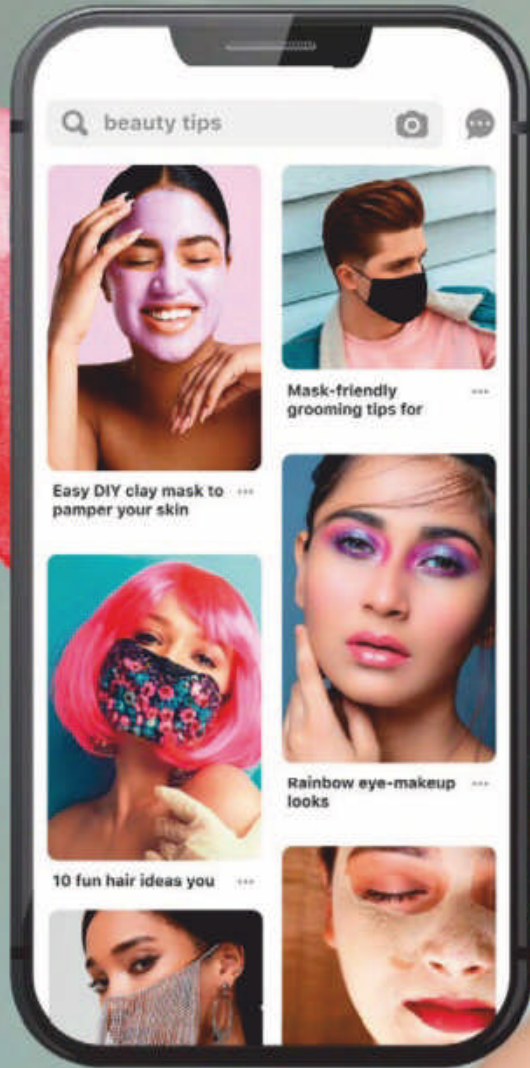
"When the pandemic posed one of the greatest setbacks witnessed in fashion, we at *Vogue* India galvanised a global community of designers, editors and influencers to put their might behind the Indian karigar. In these stranger-than-fiction times, as their livelihoods are upended, it is imperative that we come together to support and protect them. 'To India, With Love' is our ode to the Indian artisan community."



NATASHA POONAWALLA, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR, SERUM INSTITUTE OF
INDIA AND CHAIRPERSON, NATASHA
AND ADAR POONAWALLA FOUNDATION

"While economies and businesses all over the world have blistered in the pandemic, the effect has largely been felt by those who form the backbone of these large industries and businesses. The Indian karigar, whose hands form the fashion of the globe, has borne the greatest brunt. While Adar and I, along with our dedicated teams, work towards a vaccine, we also want to extend our support to the talented crafts community of our country. Their unique skills must be honed and protected. I urge you to join us in this charitable endeavour to bring positive change for those behind the scenes."

RUVEN AFANADOR; GETTY IMAGES



A BRUSH WITH BEAUTY

Finding inspiration for new looks has been a challenge for beauty enthusiasts this lockdown. So, if you're looking for an outlet for your creative ideas, look no further than one of beauty's largest digital platforms—Pinterest. The visual discovery app promises to help you find that much-needed inspiration to ace your beauty game from the safety and comfort of your home

It's fair to say that this pandemic-induced lockdown has been hard on us, both physically and mentally. Increasingly, a lot of us have sought outlets to relieve stress and anxiety, whether it's learning to bake or meditate. Still others have turned to the ever-reliable visual discovery app Pinterest to get inspired. Not surprisingly, this year, the app has seen record levels of engagement—in India itself, searches and Pinterest boards created increased 74 per cent and 76 per cent year over year, respectively. To further engage its audience, the app is even coming up with new ways to help its audience find useful ideas. A quick scroll through the 'Today' tab—curated by Pinterest's editorial team based on what's trending in India and on the app itself on any given day—throws up visuals of everything from food and fashion to home decor and beauty.

Speaking of beauty...did you know that Pinterest is one of the largest beauty platforms

in the world? With billions of Pins on beauty-related ideas saved and a whopping number of boards created, it's no wonder that 'beauty' is one of the most searched categories on the app. Whether it's a quick search for the hottest products in the market or a more in-depth hunt for insightful skincare and hair tutorials, Pinterest has fast become many-a-beauty-junkie's best friend this year.

A quick review of trending searches for beauty inspiration over the past year on the platform offers insight into how personalised beauty solutions remains a hot favourite search topic. Common searches included, among others, 'makeup tips for beginners', 'eye makeup art', 'how to get rid of acne' and 'yoga for glowing skin'. A more specific trend has been 'au naturel' beauty, with women adopting a 'less is more' approach to their beauty routines. More interestingly, Pinterest users are now proudly showing off their

freckles and blemishes, with searches for 'Asian freckles' up 59 per cent and 'models with acne' up 2x, while those for 'wrinkle remover' and 'scars remover' are down 30 per cent and 96 per cent respectively. But perhaps the most fascinating trend has been that of men getting in on the action, too—in India, specifically, searches for 'man bun hairstyles' have been on the uptick.

With its easy user interface, treasure trove of visuals and tailor-made search results, Pinterest has all the inspiration you seek to keep your creative juices flowing, even as you remain cooped up indoors!

For more information, visit [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) or download the Pinterest app





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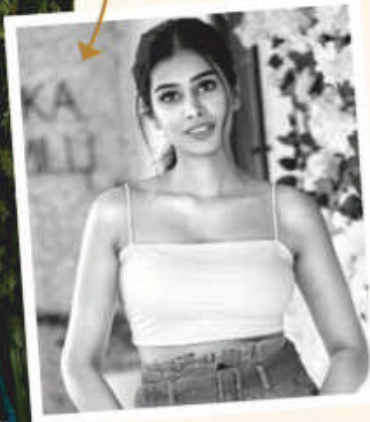
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SOME OF THE FEATURED BRANDS



GEETHIKA KANUMILLI

Focusing on the confluence of traditional embroidery and a contemporary aesthetic, Geethika Kanumilli's eponymous label was founded in Hyderabad in 2015. She launched the label at just 20 years old while she was studying at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Hyderabad. As a designer, her ensembles are an amalgamation of Indian and Western aesthetics, and she has now gained a reputation for crafting Indian bridalwear in refreshing palettes.

SEASON'S FAVOURITE

Kanumilli's latest collection, Leia, boasts chic, vibrant outfits that are comfortable yet stylish—perfect for the young millennial bride. This gorgeous ivory lehenga from the Leia line flaunts patterned floral motif work and comes with a cutwork dupatta in an enchanting forest green hue that beautifully offsets the ivory of the lehenga. Even better, the flattering deep, broad V-neckline of the blouse will let you show off your beautiful décolletage and dazzling diamond necklaces in style.

ANNU'S CREATIONS

Founded in 2011, Annu's Creations is the brainchild of Annu Patel, who launched her label while she was studying at the International Institute of Fashion Design (INIFD), Vadodra. Hailing from a small town in Gujarat, Patel stayed true to her roots while developing her label and kept heritage and tradition at the heart of her style sensibility. She believes in following tradition when it comes to her design philosophy; and this has led to her label becoming one of the most celebrated and sought-after fashion houses in Gujarat.

SEASON'S FAVOURITE

Annu's Creations has become a household name in Gujarat, with a loyal customer base. The label's 2020 bridal collection, Gulshan, seamlessly blends traditional designs with contemporary inspirations, thus appealing to modern brides who are looking for unconventional yet elegant wedding attire. These ready-to-wear whimsical silhouettes promise to perfectly capture the many moods of the ceremonies on your big day in absolute style.

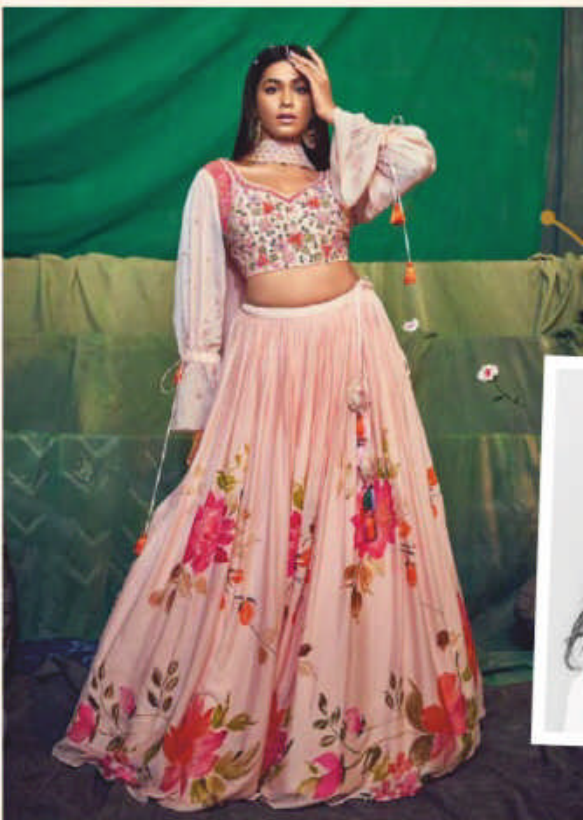


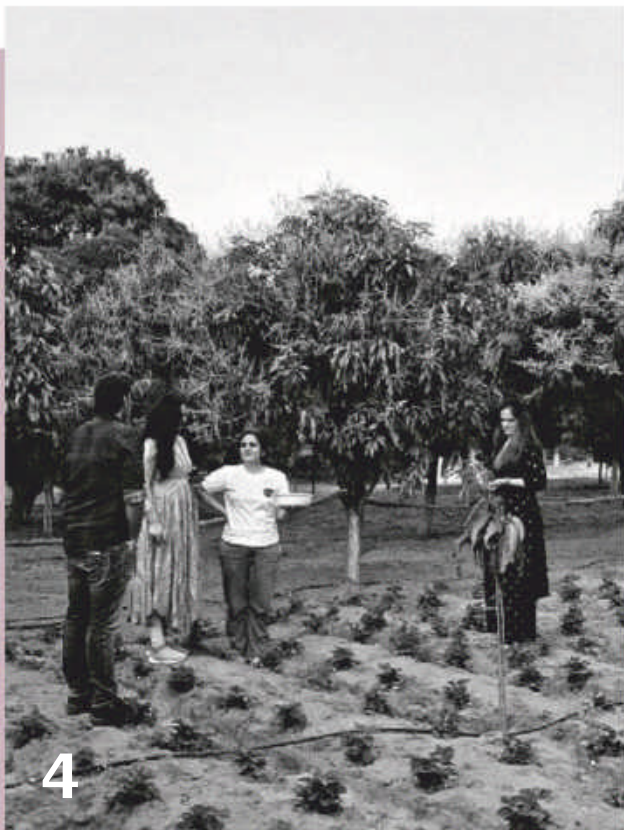
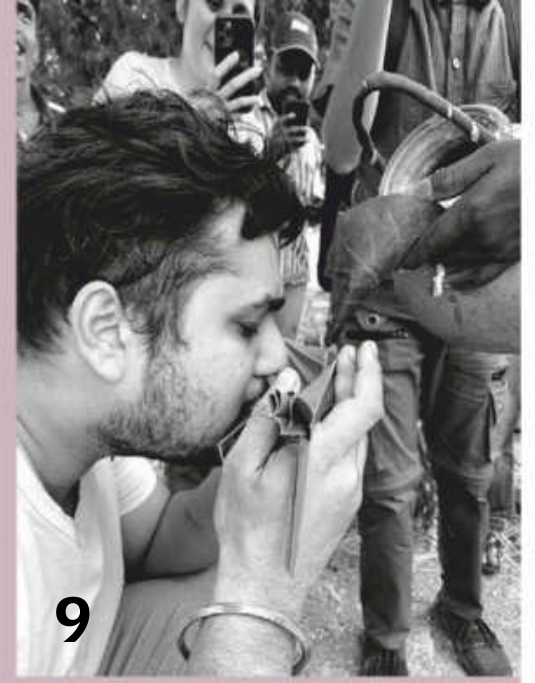
SURUCHI PRAKH COUTURE

With a deep appreciation for art and a critical eye for design, Suruchi Parakh launched her eponymous label in 2015. A Surat-based label, Suruchi Parakh Couture envisions a modern future for the Indian woman. With an assortment of bridal embroidered lehengas and contemporary saris that weave together traditional and Western aesthetics, Parakh's collections are an ode to Indian craftsmanship. Each ensemble from the label tells a story, with inspiration coming from elements of nature and varied cultures.

SEASON'S FAVOURITE

Suruchi Parakh Couture specialises in Indo-Western bridalwear and offers modern brides-to-be a selection of customised ensembles as well as ready-to-wear sets. The label's latest Kalakari collection focuses on different techniques of craftsmanship whilst seamlessly bringing out the artistic thoughts and creativity of the designer. This ethereal lehenga is replete with colourful hand-painted flowers and is inspired by the designer's trip to Kashmir's Valley of Flowers. Complementing it is an equally stunning handcrafted blouse that lends the outfit a lovely contemporary charm.





1. Farmers ploughing in Peddamadur village in the Warangal district of Telangana. The village practises intercropping and harvesting heirloom seeds, and possesses a unique biodiversity with the *prosopis juliflora*, a plant that is also native to South America and the Caribbean, which is used mainly for biochar.

2. The toddy tappers are from the Goud community of Telangana. In a small sling on their backs, they carry a sharp iron blade to make incisions in the palm. **3.** A picture of the munshi naan we ate for lunch at Barkas in old Hyderabad.

The neighbourhood is like a mini Yemen, comprising descendants of Yemini folks who migrated to be soldiers in the Nizam's army. **4.** The strawberry fields at Sujatha Gardens, a 11-acre farm run by Rupam and Sashi Kumar in Telangana, where, besides many varieties of strawberries, the husband-wife duo has grown an orchard of 2,000 mango trees and 800 varieties of plants. **5.** A clay pot which toddy tappers hang on the tree to collect sap.

6. Lakshmi, the mother of Peddamadur village's youth leader Sampath, making jowar roti on her patio in a rural setup without an electric stove. **7.** Natu kodi chicken is cooked on an open fire in a clay pot used for collecting kallu (toddy). It cooks in its fat and spices, no oil or water is added. **8.** Planting eggfruit (which I first discovered during a foraging trip in the northern part of Thailand) at Sujatha Gardens in Telangana.

9. Chef Manav Khanna of Gaa drinking fresh kallu, served in a pot crafted by local potters. Kallu is drunk from a boat-like cup made from palm leaves and poured through a conical filter made from moduga leaves stuffed with palm tree fibres

MY INDIA IS ON THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

A PHOTO ESSAY
ON INDIGENOUS
FLAVOURS. BY
GARIMA ARORA



Last October, when I launched Food Forward India, my aim was to tap Indian cuisine through our eating habits. The plurality of our cuisines makes it impossible to agree on an all-encompassing definition for Indian food. But what I found in common across India was that the bounty of unexplored flavours, cultures, techniques and customs lay on the road less taken. So, charged with this thought, I set out to savour the tastes of Telangana, making Indian food my journey rather than my destination. From the ash-covered tamarind of the Chenchu tribe to the hospitality of the Barkas community and the high spirits of their toddy tappers, this nomadic India was unique and unexplored. It taught me about flavours, ingredients and techniques in a way that even a Cordon Bleu degree or kitchen experience at the world's best restaurants could not, and made me realise that Indian food is as vast as our geography itself. ■

Garima Arora is the first Indian woman to win a Michelin star for her restaurant, Gaa

MATYLD A GRZELAK

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Children of the soil

Sowing the seeds for a green future, these modern-day agripreneurs are trading age-old techniques for a new range of radical farming practices, finds **Sonal Ved**



PHOTO: TIERNEY GEARON. STYLIST: ALEX HARRINGTON. HAIR: MUSTAFA YANAZ. MAKEUP: TERESA PEMBERTON. MANICURE: YUKO TSUCHIHASHI. MODELS: TASHA TILBERGH; LINDSEY WIXSON; LIU WEN. PRODUCTION: MOXIE PRODUCTIONS. SET DESIGN: ROSIE TURNBULL. TAILOR: HAILEY DESJARDINS

The coronavirus pandemic has shown us that there are two kinds of people—the first, who took over our timelines with their baking experiments, and the second, who took out their shovels to indulge in some victory gardening. From tending to tomato tendrils to muddling chimichurri from the parsley in their backyards, growing greens has become a gram-worthy activity for this second cohort. But for this cu-

rated group of niche growers, farming goes beyond pastime to specialisation. Armed with an alternate practice, they are preserving heirloom seeds, foraging greens, restoring forest lands, reducing carbon footprints, and thus, even mitigating climate change. Here is a lowdown on the varied cutting-edge approaches that a growing number of modern-day farmers are employing to create a win-win between man and the wild.



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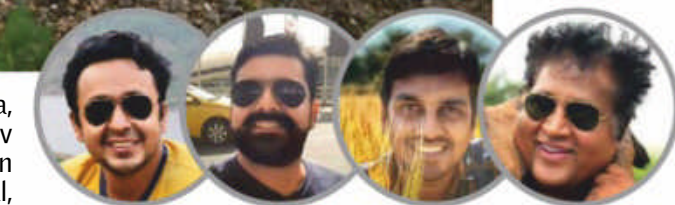


"I grow food in a cultivated ecosystem where I mimic the forest's ways"

—CLEA CHANDMAL



Abhay Bhatia,
Pranav
Khandelwal, Karan
Khandelwal,
Shailesh Awate



CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE

OOO FARMS, MAHARASHTRA

Iron-rich black husked rice, greens like gharbhandi, fatangadi and kurdu, and potatoes that grow on vines are just some gems that have been spotlighted

since a quartet of friends set up OOO Farms in the Sahyadris. "Our practice mixes foraging with farming. So far, we've conserved over 100 varieties of rice, 14 varieties of wheat and 130 vegetables," says co-founder Shailesh Awate, who lists Taj Santacruz, The Bombay Canteen in Mumbai and Black Market in Goa among his clientele. OOO Farms works with a network of 500 farmers to bridge the gap between deforestation and urban agriculture. Its pop-ups, like the tribal produce-led meals at the Serendipity Arts Festival 2019, are as delicious as they are educational. "Our effort is to work on soil conservation by bringing back practices like working with ancient seeds or using tribal knowledge so we don't hamper the earth further," he adds. Ooofarms.com

PERMACULTURE

THE FOREST WAY AND FYOTS, GOA

Ecological buzzwords find a spot under the sun with permaculture, a method of farming conceptualised by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the early '80s. "I grow food in a cultivated ecosystem where I mimic the forest's ways," says Clea Chandmal, one of



Clea Chandmal

India's foremost permaculturists. In the foothills of the Western Ghats, at the intersection of Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra, Chandmal has nurtured a "food forest" that produces 300 varieties of edible plants.

She champions permaculture for its zero-wastage approach and its interde-

pendent ways that result in nutritionally

dense crops. Her 14-acre farm produces crops that are sold locally and can be savoured through Foyts, a plant-based label that retails cheeses, ice creams, compotes, spreads, butters, dips and sauces.

Clea@permacultureways.in

HEIRLOOM INGREDIENTS

OFFERINGS FARMS, PUNE

Sweet butternut squash, crisp lettuce, deep-hued salad leaves and sharp microgreens are just some of the bestselling items that this Pune farm has added to supermarket aisles in Mumbai, Pune, Goa and Gurugram. "When we moved to India in the early

2000s, we found that our favourite salad greens

were not available here, so we started growing

our own," says Amrita Chaudhury who started

Offerings in 2007, a 16-acre farm in Maharashtra's

Saswad region. "There are three kinds of

seeds: genetically modified, hybrid, and open-

pollinated ones like heirloom seeds," she

explains. Seeds predating 1951 are considered

heirloom since hybrids entered the market

after that. Scouring the world for such seeds,

Chaudhury now has a rich bank that features

everything from Peruvian purple corn to orange

sweet potatoes from Germany. >



Sanmitra
Pandharpur
and Amrita
Chaudhury



SPOTLIGHT

“Heirloom seeds have strong genes and taste purer since they have never been touched by genetic modification,” she adds. *Offeringsfarms.com*

HYDROPONICS

LETCETRA AGRITECH, GOA

Forfeiting the soil and the shovel, two mainstays of conventional farming, hydroponics is the art of horticulture that Ajay Naik’s farm in Goa’s Valpoi area has in common with the mythical Hanging Gardens of Babylon and the floating gardens of China. “Hydroponics uses nutrient-rich water to grow plants directly in water. No soil is needed,” explains Naik of the practice he started four years ago. An innovation that steers towards water and land conservation, the biggest boon of hydroponics is that it can be practised anywhere. “Even on sterile and unproductive lands,” adds Naik, “Hydroponics uses 80 per cent less water than traditional farming and you need only one-sixth of the land to grow the same number of plants elsewhere.” So far, he’s grown lettuce, parsley, basil, cherry tomatoes, red amaranth, spinach and coriander that he



Ajay Naik

supplies to 42 eateries across Goa, as well as to a handful of supermarkets. *Letcetragritech.com*

AQUAPONICS

MADHAVI GREENS, BENGALURU

Thriving on interdependency, aquaponics is that waste-proof method of farming which merges the world of aquaculture and hydroponics. Here, water is eternally recycled to raise plants as well as fish, co-dependently. At his 20-acre farm in Sakalavara village, K Vijayakumar grows basil, celery, coriander, cucumber, tomatoes, brinjal, spinach and lettuce on water, alongside rearing fish like ornamental koi, red and Nile tilapia and pangasius. “These crops have optimal nutrition and no chemicals,” adds Vijayakumar, one of India’s foremost aquaponics experts, who has been keenly observing and rearing this symbiotic relationship between aquatic animals and agriculture since 2018. “The waste of fish is used to fuel the aquaponic unit, thereby producing crops that have negligible carbon footprints,” he adds. *Madhavifarms.com*



K Vijayakumar

ETHICAL DAIRY FARMING

TWO BROTHERS ORGANIC FARMS, PUNE

A 2020 report by the Consumer Guidance Society of India reveals that 79 per cent of commercial milk in Maharashtra is adulterated, a troubling finding in a country that is considered the world’s largest milk-consuming nation. The solution is brewing among the growing number of boutique dairy farms cropping around the country, such as Two Brothers,



Clockwise, from above: Dragon stalk yam, one of the foraged vegetables available at 000 Farms; Madhavi Greens grows a variety of vegetables and microgreens on a soil-free farm; Pune’s Offerings Farm supplies heirloom ingredients to Masque, Sequel, and Kitchen Garden in Mumbai and hotels like JW Marriott in Pune, The Oberoi in Mumbai and Fairmont in Jaipur



whose ghee, milk and buttermilk are produced out of free-grazing Gir cows that are not treated with hormones or fed on commercial fodder. “They eat bajra, jowar and wheat that grows mainly on our farm or the neighbouring ones, and are hand-milked so there is no external interference,” says co-founder Satyajit Hange. As its name suggests, the dairy brand was started by two siblings in 2016. Presently, it occupies 32 acres of farmland in Bhodani village, where 80 indigenous cows are reared. “We have chosen Brahma Muhurta to churn the ghee and buttermilk, a period from 4am to 6am that is cited by Ayurveda as an ideal time for spiritual tasks,” adds Hange. *Twobrothersindiashop.com*

SALT HARVESTING

LUNN, RAJASTHAN

A visit to Himanshu Vyas’s salt farm is like a refresher to a geography lesson. It reminds you that all deserts were former sea beds and “therefore still preserve mineral-rich salts, a million years later,” he explains. With his ethical salt brand Lunn, he offers a fair-trade label that extracts from the Thar desert. “Sea salt may still have traces of aquatic life, while desert salt is free from it,” says Vyas. Stretching over 20 acres, the wells in Rajasthan are filled with rainwater that turns saline due to the salinity of the land around. This water, when evaporated, can extract mineral-rich crystals that can enrich your next avo toast. *Lunn.in* ■



Satyajit and Ajinkya Hange



Himanshu Vyas

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آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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WomenWeave handloom school in Maheshwar

Chanderi

Arguably the most popular handloom in the country, the WomenWeave handloom school in Maheshwar is training a new generation of weavers.

- 1. Chanderi dupatta, **WomenWeave**, ₹2,850
- 2. Layered slip dress in chanderi silk, **Urvashi Kaur**, ₹20,750

Farm to rack

In Ladakh, slow fashion label Lena Ladakh employs nomadic sheep herders, local weavers and community hand spinners to create beautiful pashmina products. Labels like Indigene and Ananda employ similar hand spinning practices on kora cotton, textile weaving, and a natural dyeing process.



LENA LADAKH



INDIGENE

Cotton kaftan in natural dyed shibori **Ananda**, ₹2,400

Craft and country

From the yarn spinners of Ladakh to the ikat weavers of Telangana, we take a trip across India to learn who makes our clothes. These are the young labels revolutionising handicrafts with a direct impact on rural artisan communities



Hand-painted and embroidered tassar silk scarf by the women artisans in Bihar

- 1. Cotton shirt with smocking detail, **Cord Studio**, ₹7,200
- 2. Wool coat with Kullu embroidery, **Péro x The Woolmark Company**, price on request



VOGUE LOVES

Silver necklace with stone work, **Tribes India**, ₹2,285

The Negi and Bodh tribes of Himachal Pradesh take inspiration from their scenic surroundings to create distinct silver and stone jewellery.

Thread work

For centuries, stories have been told through thread. Wool work in Kullu, smocking in Modinagar and hand embroidery over paintings in Bihar are a few examples of the

IGAR AHUJA



AKAARO

1. Linen coat, ₹13,900, trousers, ₹12,200; both Yavi

Bengal weaves

With a rich pre-colonial tradition of handlooms, the textiles of West Bengal are second to none. Three young designers are harnessing their raw potential in new and innovative ways: Yavi uses handloom linen from Pulia in unconventional colourways, while Akaaro introduces metal threads into jamdani and Pranay Baidya revives the Tant sari.

Sabai grass

Locally called Babuii grass, this indigenous variety found in the Mayurbhanj area of Odisha is known for its sturdiness. Okhai.org trains tribal women artisans in the creation of these products as a means of supporting local communities in the non-farming season.



A six-and-a-half-yard Tant sari woven using fine cotton yarn by Pranay Baidya

PRANAY BAIDYA

Woven grass bags available at Okhai.org



Looking east

These designers from the north-east are tapping into the rich handloom traditions of their home states to create a unique DNA for their labels. Think clothing that is informed by their cultures, with contemporary tenets at their core.



Eri silk dress, Ura Maku, ₹8,000

KAZU SIKKIM



Handloom wool skirt, Kuka Mizo, ₹3,000



Embroidered cotton dress Richana Khumanthem, ₹6,000



Double ikat

In the tiny village of Puttapaka in the Nalgonda district of Telangana, the last remaining families of weavers practise the age-old art of double ikat. This ikat is warp-based, unlike most other ikats designed predominantly on the weft. Designer Rina Singh of Ekà travelled to the region to collaborate with two weaver families on engineered ikats for her autumn/winter 2020-21 collection. In a mix of wool and cotton she uses minimal ikat patch-woven into the textiles to give pops of colour.

1. Checked shirt, ₹5,500, khadi trousers, ₹5,200; both **Naushad Ali**
2. Handloom cotton silk dress, **Maku**, ₹12,000
3. Handloom cotton dress, **Anushé Pirani**, ₹7,900



Madras checks

Once celebrated as a beacon of British influence on Indian handloom crafts, this is now under severe threat as the powerloom takes over. Designer **Anushé Pirani** travelled to the sleepy town of Chennimalai in Tamil Nadu to collaborate with the last remaining handloom weavers practising the craft to create her collection in association with Indira Weavers Cooperative Society. Puducherry-based **Naushad Ali** takes the Madras check and interprets it through block prints, while slow fashion label **Maku** uses jamdani handloom to create the square motif.

Khun weave

A blouse worn by a Maharashtrian fruit seller led designer **Vaishali S** to Guledagudda in Karnataka, in search of the elusive khun weave. She says, of her journey, "Khun is a handwoven textile, which is traditionally produced only for sari blouses. In Guledagudda, it is sad to see that power looms have mostly taken over, but we found hand weavers a little farther away from the village. It felt like we had found the Holy Grail. After spending days on the looms with these three families, I came up with my first collection shown at New York Fashion Week using khun handloom textiles. This unique weave has the potential to stand on par with any popular textile to come out of India. The fabric is so lightweight that it's hard to judge the thread count by just holding it. However, the art form is dying, and as a result, their way of life is under threat."



1. Kanjeevaram silk sari, ₹58,000, blouse, ₹10,000; both **Advaya - The House of Angadi**
2. Printed tussar silk sari, **Tulsi Silks**, ₹12,970
3. Mangalagiri silk sari, **Indicult**, ₹4,200

Silk saris

The southern silks of tussar, Kanjeevaram and Mangalagiri are what every sari collector must own.



1. Patchwork denim jacket with kantha detail, **11.11/eleven eleven**, ₹17,900 2. Cotton dress with Kutch embroidery, **Morii**, ₹7,500 3. Fringe bag with banjara embroidery, **Vipul Shah**, ₹18,950

TILLA BY ARATRIK DEV VARMAN

Patchwork

A trip through the western states of Gujarat and Rajasthan will reveal the reigning patchwork handicrafts made in the region. Popularly called banjara, Kutch work or kantha, each of these is a separate art form practised by a different community. These four labels employ craftspeople from the region, who inject new life into everyday pieces.



1. Ornate silver bangles, **Silverline**, ₹6,800 (each) 2. Vintage silver anklets repurposed as necklace, **Creyons**, ₹1,600

Silver work

Vedic astrology credits silver for having healing properties. It is believed to help regulate blood circulation as well as have antibiotic and sterilising qualities. But if the science of silver does not interest you, embrace the metal for its bohemian spirit.



ANUSHREE REDDY AT OGAAN

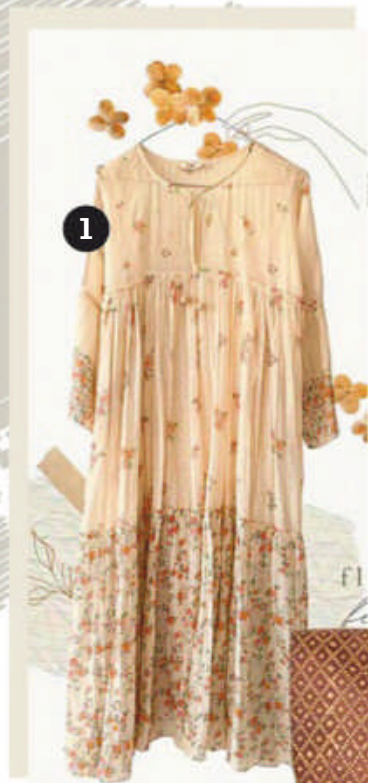


DIVYAM MEHTA

1. Block-printed and embroidered dress, **Buna**, ₹10,400 2. Leather bag with Dabu print, **Kassa**, ₹8,200

Block prints

From Rajasthan's popular Dabu to the traditional block prints of Sanganer, and even an innovative use of natural dyes, we give you a lowdown on the much-loved craft form.



2



1. Pyjama set block-printed in natural dyes, **ASA Clothing**, ₹14,000

Tie-dye

Two tie-dye techniques: Japanese-inspired hand-dyed shibori and traditional Rajasthani bandhani. Take your pick.

SAGAR AHUJA

MY INDIA IS IS THE POWER OF ITS
DIVERSITY

A CASE FOR
VERNACULAR VOICES.
BY DIVINE



Photographed by SAHIL BEHAL

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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I discovered hip-hop on a T-shirt in my teenage years. A friend was wearing a T-shirt imprinted with a 50 Cent album; I was curious. The same friend burned me a CD with his tracks, and I was hooked. I'd visit internet cafes to find more information and hear more music that helped me dive into the '90s hip-hop of New York. The lyrics, the rhymes, the videos, the slangs, the way they moved, all of it captivated me.

In a world where Kendrick Lamar is a feted Pulitzer winner, rap commands the same respect as poetry. Bending words to the beats, rappers have been using the power of free-flowing words to articulate ideas and experiences. But for years we have seen the reign of the English language through its soft power in art.

Many musicians, including myself, have been taken in by the words emanating from the US through the works of Nas, Jay-Z, Biggie, 2Pac, Big L and Big Pun. But as an Indian musician, I cannot overlook this homogenisation. India has as many languages and traditions that have been coexisting for eternity. And I think the time is now that India's next generation of storytellers takes over.

When I started rapping in 2009, I took it up in English. But something was always amiss. It hit me later—I think in Hindi and speak in that dialect we endearingly call Mumbaiiya, but here I was trying to write in English. My music did not mirror the slangs and phrases I'd use so generously in daily life. I wanted to express myself better, and that's when I switched to Hindi with 'Yeh Mera Bombay', my 2017 viral hit that also won 'Video of The Year' from *Rolling Stone* India. Thereon, I felt the power of language.

In his 2011 bestseller *Sapiens*, historian Yuval Noah Harari says that a distinguishing trait of humanity from other beings on earth is the power of language. It's true, almost all art is derivative of ideas, which in turn are derived from language and the human experience. Ideas inspire us and language connects us. As rappers we are not just dependable hitmakers but also carriers of an oral tradition that will thrive only when we deliver our original story in vernacular verses. There are a lot of voices that need to be heard to write the next chapter. Punjabi, Telugu, Tamil, Khasi, Konkani, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Bengali, Assamese—the book is incomplete until we hear their experiences.

As a Goan-Mangalorean boy from the gullies of Mumbai, I pinch myself when I see my music being heard across borders. I attribute this to the power of the pen and to those who have inspired me. Hip-hop encourages listeners to hear spoken words as music, and this music will only endure if our words are free of gimmicks. So my advice to prospective artists—dream big and never underestimate the power of your words.

Signing out,

मेरा नाम डिवाइन है

Vivian Fernandes, better known by his stage name Divine, is the country's premier hip-hop star. The award-winning rapper's story partly inspired director Zoya Akhtar's 2019 blockbuster film, Gully Boy

Divine



The north-east beauty edit

Seven women from the sister states let *Vogue* India in on their beauty rituals that skilfully blend modern influences with age-old local traditions. More than anything else, it is slow, mindful living that has contributed significantly to their inherent beauty, finds **Sheree Gomes Gupta**

Styled by **NAHEED DRIVER**

Art direction **NIYATI MEHTA**

"Anywhere close to the sea is my happy place. The sense of belonging from the sound of the waves keeps me calm"

CAROL HUMTSOE, 33
Model and proprietor,
Carol's Shop & Tea Room

NAGALAND

Carol Humtsoe is a beauty chameleon on fashion runways. But ask her what her favourite look off the ramp is and she's clear it's loose hair and a clean face with mascara and red lipstick slapped on. "My beauty ritual is basic as well. I moisturise, hydrate and eat clean," she says. It's a complete contrast to her out-of-the-box personal style that propelled her to open Carol's Shop & Tea Room in Dimapur, which retails exclusive clothes, books, accessories, teas, cups, and collectables. Her vintage store's Instagram feed has several stunning images of Humstoe in garments that she has sourced. She has bare-minimum makeup on, but her translucent complexion shines through in every shot. "I don't use many products on my face, but what I do love is the serum and moisturiser by The Ordinary and products from Murad. I like to stay hydrated and get in some quality sleep so that I can look 'ready to go' without the add-ons," says Humstoe, who prefers practising yoga, playing with her pets and being amid nature as much as she can.

Beauty musings: "The north-east has been more influenced by the West than any other place in India. Most beauty trends in the country, like the pastel eye trend and the inner corner eye pop, start from here."





← GLORIA TEP RENGMA, 28
Model and certified yoga instructor

NAGALAND

Born and brought up in Nagaland by two culturally diverse parents (her mum is Naga and her dad, a Malayali from Kerala), Gloria Tep Rengma cut her break when she made it to the finals of *India's Next Top Model* on MTV India in 2015, gracing fashion magazine spreads soon after. Her makeup booty is well stocked, with products including Bobbi Brown's Long-Wear Weightless Foundation, Dior's Diorific Haute Couture Lipstick in Diorella, and Skinfood's Choco Eyebrow Powder Cake, but she insists on keeping things simple. "I like a dewy, no-makeup look with a pop of colour on my lips, some mascara, and brushed-out eyebrows," says the certified Hatha and Vinyasa yoga instructor, who starts her day with a concoction of warm water mixed with moringa leaf and seed powder. Her biggest indulgence is the spa, which brings back memories of her childhood: "In Nagaland, it is a custom for parents to massage their children (and vice versa) when they are sick or tired."

Beauty musings: "I eat mostly steamed Naga food—lots of herbs, greens, and veggies. I believe that what we consume is important when it comes to how we feel and look."

PRIYADARSHINI CHATTERJEE, 24
Model and TV presenter →

ASSAM

The Guwahati girl, now based in Melbourne, credits her mother for introducing her to the concept of self-care in her early years. "Growing up, I'd join her while she put curd, raw turmeric or fuller's earth on her face weekly, and almond or coconut oil on her hair at least twice a month," says the model whose love for sports recently landed her a gig on Star Sports as a presenter. The 23-year-old admits to being old school and drawing inspiration from Hollywood icon Audrey Hepburn. "I like my skin to look transparent and healthy, with subtle smoky brown eyes, nude or pink lips and lots of bronzer. For my hair I either go for a high pony or beach waves, depending on the weather and the event," she says. Her must-have products include a wide range by Kiehl's and she highly recommends the brand's avocado-rich eye treatment. "When your appearance is part of your job, you have to take it seriously. I am so grateful for my genes and the fresh air of the hills that I grew up in. I don't need to put in much effort as a result."

Beauty musings: "There are no shortcuts to beauty. If we sleep right, eat right, and apply or do the basics right, we can easily maintain the best versions of ourselves." >



"When I feel the need for stability, I unwind by cooking for my loved ones and picnicking in the forest with music and dance. It is what keeps me grounded"



TIPRITI KHARBANGAR, 37,
Musician

SHILLONG

Tipriti Kharbangar's influences stem from her upbringing in Malki and its stunning forest. "My beauty philosophy is simple: eliminate toxins from the body naturally by sweating it out, and ensure you eat right and drink fresh water and the freshly squeezed juice of various seasonal fruits," says the singer-songwriter whose band Soulmate released its latest album, *Give Love*, last month. The band has performed across the globe, taking Kharbangar to several places including Norway, France, Singapore, Dubai, and America, further shaping her fashion and beauty choices. "My go-to products include Benefit's Benetint Rose Cheek & Lip Stain and They're Real! Mascara, M.A.C's Studio Fix Powder Plus Foundation and Clinique's Moisture Surge 72-Hour Auto-Replenishing Hydrator," she says. Given her hectic travel schedule, Kharbangar is as conscious about her skin as she is about her overall health. "Going makeup-free is the best skincare. You need to allow your skin to breathe. When I'm home, I get my dose of vitamin D sunbathing on my mum's vegetable terrace garden. It's one of my favourite things to do, besides brisk walking to the forest and cycling around Shillong on my mountain bike."

Beauty musings: "My number one beauty hack is a home-made coffee scrub that I use once a week. The caffeine in the coffee restricts the blood vessels and the scrub acts as a stimulant. The result is less tired-looking eyes."





← ANGELICA ARIBAM, 28
Activist and founder, Femme First
Foundation

MANIPUR

Angellica Aribam is just as clued-in to her beauty regimen as she is to the social and political causes she fights for. And while the latter takes precedence, she does not shy away from experimenting. “Two years ago, I tonsured my head because I had always wanted to do so despite society’s beauty standards for women,” says Aribam, who was featured in *Forbes India’s* 30 Under 30 list in 2017. Her mornings start with cleansing (Neutrogena), toning and moisturising (Forest Essentials), followed by sunscreen (Vichy). Off duty, she loves her bright lipsticks and eyeshadows. “Some of my favourite lip colours are Relentlessly Red by M.A.C, Graffiti Pop by Clinique, and Gossip Gurl by Huda Beauty.” Health, of course, has always been the top priority. “I eat a lot of foods rich in vitamin C, drink a litre of herbal tea, and practise the anapana breathing exercises,” says Aribam, who is currently working on her mission to amplify women’s political leadership.

Beauty musing: “In my experience, the one ‘beauty tool’ that you can never go wrong with is self-confidence. So wear it always.”

LIN LAISHRAM, 34
Actor, model and entrepreneur →

MANIPUR

Lin Laishram, last seen in *Axone*, a film on north-east migrants in Delhi, which premiered at the London Film Festival a year ago—is a self-confessed beauty addict who follows a strict skincare regimen. “My days begin with a home-made ubtan face scrub, washed off with a vitamin C cleanser, followed by a facial massage or workout with grape seed oil, and then the No7 Protect & Perfect Intense Advanced Facial Sun Protection sunscreen. At night, I cleanse, tone, and moisturise before putting on a water-based sleeping mask by Laneige,” says the 34-year-old whose vanity kit comprises a Burt’s Bees lip balm, a Maybelline mascara, Shiseido’s Sheer and Perfect Foundation and a balmy blush. Eating clean, meditating, and hobbies like painting have made a huge difference, giving her the kind of glow no product could. “I suffer from hypothyroidism, which is why I have to be extra careful about my lifestyle,” says Laishram, who launched her own eco-friendly north-east inspired jewellery brand Shamooo Sana a few years ago.

Beauty musings: “I belong to the Meitei community, and instead of shampoo we use a concoction of rice water and herbs brewed in an earthen pot. Sadly, this tradition is disappearing.” >



"Every evening, I sit in my balcony garden with my son. Together, we watch the sky and the trees, and I focus on all the good things the universe has delivered in my life"



RICHANA KHUMANthem, 32
Fashion designer and creative
director, Khumanthem

MANIPUR

For Richana Khumanthem, who helms her eponymous label that promotes handlooms and weaves peculiar to the north-east, less is more—be it at her fashion week showings or her store in Sagolband, Imphal—she prefers sporting a toned-down look. "I like to highlight just one feature at a time. If I have chosen to go with red lips, everything else will be subdued, including my hairstyle," says the designer, whose skincare routine includes an Innisfree aloe gel in the day and a retinol eye cream at night. "I've recently started practising the Curly Girl Method by Lorraine Massey. I have naturally wavy hair, but it has somehow become straight and frizzy. It could be all the treatments I put it through during my college days, back when poker-straight hair was in vogue," she says. "As kids, my sister and I would tail our grandmother so we could get a bit of this special concoction called *chinghi* in our local language. It's because of this ritual that my grandmother had long black hair till her last days." Presently focused on helping front-line workers in India fight COVID-19 by providing high-quality PPE kits, Khumanthem travels light, carrying just her Maybelline New York Colossal Bold Eyeliner, Laneige lip balm and a M.A.C lipstick or gloss (Ruby Woo, Velvet Teddy, or Lipglass Spice, depending on the mood). "I have stopped using a compact as I prefer to let my skin breathe. When I use makeup, I add just two more steps to my daily routine—M.A.C's BB and Strobe creams."

Beauty musings: "Between work and the baby, I try and squeeze in a few upper body workouts and planks. I also drink two litres of water and include fruits in my diet every day. All this works like magic on the skin." ■



A COUPLE'S GUIDE TO THE PERFECT WEDDING

Though wedding celebrations are now a small affair, it still requires a whole lot of planning and meticulous execution. Co-curators Neha Seth Arora and Manoj Gopalani's first-ever virtual wedding fair, The World of Weddings, is a three-day experiential affair that promises to be an excellent platform for prospective couples and their families to connect with the best suppliers of the wedding industry

Weddings in India are unlike any other and making it even more exceptional are the ceremonies and rituals that come with it. The festivities commence months before the D-day with a whole lot of planning in place. However, the global pandemic has transformed the entire scenario as most couples have been compelled to postpone their fairy-tale wedding. But with the country slowly opening up, families that have chosen to move forward with their special day during the pandemic, have sparked off a trend of intimate weddings with a definite guest list, often in an outdoor setting.

Although wedding celebrations are now a sociable affair, it still requires an army of people to ensure everything works out as planned. To address the host of wedding woes during a pandemic, co-curators Neha

Seth Arora and Manoj Gopalani have announced the first-ever virtual wedding fair, The World of Weddings (TWOW), a three-day experiential affair from 23rd to 25th October 2020 in collaboration with Hyatt Hotels, an associate sponsor. TWOW was conceptualised as a holistic platform to provide consumers direct access to the finest stakeholders and thought-leaders from the industry and all this, from the comfort of your home.

An immersive, one-of-a-kind online event, TWOW is a one-stop-shop bringing together the finest players of the wedding industry to not only network but also have one-on-one interaction with potential clientele. Bridging the gap between end consumers and partners from the wedding fraternity, the fair offers a virtual lobby,

dedicated auditoriums, and immersive galleries that will showcase design mavens like Masaba Gupta, Archana Kochhar, and Nivedita Sabboo and jewellery label like Notandas Jewellers. TWOW also offers easy access to some prominent names from the field of photography like the Wedding Story and Israni Photography. Also, onboard are names like Vinod Sumit and Laadi Sangeet Maker for a perfect sangeet night.

At TWOW, you will not only get a chance to meet make-up artists like Ojas Rajani and Bianca Louzado but also attend masterclasses and get styling tips from Mohit Rai and Aastha Sharma of The Wedding Style Project. A show dedicated to the wedding industry is incomplete without wedding planners. TWOW has signed up with Horizon WIE, VV Weddings, Dreamz Krraft - The wedding company, and Pink Whistle Man by Ranjani, and décor stylist like Vivaah, Spree Designs, and Pulp Fiction. Hospitality brands like Minor Group and Hyatt Hotels (also an associate sponsor) have been locked in for the show. While media and entertainment companies include Wedding Sutra (media partner) and Red Entertainment.

TWOW is a virtual extravaganza that revolves around three pillars; experience, engage, and evolve with the modern world of weddings. Experience carefully curated products and services, engage with industry experts, expand business opportunities, explore the bigger picture, and evolve with the ever-changing realm of the industry. So, go ahead and sign up for this one-of-a-kind extravaganza that promises a wedding planning experience like no other!

For more information, visit Twow.in, email info@twow.in, call +91 9930368477 or follow @twowexp on Facebook and @twow_exp on Instagram



آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

More than words

Animating letters into visual stories, these four modern-day type masters create dreamy works that are both legible and lovely. **Megha Mahindru** tasks them with crafting exclusive stamps that celebrate the wealth of Indic scripts

→
NIKHEEL APHALE,
CO-FOUNDER,
STUDIO EM & EN

The way Aphale talks about his work, you'd think he's describing a love interest. "The beautiful curves and turns of Devanagari or the geometry of Roman alphabets...when-ever I draw something, the letters surprise me with their inner beauty and reveal their never-seen forms, and this makes our relationship more engaging and long-lasting." His fascination with letters started in school, where Aphale's impeccable handwriting won him steady admiration. Over the years, the NID graduate's dreamy strokes have not only featured in calligraphy journals like the *Letter Arts Review* but also on book covers for Ruskin Bond and Khushwant Singh, as well as on sneakers for Vans x VegNonVeg. "Type is a versatile and fluid medium comprising sound, dimension, textures. You can write, change, twist, shake and express many emotions and stories," says the Bengaluru-based letter artist, who has recently finished designing the children's book *Naye Shabd* by child rights activist Kamla Bhasin, out on Pratham Books. Leehkin.com



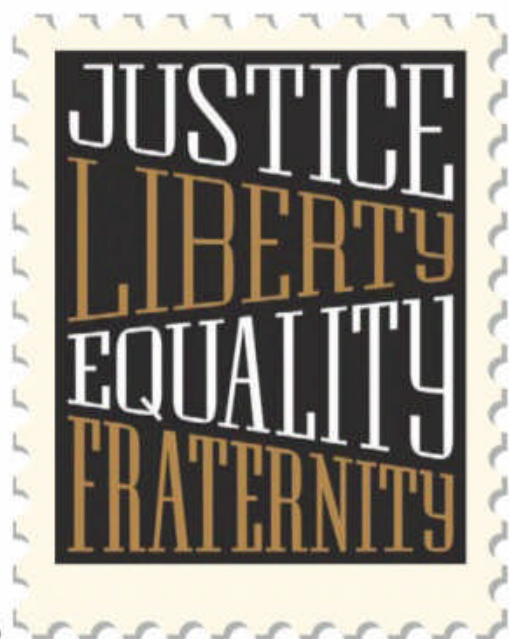
"I WORKED WITH A LINE FROM A BEAUTIFUL SONG PENNED BY THE EMINENT POET-LYRICIST SAHIR LUDHIANVI. THE STAMP SPEAKS OF A BETTER TOMORROW, URGING YOU NOT TO GIVE UP, BECAUSE 'DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT IS TEMPORARY'"

"THIS STAMP USES CHARACTERS FROM 15 NATIVE INDIAN SCRIPTS (OL CHIKI, GURMUKHI, CHAKMA AND MEETEI MAYEK, AMONG THE LESSER-KNOWN). THE GARLAND OF LETTERS IS STRUNG TO FORM A CIRCLE CELEBRATING DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, HOPE AND HARMONY"



NEELAKASH KSHETRIMAYUM,
CO-FOUNDER, BRANDNEWTYP

In school, Kshetrimayum was the go-to guy for every lovelorn student in need of a stylistic, handwritten poem. Since then, the NID and University of Reading graduate has taken his knack for type design to a global audience. His seminal work in Meetei Mayek, the native script of Manipur, has brought renewed interest in a script that was fast being replaced by Bengali. "It was my responsibility as a type artist to popularise and push it from obscurity," says the Goa-based Manipuri artist, whose script is now developed for behemoths like Adobe and Google. Neelakash.webflow.io



POOJA SAXENA,
FOUNDER, MATRA TYPE

Among the niche cohort of handwriting enthusiasts, Saxena's type walks of old Delhi through its signboards are sacred. Her preoccupation with type design started at age 10 when she got hold of Noelene Morris's lettering book. Since then, she's not only helmed a flourishing practice but also an e-store that brings her youthful designs on postcards, prints and tote bags. "I wish there was a culture to preserve and archive design practices and processes in India," says the typeface graduate from the University of Reading, who has converted Devanagari to Bharati Braille. Matratype.com

About the work: "The diversity of scripts as well as India is best captured in our Preamble, and the four words I decided to draw are very much the heart of it."



RATHNA RAMANATHAN, FOUNDER,
MINUS9 DESIGN

In her game-changing book *In The Land Of Punctuation*, Ramanathan animates punctuation to tell a parable first published in 1905—question marks morph into trees and brackets take on the shape of foot soldiers, presenting a book where every page is worthy as an art print. "Typography is visualising language, and designing something is like having a conversation," shares the Chennai-born, London-based type artist. M9design.com

About the work: "My stamp is inspired by Asoka's edicts. India was founded on the pluralist values of unity in diversity. The 'O' in Hope is a modern version of the Asoka Chakra." ■

Ajrakh and Armani

Gujarat is a land of textiles, a state where the complexity of the Patan patola exists alongside the simple ingenuity of bandhej. And for these prolific (and well-turned-out) women who live here, dressing is as much an expression of their packed-to-the-brim lives as an ode to their home state's glorious craft traditions. By **Shalini Shah**

MALIKA CHIRAYU AMIN

📍 VADODARA

For the CEO and managing director of integrated pharmaceutical company Alembic Ltd, an average day is spent at the company headquarters in Vadodara, where she is also part of the marketing team at Yera, its 60-year-old glassware manufacturing facility. There is work with Alembic Foundation, the CSR arm, much to do at the firm's real estate business, as well as at Space Studios, the artist residency that she initiated 15 years ago. Her wardrobe is as chameleonic as her. "Whether it's a print, colour or vintage, there is always something unexpected," she says. A consummate hostess, a place at her dinner table (either at their "home, garden pavillions, or riverside properties") is a coveted one. Cotton kurtas make up her day wardrobe, while saris are redone with vintage borders and lace trimmings. For travel abroad, picks from Dolce & Gabbana, Emilio Pucci and Ralph Lauren are paired with chiffon saris and jewellery she's designed herself. Travel also brings with it a chance to collect vintage brooches, fragments of necklaces and curios. Topmost on the list of cherished wardrobe items is a 45-year-old fully embroidered sari designed by her sister Pallavi Jaikishan.



RADHIKARAJE GAEKWAD

📍 VADODARA

HH Maharani Radhikaraje Gaekwad of Baroda discusses textiles with an enthusiasm that is both heartening and inspiring. A textile revivalist, heritage conservationist and director of the CDS Art Foundation, she has been championing the woven art in her public life as well as in her personal wardrobe: her collection of nine-yard saris is highly covetable. Among the rich repository of traditional weaves, she admits to being partial to Chanderi. "In Gujarat, because of the climate, Chanderis are more popular than silk. You don't see as much of the Paithani in Baroda even though it's a Maratha state," she explains. (Along with her mother-in-law Shubhangini Gaekwad, she has been working on a Chanderi revival project.) She's also especially fond of the Baroda shalu, which used to be specially woven in Benares for the Baroda royals. "They are exquisite, but there has been no research done on them." A revival project kicked off earlier this year and a batch was presented in a show by the Foundation. Her vintage sari blouses are, justifiably, a source of pride. "Today we talk of slow fashion, but that's how it always was," she says. "That was always the concept of luxury."



JAINA LALBHAI

📍 AHMEDABAD

For this stylist and fashion curator, her personal style became the springboard for her pop-up concept, Style Audit by Jaina Lalbhai. "I saw people appreciating the designers I wore and asking me to source something similar for them.

I work extensively with luxury prêt designers from all over India," says Lalbhai. A proponent of labels like Kshitij Jalori and Akaaro by Gaurav Jai Gupta, about her style Lalbhai says, "On some days I will wear tonnes of silver jewellery and a bindi. On others, you will see me in a white shirt, distressed jeans and a statement headband. I go with the mood." While Anamika Khanna is an eternal favourite, Ikai, Rimzim Dadu, Saaksha & Kinni, Dhruv Kapoor, Zimmermann, Ulla Johnson, and Johanna Ortiz also occupy precious space in her wardrobe. "Patolas, a well-done bandhej sari and Kutchi embroidery make me go weak in the knees... My favourite designers today are the ones who give traditional crafts a global appeal." Lalbhai says she has witnessed a shift in her clientele. "My typical Ahmedabadi customer is extremely discerning. I've done over 17 shows, and while they liked to play safe earlier, they now crave statement pieces. They are becoming bolder, which I love."



MEHA S PATEL

📍 AHMEDABAD

In the sweatpants era we live in, there's a running joke in the Patel household. "Even when we were staying indoors, I couldn't find myself lounging around in tracks and tees all day. I would be all dressed up, and my husband Sharvil [Patel, managing director of Zydu Cadila] would ask: 'Are we going somewhere that I am not aware of?' Dressing right is important... It lifts my mood and sets the tone for the day," says Patel, a graduate of London College of Fashion. Wardrobe favourites span family heirlooms with sentimental ties, alongside Cartier's Panthère de Cartier collection and jewellery by Bina Goenka. Between time spent with the kids and Pilates, work, and piano lessons, Patel manages to keep it stylish. "A love for traditional weaves and saris comes from my mother, whose style is unparalleled," she muses. Khadi is another love, and Patel has a collection devoted to it. "Coming from Bombay and living in Ahmedabad after marriage, the love for textiles and its many weaves helped me mix the aesthetics of both cities and develop a unique sense of my own." >



NUPUR DALMIA

📍 VADODARA

The director of Gallery Ark has a "cheat card" for when she needs to dial it up—a pair of green Dolce & Gabbana crystal heels. Those, along with her mum's cotton saris and her own crisp white shirts make up her uniform. "I have moved across cities, countries, jobs and industries, and my wardrobe naturally emulated my environment to some extent. What's remained consistent, though, are easy-to-wear pieces that echo a mix of cultural influences." Current favourites include sustainable label The Summer House, Anavila, Raw Mango, Reiss and Aritzia. "Ask any gallerist, she'll tell you transitional dressing is everything," Dalmia elaborates, on the presence of '50s-style skirts and '80s-inspired high-waist jeans that are perfect work-to-dinner looks. "For us from Baroda, our spirits are guided by the city's long-standing patronage tradition influenced by the Gaekwad royal family. The culture of patronage has trickled down through generations and has created a strong community of artists, including some of the greats like Sankho Chaudhuri, NS Bendre, Nasreen Mohamedi and KG Subramanyan." Dalmia thinks it's natural that Gujarat's textile heritage would have exerted an influence on her through gradual osmosis.

ROOPAL SHODHAN

📍 AHMEDABAD

At Elan, Roopal Shodhan's clothing store in Ahmedabad, the shelves stock Sabyasachi, Anamika Khanna, Tarun Tahiliani, Rajesh Pratap Singh and Raghavendra Rathore on one hand, and Raw Mango, Péro, Ikai, Vrisa, and Payal Khandwala on the other. "I love working with designers with an inherent culture of textiles, crafts and structure. Also, those who are constantly evolving and are versatile," she says. Whether doing casual-chic in Óbidos, Portugal, or bedecked in a gold sari at a Rajput wedding, she's known for her style. (Last September, Sabyasachi Mukherjee picked her for his list of the country's most stylish women.) "I have had no formal education in textiles, but living in Gujarat I was constantly exposed to the culture of beautiful weaves, crafts and arts," says Shodhan. "Ahmedabad is this unique mix of enterprise, culture, modernity and vivacity. What I find impressive is how the women have an innate sense of good clothing and can match and mix it with trends. An Ahmedabadi wedding is a treat to witness, with the finest of textiles and jewellery all put together with such ease and grace."



REKHA RODWITTIYA

📍 VADODARA

For this Vadodara-based artist, her art is as much a manifestation of an itinerant life as the need to explore the inner lives of women. "I love the vibrancy of differences that jostle for attention in India. I love the spirit of those who are bold enough to see themselves without fear. I love that style is not homogenous but so varied that it is like that proverbial kaleidoscope." Known for her kohl-lined eyes and handloom saris, she draws parallels between her work and wardrobe, and she ponders, "As a painter, I am a colourist, and I love the palette of bright and vibrant colours. These too get reflected into my wardrobe, but more often than not, I find myself choosing to wear black. This isn't, as many people sometimes believe, some act of trying to make it my signature style. It comes I think much more from the fact that when I am within the territory of so much colour as an artist, to be garbed in black creates that necessary balance of stillness I believe I aesthetically require."

**KRISHNA HANDA**

📍 AHMEDABAD

"I'm not a clotheshorse; I like clothes that have character, and that match the person I've evolved into," says Handa. The entrepreneur behind venture capital and private equity firm Claris Capital and the founder of Brihati Foundation, a sustainable urban development organisation, leans towards the effortless. "I spent my student days in America, and you can still see that influence in the fact that I reach for denim when I'm dressing down (and also sometimes up). Of course, the frayed jeans, knotted tees and dip-dyed hair have made way..." she says. Her favourite things are tied to her favourite people—the first football jersey that husband Arjun (then a national-level player) gave her when they were 17, the five saris that her five aunts gifted at her wedding, mum's saris and wedding lehenga, and the matching tees that she and her sister bought when they were younger. "Some clothes are more than just pieces of fabric; they're stories and memories entwined in threads." How does the state she lives in affect how she dresses? "I pick pieces that are rich not just in colour, but also character and story." A guilty pleasure, she says, is heading to the old city to look for pre-owned sari borders or fabrics. ■

ABU JANI & SANDEEP KHOSLA • ALBERTA FERRETTI •
ALEX KURUVILLA • AMIT AGGARWAL • ANAMIKA
KHANNA • ANGELICA CHEUNG • ANITA DONGRE • ANNA
WINTOUR • BANITA SANDHU • BIBHU MOHAPATRA •
CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN • DAVID ABRAHAM & RAKESH
THAKORE • EDGARDO OSORIO (AQUAZZURA) • EUGENIA
DE LA TORRIENTE • FALGUNI & SHANE PEACOCK • FREIDA
PINTO • GAURAV GUPTA • GIAMBATTISTA VALLI •
GIORGIO ARMANI • HAMISH BOWLES • INDRANI
DASGUPTA • KANISHTHA DHANKAR • KIARA ALIA
ADVANI • MANISH MALHOTRA • MARIA GRAZIA CHIURI
(CHRISTIAN DIOR) • MEKHOLA BOSE • MIRA RAJPUT
KAPOOR • MONICA SHAH & KARISHMA SWALI (JADE BY
MONICA & KARISHMA) • MONISHA JAISING • NAEEM
KHAN • NATASHA POONAWALLA • NEHA DHUPIA • PALAK
SHAH (EKAYA) • PAYAL SINGHAL • POOJA MOR • POORNA
JAGANNATHAN • PRABAL GURUNG • PRIYA TANNA •
RAHUL MISHRA • RADHIKA APTE • RAJESH PRATAP
SINGH • SABYASACHI MUKHERJEE • SALLY HOLKAR •
SANDRA CHOI (JIMMY CHOO) • SANJAY GARG (RAW
MANGO) • SHANTANU & NIKHIL MEHRA • SHIBANI
DANDEKAR • SONALI BENDRE BEHL • SONAM K AHUJA •
SUJATA KESHAVAN (VARANA) • SWATI AGARWAL &
SUNAINA JALAN (SWATI & SUNAINA) • TAMARA RALPH
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Unprecedented events bring about awakenings. The pandemic is a reminder that the strength of an economy rests upon a healthy community. And this can only be achieved through a robust healthcare ecosystem with access as its cornerstone. The impact of COVID-19 on world economies reaffirms that with health at stake, even the most developed economies in the world can crumble under the strain. So how does India fit into this? Over the last decade, the Indian pharmaceutical industry has burgeoned to the extent that it is pegged at becoming the pharmacy of the world. Indian pharma came together in solidarity—from forging partnerships and supporting global efforts to launching affordable drugs with the potency to fight the virus, and collaborating across the value chain for ramping up access to critical medication. Today, as economies reboot world over, it is an opportune time for us to build a healthy community that will be the driver of our economic aspirations. Here's how we can do that:

QUALITY CARE FOR ALL: Access to high-quality life-saving treatments is a fundamental right that no one should be denied, regardless of their socio-economic status. Our care centres at all levels must be equipped with skilled medical personnel and necessary equipment. We must also make it conducive for pharmaceutical companies to research and develop innovative treatments for the country, even for the rarest of diseases.

ILLNESS TO WELLNESS: The unfolding of India's consumerisation story has led to a growing shift in the illness to wellness and self-care forward mindset. I foresee an India where patients are empowered about their health needs and are transitioning to a preventive, more curative behavioural change.

EMBRACING DIGITISATION: Telemedicine and online consultation are emerging areas that have proven to be a boon, especially during the pandemic. The current telemedicine guidelines in India provide a comprehensive framework and will help realise the full potential of the advancements in technology. They are poised to attract investors to scale up, which will help in decongesting health facilities and bridge the accessibility gap by providing consultation to patients in remote and rural areas.

THE POWER OF ONE: I'd like to conclude by highlighting the most important aspect in all of this: harnessing the power of one. While praising the efforts in containing the spread of COVID-19 in Dharavi, one of Asia's largest slums, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the WHO, underscored the need for unity and solidarity to turn this pandemic around. Coming together is the only way forward. ■

Samina Hamied is the executive vice-chairperson of Cipla, and represents the third generation of the company's founding family. She has played a key role in successfully incubating and shaping Cipla Health Limited, while spearheading its ambitious foray into the US with strategic acquisitions

"THE PANDEMIC IS A REMINDER THAT THE STRENGTH OF AN ECONOMY RESTS UPON A HEALTHY COMMUNITY"



MY INDIA IS ITS HEALTHCARE

A MANIFESTO
FOR A HEALTHIER
TOMORROW. BY
SAMINA HAMIED



آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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Pick your potion

What used to be a little hippy-dippy fringe movement has ballooned into a powerhouse industry over the last decade. The business of beauty and health supplements in India is now a force to be reckoned with. By **Avanti Dalal**

A one-a-day multivitamin habit is a good first step to better health, lit-from-within skin and strong hair. But to get the pay-off you're really looking for, you may need more than just the one magic tablet. Today's supplements aren't the large nausea-inducing pills you're used to—they come in the form of effervescent tablets, flavoured chewable gummies and candies that'll leave you feeling content instead of queasy. Even if you are a well-fortified person, downing these additional potions, pills and vitamins as nutritional collateral can be a proactive pick, and in India, we certainly don't lack for choice.

PURE CURE + CO.

While single ingredients like turmeric or neem can be added into a routine easily, making a cocktail that is both safe and effective can be a difficult endeavour. To prevent a mad-scientist mixture, Pure Cure's formulas blend all the adaptogens and herbs you need into a single tablet that serves your specific purpose. The point, according to Siddharth Arora, the co-founder, is to "distil ayurvedic wisdom to its simplest form so users that don't have the time, mind space or energy to dive into the nitty-gritty of the science can still benefit from it."

Vogue pick: Relax, a tablet that houses 60 ingredients including ashwagandha, brahmi and gooseberry, which work together to balance the nervous system, support emotional stability and improve the body's reaction to stressful situations. "It saw a 300% jump in sales during the COVID-19 lockdown," confirms Arora.



Pure Cure + Co.'s range includes a pill for everyday problems



CUREVEDA

Cureveda aims to "amalgamate the knowledge of modern research in dietary supplements and phytonutrients with traditional Indian medical wisdom," says its CEO, Bhavna Anand Sharma. The result is a line-up of powders and pills derived from plants that have been proven to be effective in clinical trials and past studies.

Vogue pick: Glow, a protein and pearl-based powder that can help rev up collagen formation, which is the building block of the cellular structure for skin and hair. Collagen loss, which is said to be at 50 per cent by the time you turn 50, can leave skin prone to sagging and hair likely to break.



Cureveda Glow,
₹1,395

Setu Nutrition

Turmeric Gummies,
Apple Cider Vinegar
Gummies, Lutein
Gummies, ₹800 each



SETU

Struggling with the small things, like dry eyes or strained muscles, may not feel like the end of the world, but Setu's formulas are meant to stop the niggles in their tracks before they escalate. "We wanted to create supplements that understand and specifically care for health issues faced by young urban Indians," confirms Nihaal Mariwala, Setu's CEO. While the ingredients may be natural (like coconut oil and turmeric), their active ingredients are extracted and made bioavailable via the most scientific methods possible.

Vogue pick: Setu Melatonin, which are quick-dissolving tabs that promote relaxation and sleep. Melatonin decreases the time it takes to fall asleep and regulates the sleep/wake cycle, so taking it in a supplement form can rev up that process. The thin mint-flavoured strips (instead of pills that may not be completely bioavailable) are to be "placed on the tongue to dissolve 30 to 45 minutes before bedtime." ■

DR VAIDYA'S

When Arjun Vaidya was studying in the US, he was encouraged by the exponential growth of yoga in the West. "The ancient Indian practice had been rebranded to suit modern consumers. With yoga mats, pants and gyms, it had become a US\$20-billion industry." Taking this to be a major masterstroke, Vaidya sought to spin the family business (a 150-year-old ayurvedic clinic) into a more accessible avatar because "Ayurveda still had to wake up to the needs of the Indian consumer, beyond boring, old-school and poorly packaged products."

Vogue pick: Chakaash, a traditional chyawanprash formula packaged as a candy-like toffee in place of the traditional ooey-gooey, stick-in-your-teeth bitter paste. It's full of herbs and spices like saffron, amla and jatamansi, all of which are immunomodulatory and help improve brain health and immune function.



Dr Vaidya's
Chakaash
Chyawanprash
Toffees, ₹100
per pack

WELLBEING NUTRITION

Since "45 per cent of Indians" find it hard to swallow a pill, Wellbeing Nutrition is centred on a different delivery method: effervescent tablets. When dissolved in water (or any other liquid), they are 100 per cent bioavailable—almost double that of synthetic pills.

Vogue pick: Daily Greens, which transforms your morning green smoothie into a one-step process, including fruits, vegetables and adaptogens like kale and spirulina into one tab. The plants are handpicked, flash-frozen, slow-dried, mixed and then compressed.



Wellbeing
Nutrition
Daily Greens,
₹590,
Grandma's
Kadha, ₹350



The good life

From struggling to run a mile to becoming one of India's leading wellness curators, healthcare scion and entrepreneur **Upasana Kamineni Konidela** discusses her food and fitness evolution and how she's advocating for India's medical services. By **Aditi Bhimjyani**

When Upasana Kamineni Konidela was a twenty-something student in London, she decided, on a whim, to run the London Marathon. "I was 90kg and running ad hoc. I ended up injuring my knee," says the gen-next entrepreneur from the Reddy family of Apollo Hospitals fame, one of India's largest healthcare enterprises. "I was easily influenced by 'influencers,'" she says of her days as a management student at Regent's University. "This was when I realised how important it was to have access to the right information and professionals in the field of health." The 34-year-old has come a

long way since then, becoming one of the leading wellness curators in India's burgeoning health sector.

We catch up over a Zoom video call on a rainy afternoon with iffy Wi-Fi. She patches through, radiant in the plush living room of her Hyderabad home, in a simple white T-shirt, her hair lustrous. She has never been busier. Her days are spent interacting with COVID-19 front-liners and her nights are often sleepless—a problem solved by her nutritionist's magic insomnia-combating brew: nutmeg, poppy seeds, saffron, black raisins and almond milk. Kamineni Konidela is at once an agony aunt filled with wellness remedies and

the boss of the boardroom, whipping the health industry into shape.

CARE FOR ALL

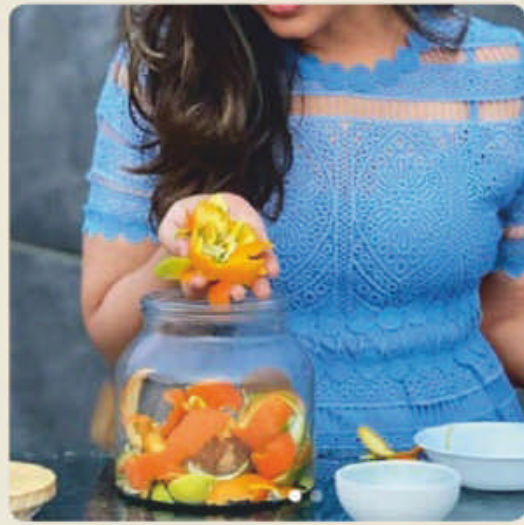
Kamineni Konidela might be a legacy kid, but she has already carved her niche across her many ventures. As the vice chairperson of Apollo Foundation, she has helped further her grandfather's self-sustainable model to help rural India stay healthy. As the managing director of Family Health Plan Insurance TPA Limited, she's a passionate spokesperson for insurance for all. She's also spearheading India's first digital healthcare concierge service as the managing director of URLife (India's larg-

COURTESY @ UPASANAKAMINENIKONIDELA/INSTAGRAM



CLEAN LIVING

Kamineni Konidela is an advocate for a local and seasonal diet, paired with a daily fitness regimen



est workplace health services firm, formerly Apollo Life). Genuine advice with legitimate provenance is the need of the hour, not only due to the pandemic, but also because of her personal experience. She shares, "I have changed my well-being journey and lost 30kg and maintained my weight. I work at it every day."

WORKOUT BUDDIES

Since her wedding to Telugu film superstar Ram Charan eight years ago, her commitment to personal fitness has been further solidified. She explains, "My husband works out twice a day since his body is required to look a certain way. He is my motivation." But his fitness regimen isn't for her. For Kamineni Konidela, exercise has to provide mental peace as well as physical results. A five-kilometre walk in the park with a friend five days a week and ashtanga yoga thrice a week do it for her. "I've stopped meeting friends for meals. I meet them for workouts or walks instead, where we can vent and bond. I am not so disciplined with fitness, but I strive towards it," she says.

NO RESERVATIONS

Kamineni Konidela confesses that as a foodie and emotional eater, the diet side of healthy living was a bigger challenge. Her motto: understand your body. "Without a panel of fancy tests and by self-evaluation, I have eliminated brinjal, ladyfinger, green chilli and milk from my diet as they didn't

work for me." But she advises that this has to be a gradual evolution: "I have never gone cold turkey on anything." For instance, she couldn't have her morning tea without sugar, so she moved from agave to jaggery, and now enjoys it unsweetened. Or, she suggests healthier substitutes: "I was the girl who ate white rice and dal every day. So I won't say don't eat it. Instead, opt for unpolished rice and vegetables for one meal and dal for another."

So, with the lockdown, has she joined the banana bread and decorative focaccia baking tribe? Quite the contrary. With activity levels plummeting, she's focusing on vegetables and protein-rich foods. Her favourite hotpot, khichdi, remains her comfort meal, packed with seasonal vegetables, dal and spices. "But don't forget to ionise your vegetables," adds Kamineni Konidela, an advocate for food to be as organic and toxin-free as possible.

Her other staple includes two cups of black coffee a day (with a hint of almond milk), a diuretic and rejuvenator she swears by. Her next food goal is to reduce her meat and seafood intake from four times a week to two. She says, "I want to turn vegetarian eventually. It is better for the body and the planet."

"Go local, eat seasonal and source food that is available within a 100km radius of your home"

VOCAL FOR LOCAL

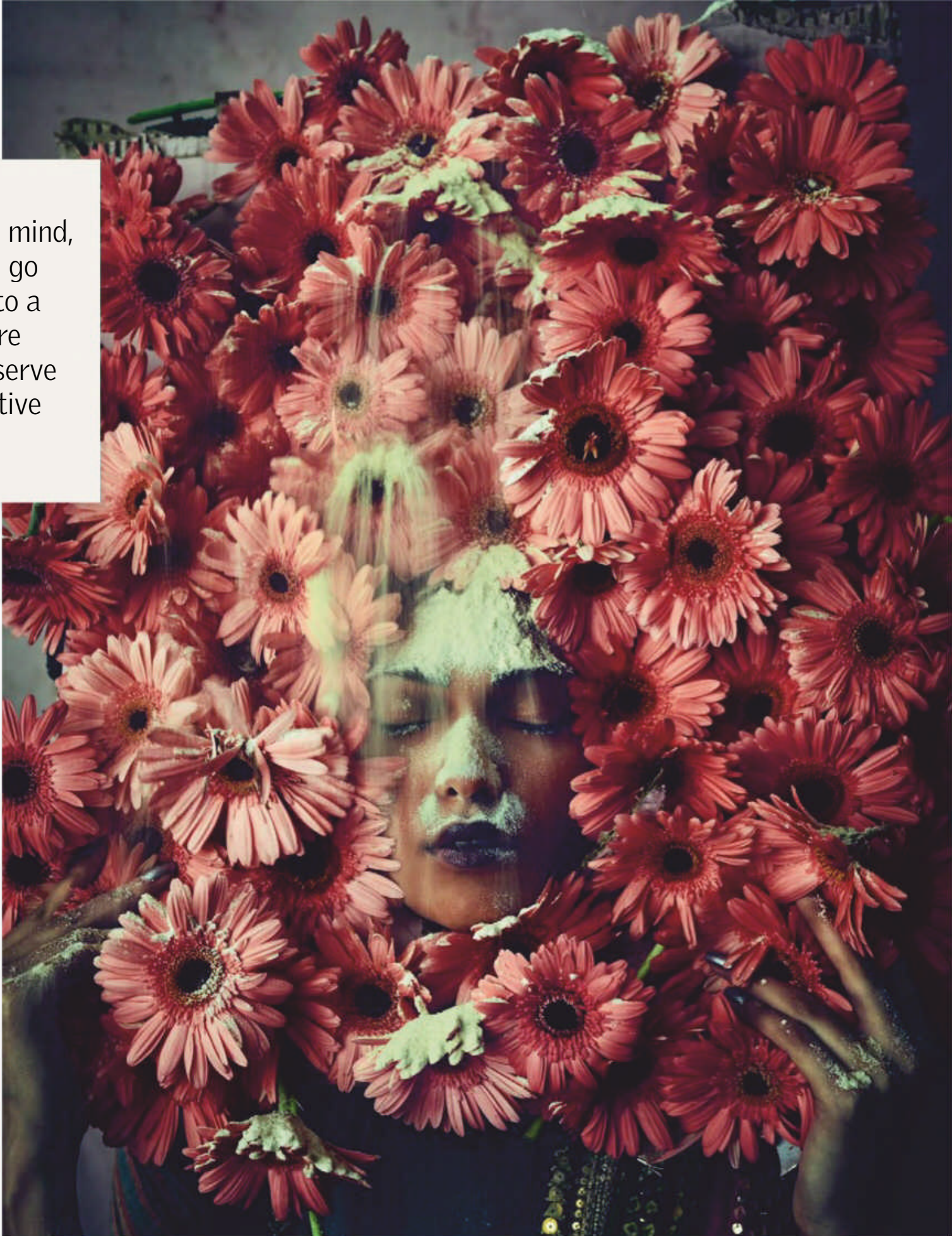
In her opinion (backed by years of research), the home-grown seasonal Indian diet is proving the most nutritious. She discovered this during the time she spent working to save the tigers with the Chenchu tribals in and around Nagarjun-sagar-Srisailam Tiger Reserve in Andhra Pradesh and Amrabad Tiger Reserve in Telangana. "These tribal groups, who have scarce access to cell phone connectivity, suffer from diabetes. Since the government had been subsidising white rice, they were consuming it copiously instead of the local millets they've been used to," she explains. Her advice? Bring age-old techniques back into your life and do it like your ancestors did. "Go local, eat seasonal and source food that is available within a 100km radius of your home," she says.

For now, she is certain life will evolve post pandemic into a simpler but healthier version. "It is time to get your health back on track. Self-assess, figure out your weaknesses and boost your immunity." And in her usual way, she promptly recommends her go-to immunity booster, owing to its fine mix of ginger, pepper and spices, the humble southern staple, a piping hot bowl of rasam. ■

Do you mind?

In Ayurveda, anxiety, depression and anger are not neuroses but symptoms of mental indigestion, a dysfunction of buddhi, which digests our life experience. Ayurvedic therapist **Farah Baria Parakh** shares how we can rekindle this visceral wisdom

To heal the mind, we have to go beyond it, to a space where we can observe its destructive patterns



KRISTIAN SCHULLER; TARUN VISHWA



THE BEAUTIFUL MIND KIT

Ayurvedic principles to add to your daily routine for major impact on your mental well-being

In Ayurveda, we are what we eat, so **food becomes our consciousness**. Organic fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and dairy are sattvic foods that nourish and soothe the nervous system, bringing clarity and contentment.

Avoid stimulants like coffee, alcohol, chocolate, excess sugar, salt, and rajasic spices as well as processed, stale and fermented foods which are tamasic.

Music, art, poetry, and literature elevate the mind, refining its sattvic sensibilities.

Dinacharya or following nature's circadian rhythm brings balance and harmony to your day. Rise with the sun, conduct your activities when it is in the sky and sleep shortly after it sets.

Purusharthas, or the four goals of life—dharma

(relationships), artha (work), kama (enjoyment), and moksha (spirituality)—give us purpose and fulfilment.

Pratipaksha Bhavana, the yogic technique of consciously replacing toxic patterns like

dishonesty, hatred and reactivity with beneficial ones such as truth (satya), compassion (ahimsa), and self-control (brahmacharya), can heal us and our relationships.

Asanas release undigested emotions that

get trapped in the body's connective tissue, promoting steadiness (sthiram) and bliss (sukham).

Pranayamas like Nadi Shodhana (alternate nostril breathing) detox the nervous system. And positive affirmations can reprogramme negative sanskaras.



If we were to distil all the angst of human existence into a single word, it would be that snarky verb, 'should'. Your heart is broken but you *should* get on with life. You're terrified you'll go broke but you *should* maintain your lifestyle. It's not what things are but what we think they *should* be that causes us so much pain. 'Should' also implies that we ought to be what we are not, because we simply cannot stomach who we are—our feelings, thoughts, needs and experiences. Modern psychology calls this neurosis. Ayurveda calls it mental indigestion.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

According to Ayurvedic psychology, we digest our experiences in much the same way we digest dinner. First, sensory information is ingested by the outer mind, Manas, and converted into raw emotion. (My friend says something hurtful and my stomach recoils with indignation.)

These emotions are then digested by the middle mind, Buddhi, which subjects them to the acid test of reason. (Could she be right?) If digestion is good, toxic feelings are smoothly eliminated. (I'm hurt, but her opinion doesn't define me, so I can let it go.)

The experience then gets assimilated by the inner mind, Citta, in the form of sanskaras. These are deep-seated mental patterns that get hardwired into our consciousness and govern all our reactions.

MENTAL INDIGESTION

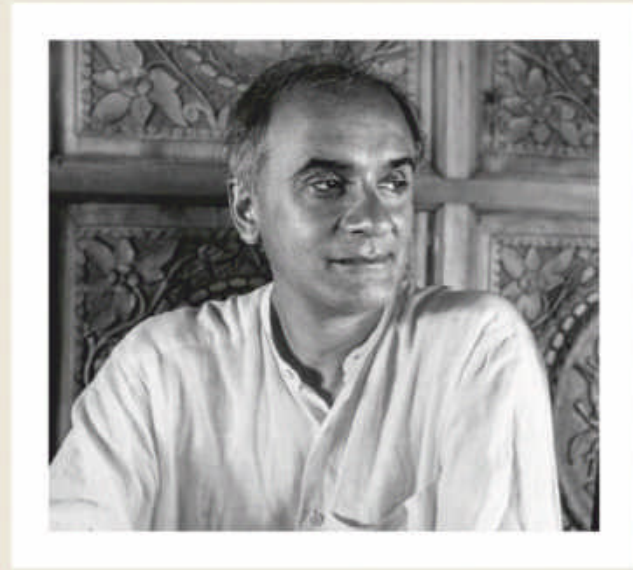
The trouble arises when Buddhi fails to own and digest our feelings by rejecting and judging the experience instead. Similar experiences can subsequently give rise to a negative sanskara. Because sanskaras are based on past experience and personal judgement, they do not factor in current reality. Mental indigestion takes many forms—fear, social anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, envy. Like undigested food, suppressed feelings get stuck, poisoning both mind and body at a cellular level. This is why most diseases originate from negative sanskaras.

HOW DO WE HEAL?

Ayurveda says that to heal the mind, we have to go beyond it, to a space where we can observe its destructive patterns. That space is our real self, or soul, which is the silent witness of our mind-driven false self, or ego.

To get there, we need to sharpen our buddhi by becoming aware of our feelings, thoughts and experiences (no matter how unpalatable), accepting and processing them unconditionally, and acting mindfully in the present instead of reacting from an outmoded mental pattern.

Then, we become conscious. We realise that everything in life is exactly as it should be. But we can choose to embrace and transform it. ■



India in recent years has given us the finest literature in the English language, brilliant cricketers, many of our most ingenious software engineers, more than a few beauty queens (and kings)—and enough Bollywood spectacles to keep the planet sated for centuries.

But if I were to thank it for one great global gift, it would be for its philosophy. Not just yoga or Ayurveda, or the teachings of the ghats, or even the idea of karma; simply the sense that what we see is not the whole story, and the clock cannot measure what's essential. Each of us has a small self and a larger self, and though every culture has given voice to this universal phenomenon, I'm not aware of anywhere that has sung and debated its implications as ceaselessly as India.

When I talk to the Dalai Lama these days, all I hear him stress is the ancient philosophical wisdom that India took to Tibet and across the planet. His Holiness always speaks warmly of India's agility of mind, its ability to keep the ageless alive even as it accelerates into a new millennium, its gift for celebrating secularism while playing host to so many great religious traditions—and, of course, its opening of its doors so generously to himself and a large Tibetan exile community.

But what he's also acknowledging, implicitly, is the way in which India is home to the wisdom of Muslims and Sikhs and Christians and Jains and Zoroastrians and those who take science as the ultimate truth, among so many others. And what he's seen, as leader of Tibetan Buddhists for 81 of his 85 years, is that all these traditions have woven into the fabric of Indian life the sense that the small self is the least of us, and the life we see, not the only one that matters.

People flock to Mecca, to Kyoto, to Rome for variations on the same message, but in India it comes in a thousand flavours, and in a country that mixes them together more intensely than anywhere I know. Not always harmoniously, and not always with dignity or clarity or tolerance, but I thank India for making such ideas feel so urgent—and so current. I walk through the streets of Amritsar, Dharamsala, Varanasi and I know that what we can explain is only the first part of any sentence. ■

Pico Iyer is the author of 15 books, including The Open Road and, most recently, twinned books on his adopted home, Autumn Light and A Beginner's Guide To Japan

"IF I WERE TO THANK INDIA FOR ONE GREAT GLOBAL GIFT, IT WOULD BE FOR ITS PHILOSOPHY. NOT JUST YOGA OR AYURVEDA...OR EVEN THE IDEA OF KARMA; SIMPLY THE SENSE THAT WHAT WE SEE IS NOT THE WHOLE STORY"



DHARUV SINGH; BRIGITTE LACOMBE

MY INDIA IS ITS
**ANCIENT
WISDOM**

AN ODE TO THE COUNTRY'S PHILOSOPHICAL POWER. BY PICO IYER



آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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Incredible and Indian

Part of our narrative, these unique micro-communities, from Nagaland to Lakshadweep, offer a rich study in the anthropology of a diverse nation

THE KONYAKS OF NAGALAND

Phejin Konyak set out to tell the story of her headhunting and tattooing ancestors and discovered herself in the process, says **Parizaad Khan Sethi**



Phejin Konyak became the chronicler of her tribe by accident. In 2014, during a conversation with the director of the Indian Museum in Kolkata, she pointed out that artefacts from the tribes of Northeast India would make their collection more inclusive. Impressed by her passion, the museum director asked her to come back and host a lecture. Konyak, unsure of herself, demurred, but later decided she couldn't waste the opportunity. Armed with a notebook, she started walking from village to village in the Mon district of her home state of Nagaland, meeting her elders and learning about their way of life.

Her elders are not quite like yours and mine. The Konyaks of Nagaland are a remote tribe of erstwhile headhunters and tattooists. Men were rewarded with tattoos on the face, neck or body depending on the role they played in a headhunting mission, while women got their ink on attaining life milestones like puberty, marriage and childbirth. Konyak's great-grandfather, Ahon, a celebrated warrior, later served as an interpreter for the British. (Headhunting was officially banned in 1935, but continued furtively alongside the tattoo traditions till the '60s.) As she got more invested in learning about the tattoo patterns and their significance, Konyak realised she

had not just a lecture, but the makings of a book. She teamed up with Dutch photographer Peter Bos, and after years of documenting and photographing the tribe, the duo published *The Konyaks: Last Of The Tattooed Headhunters* with Roli Books in 2017.

For the Konyaks, the power of one of their own telling this story can't be understated; thus far they've been viewed through the lens of British ethnographers, and later through mainland Indians, who couldn't speak the language. So Konyak's chronicling is not only meticulous but also offers nuance and insight where previously there was misinterpre-



THIERRY FALISE/ GETTY IMAGES





IN INK AND BLOOD

The Konyaks of Nagaland are a warrior tribe of erstwhile headhunters and tattooists

tation and alarmism. It provides a glimpse into how a community jumped from rural to modern life in a few decades. “Those of us born in the early 1980s are the last people who’ve lived the traditional village lifestyle. From the mid ’90s onwards, cars and televisions started coming in,” says 40-year-old Konyak.

Her partnership with Bos encouraged her to delve into the personal, so the book didn’t read like an anthropological text. In a crucial awakening, Konyak had to “slay her demons” by coming to terms with the tribe’s headhunting past. “I was embarrassed and had an inferiority complex about it

and would dodge those questions when asked in lectures,” she says. “Peter saw my discomfort and told me I had to confront it to write the book.”

Konyak’s research showed headhunting missions weren’t just bloodthirsty rampages but strategic forays to control boundary disputes, fishing rights or betrayed alliances. For her rigorous research, Konyak ended up with an invaluable gift—a forearm tattoo done the traditional way by the tribe’s last living artist who’d stopped tattooing in 1958. “I persuaded her, saying I needed to feel the pain like my ancestors did, to be able to write genuinely.” >



THE SIDIS OF JAMBUR

An Indian community with roots in Africa became a five-year-long documentary project for **Ketaki Sheth**, one of India's leading female photographers, finds **Aarti Virani**



Rarely does medieval Indian history zoom in on the odds-defying tale of Malik Ambar, a trailblazing Abyssinian warrior. Born in Ethiopia, he arrived in India as a slave and miraculously ascended the ranks, becoming emperor Jehangir's archnemesis in the early 17th century. Though Ambar's story is one of the era's more epic accounts, he was part of a wave of thousands of East Africans who migrated to the Indian subcontinent—as merchants, soldiers, even pirates—between the 7th and 19th centuries.

It's their present-day descendants, the Sidis, with whom the award-winning photographer Ketaki Sheth first crossed paths in 2005. "My entry was not at all welcome," discloses Sheth, who stumbled on a Sidi village in the dust-encased forests of Gujarat. "They were playing carom, and I think I interrupted," she says. "Eventually, the Sidis didn't care that I was wearing jeans or that my hair was in a ponytail. They treated me like an equal and I respected that."

That initial scepticism wasn't entirely unfounded. Currently, the Sidis—whose population is estimated to hover around 70,000—are one of India's poorest ethnic groups, incessantly discriminated against for their looks. Many opt to marry outside their communities as a gut-wrenching effort to "dilute" their physical appearances, according to Bangkok-based

photographer Luke Duggleby, founder of The Sidi Project, a digital platform that has thoughtfully and inclusively documented the group since 2015.

For Sheth, that first inadvertent trip to Jambur, a remote village in Junagadh, spurred a five-year adventure consisting of frequent visits to local madrasas (most Sidis are Sufi Muslim), fisheries and homes. "During my first trips, I didn't use my camera at all," she says. Her trust-building took shape over a series of intimate interactions, spanning both Gujarat and Karnataka (as well as Mumbai and Hyderabad), where the Sidis reside. The result is a tome of 88 soul-stirring photographs titled *A Certain Grace: The Sidi—Indians Of African Descent* (2013).

Sheth brought her compassionate lens to portray a misunderstood and underrepresented community. To wit, she nurtures connections with several women she befriended while researching, including Hirbai-ben Lobi, a dynamic 70-year-old who steered an all-female jute bag business until the pandemic hit. "Hirbai has managed to do more than most of the men in her village," says Sheth, underscoring the pivotal role women play in uplifting communities. "[In Gujarat], the Sidi community is wedged between villages that are not Muslim," she says, "Nobody writes about them as history becomes even more revisionist. But they're incredible, and they're Indian."



DEEP FOCUS
Ketaki Sheth's
book on the
Indians of
African descent





TRIP, AHOY!
To visit Minicoy, book your passage on the sole ship that plies from Kochi. It's comfortable and takes just under 24 hours

THE WOMEN OF MINICOY

Unexplored and unique, the southernmost atoll in the Lakshadweep archipelago unopens a rhythm of life that reverses the prevalent gender codes across India, writes **Vivek Menezes**



Close your eyes and leave aside the pandemic predicament for a while. Imagine an empty arc of talcum-powder sand on a magnificent emerald-azure lagoon filled with turtles and tropical fish. Everything is different here: simultaneously Muslim and matriarchal, cosmopolitan and traditional. Bask in the fact you're free of tourists in this paradise. This isn't a dream, just everyday reality in Minicoy, the southernmost atoll in the Lakshadweep archipelago.

In its local language (quite similar to the Maldivian Divehi), the island is called Maluku, derived from Mahila-du, or 'women's island'. Possibly because the men were always seafarers, Minicoy has always been a woman-centred society. Marco Polo noted this in the 13th century and Ibn Battuta a century later, and so has every visitor since. It's the same today. The men of Minicoy are prized below-decks ship workers who are disproportionately represented in every multinational shipping company.

The intricate details of Minicoy's matriarchy beggar belief. Only women own property. Everyone takes their mother's name. When a couple gets married, they move into the bride's maternal home; it's the groom's responsibility to furnish it. One disconcertingly gleeful young man told me, "They didn't even give me a toothbrush."

His new wife, one of the island's formidable cohort of highly educated young women, told me that almost all her contemporaries had at least a master's degree. Women make up the bulk of teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants and administrators on Minicoy, while the majority of men head to "work on the ships" after school.

The scholar Ellen Kattner elaborates, "At the outset, marriage is a visiting marriage. Ideally, husbands come after dinner and leave their wives' house before breakfast. During the daytime, they come for tea in the afternoon. They have the rest of their meals in their mother's house. As a couple grows older, a husband spends more and more time in his wife's house until finally the daily rhythm is reversed: he has his meals in his wife's house and visits his mother's for tea in the afternoon."

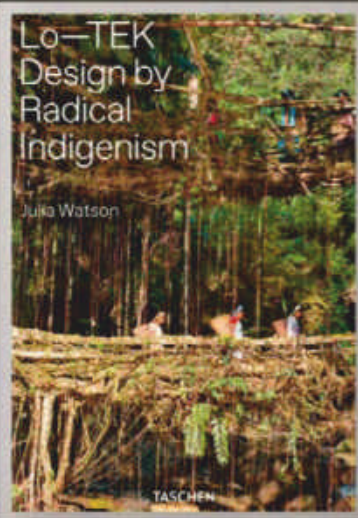
If these cultural wonders weren't enough, Minicoy's setting too is wondrous. Exceptionally far from the rest of India—the Maldives are closer than any other island in Lakshadweep (which has 27 islands, but only ten are inhabited)—its lagoon has to be explored to be believed: 10 sqkm of gin-clear waters, where you can see parrotfish and wrasses darting around your feet and curious turtles bobbing around peaceably. All this, but the most beautiful fact about Minicoy is that almost no one visits. ■



Forces of nature

Can indigenous knowledge mitigate climate change? From the Khasis of Meghalaya to the fisherfolk of Bengal, architect **Julia Watson** shows how nature-based construction techniques and materials can lead to a sustainable future. By **Rajashree Balaram**

Watson's book, published by Taschen, focuses on 120 nature-based technologies developed by indigenous communities over the years



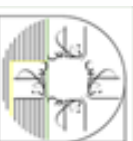
At the outset of my Zoom call with Julia Watson, I realise that the Australian architect-environmentalist is someone who will step forward to share a beautiful point of view, whenever one presents itself. It happens even as we are caught in that perfunctory drill of adjusting our laptop screens, facing each other over two different continents. I ask her what it's like in Utah, where she is on a vacation (her studio is based in New York), and instead of answering,

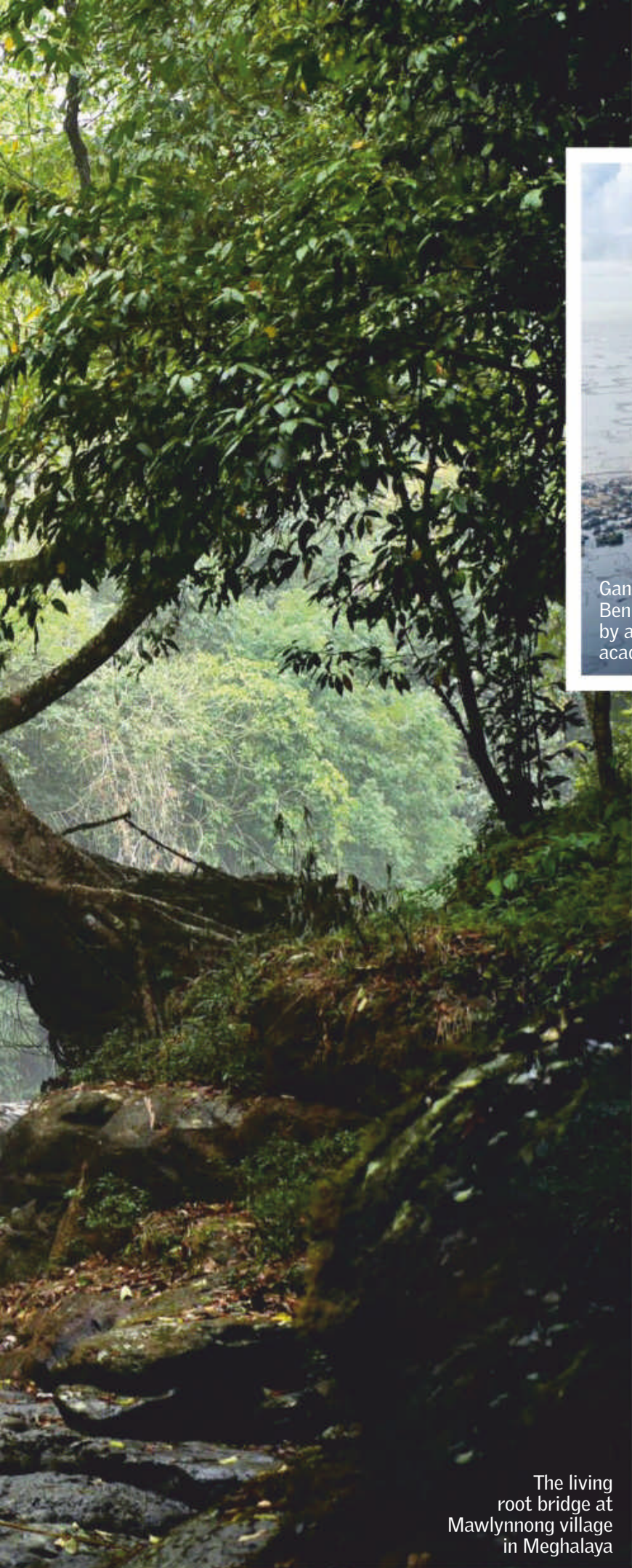


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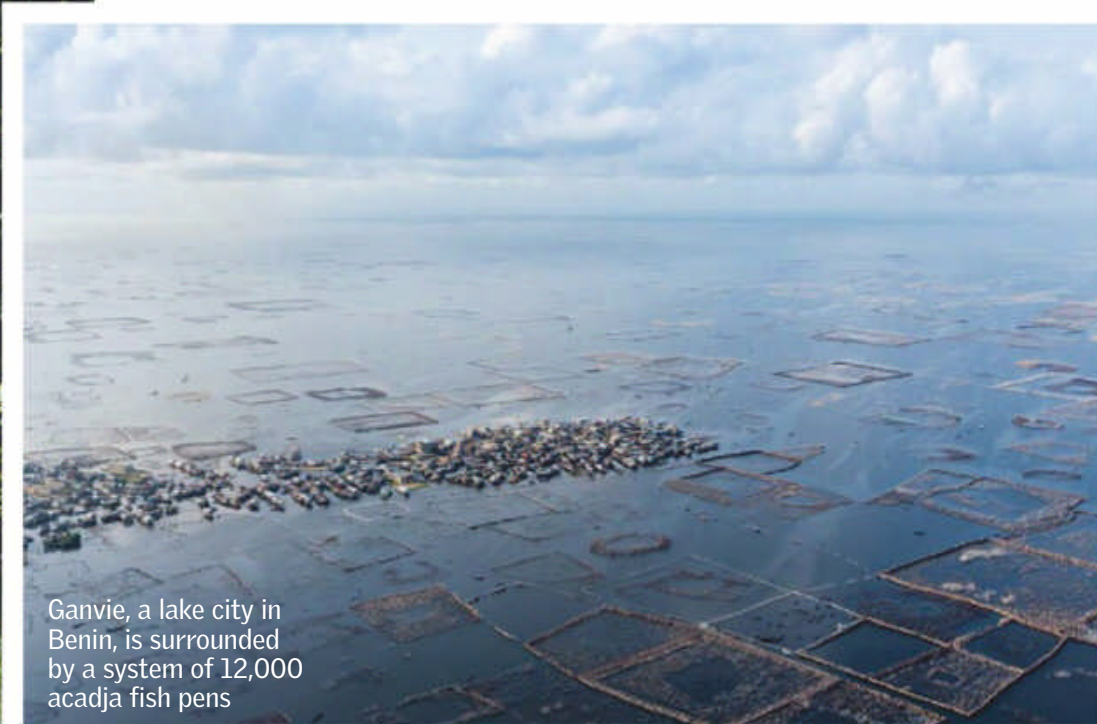
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The living root bridge at Mawlynnong village in Meghalaya



Ganvie, a lake city in Benin, is surrounded by a system of 12,000 acadja fish pens

TIME AND AGAIN

The muscular 400-pager lays out 120 nature-based technologies developed and implemented by indigenous communities over thousands of years in different parts of the world. Watson studied architecture in Australia, a land uniquely defined by its mix of colonial and aboriginal environments. And though it may have steered her to know more about indigenous cultures, it was a trip to Borneo in 2003 that led her on this path: “I’d read about this Swiss environmentalist, Bruno Manser, who was trying to get the Penan tribe in the forests to stand up against the Malaysian government and prevent their forests being turned into palm oil plantations. Manser went missing, and I was keen to see this tribe that not many had seen before. I looked for a month, and it was heartbreaking to see them finally. They had been pushed to live on an encampment by the side of a river.” This journey also spurred Watson to study sacred landscapes while she was at Harvard. “What indigenous cultures regard as sacred landscapes are basically resources, like freshwater and farms, that are protected because they are critical to our survival. These cultures have been practising carbon sequestration for centuries.”

Over the past two decades, Watson has travelled to each of the 18 countries that present enriching case studies in her book, including Iraq, India, Kenya, Peru, Tanzania and many other developing nations. She presents detailed documentation of practices and systems that have been shaped by human ingenuity and multigenerational knowledge. “Quite frankly, indigenous knowledge is innovative beyond what we can innovate at present in the area of design,” insists Watson, whose portfolio includes top-notch projects such as the Dubai Central Business District Master Plan and the tourism management and conservation plan for Bali’s first UNESCO World Heritage Site. >

“Indigenous knowledge is innovative beyond what we can innovate at present in the area of design”

she turns her screen to show me the view from her window—the rugged mountains of Salt Lake City, which, even in pixelated splendour, make you gasp.

“I am just three hours from the Grand Canyon,” Watson says in her dulcet voice. The joy in her eyes is that of someone who doesn’t take the wonders of nature for granted. It’s this passion and reverence for the planet that also permeates her book, *Lo—TEK Design By Radical Indigenism* (Taschen), released earlier this year.



Watson, who worked on the restoration of the southern wetlands of Iraq of the Ma'dan people, has fierce faith in complex ecological relationships, not without good reason: "We need to analyse the reason why these communities have been able to mitigate climate challenges for thousands of years," she says. "It's because they didn't see nature as a threat or, for that matter, themselves as saviours of nature. They developed their life systems in symbiosis with nature."

BACK TO THE FUTURE

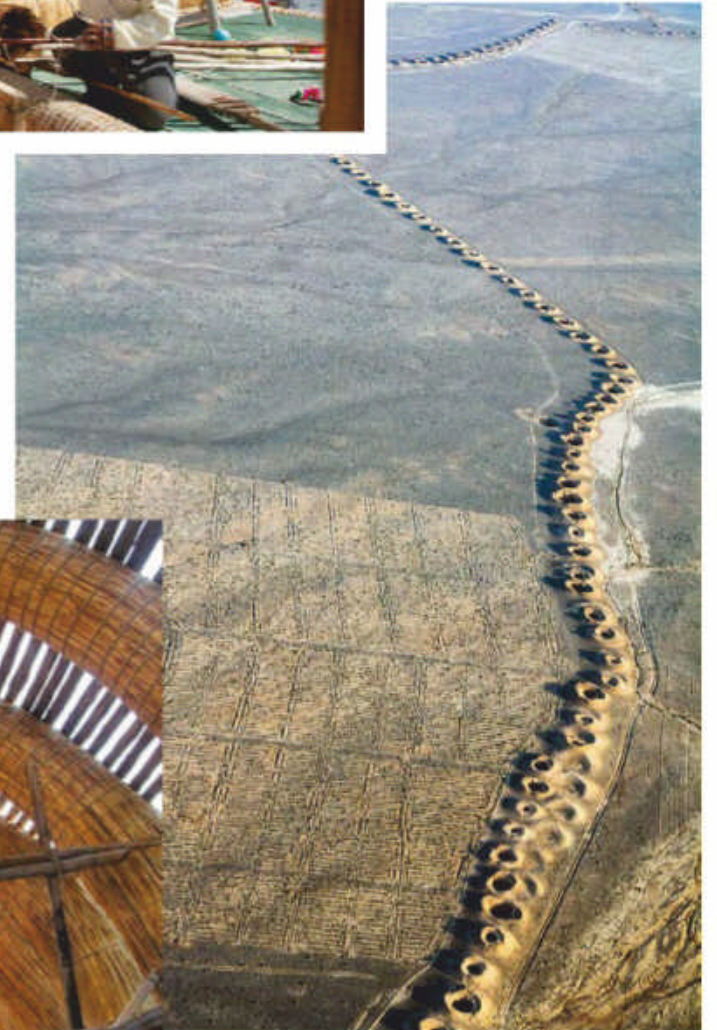
The title of Watson's book is a cleverly aimed wake-up call of sorts. *Lo—TEK* is not 'low-tech' (primitive and rudimentary) as people living in urban environments are wont to believe of indigenous lifestyle practices. The 'TEK' stands for Traditional Ecological Knowledge, which constitutes sophisticated, environment-resilient and complex nature-based technology structures that exist in our collective ancestral past. "This book is a subversive attempt to delve into technologies that have never been seen as technologies."

In *Lo—TEK*, Watson moves away from the standard architect's focus on structure and style towards dwellings and community systems that have emerged from a respect towards the environment and an intelligent use of resources. Consider the jing kieng jri, the rubber-tree bridges nurtured by generations of the Khasi tribe in Meghalaya since 100BC. These bridges, decked with stones, evolve at the pace dictated by nature, though the trees are planted years in advance by the Khasis at key crossing points along rivers to serve future generations. In Tanzania, there is much to learn from the Chaggas, a community residing in the lap of Mount Kilimanjaro. They have introduced 250 new banana and coffee species in the middle of a rainforest, on a plantation that is the size of Los Angeles, proving that a robust agroforestry system can thrive while preserving the biodiversity of the land.

So, is the only way to stave off apocalypse to abandon all that is familiar? Watson says *Lo—TEK* is not about pushing city folk on a back-to-the-landers march. "Instead, let's consider hybridising this indigenous ecological knowledge with contemporary construction techniques and materials to create symbiotic cities." But won't that involve an undoing of the critical machinery that underpins urban areas? Watson is quick to point me to one such case study thriving at the edge of a bustling metropolis—the East Kolkata Wetlands, a sewage wastewater treatment system put in place by a group of Bengali farmers over a century ago. These man-made wetlands take in 700 million litres of raw sewage (half of the city's daily output), which is routed through a



Clockwise from above: The floating island system in Peru is made using locally grown Totora reed; the 'qanat' was the first man-made water stream constructed in the 1st millennium BC; the 'Mudhif' houses of the Ma'dan people in Iraq are made using Qasab reed



series of processes, before the treated water is led to a network of fishponds to produce 13,000 tonnes of fish annually.

The pandemic shows that it's time we recognise that the evolutionary theory has changed: "It's no longer about survival of the fittest, but survival of the symbiotic. Designers responding to the challenges ahead must focus on biodiversity as a key building block in a post-pandemic world and move beyond sanitation and beauty." A pithy statement in the early pages of *Lo—TEK* ("This book is dedicated to the next seven generations") alludes to the indigenous life philosophy. "They use their knowledge and plan with full awareness of the impact of their actions," says Watson, who teaches future minds at Harvard and Columbia. "Many decades from now, I'd want someone to pick up this book, flip through the pages and see images and wisdom that are really old, but understand it because they live in a world conceived from it." ■

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MY INDIA IS ITS
BOLLYWOOD
PRIDE

A TRIBUTE TO
FINDING BROWN
ROLE MODELS
THROUGH
CINEMA.
BY HASAN MINHAJ

COOL

Illustration by JAGRUTI TAMBE

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Hasan Minhaj



I remember seeing the poster for *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (1998) in the eighth grade at our regular Indian grocery store in Davis, California. It was so iconic, it immediately imprinted on my mind. Shah Rukh Khan was wearing Tommy Hilfiger, Polo and DKNY, all these iconic brands that kids were wearing at my middle school. Just like the movie *Chueless* (1995), *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* was ahead of its time in terms of the fashion statements the movie was making. The characters had swag, charisma and charm, and they were Indian. I wanted to be them. So while the boys at my school were looking up to '90s stars like Jennifer Love Hewitt, Justin Timberlake and Leonardo DiCaprio, I was looking at SRK, Rani and Kajol. It made me proud of my heritage. It made me proud of brown love. And the film taught me you could be endearing and funny at the same time. I still wear those yellows and blues onstage as homage to that film. ■

Hasan Minhaj is an award-winning comedian, political commentator and actor. He was the host of the Netflix show Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj, which recently concluded after a successful three-year run

"[KUCH KUCH HOTA HAI] MADE ME PROUD OF MY HERITAGE. IT MADE ME PROUD OF BROWN LOVE"

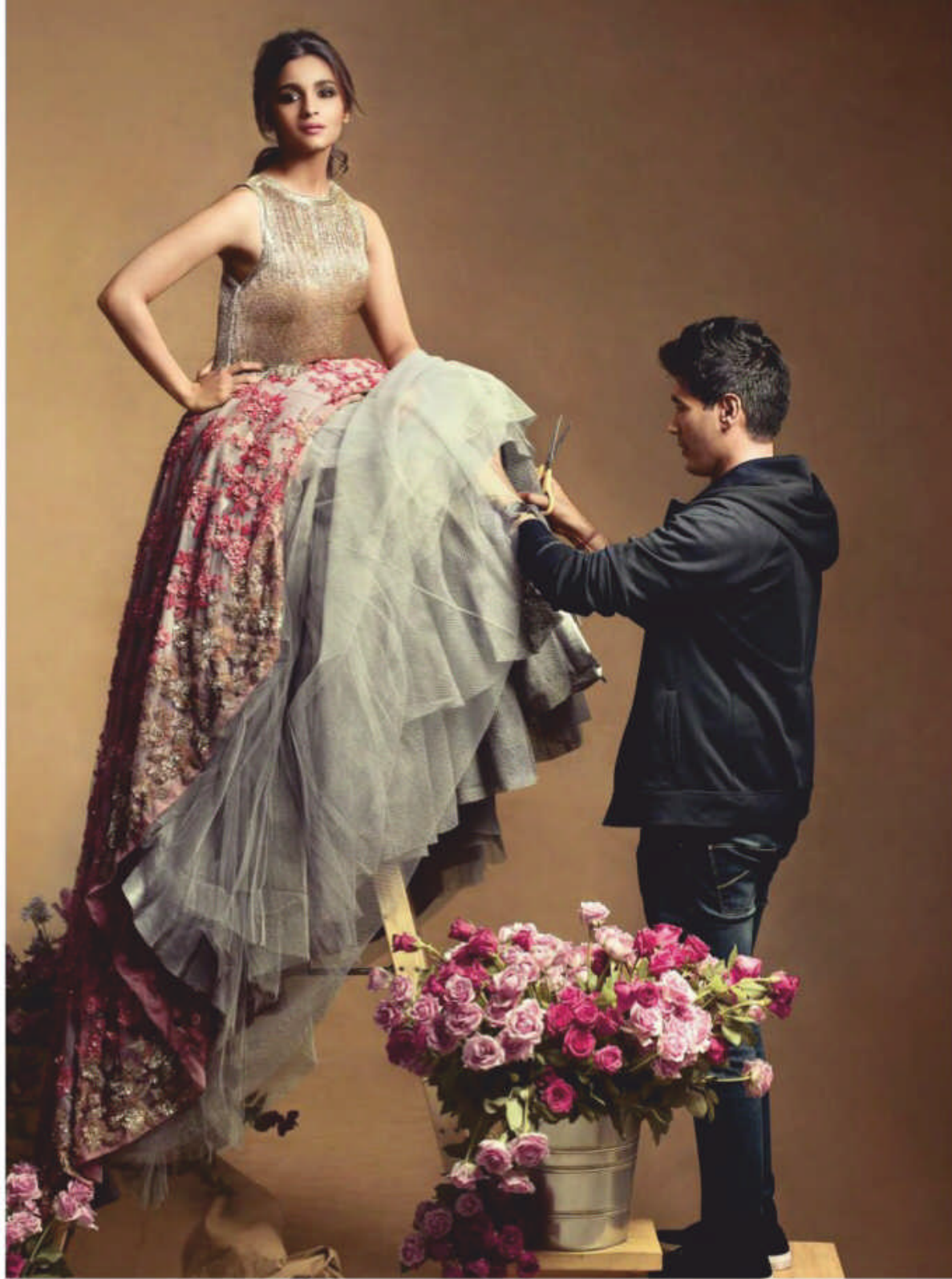
ERIC HOBBS



In reel life

Films have the power to transport us and make characters on celluloid seem more real than the world around us. When paired with fashion, these films and characters can inject glamour into our lives, inform our world and influence our closets. One man behind a 1,000 such movies that have answered our duchesse satin and chiffon dreams, is couturier and costume designer **Manish Malhotra**.

This year, as he wraps up three decades in bringing style to the silver screen, he looks back at 30 lessons he picked up along the way. From his manifesto on making it in fashion, to tangible tricks for looking the part of his on-screen heroines, the designer tells us all. Brace yourselves for a Bollywood throwback that will have you tuning into your all-time favourites with a new perspective



GO BOLD OR GO HOME

1

ONE WORD: D-R-A-M-A

I've always loved the grandiose of sequins, trails, ruffles, and the larger-than-life appeal of bling. To me, these signify happiness and celebration. I took the first bullet to kick off this trend. It was initially looked down upon, but is now a norm in Indian cinema.

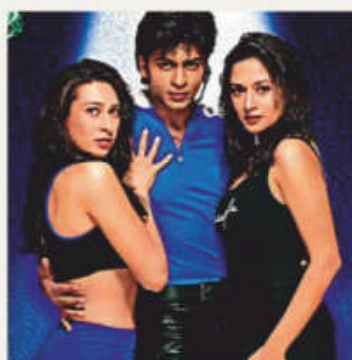


Kalank (2019)

2

BE AUTHENTIC, QUITE LITERALLY

Gumrah (1993) came at a time when the popular belief was that short hair was for modern girls who wore tight dresses, while long hair best suited traditional Indian clothing. While most actors would opt for wigs that never really looked authentic, Sridevi and I decided to go in for a trim. A few snips and very short hair later, she wore her cinched dresses with complete authenticity.



START THE TREND, DON'T FOLLOW IT

Every time someone mentions athleisure now, I can't help but roll my eyes. We did that in *Dil To Pagal Hai (1997)* where both Karisma and Madhuri's characters wore track pants, crop tops and bralets.

3

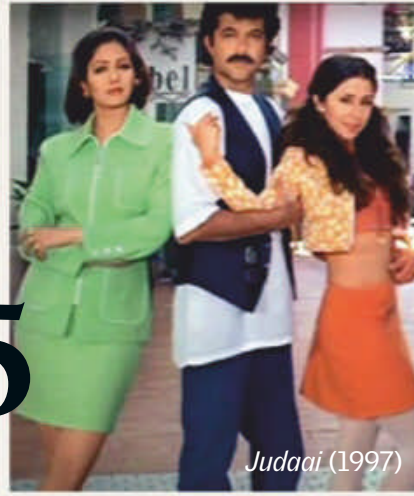
4

FASHION WILL TAKE YOU FAR, BUT MAKEUP CHANGES EVERYTHING

It was slightly difficult to convince Babita ji, but making Karisma Kapoor wear brown lenses in *Raja Hindustani* (1996) gave her character a certain warmth and emotional appeal. We even straightened her hair and gave her a full makeover. But the work was worth it. Aarti is still regarded as one of the most defining characters on screen.



5



Juddai (1997)

SHAKE UP THE STATUS QUO
The '90s were a great time to experiment. Our market had just been liberalised. However, directors were still keen on stitched garments for films. The result was some ill-fitted outfits with poor finishes. I decided to pick up ready-made garments and add something of my own, giving way to styling in costume design.

6

CREATE SOMETHING THAT CAN RESONATE WITH AN ENTIRE GENERATION

Ram Gopal Verma was clear about the brief for Urmila Matondkar in *Rangeela* (1995). We went with crop tops, dungarees, T-shirts and jeans—a completely fresh palette that caught the eyes of millennials. It went 'viral', as they say today.



THE FAIL-SAFE SILHOUETTES

7



TWO BASICS MAKE AN OUTFIT FOR THE AGES

That scene in *Jab We Met* (2007), when Kareena Kapoor Khan moves with such ease and quirk wearing her T-shirt with a salwaar became a look that seeped into many closets around the country. Girls from smaller towns were especially drawn to it and it birthed a new laid-back cool.

8

WHEN IT DOUBT, WEAR A CHIFFON SARI
The chiffon sari became a cult fashion item in the '90s. One way or another, it is coming back. I remember proposing a sari for Urmila in *Rangeela* (1995) to Ram Gopal Verma. Ramu liked it so much that we decided to do another black one in the same film.



10



EDIT YOUR LOOK

I learnt this early on in my career working with director Yash Chopra, a man of refined taste who loved everything timeless and classic. To realise his vision in exactitude, I made many chiffon kurtas for Madhuri Dixit in *Dil To Pagal Hai* (1997), and the amount of copies that were made in the counterfeit market just blew my mind.

9

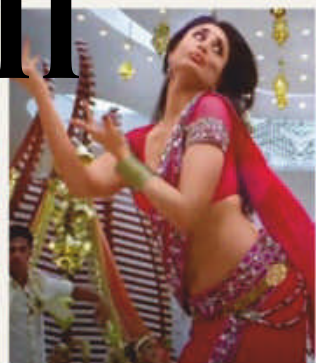
THE SARI WILL ALWAYS SLAY
'Desi Girl', the song from *Dostana* (2008) that is now an anthem for any Indian wedding was also a defining moment for the silver sequinned sari that was copied across continents. Since there was a gold swimsuit earlier in the film, we decided to go with a silver look for the song—a silver sequinned petticoat and a French two-tone chiffon draped over it.



11

CONVENIENCE IS THE MOTHER OF ALL INVENTION

The pre-draped sari was just gaining momentum, so I decided to put one in red on Kareena Kapoor Khan in *Ra.One* (2011). The outfit was the result of a myriad of sampling, sourcing improvement and reinvention.



♥ CREATE NEW COLOURWAYS

12

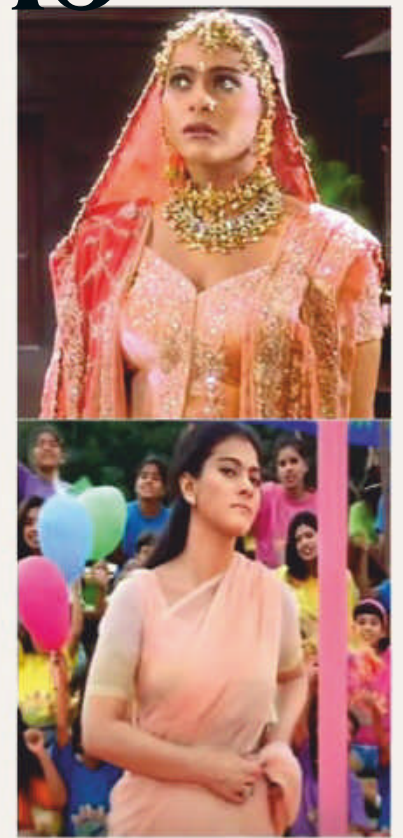


A BLUE LEHENGA? WHY NOT
For the song 'Dulhe Ka Sehra' in *Dhadkan* (2000), we did fittings at 8pm for a shoot at 8am the following day. The directors didn't love the look and I had 12 hours to salvage the situation. In a flash of inspiration, I thought of a blue lehenga with gold embroidery. There was just one problem: blue was not the reigning colour for a lehenga at the time. I got the store opened, picked up the fabric, went to the tailor and worked all night, right until the second before the shoot began.



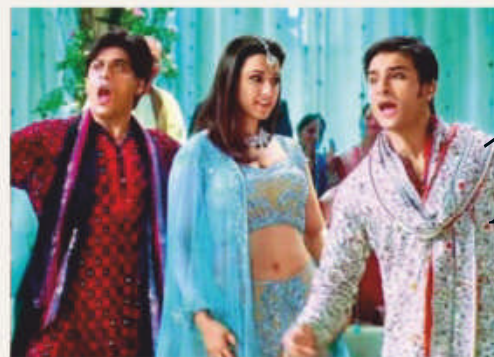
AND A PEACH SARI? DEFINITELY

We were working on Kajol's look for *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (1998), and she had already worn a golden look in *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995). I was going through a strictly-everything-peach phase, so I picked out a tone-on-tone embossed fabric in the delicate hue. For the first time on-screen, peach was seen as a wedding colour. And I remember, that summer, all brides wore peach.



USE YOUR SKIN AS THE STARTING POINT

The '90s and aughts were really about shades of brown—sand, nude, flesh. With New York as the backdrop for *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2003), I wanted Preity Zinta to look modern. We made a blue and skin-coloured lehenga with no gold or silver embroidery, just blue threadwork and sequins against her skin tone.



14

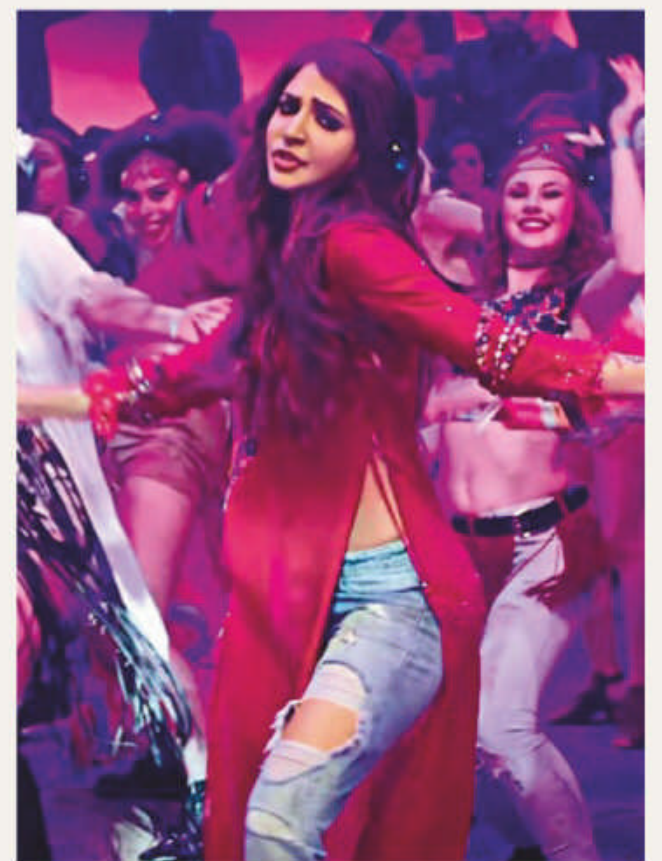
♥ LET DISTINCT WORLDS COLLIDE IN YOUR CLOTHES



MIX MODERN WITH TRADITION

I used to interact with a lot of NRIs who were torn between their cultures and the outside world which felt poles apart. I wanted to strike a balance between both these ideals. For *Mohabbatein* (2000), halters and tube tops paired with lehengas really echoed with an international audience.

15



16

BE INSPIRED BY THE CULTURE THAT SURROUNDS YOU

Anushka Sharma's character in *Ae Dil Hai Mushkil* (2016) was a Muslim girl living in London. She is educated and individualistic. The short kurta and salwar look in *Jab We Met* (2007) was a hit, so here I made the kurta longer and the embroidery richer. The jewellery looked like something Alizeh had picked up in Camden Town and paired with vintage jackets from Brick Lane. For the eyes, we went with a dark, bold look. I believe that the eyes have it all—they connect most on-screen.

ICONIC LOOKS ARE BORN FROM AN UNEXPECTED TWIST

Who doesn't remember Kareena Kapoor Khan's asymmetrical top with shararas in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...* (2001)? It was a contemporary outfit and always will be. But the maang tikka completed the look in a distinct way and that never fails to make waves.





Aishwarya Rai Bachchan does the final walk for Malhotra's show

18

DON'T BE AFRAID TO CROSS OVER YOUR INFLUENCES

When I first had Urmila coming to my fashion show, media, influencers and the industry frowned upon it. Historically, I have seen friction between films and fashion. But today, it is a norm to have a celebrity as the showstopper, and I get to have the last laugh.



19

A CRUNCH IN TIME GETS YOU CREATIVE

The royal blue sari that Deepika Padukone wore in *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani* (2013) was a hit. And to think I had to create it with barely any time on my hands. I had spools of existing blue fabric in my warehouse, so I upcycled it with some added frill and paired it with a black blouse. I loved the final outcome and so did Deepika. I find that brevity really is the key. Many times, a simple outfit becomes the most popular.

PATCH IN A SURPRISE

Rekha ji and Rakhee ji championed this trend, so I had to try it. I picked up a few different saris and patched them together. At the joints, I sewed delicate embroidery. You can see the result in the song, 'Pucho Zara Pucho', from *Raja Hindustani* (1996), where blue chiffon is used with printed chiffon.



20

LESSONS FROM THE LEGEND ON MAKING IT IN FASHION

- 21 Nothing less than 500 per cent will do**
I've worked 48 hours in a 24-hour day. Costume work requires research, sourcing, coordination, sampling, trials and fittings.
- 22 Where is innovation not rewarded?**
Thinking outside the box is a great creative skill. And I flexed it when we had to create a right fit for Amit ji and Abhishek in *Bunty Aur Babli* (2005) considering their height. We attached collars, cuffs and plackets to the jacket.
- Ride the change**
- 23 Agility is an indispensable trait in a creative and dynamic work environment.** With the last-minute brief change, we spliced two swimsuits and stitched them together to construct Priyanka's seminal swimsuit in *Dostana* (2008).
- Own your aesthetic**
- 24 My love for bling has garnered polarised opinions.** But it is important to trust your look to be able to create the iconic.
- The gut is your second brain, so trust it**
- 25 I have completely overhauled a garment right before a scene.** There is great merit in carefully listening to your instinct and working on it.
- Think macro**
- 26 Even when it is a lengthier process, don't stop yourself from recommending ideas for the larger good of what you are working on.**
- Leave the stress at the studio door**
- 27 The best work is produced when your mind isn't laden with stress and anxiety.** I remember, in a bid to trim the length of a skirt, we made it much shorter than planned. So, we laughed at our misery and restarted.
- 28 Show up and do the work**
Nothing could be worse than delegating the work and expecting the final result to be perfect. Get involved in every aspect.
- 29 Quality over quantity**
When I entered the industry, I didn't come with a relevant degree. My only asset was that I never cut corners on quality. Good work spreads through word of mouth.
- 30 Keep it simple, silly**
We tend to overdo things when we want to really achieve something. But, at most times, simpler things make a much bigger impact. Case in point: the most non-fussy item I ever created, the chiffon sari, became a cult fashion item.

COLOUR POP

"This look helps jazz up your everyday winged eyeliner with a pop of pink. Opt for coloured eye pencils instead of shadows as they last longer and are smudge-free"



Tarvi Chemburkar



Black out

It isn't a wrap until kohl-rimmed eyes appear on the silver screen. Four makeup artists show you how to elevate Bollywood's darkest desire

BEYOND BASIC



Namrata Soni

"This soft, straight liner reminds me of Sharmila Tagore. It really lifts the eyes and opens them up"

TEJAS NERURKAR (MEHAK): SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

SMOKY SHINE

"Owing to my love for kohl and its undying significance, I've created a dramatic eye using smudged kohl and lots of glitter—a lethal, sexy combination"



Mehak Oberoi



Marianna Mukuchyan

OUT OF LINE

"The dot in the middle of the bottom lid and the open half flicks on both sides give the perfect cat-eye look"



1. Clinique High Impact Custom Black Kajal, ₹1,400 2. Colorbar All-Rounder Pencil, Sexy Silhouette, ₹450 3. Kiko Milano High Pigment Wet And Dry Eyeshadow, Satin Magenta, ₹690 4. Stila Magnum XXX Mascara, Intense Black, ₹2,100 5. NYX Professional Makeup Epic Ink Liner, Black, ₹825 6. Anastasia Beverly Hills Waterproof Crème Color, Jet Black, ₹2,000 7. Maybelline New York Total Temptation Mascara, Black, ₹525 8. Kay Beauty 24 Hour Kajal, Spade, ₹249 9. Make Up For Ever Star Lit Glitter, Holographic Silver, ₹1,850 10. PAC Pressed Glitter Eyeshadow, Seven Heavens, ₹500 11. Lakmé Eyeconic Curling Mascara, Black, ₹450 12. M.A.C Pro Longwear Paint Pot, Layin' Low, ₹2,400 13. Sephora Smart Liner, Black, ₹1,200

Sudha Murty



Over the last 25 years, I've worked with the poorest of the poor and tackled many problems—from malnutrition and healthcare to social and gender inequality and poverty. My time in the field has made me realise that education is the way forward. I come from a teacher's family and I've been a teacher myself. Growing up, my home was filled with books. They shaped my approach to life. Through the Infosys Foundation, we have worked with many local governments, opened 60,000 libraries and served hundreds of thousands of mid-day meals through various schemes such as the Akshaya Patra scheme. During my lifetime, I want to try to ensure that all children in our country have access to healthy meals, clean drinking water, clothes and a good education.

When I was a young engineering student and the only girl in my course, I wrote to JRD Tata and questioned him about a hiring policy at TELCO that excluded women. This was not arrogance, it was confidence that came from my education. My audacity worked and I got the job. For decades, women in India have had to deal with bias, forced weddings, dowry and early pregnancy. They have had to suffer violence and be economically dependent on men. We can break this cycle of injustice if we educate our girls.

Teach them to think. Empower them to make decisions. Expose them to new ideas so they can demand equal status and find economic independence. We have to remove barriers like period poverty. We have set up a scheme where we distribute free sanitary pads in schools. It's getting girls back into schools; they are even taking pads back home for their mothers and sisters. Another roadblock is the lack of proper toilets in schools—we have built more than 14,000 toilets in schools. We've realised that parents don't want to spend money on their girls, so we provide books, notebooks, even footwear. We have educated children of sex workers and given them scholarships. If a mother is educated, she will make sure her children are even more educated than she is. This has a long-term effect on making the population more literate. Anyone and everyone can help make a difference—start small, start by supporting your house help, support their children to go to school.

In our country, every 150 kilometres the culture and language changes. I would like to see vernacular languages get included in our school curriculums. Our children shouldn't look down on their own language—there has to be a sense of pride in it. A good education also needs to be made more accessible. There should be a school in every village or at least every second village. We need a stricter selection process for teachers, better training and more accountability. Technology is a tool, but it must support a good education, not replace the teacher. It can help change our syllabus from memory-based to more interactive, knowledge-based learning. We must teach our children to think. At the foundation, we offer scholarships in partnerships with institutes across the country.

Years ago, when my son Rohan was away at university, I received an email from him that said: "Every mother looks after her own children, but you want to look after the children of the whole country." I cherished these words then and I cherish them now, but there is still so much work to be done, and miles left to go. - As told to Renuka Modi

Sudha Murty is a prolific author, Padma Shri awardee and a philanthropist. She is the chairperson of the Infosys Foundation, a not-for-profit which supports programmes in education, rural development, healthcare, arts and culture and hunger eradication

"MY TIME IN THE FIELD HAS MADE ME REALISE THAT
EDUCATION IS THE WAY FORWARD"

SAM MOHAN: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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MY INDIA IS FOCUSED ON
EDUCATION

A PLEDGE TO
EMPOWER OUR
CHILDREN. BY
SUDHA MURTY



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Thirteen again

As *Vogue* India enters its teens, we hit play on the reminisce button. To join us in our sepia-toned view of the wonder years, we got six tastemakers to look back and share sartorial advice for their younger selves. By **Praachi Raniwala**



Dear Karisma,
Be yourself. Fashion is about having fun. don't take it so seriously.

KARISMA KAPOOR ACTOR

A proud '80s baby? That was me with my wardrobe of shoulder-padded dresses, button-down shirts, high-waisted jeans and oversized blazers. And I'm even more excited for their comeback. My early teenage years were sartorially symbolic because they really got me interested in fashion. I took more than a few cues from American TV shows—*Dynasty* (1981), in particular—that I was obsessed with. And then there were icons like Molly Ringwald, especially in *Sixteen Candles* (1984), Madonna, Cyndi Lauper, Sridevi and Rekha who heavily influenced me. At 13, I was still discovering myself. Quite early on, I knew my personal aesthetic was tilted more toward classics. My love for white definitely comes from my grandmother's extensive collection of white saris and my grandfather Raj Kapoor's tendency to dress his heroines in white. But that's not to say I did not experiment along the way—I had a perm, which in hindsight, was not such a great decision. My biggest learning has been to look beyond trends to create my own unique statement.



Dear Indrani,
Your big mop of curly hair that you never know what to do with? Just own it!

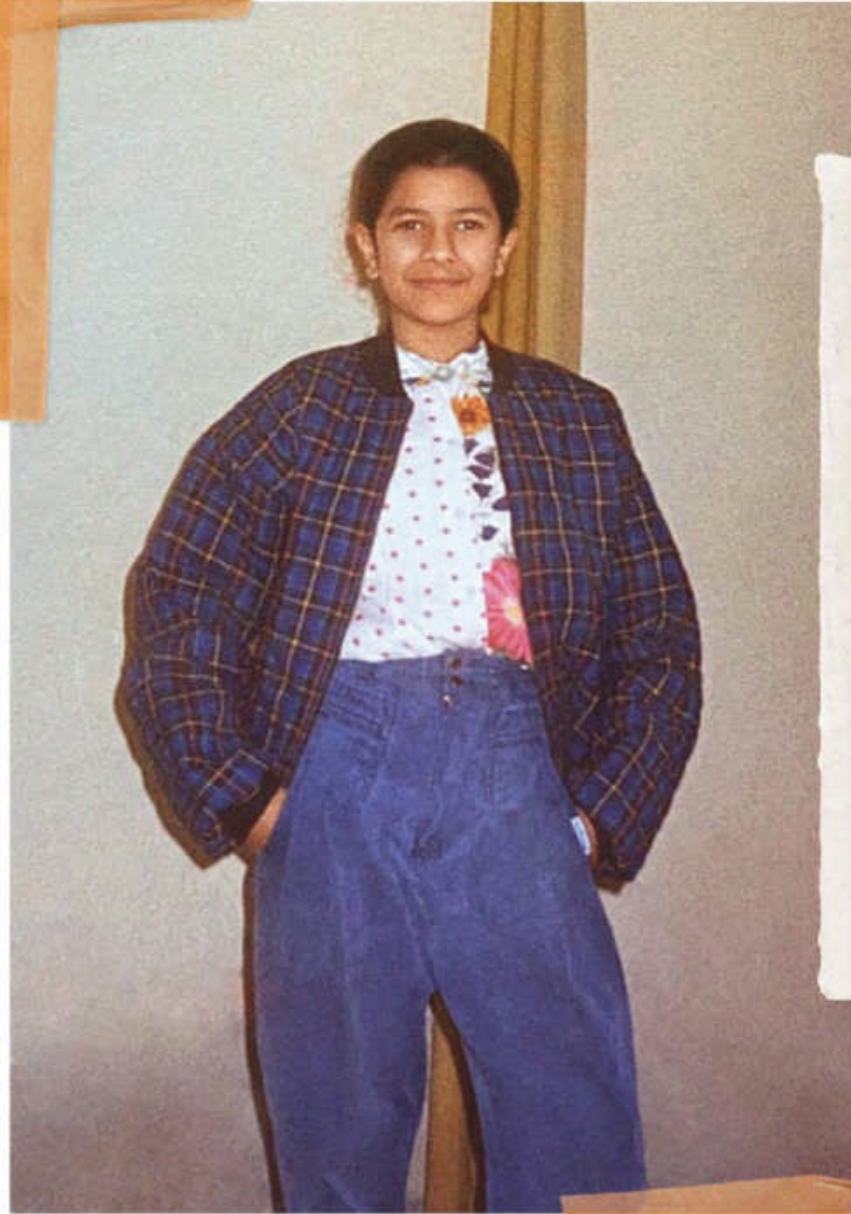
INDRANI DASGUPTA FORMER SUPERMODEL AND CURRENT SUPERMOM OF TWO

Style is not something that 13-year-old me knew much about. I was the girl on the track field or basketball court and my clothes reflected this athletic bent. Androgynous and unisex looks were as much my go-tos then as they are today. I grew up with two older brothers and vaguely remember rummaging through their cupboards for oversized checked shirts to wear with ripped jeans and high-tops. My best friend at the time was a quintessential girly-girl (it was a look I never aspired to). I did own a slinky black knit slip dress that I wore exclusively in the confines of my room, never having enough courage to wear it past my protective brothers. I had more pressing concerns, though: my frizzy curls. Ample time and effort were spent on taming them (there was also a phase of adding a pouffe to my plait that makes me cringe now). Maybe that explains my draw towards Julia Roberts, a curly-haired girl who really owned it. But my biggest influence was Madonna, who was ahead of the curve and marching to her own beat. I was a devoted member of the 'express yourself, don't repress yourself' club.

NIMRAT KAUR

ACTOR

"Thirteen was when I started to take a real interest in clothes. Up until then, my mother decided what I'd wear each morning. Luckily, mine had impeccable taste. I loved watching her get dressed for her weekend army parties in chiffon saris, pearl strings and pencil heels. Special occasions were when I pulled out all the stops. Most of these looks were heavily inspired by Hindi films. For a friend's birthday, I remember wearing my version of Madhuri Dixit's outfit from the song 'Akhiyaan Milaon', a colourful printed shirt, high-waist pants and big button earrings. I was also a Juhi Chawla fan girl. I loved her voluminous skirts and off-shoulder tops in *Darr* (1993) and Sridevi's entire wardrobe in *Chalbaz* (1989). But on most days, I was dressed in something grunge—moody colours, oversized Led Zeppelin T-shirts and long shorts. Don't ask why, because I wasn't a rebel even by a mile. Let's just call it my 'I didn't know better' phase. I grew up in Noida, which is not known to be particularly liberal. So, looking back, I think I was hiding inside my clothes. I wish I had been more fearless and had the courage to embrace everything I wanted to wear, without feeling judged.



Dear Nimrat.
Be fearless.
Don't let the
world around you
dictate what you
should (or should
not) wear.

Dear Deepshikha.
Embrace all the changes. Dress for yourself,
and enjoy being young and free. So that as
you age, you can do it gracefully.



DEEPSHIKHA KHANNA

HEAD DESIGNER, SUSTAIN FLOW APPAREL, GOOD EARTH

Looking through photos for this story made me realise how well co-ordinated I always was. The credit goes entirely to my mother, who made most of my clothes. She always reminds me that I wanted the last say in all the fabrics and styles. Safe to say, not much has changed all these years later. I wore a lot of frills. Monotone sets were a particular favourite, as was the white mul skirt and blouse in this photo and a pale yellow cotton bolero and matching balloon skirt that I wore on repeat. I remember a pet peeve (which I still have): lingerie is meant to be worn under your clothes. No exposed bra straps, unless you were Madonna of course. I recall being conflicted between preserving and showcasing my femininity (like my convent school skirts that were short enough to qualify as a mini, but long enough to hide my bloomers). I think I can safely say I found a happy balance. >



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NOSTALGIA

Dear Athiya,
Don't lose your bravado to experiment
with fashion as you grow older. And
don't crimp your hair!



ATHIYA SHETTY ACTOR

I was a tomboy who always wore denim jackets, jeans and tees from Justice, Limited Too, Old Navy and Gap, until Poo entered my life. *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...* (2001) was the turning point that brought the femininity I didn't know I had to the forefront. I even dressed as Poo for a school talent show, in red sequined pants and a crop top that my mum made for me. To be honest, I was a fairly fashionable 13-year-old (shoutout to my dad for buying me the cutest clothes). In fact, that 13-year-old could teach me a thing or two about experimenting with carefree abandon. Pants with attached miniskirts? Clip-on earrings? (I always wore five at a time.) Juicy Couture tracksuits and tattooed necklaces? Yes, yes and yes! A lot of it was influenced by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen and Hilary Duff's character Lizzie McGuire. There was also an unfortunate incident involving some burnt hair as I tried to crimp it like Avril Lavigne's. But we don't talk about that anymore. With age, I've definitely become more comfortable in my fashion choices.



HASEENA JETHMALANI DESIGNER AND CURATOR

From mismatched earrings and stacked bangles to pinstriped jeans, my repertoire at 13 can be best described as punk-meets-bohemian. I was free-spirited, but also had an affinity for goth-inspired looks and my clothes were always baggy and oversized. I never shied away from experimenting—you only have to look at my constantly changing hairstyles to know that. Because of my mistakes, of which there were several, I can now bank on the cliché of being older and wiser to give my younger self some advice. I would say to her: "Steal your brother's shorts and not your mother's lipstick. Forget tottering in stilettos, there is nothing chicer than sneakers (I learnt this too late in life). Steer clear of labels, mascara, hair colour and plunging necklines, but glitter under your brows and neon are must-dos. Don't be embarrassed by your heritage. Instead, learn about Indian textiles and you will be the coolest teenager. But most importantly, have fun. You're not meant to be stylish at 13." ■



Dear Haseena,
Have fun with fashion,
you are not meant
to be stylish at 13.
Embrace it with
authenticity and in-
nocence that will never
be yours to indulge in
as an adult.

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Found in translation

Heart-wrenching family sagas, gripping political thrillers and the great climate-change novel—Malayalam literature in translation is on the rise, fast becoming a bestselling and award-winning favourite, finds book blogger and writer **Resh Susan**

Recently, I sped through Subhash Chandran's *A Preface To Man* (Harper Perennial), a feudal Nair family saga translated by Fathima EV. In the novel, Ann Marie, through her dead husband's love letters, guided me across three generations traversing 20th-century Kerala, instantly becoming a novel that I know I will reread (and probably recommend, ad nauseam). TP Rajeevan's *The Man Who Learnt To Fly But Could Not Land* (Hachette India), translated by PJ Mathew followed. It took me on a deep dive into Kerala's history, from the 1920s to Independence. I was vaguely acquainted with this setting, it features often in my 90-something grandmother's stories, "Those were the times," she says of the budding nationalist movement and crumbling households of the upper castes, when a school teacher earned four to twelve rupees per month. With the boom in Malayalam translations in English, I found a portal to race into an elusive yet familiar world.

COMMON LANGUAGE

Over the last decade, translations in the language associated with colonial history (that ironically bridges our linguistic diversity) have been faithful renditions and beautiful reads. Mini Krishnan, translations editor at Oxford University Press India (OUP), explains the rise in translations to "a desire to know about a related but dissimilar community, armchair travel, and looking for patterns in the palimpsest of the country."

But what makes a 'good' translation? Acclaimed author KR Meera—whose novel *Hangwoman* (Penguin India), translated by J Devika, has garnered praise for its brisk writing and soulful characters—says it is "the power they wield over readers of different social and cultural backgrounds."

I am reminded of this power as a Malayali (with poor reading speed in Malayalam, having been raised on English books) in Sara Joseph's *Othappu: The Scent Of The Other Side* (OUP), translated by Valson Thampu, about a nun leaving the monastery and finding spiritual fulfilment in motherhood and service. My copy, generously annotated, concurs with author Paul Zacharia, who says, "I couldn't put down the English translation."

Krishnan recalls hesitation among Dalit writers, translators and publishers about, she says, "nervousness of how successfully we might carry the force and tone into a language which is, for us, a second language." But she adds that things have changed for the better "over the last ten years or so." Today, Dalit anthologies like *The Oxford India Anthology Of Malayalam Dalit Writing* (OUP) and *Don't Want Caste* (Navayana) inform about cultural injustice, while novels such as Paul Chirakkarode's *Pulayathara* (OUP), translated by Catherine Thankamma, expand into caste politics.

NOVEL READ

It is heartening to note the diversity in Kerala's milieu reflected in translations. The first Adivasi novel, Narayan's *Kocharethi* (OUP), translated by Thankamma, comments on the erasure in belief systems by the state machinery, Christianity, and geographic compulsions. Another dwindling community, the Kerala Jews, find a place in Thankamma's translation of Sethu's *Aliyah* (Harper

Perennial), which dabbles in the generational identity crisis between the aspired (Israel) and familiar land (Kerala)—and Prema Jayakumar's translation of *The Saga Of Muziris* (Niyogi Books).

Stories awash in the natural world and its exploitation have also found a firm footing. I expected a 'hairy' sociopolitical story about a rebellious lower caste man in the 2020 JCB Prize for Literature-

What makes a good translation?

KR Meera [of *Hangwoman* fame] says it

is "the power they wield

over readers of different social and cultural backgrounds"



**BOOK CLUB**

S Hareesh's *Moustache*, Subhash Chandran's *A Preface To Man*, *Don't Want Caste*, and Sarah Joseph's *Othappu* are a few must-reads

nominated *Moustache* (Harper Perennial) by S Hareesh, translated by Jayasree Kalathil, but was engulfed by the ecological landscapes and blissful folklore of Kuttanadu. I found myself welling up at too frequent intervals reading Ambikasuthan Mangad's *Swarga* (Juggernaut Books), translated by J Devika. Here, leopards and bees have disappeared and people fear the curse of Jadhari, the guardian spirit. *Swarga* accuses the aerial spraying of the globally-banned insecticide endosulfan (banned in India only in 2011) on state-owned cashew plantations which resulted in grave health problems that plague the people even today.

WAY AHEAD

In 2018, Benyamin and translator Shahnaz Habib put Malayalam literature in the spotlight when *Jasmine Days* (Juggernaut), a political novel set against the Arab Spring, won South Asia's richest

literary prize, the JCB Prize for Literature. This year alone, his *Body And Blood* (Harper Perennial), a heavyweight themed on organ trafficking and translated by Swarup BR, was released, and *Aadujeevitham* (*Goat Days*) is being adapted into a movie.

Apart from Benyamin, a flavourful literary sadya of Malayalam literature in translation is expected to be released all through this year. Highlights include *Chorashastra* (Eka) by VJ James, translated by Morley J Nair, about a thief trained by a professor, *The Book Of Passing Shadows* (Niyogi Books) by CV Balakrishnan, translated by TM Yesudasan, and Unni R's *The Cock Is The Culprit* (Eka), translated by J Devika, a timely tale of an invisible rooster labelled a national threat. As the country rides on a Kerala wave, with Malayalam movies winning hearts among a wider audience across OTT platforms, one can be sure that for book lovers, Malayalam translations are here to stay. ■



Last year, while shooting *A Suitable Boy* (*ASB*) in Lucknow, I took a metro ride that dazzled me. I was in this futuristic subway car in the erstwhile city of Nawabs, when I saw the route map of the stations in this beautiful Urdu calligraphy, which then morphed to Devanagari and English in an exquisite, syncretic ballet. In this screen lay a proclamation of India that didn't need any more unravelling—we are (and have always been) a deeply intermixed nation with a profoundly syncretic culture.

Charged by the excitement of seeing Urdu for the first time in a subway, I took a picture of this rhythmic dance of languages, and tweeted “Long Live Lucknow!” Precisely 10 minutes later, I was bedazzled again: over 300 messages screamed into my phone. I was being trolled by a swathe of virtual vigilantes for celebrating the India of my childhood—a place that was known for its heterogeneity of traditions, languages and cultures now elicited rage for the same. What had happened to the India of my past?

In 1951, my father had the distinction of being part of the first cadre of IAS officers. Back then, postings were secular and always far from your native place. So there they were, my Punjabi parents from Lahore and Amritsar, shipped off to a hamlet called Talcher, where hyenas roamed, and then on to Rourkela, where I was born, and later Bhubaneswar.

Every morning in Odisha, we three children would wake up to the scratchy gramophone needle landing on the bhajan ‘Om Jai Jagdish’. In the course of the day, my mother would listen to the captivating voice of Iqbal Bano and sing to the irresistible charm of Begum Akhtar’s ghazals, while my father would spout shayari or translate the power of Ghalib to us Neanderthals. This peculiar mosaic, which we accepted as the natural order, has seeped into my work—from my early documentary *So Far From India* (1983) to my latest, *ASB*.

Last week, after finishing *ASB*, I returned to my Ashima fantasy from *The Namesake* (2006)—learning Indian classical music with my ‘junior masterji’, Ali Sethi. As we launched into Raag Bhairavi, our syncretic identities came alive through music. Devotional music genres—qawwali, bhajan, kafi and ghazal—all contain hybrid lyrical tropes. Often the text of a single qawwali uses Hindi, Brij Bhasha, Persian, Arabic and Turkish, which are woven together with melodic refrains and percussive patterns. The same applies to our raagas. So as we took flight with Raag Bhairavi, we heard the Arabic maqam, the Turkish aria, or a bit of Farsi söz and returned seamlessly to the Indic framework. Everything reconciled.

How did this happen? For a thousand years, musicians from all over the civilised world came to Delhi for patronage. And we desis have merged those multitudes within us.

ASB is my portrait of a fictional city that is modelled as an amalgam of India. At the heart of Saeeda Bai (Tabu), Vikram Seth’s character of a refined courtesan who lives in the poetic landscape of Ghalib, Daagh and Mir, is India’s syncretic soul. My journey of finding Kavita Seth, an amazing composer in modern-day Mumbai deeply immersed in the scholarship of traditions, follows a similar trajectory. Through this juxtaposition of people, culture and religion, we navigate a hybrid nation that is built on bringing old and new traditions together. In the 21st century, it’s still there. We just have to remember to never forget, because syncretism is our strength, and plurality defines us.—*As told to Megha Mahindru* ■

Mira Nair is an award-winning filmmaker based between New York and Delhi. Her latest series, A Suitable Boy, is out on Netflix this month



MY INDIA IS SYNCRETIC

REVISITING OLD
TRADITIONS FOR
A NEW WORLD.
BY MIRA NAIR



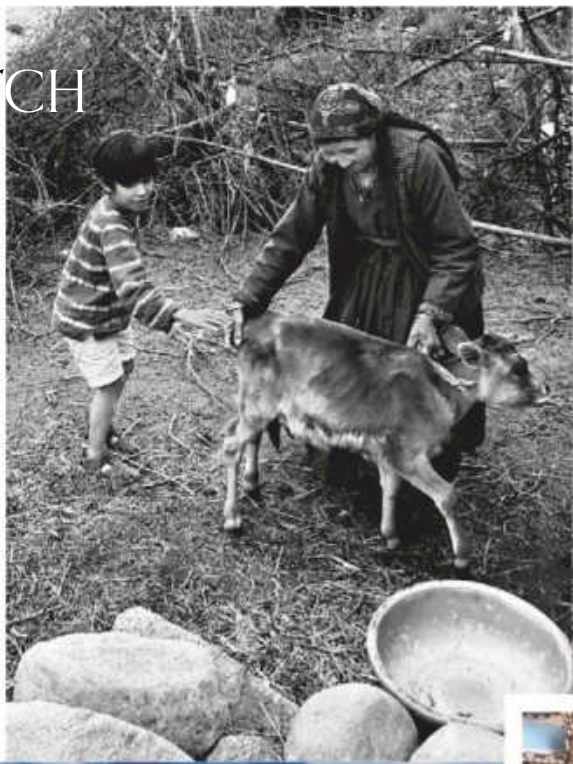
Photographed by ADIL HASAN

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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*Clockwise, from left: Lodha's younger son Attilio plays with a calf in Ladakh; on safari with the kids; a young Lodha travelling with her aunt and mother; in a custom sari-gown at the 10-year celebration of the label; collection sketches inspired by India; Lodha's grandmothers in traditional saris; local flavours of India served at a Saloni event; a sketch of the *Colour Walk* installation by Saloni at Le Bon Marché in Paris; marigold flowers being used as decor at an event*



A wandering soul

Whether it's her time spent studying the craft clusters of northern India or making pit stops at the local farms where she grew up, designer **Saloni Lodha's** travels through India provide answers to the why and how of who she is and what her label does. By **Akanksha Kamath**

COURTESY SALONI LODHA



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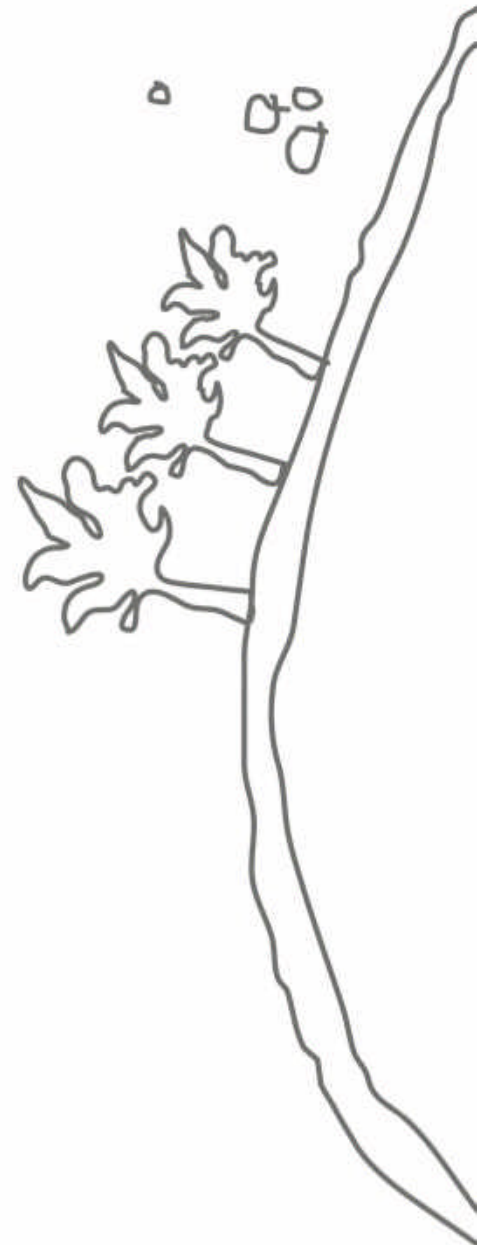
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“I love flying into Bombay. I just don't get that feeling of home in any other Indian city,” says Saloni Lodha. The Hong Kong-based, India-raised designer, who shuttles between London (where her team holds fort for her label) and India (where her big fat Indian family resides across different zip codes), is currently clocking in her longest period in Hong Kong with her husband Giorgio and two boys, Amedeo (7) and Attilio (3). The result has been a certain nostalgia that peppers every sentence as we speak of her second home over the phone. “I was lucky enough to spend a solid month in India in February. Travel to India, for me, is a twice-yearly occurrence and it is always a mix of work and family time.” Her eponymous label, Saloni, is manufactured in India, and her teams come from Hong Kong and London for routine research and development when creating a new collection, shooting campaigns or preparing her next big India-inspired event (cue the label's three-day Holi Saloni event in 2018 in Udaipur). We speak to the designer about the India that informs her personal and professional world.



“The values of ancient wisdom are the foundation for the way I think.”

I was brought up in a Jain family. Every summer was spent travelling across Rajasthan, visiting Jain temples. We would spend hours chanting and watching the view from these shrines. When I was in India in February, my mum took both the kids to perform all the pujas that I grew up doing, and they happily followed and enacted all the rituals.

Jainism makes up the way I operate daily. Its principles and holistic approach are what I try to imbibe constantly into the philosophy of my brand. Last year, when we were under tremendous pressure with the fashion cycle, we brought in wellness experts to conduct yoga and breathing sessions twice a week. I loved how seriously my teams took these. Similarly, a set designer we worked with brought in her aunt, a sound bath and healing expert. Because we work in a fast-paced environment and there is always a deadline, I encourage the downtime, the silliness, the laughs. I think these moments of oneness can come via meditation as much as they can with team dinners and drinks that are more western ways of looking at things.

“Respect for culture begins at home.”

Of course, I find it difficult to impart the India I know to my children, who are in Hong Kong. There are little ways in which I bring India into our home on this little island—I speak to my parents a lot and

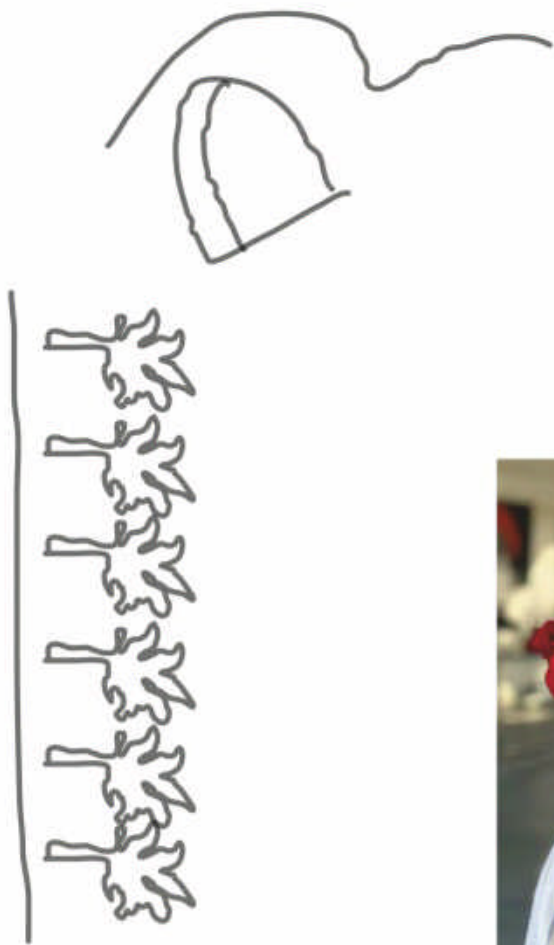
whenever I do, I still say, “Pranaam Papa,” and I make the kids say the same to them. They are still learning the Namo Arihantanam Jain mantra, so when we go on hikes I'll play it in the background, or in moments of concentration as it helps them focus.

“Rural farmscapes and simple living formed my growing up years.”

When I was a kid, we would take train trips to Nainital and Kodaikanal, each time travelling in giant herds of extended family members. When my kids visit, I try to give them a bit of both—the beautiful side of staying in magical, luxurious places, but also spending time with my aunts and my parents. Last year we did a road trip from Maheshwar to Nashik. It was a big success, barring the small hiccup of having to secure my son's car seat with Rehwa scarves, thanks to the lack of seat belts in our chosen form of transport. Growing up around Nashik, that agricultural side was such an important aspect for me. Every now and then I still crave the simple meal of bhakri and achar that my father and I would share with the farmers. That's when I call dad and tell him to send some with mum the next time she's visiting Hong Kong, but they never really taste the same by the time they get here.

I'm still inspired by the mud huts. In 2017, as we celebrated Holi Saloni to mark 10 years of the label, we collaborated with Mizzi Studios to create traditional mud huts in a Gaudi-esque style. >





Clockwise, from top right: Lodha on holiday in Ladakh; visiting sites with Attilio in Ladakh; the mud huts that made up the decor at Holi Saloni; Attilio wearing a traditional get-up; a young Lodha with her parents

“I feel very passionately about anything that is a craft.”

My grandmothers would go to a small town called Yeola, near their home in Maharashtra, to buy paithani saris made in real silver and gold. I’ve spent countless hours in this town with my father and the weavers as they wove saris with metallic threads. At the end of the day, it’s not just about buying a craft but spending time with it, talking about it, and learning the nuances of these incredible ancient techniques.

“There are parts of India where the communities, the textiles and the ways of life guide my creative quest.”

I took my team to Ladakh, where we had been researching the yarn, textiles, and embroideries of the region. I found it fascinating that even though the raw materials came from Ladakh, due to lack of infrastructure, the Ladakhis were not really benefiting as much from this exchange. When getting involved with NGOs and on-the-ground organisations, it is important to not just think about the craft perspective but also the environmental aspects and the livelihoods it impacts. To me, these are all intertwined. A year ago we decided to start researching

how to integrate craft projects into our brand by finding ways to engage, innovate and create with the skills and materials that are locally available. Our aim is to now weave together a network of organisations we have identified in different parts of India, where our role will be to bring in a design element to help complement the way they currently operate. This will create a confluence of creativity between artisans and the brand.

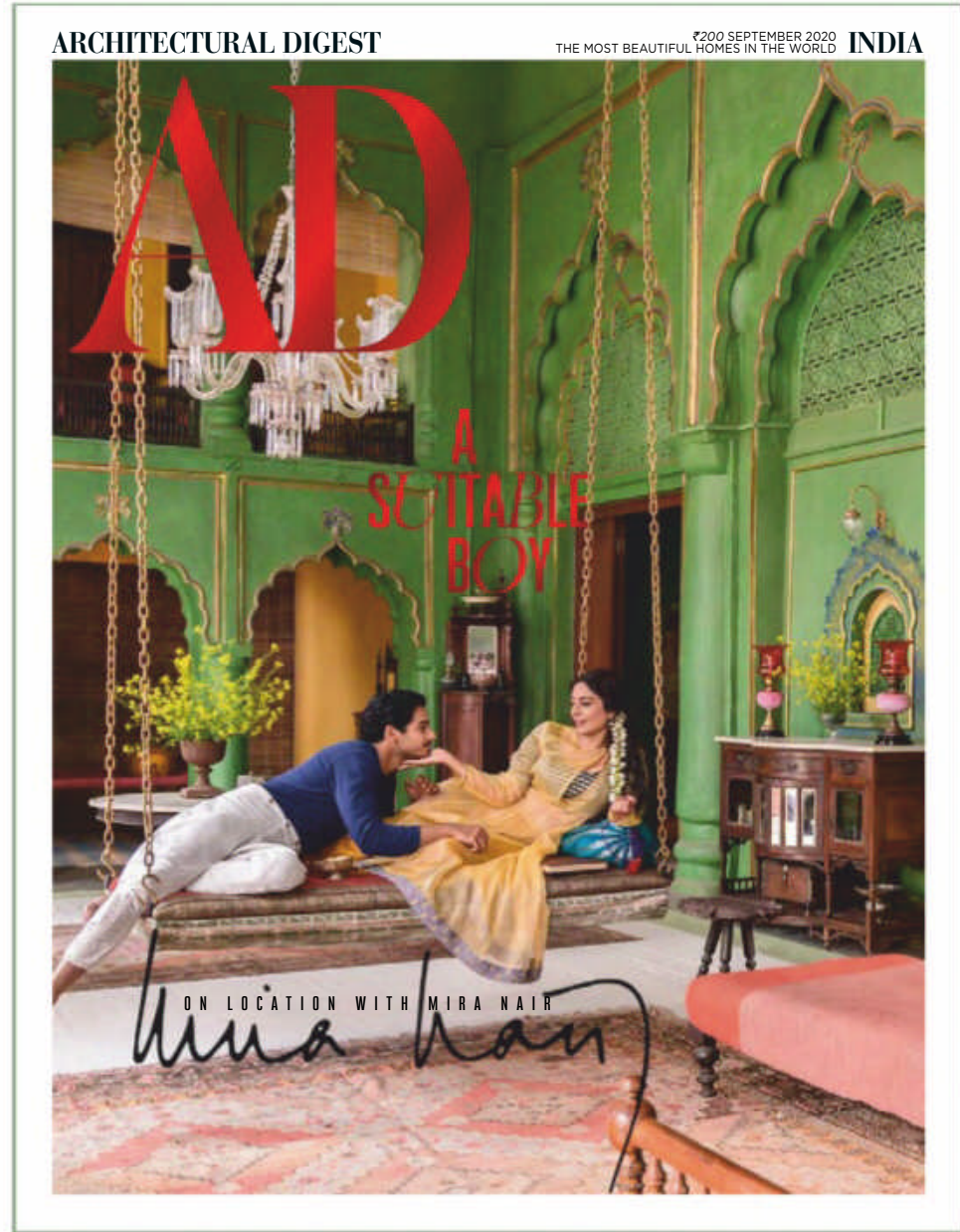
“India’s celebration of life through food and hospitality forms the ethos of my label.”

Travels and visits to India are always surrounded by singing, dancing and hospitality. I have this vivid memory of all the grandmothers sitting on the terrace, singing songs all morning, making dry fruits and mango pickles. This whole focus around food and the celebration of life on an everyday basis inspires me. Whether it’s the colours—my grandmothers would wear mismatched blouses, saris with silver embroidered peacocks, and vibrant bandhani diamond pins in their hair—all put together to look like these magpies without intending to. I think I bring a lot of those memories into the label—a sense of constant nostalgia and a celebration of this spirit of India. ■

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Old-town legacies

"REAL BEAUTY DOESN'T COME IN A JAR. I LOVE HOW AYURVEDA REMINDS US THAT BEAUTY IS BOTH AN INSIDE AND OUTSIDE JOB"
- ROOSHY ROY

A growing breed of international beauty entrepreneurs are bottling the secrets they learnt from their Indian ancestors for an audience that's waking up to the power and potency of Ayurvedic beauty. By **Parizaad Khan Sethi**

A generation of beauty entrepreneurs across the globe have almost identical origin stories. They grew up with grandmothers and mothers who massaged their scalps with potent oils they had concocted themselves, dads who brewed special teas for specific ailments and aunts who were ready with handmade ubtan for weekly scrub-downs. It was just a way of life, they all say. No one called it by the name that skincare worshippers are labelling it with today: Ayurvedic beauty. It's no wonder these women (and one man) wanted to share with the modern world the important legacies they'd been handed down, in the form of Ayurveda-inspired beauty brands.

PHOTO: EMMA SUMMERTON. STYLIST: NATASHA ROYT. HAIR: MUSTAFA YANAZART+COMMERCE. MAKEUP: RALPH SICILIANO. MANICURE: MAKI SAKAMOTO/THE WALL GROUP. ASSISTANT STYLIST: RASAAN WYZARD. MODEL: POOJA MORFELITE NYC. CASTING: SHAUN BEYEN. PRODUCTION: HEN'S TOOTH PRODUCTIONS. SET DESIGN: VIKI RUTSCH/EXPOSURE NY

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INGRAINED
IN RITUALS:
Michelle Ranavat,
Ranavat Botanics



BACK TO THE
ROOTS: Rooshy
Roy, Aavrani



RANAVAT BOTANICS

Michelle Ranavat, founder and CEO

Haldi doodh on sick days and besan ubtan facials were an inescapable part of Los Angeles-based Michelle Ranavat's childhood. She graduated to mixing her own face packs and realised the Ayurveda glow-up was real. She leveraged her expertise of sourcing ingredients for a pharmaceutical supplier to bring India's ancient beauty practices in a high-quality format to the mainstream US skincare market.

Ayurveda's philosophy of each bodily system being connected is vital to Ranavat's ethos. "Skincare is a ritual to me, and that is a concept that runs through the core of the brand," she says.

Facial tools like gua sha were gaining traction, and Ranavat gets credit for mainstreaming a previously lesser-known one of our own. The kansa wand, a wooden instrument with a domed bronze tip used for relaxing and purifying facial massages, is now one of Ranavat's signature offerings. Try a kansa wand massage with a few drops of Radiant Rani ("My personal take on kumkumadi oil—organic sesame oil infused with herbs in traditional copper vessels and hand-stirred over ten days," says Ranavat) as a ritual to nourish your body and soul.

AAVRANI

Rooshy Roy, founder and CEO

"I was born and raised in Michigan, and grew up bouncing between cultures. I was either too Indian or too American, especially in the context of feeling beautiful," says New York-based Rooshy Roy.

Roy chose to celebrate the duality often felt by the Indian diaspora by uniting her worlds in one beauty brand—clinically proven modern-day formulations married with India's ancient all-natural approach.

At a time when the industry is seeking to reimagine beauty as self-care, Roy feels

some principles of Ayurveda resonate now more than ever. "Real beauty doesn't come in a jar. I love how Ayurveda reminds us that beauty is both an inside and outside job."

Roy reimagined that most iconic of Ayurvedic beauty rituals, the turmeric mask. "For Indian-American women like me, there's real excitement around a modernised turmeric mask—one formulated to avoid the yellow-stained aftermath." Aavrani's Glow Activating Exfoliator is a best-seller for a reason: turmeric, neem and honey turbocharge this product to perform double duty as a cleanser and mask, fitting seamlessly into a modern beauty routine.

SAHAJAN

Lisa Mattam, founder and CEO

Lisa Mattam didn't hear the word Ayurveda until she was much older, but with parents from Kerala, it was integrated into her childhood. Her dad served up cumin and fennel tea for upset tummies and dabbed turmeric on her first acne spots. "Ayurveda became a foundation for my lens on beauty and wellness," she says.

Toronto-based Mattam had her eureka moment when she came home one day to find her toddler slathered in her then skincare. "When I showed her the products safe for her to play with, they were all Ayurvedic oils. I realised that if my skincare wasn't good enough for her, it wasn't good enough for me."

Mattam takes the scientific process of big pharma, in which she worked, and applies it to Ayurveda. Ayurvedic doctors in Kerala as well as pharma chemists work on each Sahajan formulation. For instance, "Ayurveda's answer to hyperpigmentation is turmeric, tulsi and fruit acids. >



SCIENCE MEETS
AYURVEDA: Lisa
Mattam, Sahajan

"AYURVEDA'S
ANSWER TO
HYPERPIGMENTATION
IS TURMERIC, TULSI
AND FRUIT ACIDS"

- LISA MATTAM

Those core ingredients, plus nourishing hemp seed oil, are all in a light clay base in our Brightening Mask,” she says. Her approach is intuitive, effortless and effective.

SHAZ & KIKS

Sharoni Rajashekar and Kiku Chaudhuri, co-founders

Sisters Kiku Chaudhuri and Sharoni Rajashekar’s haircare brand in Austin, Texas, has just one product so far—a scalp and hair pre-wash for two different hair types. The duo has modernised the oiling ritual, transforming it into a pre-shampoo hair mask. The fiery unaltered smell of herbs and roots that greets the user is an indicator that not much has been tampered with.

The mask will win over lovers and haters of hair oiling alike. “It has shikakai and reetha to clean and balance the scalp, and a wonderful mix of oils that penetrate and nourish hair strands and also create a protective shield, allowing less water to penetrate the shaft,” says Rajashekar. It’s easy to wash out, and won’t leave your scalp and hair feeling greasy.

In another win for authenticity, raw ingredients are sourced directly from small, sustainable Indian farms and artisan groups. Education in Indian beauty is on the agenda too. “We’re excited about highlighting the original names of the different herbs. Who doesn’t have fun saying ‘shikakai,’” says Chaudhuri.

TAZA AYURVEDA

Divya Viswanathan and Amy Engel, co-founders

A few years ago, Divya Viswanathan returned to the US from a visit to India where she had undergone an Ayurvedic treatment for burnout, and spread the gospel to her friend Amy Engel. Engel, in turn, spent some time at Kerala’s Sitaram Beach Retreat, emerging a new person. “My digestion issues were solved, my energy levels improved and my skin looked ten years younger,” says Engel.

The duo joined forces to create New York-based Taza, with a simple vision—to stay true to the authenticity of ancient

Ayurvedic texts. “Our ingredients are traditionally sourced, and all our products have the original Sanskrit name that can be traced back to Ayurvedic texts,” says Viswanathan. “We want to treat Ayurveda with the same respect as western medicine and not change formulations that have a long history of effectiveness.”

Taza’s approach offers a trio of products to be used in tandem—Gandharvahastadi, a herbal digestive supplement to address gut issues, Kumkumadi Facial Oil that’s loaded with carotenoids and antioxidants from saffron, and Eladi Body oil with 34 potent herbs, roots, spices and adaptogens, for everything from abhyanga and scalp rub-downs to baby massages.

FABLE & MANE

Akash Mehta and Nikita Mehta, co-founders

London-based siblings Akash and Nikita Mehta have their sights set on one body part: the head, and what springs from it. The Sephora-stocked duo wants to popularise the time-honoured Indian head massage and are using their adaptogen-infused brand to do that. “Although familiar to Indians, hair oiling is a new ritual for many western consumers,” says Akash.

They hope their ashwagandha-powered hair oil, plus shampoo, conditioner and mask, prove to be the modern-day tools their customers can use to perform the rituals of sneha—to oil and love, and abhyanga, or self-massage. “An oil head massage stretches hair from the roots and stimulates it to produce thicker individual strands,” says Nikita. ■

“WE WANT TO TREAT AYURVEDA WITH THE SAME RESPECT AS WESTERN MEDICINE AND NOT CHANGE FORMULATIONS THAT HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF EFFECTIVENESS”
- DIVYA VISWANATHAN



THE STAR SISTERS: Kiku Chaudhuri and Sharoni Rajashekar, Shaz & Kiks



AUTHENTIC AYURVEDA: Amy Engel and Divya Viswanathan, Taza Ayurveda



THE A-TEAM: Akash and Nikita Mehta, Fable & Mane



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WHITE BLOOM:
Freshly plucked
jasmine flowers
from the farms
of Madurai,
Tamil Nadu

Brighter times

From a Roman perfume house's future-forward techniques to save decades-old floral farmlands in Tamil Nadu to a home-grown brand's modern methods to preserve ancient Ayurveda, here is a look at beauty's sustainable future



FARM TO FRAGRANCE

Tracing the journey to preserve jasmine, perfumery's most precious and proud bloom. By **Sneha Mankani**

VALLEY OF FLOWERS:

Flower pickers wake up before the break of dawn to pluck scented jasmine petals



Bulgari
Splendida
Jasmin
Noir EDP

My ride slices through a kaleidoscopic horizon—temple crowds clad in vivid colours of the brightest kind and stretches of fields that go from earthy to sprightly green. The driver adds the voice-over to this motion picture: “You must visit our Meenakshi Amman Temple and jasmine farms.” As we enter the heart of Madurai, the temple city of Tamil Nadu, his words reaffirm my decision to learn about Bulgari’s humble yet ambitious initiative, in partnership with perfume designer Firmenich and its local partner, Jasmine Concrete, to create a sustainable jasmine farming model for 100 family-owned farms in the state. Because while the flower continues to yield its intoxicating scent, it isn’t thriving as it once did.

LITTLE WHITE FLOWER

At the core of perfumery lies a little white bloom whose scent deceives its delicate appearance. It is sweet, floral and fresh, but also sensuous, warm and musky. In Tamil Nadu, women adorn their lustrous hair with a barrette made out of its freshly plucked petals. In perfumery, it’s the pride of every maker who understands its intricate trajectory from farm to fragrance. Harvesters hand-pick the petals before dawn, before the arrival of the first rays that come for the same reason—to drink up its heady scent. Dominique Roques, vice president, naturals partnerships and communication, Firmenich, explains the flower’s fragility: “I think the beauty of jasmine harvesting is that it is the most delicate hand-labour crop. It requires work

that starts at dawn that you have to complete in a few hours, because your enemy is the sun and the heat. No machine can replace this job. A great flower picker can pick up to two kilos of jasmine a day, but 45 kilos of rose in the same time.” But with climate change and the sad state of biodiversity, the farmers need to adapt. What worked then, fails them now. That’s when brands like Bulgari, which preserve jasmine’s rich essence in its luxury scents, need to step in—to help farmers better their techniques, and thus, bolster the flower’s future.

SEEDS OF TOMORROW

To cultivate the most beautifully fragrant, healthy jasmine flowers, three core problems need to be addressed: water supply (disrupted due to unpredictable monsoons), the quality of soil (gradually damaged due to use of chemicals and fertilisers), and balance in crop cultivation (jasmine season lasts from June until November). The Roman luxury house’s three-year pilot project offers farmers an alternative approach to jasmine production by teaching them permaculture principles such as soil restoration and water supply management. “Biodiversity starts in the soil and healthy soil results in rich biodiversity. This programme has been about searching hard for the balance,” says Roques, as we explore one of the farms that the brand has brought under its wing. He tells us that the borewells—600ft deep

holes created by farmers to capture rain-water underneath—started yielding less water with climate change. The project remodelled the farm by creating a pool that gathers water from the surroundings. “These pools create water retention that gradually percolates in the ground and feeds the underground borewell,” explains Roques, as Pushparaj, a farmer, admits that this process has helped the borewell provide more water than it did a year ago.

SLOW AND STEADY

Permaculture is the art of agriculture done in the most sustainable way possible. To create nourished land using compost and to not have to plough it again, balanced crop cultivation is key. Growing marigold to attract birds that eat insects helps avoid the use of pesticides, corn patches feed the farmer’s cows, apart from adding to his livelihood, while the jasmine buds continue to grow in their designated circles. “The ground is constantly nourished so that the roots can feed themselves and clever drip irrigation helps irrigate the plant at the roots,” says Roques of the many methods they’ve introduced. As we stand on that soil a year into its organic transformation, Pushparaj nods that his flowers are indeed slightly bigger, with better fragrance. But it wasn’t easy for him to take that bold step. “My father grew grapes and rice with an abundance of water 25 years ago on this soil,” he tells us. The difference he saw in his production, turning from a monocrop farm to a multicrop one, creating his own bio inputs, vermicompost (use of dead material) and vermiculture (growth of worms), and nurturing his farm on his own, has empowered Pushparaj to be hopeful for the future. And while his fellow farmers wait and watch him reap the seeds sown, Bulgari hopes it nudges them to take that step too. >



CLEAN SWEEP

The very premise of Ayurveda is deeply rooted in the boundless wisdom nature has to offer. It's time to give back, writes **Sanjana Salunkhe**

Conscious consumption isn't just about how you dispose of your empties anymore, but to know if the botanicals in your favourite serum come from responsibly managed forests or if the brand has been honest with you. "No single event in recent history has had as profound and immediate an impact on the consumer mindset as COVID-19. We have to now look at trends differently, such as planetary impact, safety, self-consciousness and the ways in which consumers can get self-care at home," says Mira Kulkarni, founder, Forest Essentials, as

she tells us more about her brand's sustainability journey.

GRADUATING TO GREENER PACKAGING

"To find the ideal eco-friendly packaging, it was important for us to carefully assess and ensure the product is also kept safe, clean and undisturbed," says Kulkarni. Forest Essentials uses biodegradable cartons made of paper certified by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council). The FSC sets standards for forest products, certifies that they have been met, and bestows labels upon



IN THE LAP OF NATURE:

The manufacturing base is located in the Himalayas, surrounded by rivers and peaks



WHOLLY NATURAL
Ethically sourced ingredients are used as per age-old Ayurvedic traditions



the products that qualify. 90 per cent of Forest Essentials's portfolio is now completely recyclable with PET packaging material that is strong, lightweight, non-reactive, economical and shatterproof.

ETHICAL SOURCING

The quality of a herb is not only defined by its potency, but also by the fertility of the soil where it was grown and the working conditions of the hands that harvested it. Sustainability of people, place and culture are all taken into consideration by the brand when establishing new farming

partnerships. "We source our ingredients from local, small-scale farmers, traditional artisans, and rural cooperatives that are experts in their fields," says Kulkarni. The products—from the organically grown cold-pressed oils to the raw and unprocessed cane sugar—are all made the old-fashioned way, as per the tenets of Ayurveda. This approach aims to secure precious ingredients without any loss of biodiversity while also bolstering the livelihoods of the local producers.

TICKING THE RIGHT BOXES

Along with being authentic and transparent, it is important for brands to do their due diligence along the entire value chain. We have evaluated every aspect of our product life cycle, be it our green formulations, raw material sourcing, or monitoring our use of water, energy and resources," says Kulkarni.

Cleaner formulations: The formulas are free of palm oil (which is known to lead to

massive deforestation), triclosan and microplastics. The products have no parabens, silicones, sulphates, artificial colours or fragrances.

Consumer transparency: "Due to the rising number of beauty conversations around going green and clean, consumers have access to so much information and we are encouraging transparent communication with them," says Kulkarni.

Healthy work culture: Training workshops, keeping employees well informed about the brand's ethos and plans, and creating more jobs for local women are being encouraged.

Giving back: Project Paathshala was started as a partnership with Simple Education Foundation (SEF), a non-governmental organisation in Delhi, as a CSR initiative with a vision to give rural students the same kind of exposure and opportunities to quality learning environments as their urban counterparts. ■

OLD IS GOLD

Classic pieces are no longer reserved for your mother's vintage saris. Certain ones will even add extra edge to an everyday look



The drop earring

A hero for any outfit, these eye-catching beauties are all you need to up a basic look

1. 'East of Bengal' 22K gold chandbalis, Sabyasachi Heritage Jewellery Collection
2. 18K gold jhumkis, Sunita Shekhawat



Past and present

Gold is synonymous with Indian jewellery. Moreover, the metal is well suited to traditional pieces as well as modern creations. By Priyanka Parkash





3. 22K gold bangles, **The House of MBJ**
4. Gold kada, **Hazoorilal by Sandeep Narang**

The classic kada

Not only essential to every bridal stack, but also an original way to add glamour to jeans and a basic tee



The daily neck-piece

Layering gold isn't simply for occasions. Pair your shorter and longer gold bits over standard basics

5. Gold necklace, **Malabar Gold & Diamonds**
6. 'Aarambh' 18K gold necklace, **Tanishq**



7. Antique gold ring, **Reliance Jewels**
8. Pearl, diamond and gold brooch, **Birdhichand Ghanshyamdas Jaipur**

Statement maker

Find a unique way to wear heavy metal—a brooch or an oversized ring with a jacket



The classic hoop

The most refreshing jewellery trend takes a traditional turn as the perfect addition to any capsule collection



9. 'Bella' hoop earrings, **Orra**
10. Gold hoop earrings, **Jaipur Gems**



The circle earring

The contemporary dangler is statement-making at its finest



11. Diamonds set in yellow gold earrings, **Kaj Fine Jewellery**
12. Diamonds set in gold earrings, **Renu Oberoi Luxury Jewellery**

WEAR WITH



BALMAIN

SAINT LAURENT

NEW WAVE

Contemporary gold pieces are an excellent way to include fine jewellery into your daily wardrobe

Arm candy

An extravagant alternative to the classic kada is a cuff stacked with sleek bangles



13. Gold bangles, **Hazoorilal Legacy, South Extension**
14. Diamonds set in 18K gold cuff, **Rose**

14

Paloma Elsesser



STYLE INSPIRATION

The essential hoop

Exerting a slimmer and sleeker form, these must-haves prove to be an efficient match to almost any look



15

16

15. 'Tiny Egg' gold hoops, **Sophie Buhai**
16. 'Juste Un Clou' earrings, **Cartier**

The everyday necklace

Necklaces are now more delicate and sleek, so layering multiple pieces is the perfect way to wear your gold out on the town

- 17. 'La Suerte' Zodiac pendant, **Forevermark Diamonds**
- 18. 18K gold chain link choker, **Rosa De La Cruz**

STYLE INSPIRATION



GETTY IMAGES; INDIGITAL MEDIA; SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



The cool ring

There's nothing more eye-catching than a dressed-up hand of stacked rings. Embrace newer styles like beaten gold, embellished, or sleek and stackable pieces

WEAR WITH



- 19. 'Rain' 18K gold ring, **Spinelli Kilcollin**
- 20. 'Eminence' ring, **Shaze**
- 21. Diamond and gold ring, **H.Ajoomal**

MY INDIA IS

DIGITAL

UNLEASHING
THE POWER OF
CONNECTIVITY.
BY ISHA AMBANI
PIRAMAL



Photographed by **TARUN VISHWA**

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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On March 24 2020, amid a global pandemic, when India first announced a nationwide lockdown, it became clear that life as we knew it was going to change in ways we couldn't see as yet. Offices, shops and schools remained closed in the months that followed. COVID-19 cases surged, the economy suffered, commerce dwindled, and a sense of loss and uncertainty loomed large. Yet, in the face of crisis, humanity did what humanity does best—adapt to change, cling to hope and come together to rise above adversity. With the help of digital technology, we began to stay and feel connected again. In our screens, we found a digital lifeline. Working from home, learning from home, banking from home, consulting doctors from home, shopping essentials from home, even entertainment on-demand at home. To me, this is the new India, a resilient India, a truly digital India.

Four years ago, in 2016, my father Mukesh Ambani envisioned a digital revolution that would democratise technology for 1.3 billion Indians. Jio led the way for a digital liberation as an unparalleled movement that would empower and enable people from every stratum of society. From ranking 155 in the world on mobile data consumption, India became number one. No greater proof was needed for the digital appetite of our large and young population.

Connectivity is only one part of the vision. It is the foundation on which the edifice of our nation's development will stand tall. Be it agriculture, education or healthcare, reach and amplification of growth initiatives is key to our inclusive growth story. And that is precisely what digitisation offers—an equal-opportunity revolution, bridging deeply rooted divides of geography, class and gender.

In this new digital landscape that connects Bharat with India, smartphones and tablets will become the roads that take the youth on a journey of upward mobility like never before. These tools will ensure that learning is not confined within walls and access to opportunity is not the prerogative of a few. Using artificial intelligence and augmented reality, we will provide virtual classrooms, clinics, banks, malls as well as entertainment to every Indian.

Next year, our nation celebrates its 75th Independence Day. Let's make it a celebration of every Indian and promise ourselves the future that is destined for us—of modernity, of innovation, of inclusion, of growth and power with accountability and responsibility. If you ask me, digital technology is the pathway to that future, and it's already here. ■

Isha Ambani Piramal is an art patron and the director of Reliance Retail and Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited, a telecommunications company that has connected over 385 million subscribers in India

"IN THE FACE OF CRISIS, HUMANITY DID WHAT HUMANITY DOES BEST—ADAPT TO CHANGE, CLING TO HOPE AND COME TOGETHER TO RISE ABOVE ADVERSITY. WITH THE HELP OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY, WE BEGAN TO STAY AND FEEL CONNECTED AGAIN. IN OUR SCREENS, WE FOUND A DIGITAL LIFELINE"



MICHAEL KORS



For a quick glow up, Jamir always turns to a healthy helping of highlighter



1

Influencer ties

Two fashion figures of the Instagram generation take us into their distinctly antithetical aesthetics and mood boards

HERMÈS



Any eternal romantic can attest to the dreamscapes of *Before Sunrise* (1995)

After the pandemic, you will find her sipping mimosas on a beach in Tulum, Mexico



3



AIEN JAMIR

Minimal, classic and predominantly black and white, it's no surprise that Jamir cites Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen as her style icons

White separates, dresses and shirts dominate her wardrobe



4



5



2

- 1. Studded ankle boots, **Charles & Keith**, ₹4,000
- 2. Jumper, **H&M Studio**, ₹3,999
- 3. 'The Elements Sun' bracelet, **Swarovski**, ₹6,600
- 4. Tie-up shirt, **431-88**, ₹7,000
- 5. Blazer, **Marks & Spencer**, ₹6,200

COURTESY @KYLIEJENNER/INSTAGRAM; INDIGITAL MEDIA; JAMES COCHRANE; GETTY IMAGES; SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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Sometimes, the digital content creator dials up the drama on her talons (cue Kylie Jenner and her pastel acrylics)



For a stay-home-stay-cool era, Contractor turns to matching sweats



Toronto is like Contractor's second home and the cold weather inspires her style



KAYAAN CONTRACTOR

A style steeped in retro basics with a heavy dose of modern-day quirk, Contractor's influences run far and wide



Levi's trucker jackets and Nike dunks—does it get more '80s than this?



- 1. Denim jacket, Levi's, ₹5,999
- 2. Jumper, ₹1,600, pants, ₹2,600; both Zara
- 3. 'Dunk Low Disrupt' sneakers, Nike, ₹8,000
- 4. 'Keith Haring' T-shirt, United Colors of Benetton, ₹2,300



Zoë Kravitz



Old-world Wes Anderson films like *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (2014) make up her watch list

Big digital energy

From nightly binge-fests to weekend movie marathons, we have streamed our way through the groundhog-ish reality of our stay-at-home lives. The leaders of the creative zeitgeist taking over India's entertainment industry tell **Shahnaz Siganporia** why OTT is only going to get bigger



APARNA PUROHIT

HEAD OF INDIA ORIGINALS,
AMAZON PRIME VIDEO

“India is not an ‘or’ country. It’s not film or TV or OTT. It’s an ‘and’ country. It’s film and TV and OTT. There is room for everything to coexist beautifully,” says Aparna Purohit. She beams through my screen, zoom-ready in her suburban Mumbai apartment—kohled eyes, silver danglers, a hint of a white handloom kurta. She’s not speaking to me in the abstract. Even before the great lockdown binge, India’s OTT market value spiked from ₹2,150 crore in 2018 to ₹35 billion in 2019, with about 40 players (and counting). Amazon

Prime, now a leading one, earned a ringing endorsement from founder and CEO Jeff Bezos who stated earlier this year, “Nowhere in the world is Prime Video doing better than in India, and we are planning to double down on our investments here.”

Over the last five years, Purohit, as head of India Originals, has created a stellar repertoire that includes shows such as *Made In Heaven* and *Pataal Lok*, films like *Gulabo Sitabo* and *Shakuntala Devi*, and the comedy series *Comicstaan*, to name a few. So what’s the secret sauce behind her brand of modern, complex yet nuanced content that has viewers hooked and begging for more (think jonesing for your fix of *Mirzapur* season two that is finally releasing later this month)? “Shrinking timelines to get customers what they want is my greatest challenge right now,” she confesses. The pressure is on, but it’s their “customer-backwards approach” that she credits. “What is the need-gap? I felt there was fertile space for long-form content

that is authentic to who we are.” Be it line-producing at UTV or running the screenwriters lab at National Film Development Corporation’s (NFDC) Film Bazaar, Purohit has been training to fill this gap from the get-go.

The real clincher to her success is her compulsive chasing of “closet scripts” (the passion projects that can’t seem to find a backer). She hounded Sudip Sharma until he spilt his idea for what is probably this year’s most bingeable show, *Paatal Lok*. She says, “I was blown away as I heard it. It was a window into the different Indias that exist. Whether it was Hathi Ram or Cheeni or Tyagi, I felt I had seen them, even interacted with them, but never really paused to know more about them.” But her seemingly simple vision has seen her spearhead an immersive universe that we cannot get enough of.

KAY SUKUMAR (APARNA); PHOTOGRAPHER’S AGENCY: FAZE MANAGEMENT

آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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"In India, film and TV have had very formulaic writing. We're changing that"

—MONIKA SHERGILL

MONIKA SHERGILL

VICE PRESIDENT, CONTENT, NETFLIX INDIA

How did Netflix India win 2020? Two words: *Indian Matchmaking*. The most explosive show of the year was panned and lauded in equal measure. It gave us an amuse-bouche of peri-peri fox nuts with liquid nitrogen, Sima Auntie memes, but most importantly, intentionally (or unintentionally) it exposed an antiquated institution. It made us sit up and tweet or talk about everything from colourism to sexism in contemporary Indian

society. "Controversy is not something we fight shy of. One of the most important barometers of an audience responding to content is not whether something is liked or disliked, but that it cannot be ignored. *Indian Matchmaking* stoked a conversation. What more can a creator ask for," says Monika Shergill, vice president of content at Netflix India, rather fearlessly.

She's squeezed in our conversation between meetings and calls. Her apartment in Mumbai has morphed into a content incubator, and yet, there she is, hair perfectly coiffed, emanating a rare old-world earnestness. Behind the soft-spoken demeanour is a breaker-of-glass-ceilings audaciousness. She says, "Nearly half our workforce and leadership are women, and that impacts our choices and makes us an equal-opportunity workspace. However, there is still the big boys' club in the media, and boardrooms are predominantly male, but it is changing." Shergill is used to fighting her way to the top, first as a reporter in Delhi for the Green Oscar-winning environment series *Living On The Edge* and then by shaking up TV with *Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin* (the adaptation of *Ugly Betty*) and by bringing *MasterChef* to India.

Barely a year and a half into her role at Netflix India, and she's already raising the bar. In July, the company unveiled 17 original shows and movies. From films such as the upcoming *Serious Men* and shows like *A Suitable Boy*, three months later and our watch lists are far from exhausted. "We want to give our members something to discover and love on Netflix every day," she says. Even as she waits to see how the rest of the calendar for the year fares, she's on to her next adventure, "The writing challenge," she says. "In India, film and TV have had very formulaic writing. We're changing that. The creativity is here, but we need to adapt to a new format." She's busy organising writing and technical workshops to ensure quality, even as she scouts for emerging voices and signs on new projects. What can we expect from Netflix India's next big reveal? Everything, from VFX to YA is on her radar, she says. "Your Netflix is different from my Netflix, and it's my job to ensure we get the best of a diverse range of great content." >



KARAN BEDI

CEO, MX PLAYER

If the two international streaming giants aced quality content, the youngest kid on the OTT block won the great lockdown number game. In April of this year, MX Player saw the highest visitor count with 148.4 million users spending a total of 19,120 million minutes daily, according to a CNBC-TV18 report. With 280 million users (last year), MX Player is currently second only to Disney+ Hotstar. Karan Bedi, the man behind the rapid success of this year-and-a-few-months-old platform, is grinning gleefully as I ask him about its phenomenal growth story. His Silicon Valley dress code (he's a Stanford grad and self-confessed techie), tee, jeans and smart sneakers (the kind "that keep you cool in summer and warm in winter") in place, he says, "We're already the largest." Even with the final numbers a few months away, Bedi is confident they've nailed it this year.

"We're young but our DNA is strong. We're half media, half tech. When the lockdown struck, there was a furore over data speed and we were good." If you're still scratching your head, wondering why MX Player isn't necessarily your app of choice, its primary audience lives outside the eight big metros, is 75 per cent male and below 35 years of age. All part of its strategy, Bedi, who was previously behind Eros Now's success story, explains: "India is largely a single-TV household, and Indian TV has always been homogenous. It's mainly daily soaps or family entertainment. There is nothing for young people, especially young men. There are about 200 million TV screens in India, and 500 million 4G smartphones. So we're not looking to cater to the top tip of the pyramid. We're focusing on the rest—the mass middle. The young men with nothing to watch come 8pm in tier two, three and four cities are my audience."

The advertising-driven platform now



"The young men with nothing to watch come 8pm in tier two, three and four cities are my audience"

—KARAN BEDI

owned by Times Internet is a free-for-all with no subscription fee, boasting over 1,00,000 hours of licenced content that consists of TV shows, films, music videos and international content. Its focus is to now build on its originals. *Queen*, loosely based on the life of the late Jayalalithaa, premiered last December and was an instant must-watch. A recent release, Prakash Jha's *Aashram*, a crime drama series based on India's god-man-conman phenomenon was lauded overnight, both in views and by the critics. With over 20 originals and counting, Bedi is far from done, "No one ever got anywhere without aiming high. We want to be the karta-dharta of what you watch, listen and play. We want all of it."

NITIN PATEL (EKTA)



"No matter how much content you make, you cannot cater to all 1.3 billion Indians"

—EKTA KAPOOR

EKTA KAPOOR

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ALTBALAJI

If there's one thing Ekta Kapoor has mastered, it's the pulse of India's varied audiences. With TV, she pioneered the winning turn-of-the-millennium daily soap formula with the K-serial. In films, she went middle-of-the-road for the urban multiplex high-streeters with *LSD* (2010), *Dirty Picture* (2011) and *Udta Punjab* (2016). And with her foray into OTT with ALTBalaji in 2017, she's gunning for the masses once

again, but this time with "individualised" content. "Masaledar edgy entertainment," she shares.

"There is so much prohibition in our society that we veer towards anything that is in the prohibitive space," she says. Free from the nanny state-like restrictions of wholesome-entertainment-made-for-the-Indian-family-package of shared households and TV sets, ALTBalaji is capitalising on OTT's hall pass—the discretion of individual viewing on smart screens. "I don't have to satisfy five family members with one show. I can now cater to each of them with radical content and tell the stories I have always wanted to," she says.

Kapoor might be telling the stories she wants to, but she is known for her business savvy for a reason. *Gandii Baat* is an anthology of rural Indian erotic tales, *XXX: Uncensored* is about sex and urban youth, and *Virgin Bhaskar* is a small-town erotic novel writer who's still a virgin (yes, a bit like *Jane The Virgin*). Headlines might tag these shows as regressive soft porn, but the bottom line says sex sells, and audiences cannot get enough of it. ALTBalaji's repertoire of close to 50 web series also includes the action-packed crime series *Apharan* and the woman-led *Mission Over Mars*, based on ISRO's Mars Orbiter Mission.

ALTBalaji has reported a 90 per cent growth in direct subscription revenue at ₹12.9 crore in the first quarter. But the lockdown has been tough for her production house, media giant Balaji Telefilms, which has been struggling for a while, but has taken a further hit, reporting a consolidated net loss of ₹27.87 crore between March and June. "I did a course at Harvard in 2013 to reevaluate my business model. Balaji is a cost-plus B2B model. So I took the B2C plunge. I cannot match the buying power of the big OTT players. I'm a home-grown business." Kapoor is clear that the way ahead is to claim her space in OTT as an affordable app for the mass market. She says, "No matter how much content you make, you cannot cater to 1.3 billion Indians. I don't care if someone from South Bombay doesn't watch ALTBalaji, but I do want everyone from Vashi to Bihar to have my app on their phone." ■



Prime time

Some stars aren't born, they make themselves with hard work, determination and unadulterated talent. **Jaideep Ahlawat**, of *Pataal Lok* fame, tells **Anupama Chopra** why his new-found success was worth the wait

Photographed by **KAY SUKUMAR**



JA: "I will never forget *Paatal Lok*... When success comes late, you realise the value of it"

This is my first at-home and on-Zoom 'Out To Lunch' (as with everything else, we adapt to our new reality). Appropriately, the actor staring back at me from my screen is someone who has kept us entertained through this lockdown. With the release of Amazon Prime Video's *Paatal Lok* and his brilliant portrayal of the vulnerable yet duty-bound police officer Hathi Ram Chaudhary, Jaideep Ahlawat became a household name. But it has been a long road to success. The Film and Television Institute of India graduate was first noticed in 2012, when he played Shahid Khan in Anurag Kashyap's *Gangs of Wasseypur*. He then had to wait six years till his next surge of recognition with Meghna Gulzar's *Raazi* in 2018. Even after his recent headline-making OTT success, the bona fide sensation remains grounded, honest and real, much like his performances. He shares his thoughts on fame, nepotism and his greatest love—acting.

Anupama Chopra: Most people want to forget 2020, but for you, as an actor, this has been your year.

Jaideep Ahlawat: I would also like to forget 2020 for a lot of things, but I will never forget *Paatal Lok*. If success had come quick, I don't know how I would have handled it. When success comes late, you realise the value of it.

AC: You grew up in a village in Rohtak, Haryana, where you saw not more than four films a year. Where did your love for cinema come from?

JA: My love for cinema came later, but my love for performing began early on. In my village, when the *baraats* would pass by, it didn't matter whose it was, I would jump in and start dancing. I must have been five or six years old. My dad used to get angry and say, "Do you even know who they are, that you're dancing at their wedding?" But I loved it.

AC: You liked the attention.

JA: Yes. One wants to express oneself, be it through sports or the stage. It was about people seeing me and knowing my name. I was an attention-seeker.

AC: So when did the acting bug bite?

JA: My parents were teachers. They are retired now, but they always encouraged me to read. When I was in the fifth standard my father gave me a Premchand novel. This is where my love for reading started, and I went on to do my master's in English literature. My dream was to be an army officer. I tried to join when I was 21, but they did not take me. A year passed without me

doing anything. That's when I started dabbling in theatre. I found a platform where I could scream, cry, and release my anger and the frustration of failure without feeling like someone would judge me. That is when I felt, "This is right, let's do this."

AC: After graduating, there was a long struggle. What made you keep at it?

JA: I knew I wanted to act, but it was very

personal. I did not think of it as a career. Acting kept me aligned and balanced my emotions and energy. It became my driving force. I always felt that yes, this is what I want to do, so let's keep doing it. When you feel there is no other option for you—nothing else gives me the kind of peace that acting does—you don't mind the struggle. Whatever films I got, I did. You have to keep working at it.

AC: "Most people want to forget 2020, but for you as an actor, this has been your year"



AC: Were you always patient? Or was that a struggle for you?

JA: Patience is a by-product of acting. One needs to understand that everything has its own time. I never knew how to network, I came from a place where you do your work and people appreciate you and that is how you move forward. I still don't know how to reach out to people and say, "I'm a good actor and I have done this and that and the other..." I just can't do it.

AC: The good news is that now everyone is saying that you're a good actor, so you don't have to. What is your take on the insider-outsider Bollywood nexus?

JA: Honestly, I used to get angry at the 'insiders' sometimes. But I would be angry for a day and the next day it would be okay because it is a fact of society. There is no child who comes from a privileged family that has not got the benefits of being privileged. You cannot fight these things. But the amazing thing about the performing arts is that you will not be able to go far if you don't do your work.

AC: Is that your mantra for success?

JA: I love what I do. I have so much love for this work that I cannot live without it. And the other thing is that to sustain you must work, and work hard. Bruce Lee said, "I fear not the man who has practised 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practised one kick 10,000 times." I don't think there is any mantra for success, but if I had to have one, that would be it. I believe that if you keep following something, it won't be able to run away from you. ■

The world is changing before our eyes. With COVID-19 impacting every sector, it is fascinating to see how technology is rising to the occasion to offer viable solutions. With the continued closure of institutions, students are currently solely dependent on online learning. Across the world, schools and colleges are trying to integrate technology into their teaching modules. Teachers are rapidly becoming digitally empowered and parents who were once apprehensive about the benefits of online learning are now changing their minds in its favour.

This disruption has been long overdue. Prior to this, the Indian education system had remained vastly unchanged, but we are now at a turning point. With the current scenario collectively pushing us to innovate towards a digital future, now is the time to recognise the potential of educational technology (edtech) to address issues such as limited access to quality content, lack of personalisation and the practise of rote memorisation. With engagement at the core of its design, edtech is the answer to an immersive, personalised and active learning experience.

Children today are digital natives. They learn from screens and imbibe their first alphabets and numbers through them before they are even introduced to formal education in schools. Parents, on the other hand, have had a recent mental shift that has led to the accelerated adoption and acceptance of online learning. In our research, we discovered that 70 per cent of parents revealed that their children used online learning for the first time during the lockdown. And 75 per cent of them said that they want their children to continue online learning even after schools reopen. These trends, coupled with the democratisation of the internet and the proliferation of smart devices will continue to boost the growth of digital learning across the country.

Its accelerated adoption, however, is just one piece in the puzzle of creating an efficient tech-enabled learning ecosystem. India has the largest schoolgoing population in the world. We are a young country, and with the average age of our population pegged at just 29 years, our youth is firmly in the driver's seat. However, for this demographic to be an asset in our development, we need to give them the right tools in order to unlock their potential and equip them with skills for the future by creating a learning ecosystem that prepares them for the jobs of tomorrow. This means upskilling students in a digital way and equipping them with the latest learnings delivered through efficient media.

At BYJU'S we believe that the power of education and technology can transform our country. Our mission is to aid this evolution by democratising learning. We want to empower students and encourage them to stay curious, to keep their aspirations high. Because with the right tools, nothing is impossible.

When we emerge on the other side of the coronavirus crisis, expect the rise of a blended model of education—the classrooms of tomorrow will have technology at their core as they empower students to cross over from passive to active learning. The future will see us leap from the traditional one-to-many approach to the blended one-on-one learning experience, providing students the best of the physical and digital worlds. This is why this moment we are at is so important—it is an inflection point. ■

Byju Raveendran is the founder and CEO of BYJU'S, the world's most valuable edtech company. Divya Gokulnath, the company's co-founder and director, heads its brand marketing, communications and mentoring verticals, and leads one of its largest women-centric teams

"AT BYJU'S WE BELIEVE THAT THE POWER OF EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY CAN TRANSFORM OUR COUNTRY. OUR MISSION IS TO AID THIS EVOLUTION BY DEMOCRATISING LEARNING"



MY INDIA IS AT A

TURNING POINT

AND IT IS TIME TO RECOGNISE
THE POTENTIAL OF EDTECH.
BY BYJU RAVEENDRAN AND
DIVYA GOKULNATH



آموزشگاه انعکاس منبع جدیدترین اطلاعات، مقالات و دوره‌های آموزشی طراحی لباس و مدشناسی

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MY INDIA IS ACTIVE & VOCAL

A CALL TO ACTION.
BY TRISHA SHETTY

Photographed by **HASHIM BADANI**

STYLED BY: PRIYANKA KAPADIA.
BOOKINGS EDITOR: JAY MODI

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I grew up romanticising the promise of the word 'hope'. Till I met my hero, my sister, Nadia Murad. Nadia was 19 when ISIS attacked her village and killed her six brothers and mother. She was kidnapped and has lived through hell as an ISIS sex slave. Since her escape, she has been fighting for justice for her people. Nadia told me, "Hope is dangerous, hope has an expiration date. Hope requires action."

I didn't grow up wanting to be a social activist. I grew up, much like many others around me, taking democracy and its tenets for granted. Having the audacity to believe that human rights are sacred. But the more I unlearned, the more time I spent on the field working on gender-based violence and the more acquainted I got with politics, I realised this life calls upon us all to find our people and play an active role in shaping our democracy.

I found mine with fellow dissenters—my heroes didn't grow up wanting to be political activists serving as vanguards for democracy. When they were kids, they didn't envision they would one day feel called upon to put their relationships and safety at risk to fight for the soul of our country for the promise of equality, justice and freedom for all. But these are extraordinary times. Times of existential crisis. These are times when people decide whether you are worthy of living a life of dignity based on who you worship, whose political ideology you align with. And through these trying times we have seen the emergence of new leadership—the people that are fighting the good fight for *we the people*. This leadership has many faces. It is intergenerational, led by womxn, and shaped by the voices of the most vulnerable and marginalised. They are mobilising online and offline, letting the teachings of Gandhi and Ambedkar lead the way. Their commitment gives me hope.

When the fascists show up and ask us to turn in our neighbours, history will bear witness to those who stood on the front lines and defended our democracy. When stories are written about us, let them say we tried. We fought the good fight, bore scars to remind us of where we were and what we gained and lost. That we slept with peace in our hearts, for we served our country. I hope you have a vision for our India—an India that is rooted in love, non-violence and justice. I don't worry about the future of my country. I have had the privilege of meeting the best of us: Indians who are noble, kind and brave. They are just like my beloved country—active, resilient, and vocal. ■

Trisha Shetty is a social activist and founder of the NGO SheSays. She serves as the president of the Steering Committee of Paris Peace Forum and was an Obama Foundation Scholar at Columbia University

"I HOPE YOU HAVE A VISION FOR OUR INDIA—AN INDIA THAT IS ROOTED IN LOVE, NON VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE"

Trisha Shetty



Fashion round table

With words such as artisanal, conscious and handmade gathering steam in the fashion narrative, how much do we really know about the Indian crafts sector and the talented karigars that populate it? **Mayank Mansingh Kaul** talks to four entrepreneurs for whom working with this community is a professional highlight



Photo-illustrations by **SNIGDHA KULKARNI**

According to official estimates, the handmade textile sector in India employs the second-largest workforce, after agriculture, in the country. Usually seen through the prism of craft, this community represents a diversity of materials, techniques and skills that are without parallel anywhere else in the world. As symbols of culture and a means of artistic expression, these traditions that have been passed down through generations offer limitless potential for the design and fashion ecology in India and across the world. Supported largely through governmental subsidies and interventions in the last seven decades, the sector has been forced to think afresh due to the pandemic and reflect on its continuing relevance for the present and future.

We asked the Delhi-based writer and curator Mayank Mansingh Kaul to speak with four of craft's leading new-age protagonists from different parts of the country. These men and women, through the breadth of their experience and work at the grass-roots level, form the new wave of activists and entrepreneurs who are making sure that karigars get their due. Here are excerpts from the conversation with Jesmina Zeliang of Heirloom Naga, Mubashir Andrabi of Andraab, Juhi Pandey of Nila House, and Gunjan Jain of Vriksh Designs.

Mayank Mansingh Kaul (MMK): The definition of craft invokes multiple meanings. Which is the one you live by?

Gunjan Jain (GJ): It is about honouring the hands, about giving dignity to the makers who are often not acknowledged.

Juhi Pandey (JP): Craft is a way of life. It gives a unique identity to its maker.

Mubashir Andrabi (MA): In this respect, I think it is essentially a carrier of heritage, traditions and narratives. As a creative process specific to a region, it imbibes the cultural, social and economic aspects of the particular community where it is practised.

MMK: You are emphasising that beyond its tangible skills, as often understood, there's a strong emotional quotient to these traditions.

Jesmina Zeliang (JZ): Yes, beyond a mere product, craft is a creative language through which the artisan expresses himself or herself. This can be both reflective of the moment that we are in and also about creating something timeless.

MMK: Let us go back to the beginning. How did you get involved in the sector?

MA: Till the age of 16, I grew up in Kashmir. Our family home in Srinagar had the Dal Lake on one side and rugged mountains on the other. Craft was everywhere around us. As my brothers and I moved out of the valley for further education, we realised there was a possibility to enlarge the canvas of the Pashmina and Kashmiri shawl and to incorporate new elements into it. This is how Andraab was born.

JZ: I was married into the Zeliang tribe from Nagaland and saw that there was a need for women of the community to find means of livelihood by being home-based. I saw that the textiles they wove on their loin looms had the potential for new products that could be relevant outside of the region, but which would require design interventions and product diversification. I started experimenting with three weavers in my backyard. This was 25 years ago.

JESMINA ZELIANG
52, Dimapur, founder and owner, Heirloom Naga, home textiles and textile accessories

MUBASHIR ANDRABI
45, Srinagar and Jaipur, co-founder and owner, Andraab, pashmina shawls and textile accessories

JUHI PANDEY
42, Jaipur, technical head, Nila House and former director, Khamir

GUNJAN JAIN
38, Delhi and Bhubaneswar, founder and owner, Vriksh Designs, saris and textile accessories

"Craft communities are repositories of ancient systems of knowledge which have been relevant for their ecologies. This has wisdom for today's world"

—JUHI PANDEY

"The art of the Kashmiri shawl has always grown through the spiritual traditions between teachers and their students"

—MUBASHIR ANDRABI



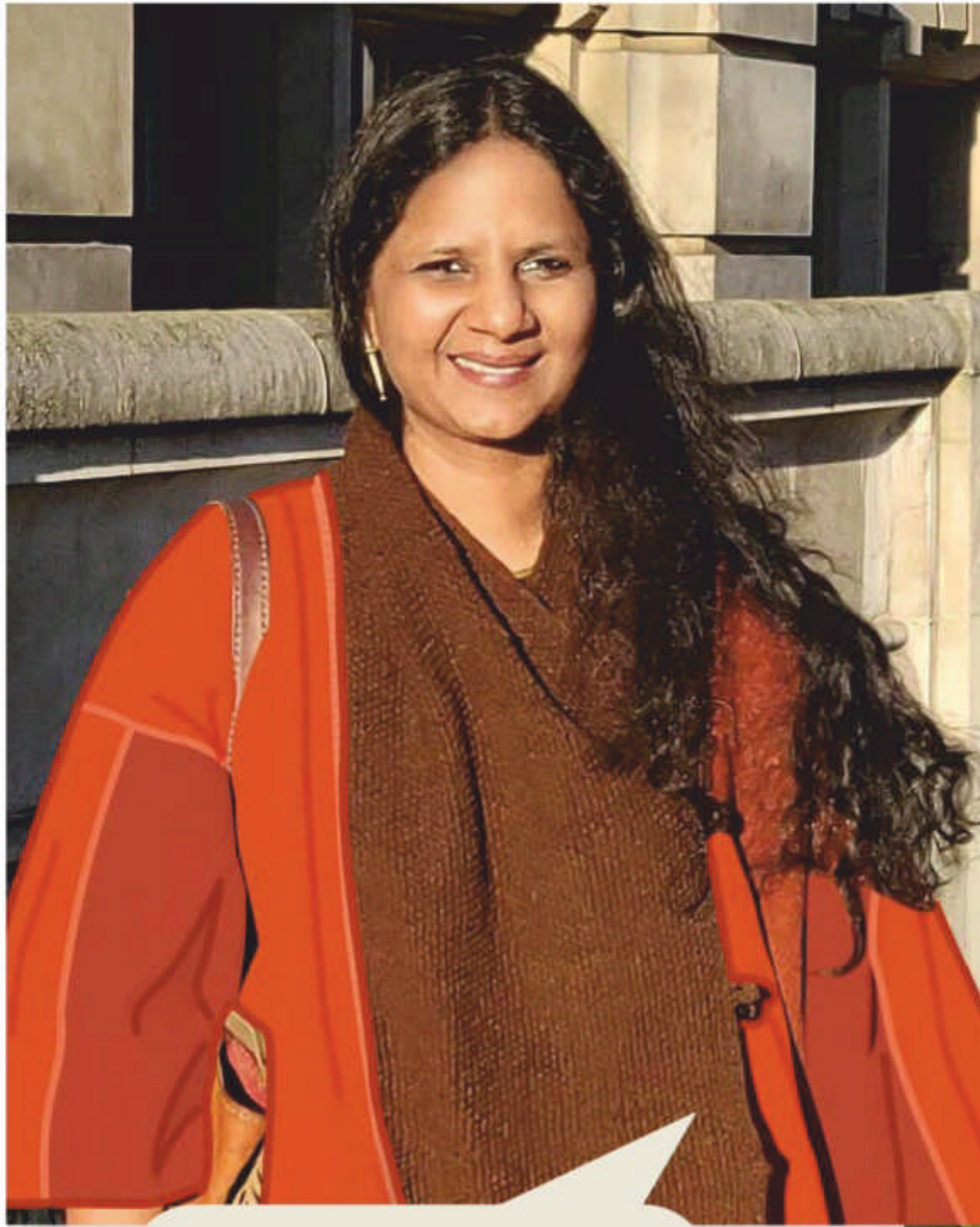
GJ: After graduating from Pearl Academy, I started my career in the apparel export industry. I was soon disillusioned by the industrial practices and moved to Odisha to set up my design studio, Vriksh, in 2008. At that time, the handlooms of the state were not well known outside of it and I immersed myself in working with master weavers of ikat in its towns and villages.

JP: I was a student of textile design at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad when a devastating earthquake struck Gujarat in 2001. Entire villages were wiped out in Kutch and this is when we went to work on rehabilitation efforts there with a group. Handcraft is one of the most important occupations in the region and we forged incredible bonds with the people there.

MMK: Juhi, after graduating, I hear you spent almost a decade in your early career working in the mill sector?

JZ: Yes. And I returned to crafts because these >





human connections, which working in the field enables, are the most important to me. Craft communities are repositories of ancient systems of knowledge which have been relevant for their ecologies. This has wisdom for today's world.

MMK: The crafts sector is usually seen for its challenges—decentralised production, the lack of standardised systems and organised statistics, to name a few. What have been some of the highlights and learnings of working in the field?

JZ: At Heirloom Naga, we work with almost 400 women weavers. Our products have sold at stores such as Shyam Ahuja and Fabindia, and abroad at The Conran Shop and Crate and Barrel. We now have a presence in 20 countries. Recently, 600 of our shawls were sourced by Massimo Dutti to be

"[Craft is]...about honouring the hands. It is about giving dignity to makers who are often not recognised"

—GUNJAN JAIN



"Buyers who saw irregularities in our products as faults have now come to recognise that these inform the very quality of the handmade" —JESMINA ZELIANG



displayed in its store windows. Such recognition has been essential in the self-empowerment of the weavers. From the beginning, we have been able to say no to orders that don't work on our terms. Buyers who saw irregularities in our products as faults have now come to recognise that these inform the very quality of the handmade.

GJ: Nothing is possible at the grassroots level without a collective effort. The power of the community has been a big learning and helps keep the personal ego in check while collaborating. For centuries, despite great odds against them, handloom weavers have continued to work from home, offering the world the choice of a conscious life that is sustainable, local and environmentally friendly. This is a great achievement.

MA: Collaborations have certainly been a highlight—Robert Kushner, Alexander Kori Girard and Erik Killi Olsen have been a few. Our products have reached all over the world. We were told that the late Oscar de la Renta loved wearing our pieces. Aside from this, the art of the Kashmiri shawl has always grown through the spiritual traditions between teachers and their students. This aspect continues to be important even today.

MMK: The news coming in about the crafts sector through the pandemic has been heartbreaking—loss of jobs, cancellation of orders, delays in payments...and so on. Is there a silver lining?

GJ: I was recently talking to Ajaya, a highly skilled weaver from Odisha who spoke of a friend who had left the village and gone to Surat for better work prospects but was then stuck with no work, money or food. Since it is migrant labourers in cities who have faced the biggest challenge, in a new normal, choosing local handmade processes like weaving can help limit such migration to urban cities.

JP: Thankfully, in the communities that I work with, the main impact of COVID-19 as a virus has not been so grave. Some of my artisan friends call it a “disease of the rich and urban people”. In Kutch, communities are working even closer than before,

even sharing raw materials. Some artisans have taken time out to experiment with new ideas and younger generations have taken to making masks and personal protective equipment, addressing the market's demand for these. A master artisan in Sanganer, Rajasthan, ran a campaign for stranded migrant labourers, personally distributing food packets and relief material. All such incidents have shown that the pandemic has brought communities to work together, moving beyond solely trade and transactional relationships. There has also been the creation of new networks for craft-people and organisations such as Vikalp Sutra, of which I am also a member.

MA: We have so far focused on the physical experience of retail because touch is so important with pashminas. But we are overcoming this and launching a new e-commerce website. We are exploring how high-end luxury can be accessed virtually.

JP: The internet and WhatsApp have been a boon at this time.

MMK: You mentioned to me earlier that more than 50 per cent of the country's handloom weavers are from the north-east, out of which 85 per cent are women?

JZ: Yes, and in the immediate aftermath of the lockdown, it was an eye-opener to spot women thronging the yarn shops all over the region. The raw material obviously had more meaning in their lives than essential commodities, and validates just how much the handloom sector contributes to livelihood generation. It is pertinent to point out that because our community network in Nagaland is so strong, one did not hear of any reports of extreme self-inflicting incidents like in other parts of the country. We have also been fortunate to have sustained orders throughout this period.

MMK: This is rare. What would you attribute this to?

JZ: The relationship that we have forged over several years with a network of conscious overseas buyers.

MMK: With handcrafted, artisanal, sustainable, and ethical sourcing becoming an important part of the fashion discourse, hearing that gives us all hope. ■

“For centuries, handloom weavers have continued to work from home, offering the world, the choice of a conscious life”

—GUNJAN JAIN



Point of view

What does it mean to be Indian today? Six emerging photographers attempt to find an answer through their lens as they capture the zeitgeist of evolving identities with an uncensored vision of what is and what can be



IN HER EYES BY AVANI RAI

This image was taken in Turtuk, the last Indian outpost on the northern edge of Ladakh, no less than 10km from the India-Pakistan border. A defining feature of a sensitive region in a conflict zone is that the world ceases to acknowledge the 'individual' and instead burdens them with the stereotypes of the entire community. But the ordinariness of daily life is extraordinary, complex and nuanced. With a baby in her arms, framed by a window, there's a sense of home that surrounds her. And for me, this image is that one moment when I saw a smile in her eyes.

Avani Rai is a photographer and filmmaker. Her film, Raghu Rai: An Unframed Portrait (2017), is based on her father and his photographic journey, which captures the history of India over the past 50 years

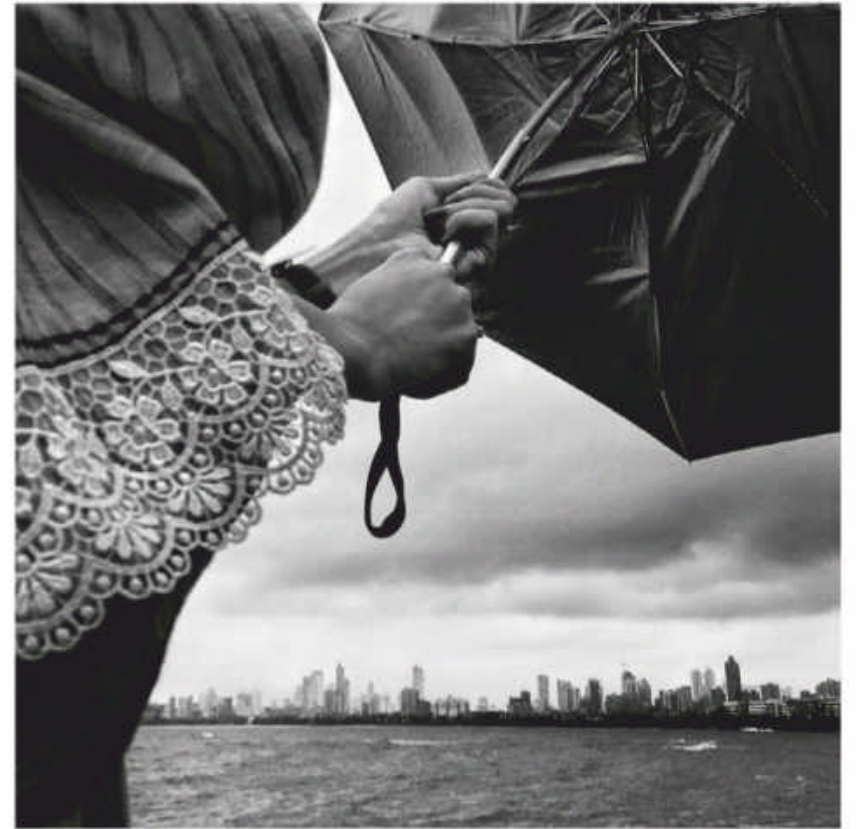
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EVERYTHING IS HOME BY ZAHRA AMIRUDDIN

"What is home? I'm in so many places, all at once," says a friend on a long-distance call from a faraway land. Her voice reverberates through the comfortable silences in my own land—India, Mumbai, the sea. It brings me back to this rainy day in the city, as a friend battles the stormy winds that sweep across the Arabian Sea. The frame is a visual sentence of her identity, the mettle that exists far below the fabric that covers her physical being. It encapsulates her beliefs, her strength to overcome forces bigger than us, her romance with the city she romanticises often. She prances and twirls in comfort, as passers-by gently smile at her elated dance. There is no judgment here, in this space by the sea. Here everything is safe, warm and accepting. Here, everything is home. >

Zahra Amiruddin is an independent writer, photographer and educator. Her work focuses on art, history, astronomy, personal narratives and family histories





EBBING AWAY OF IDENTITY WITH THE TIDES

BY SUSHAVAN NANDY

I witnessed the ravages of climate change as a child growing up in Jalpaiguri in West Bengal. Due to recurring floods in the early 1990s, my family and I had to move to Kolkata. I realised then that climate change does not affect just landscape and property, it has direct consequences on our own lives and relationships—it is a definitive aspect of our lives. Since 2017, I have been exploring the ramifications of climate change in the Sundarbans region of India and the resilience of its inhabitants. The villagers might be unaware of the term 'sea-level rise', but their lives are a testament to it. My images are made in collaboration with the locals, based on oral storytelling and their collective knowledge—a way to preserve their unrecorded stories before they disappear with the shrinking islands.

Sushavan Nandy's photography focuses on issues of climate change. He is an International Photography Grant nominee, a finalist of the Invisible Photographer Asia Awards and part of the exhibit Objectifs in Singapore, all in 2018, and was part of the MadArt Photography exhibition in India in 2019

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IN THIS TOGETHER BY FARHAN HUSSAIN

These images speak to me of an emerging India that dismantles the singular idea of being and looking Indian. An India where we create and hold equal space for all voices, and work to undo hegemonic standards and structures of identity. Suzanne and Kangan are successful Indian models of Assamese origin and the north-east is finally taking centre stage in the fashion industry, both at home and abroad. In the last few years, the industry has begun to slowly decolonise ideas of beauty and gender to make room for diverse faces and sexual identities. Although we've only scratched the surface, we need to extend this to our everyday lives. We must envision an India where the Assam floods fetch as much attention and outcry as the electricity hike in Mumbai and where our privileged feel as compelled to ugly-introspect about caste and class, as we see happening with the BLM movement in the West. Here's hoping for an India where we always re-question and reimagine what it means to be Indian. >

Farhan Hussain is a fashion photographer who grew up in Assam. His work has been featured at exhibitions in Colombo, London, Milan and New York





BREAKING BARRIERS BY PRERNA NAINWAL

The youth of India are evolving and embracing new identities and paradigms while shedding old skin. In some regions of Kumaon, the grooms don vermilion on their foreheads on their wedding day, which city slickers understand as 'feminine ways'. This simple gesture announces the arrival of strong liberal values promoting androgyny and exploring new facets of their identity. There is a departure from traditional conservative ways and more openness to intimacy. A new-found confidence is in sync with the cultural values of a new India, taking cues from all over the world and becoming an amalgamation of East and West. A small town, anywhere in India, is a microcosm of Indian ethos. So this evolution is symptomatic of a quantum change across the country—of a young India emerging from its perceived western gaze of poverty, exoticism and conventional gender roles.

Prerna Nainwal is currently working on a photobook and her brand OH KU (Oh Kumaon), which deviates from the mass to local produced, to generate income for small-scale women tailors in and around her home town of Nainital in Uttarakhand



LADAKH, 2019 BY SHUBHAM LODHA

The idea of 'Indianness' has always beguiled me. Even the most innocent cultural signifiers, like paintings and folk tales, now seem laden with subtexts and codes that endorse structural and societal hierarchies. It is extremely important to acknowledge and refuse these implied political narratives in considering a unitary notion of India, and to instead work towards building an understanding of the country as a work in progress, where multitudes of ideas, goals and viewpoints intersect. As I consider my position as a photographer, I try to contemplate the notion of beauty and question who has access to it. The transformation and subsequent objecthood that a camera imparts fascinates me. This photograph was taken in Ladakh for a story exploring fashion as self-expression and how it relates to modern-day identity. Culture in India seems to always be in a state of flux between the old and new, the rural and the urban. We tried to isolate some of these abstract ideas and present them through pictures. ■

Shubham Lodha is a fashion and portrait photographer. His work has been published in Vogue Italy and Atmos. He is currently pursuing his postgraduate course in Indian aesthetics at Jnanapravaha



ALL-BLACK

Ground your delicate darlings in the ultimate wardrobe classic—the black jacket



SEE-THROUGH TROUSERS



SHEER BLOUSE



TULLE SKIRT

1. Embellished blazer, **Magda Butrym**, ₹1,44,000
2. 'Gala' slingbacks, **Pierre Hardy**, ₹47,400
3. Crêpe trousers, **Emilia Wickstead**, ₹61,500
4. Mini flower knotted lapelled jacket, **Kunal Rawal**, ₹1,49,000
5. 'Gucci Horsebit 1955' small top handle bag, **Gucci**, price on request
6. Lace trimmed blouse, **Paco Rabanne**, ₹44,000
7. Tulle skirt, **Bloni**, ₹12,200
8. Crystal earrings, **Outhouse**, ₹7,880
9. Herringbone linen jacket, **Khanijo**, ₹16,500

GAURI & NAINIKA

SAGAR AHUJA

Maximum impact

No two colours are as fundamental to fashion as black and red. We put them to the test—alone, together, and all-over

Photographed by **VIKAS MAURYA**

Styled by **DANIEL FRANKLIN**



Silk shirt, net tie, knit bar jacket, net socks; all **Dior**. Panelled skirt, **Bodice**. Platform shoes, **Zara**. Crystal stud earrings, **Shop Vanity by Unacana**

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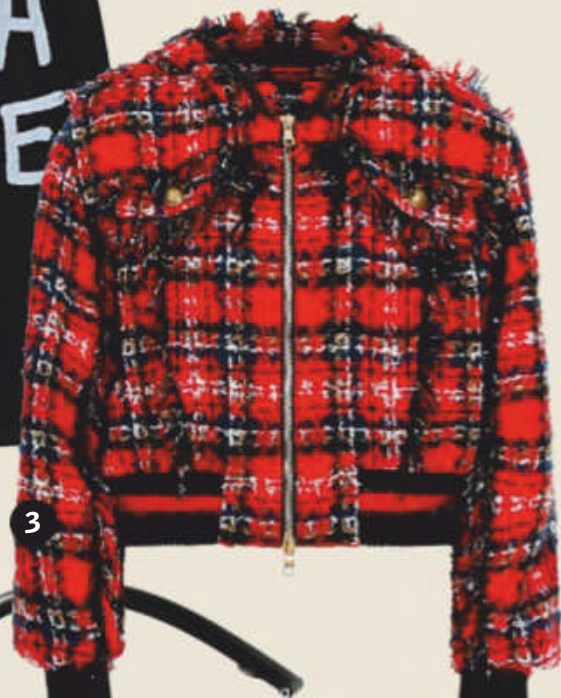
ROUGE + BLACK

The midnight hue garners street cred. Keep it fresh with flashes of red

SMOKE WEAR X LOVEBIRDS



2



3

- 1. 'Amour De Paris' necklace, **Tanzire**, ₹3,900
- 2. Slogan T-shirt, **Ann Demeulemeester**, ₹23,800
- 3. Checked hooded bomber, **Balmain**, ₹3,00,500
- 4. Cargo denims, **Kanika Goyal**, ₹15,000
- 5. 'Puzzle' bag, **Loewe**, ₹2,12,500
- 6. Bomber jacket, **Jaywalking**, ₹55,000
- 7. Chelsea boots, **Louis Vuitton**, price on request



4

7



5



6



CHRISTOPHER KANE

Patchwork sweatshirt,
Huenn. Hoop
earrings, **Zariin**



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Dress, **Saaksha & Kinni**. Metal choker, **Ritika Sachdeva**. Tie-up kitten heels, **Zara**

Hair and makeup: Leeview Biswas
Photographer's assistants: Sahil Saxena; Aayush Tuladhar
Assistant stylist: Simran Sethi
Bookings editor: Jay Modi
Model: Varsha Sriganesh/Runway Lifestyle



INDIGITAL MEDIA: SAGAR AHUJA

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POWER OF RED

The colour pulls out all the stops in its many iterations

RED + GREY

A crash course in making grey matter: wear it to work with a slick red



THE RUCHED DRESS

For when prints feel overwhelming, this season's scene-stealer is a simple red dress

Midi dress, **Cult Gaia**, ₹26,400



1. Cashmere blend sweater, **Khaite**, ₹52,800 2. Leather skirt, **N°21**, ₹80,350

ALL-OVER RED

Whether tomato, scarlet or cherry, mix it up for the perfect lady in red



1. Leather pumps, **Jimmy Choo**, ₹42,830 2. 'Banana' bag, **Bottega Veneta**, price on request



THE CRIMSON SUIT

This fiery shade comes in a coordinated look that means business



ALTUZARRA

BURBERRY

ERMANNO SCERVINO

RED SEQUINS

For the festive time of year, bring out your burgundy best



1. 'Tulip' ruby bangle, **Zoya - A TATA Product**, price on request 2. Embroidered tulle blouse, **Sunaina Khara**, ₹50,000

Presenting the 10th annual Readers' Travel Awards 2020

Condé Nast
Traveller

**READERS' TRAVEL
AWARDS 2020**



Celebrating 10 years of Condé Nast Traveller in India

COCO
BODU HITHI
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GONDWANA
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GARDEN ROUTE - SOUTH AFRICA


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THANK YOU FOR YOUR OVERWHELMING RESPONSE.

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Find out if you are one of the seven lucky winners to have won one of these luxury stays.

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THE STAGE IS SET

This festive season, contemporary Indian fashion label Saundh's new collection, The Stage, celebrates women and is a tribute to the metaphorical stages they go through while playing different roles. Rooted in tradition yet contemporary in its appeal, the brand caters to the whimsical heart of modern India. Inspired by international cultures, the collection comprises beautiful feminine silhouettes like saris, *shararas*, and lehengas that make for the perfect picks this festive season. Flaunting decorative motifs from Uzbekistan as well as design elements reminiscent of the sultanas of the Ottoman empire, the ensembles from this range are as unique as their inspirations.

For more information, visit Saundh.com or follow @saundhindia on Instagram

Dream Big

Whistling Woods International (WWI), Mumbai started as a film institute for aspiring filmmakers and actors, and today ranks among the 'Top Institutes of Influence' globally by Forbes India. As president of WWI, Meghna Ghai Puri has revolutionised the sector in India and groomed a generation of filmmakers and media aspirants by combining her roots in the film industry with her passion for imparting education. Over the course of the last year, she has overseen the evolution of WWI and helped cement its position as a leading global institution for film, communication and the creative arts, earning national and international accolades for excellence.

For more information, visit Whistlingwoods.net



Vogue DIARY

This October, we bring you the best in luxury and fashion

Time To Dress Up

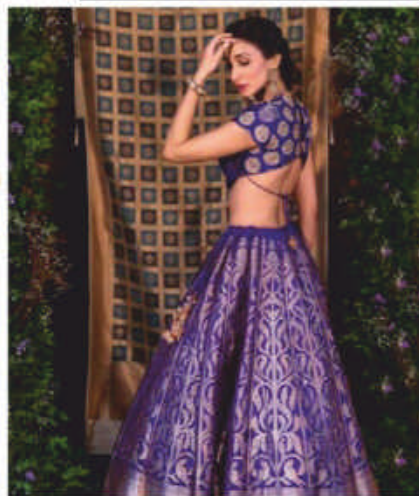
Swiss horologist Tissot's PR 100 Sporty Chic wrist watch, available in a 36mm size, is equal parts sporty and feminine. Elegant yet striking, the exquisite timepiece boasts five exciting colour options, with a choice of grey, rose gold and a mix of grey and rose gold stainless steel bracelets along with a mother-of-pearl dial and diamonds. Featuring a pared-back aesthetic, the white mother-of-pearl dial shows off luminescent hands and indexes as well as a sporty bezel with brushed details, making it perfect for the modern woman.

For more information, visit Tissotwatches.com/en-gb/t1019103315100.html

LIVE THE GOOD LIFE

Located in South Mumbai's upscale Kemp's Corner precinct, The Shalimar Hotel is an exclusive four-star lifestyle property. Comprising 59 bespoke rooms and suites mirroring distinctive cultural aesthetics, it has long been the preferred choice for the discerning traveller. Opting for ecologically friendly practices in its technological and operational processes, the hotel offers impeccable service while laying immense emphasis on quality assurance. With plenty of food and beverage options such as multi cuisine restaurant—Gulmurg, the pastry shop—Bakerie, the deli—Yo and Nova—the artisanal gelateria, patrons are spoiled for choice. Shalimar also houses The Serene Room Spa, where one can relax, and Art Shalimar, which boasts a niche collection of canvases by contemporary Indian Artists.

For more information, visit Theshalimarhotel.com



WEAVING A LEGACY

Founded in October 1997, Warp 'n Weft offers a selection of beautiful handwoven Banarasi saris, lehengas, dupattas and fabrics. The ancient city of Banaras influenced founder and creative director Sagrika Rai's love for the handloom weave, more so because it is where she was born. Spotlighting the many indigenous weaves of Banaras as well as the lineage of master craftsmen, the ensembles are heirloom pieces that speak of the grandeur of Indian silk. With designs that are at one elegant and royal, Warp 'n Weft has something for everyone.

For more information, email mail@warpnweft.in, call +91 22 22000554 or follow @warpnweftbysagrikarai on Instagram



Kick It In Style

From being an essential part of your wardrobe to becoming an accessory that makes a statement, sneakers have had a stylish evolution. American sports lifestyle brand Skechers seamlessly combines functionality and style in its latest range, Skechers D'Lites. While providing creative ways to upgrade your style, this unisex collection features chunky, colourful sneaker options. But what really lends the offerings from this range a unique look is the brand logo in the midsole, which is a first-of-its kind innovation that adds a signature touch to the shoes.

For more information, visit Skechers.in



MINIMALISTIC MAGNIFICENCE

Whether it is our clothes or accessories, increasingly, everyone is making sustainable choices and the colour green is making its way into our wardrobes. With this thought, luxury Swiss horologist Favre-Leuba's iconic Sky Chief Date is now available in a vibrant green colour. Taking inspiration from the '50s and '60s, the iconic model's latest iteration flaunts a minimalist and sleek yet distinct design. Available in a 43mm dial size, the retro-futuristic round shaped case has the distinctive bridge and a tetra decagonal bezel that contributes to its technical character. A brown calf leather strap lends the watch style and sophistication in equal measure.

Priced at ₹ 2,80,000 and available exclusively at Helios Watch Store. For more information, visit Favre-leuba.com or email info@favre-leuba.com

Rooted In Luxury

Diamond boutique brand from the House of Tatas, Zoya's latest collection Rooted salutes the inner strength of a woman and pays tribute to her resilience. Featuring over 45 exquisite pieces that flaunt aesthetic designs and impeccable craftsmanship, the stunning new collection was virtually launched by celebrated designer Gauri Khan. Seeking cues from the inner strength of the feminine spirit, Zoya's Rooted draws on motifs from the world's rainforests that have stood tall for 55 million years and their immense strength preserved in the face of climatic upheavals. For more information, visit Zoya.in/rooted

Luxury Living, Redefined

Launched in 2015 by Seme Nadvi, Gujarat-based interior and design firm, Samay Innovation has completed over 40 projects in and around Ahmedabad. In December 2019, the firm won the Best Green Compliant Interior Designer in India Excellence Awards, for its project in Spain. Their recent works include designing a house that reflected the client's style—unique, chic and out of the box. And all this, while staying green compliant.

Samay Innovation, 6th Floor, Saroj Chambers, Ashram Road, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. For more information, call 9898524366 or follow @samayinnovation on Facebook and @samayinnovation on Instagram



CRAFTED COUTURE

Samarjeet Kaur Gurm's grandmother's trousseau inspired her to start Plumtin— a clothing brand that crafts outfits that have heritage value and can be passed down through the generations. The label's latest festive collection Seher features delicately embroidered ivory sarees that are perfect for festive do's as well as a host of other special occasions. This collection is particularly close to Gurm's heart as she had always dreamed of designing timeless ensembles such as embroidered white and pastel-hued saris.

Price on request. Available at Plumtin stores in Chandigarh, Mohali and New Delhi.

For more information, visit Plumtin.com, call 91 99145-88836 or follow @plumtin on Facebook and @plumtin_official on Instagram



SHOPLIST

THE MERCHANDISE FEATURED EDITORIALY HAS BEEN ORDERED AT THE FOLLOWING STORES. SOME SHOPS MAY CARRY A SELECTION ONLY. PRICES AND AVAILABILITY WERE CHECKED AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. BUT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT PRICES WILL NOT CHANGE OR THAT SPECIFIC ITEMS WILL BE IN STOCK WHEN THE MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED. WE SUGGEST THAT BEFORE VISITING A SHOP YOU CALL TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE YOUR SIZE

FASHION

11.11/eleven eleven: Ensemble, Mumbai 022-23672418, Ensemble, New Delhi 011-46040745 (www.11-11.in) **431-88:** Delhi 8512843188 (www.431-88.com) **Advaya from the House of Angadi:** Bengaluru 8023566186 **Ahluwalia:** (www.ahluwaliastudio.com) **Alberta Ferretti:** London 0044-20-72352349, Paris 0033-893025354 (www.albertaferretti.com) (www.net-a-porter.com) **Ann Demeulemeester:** (www.anndemeulemeester.com) (www.farfetch.com) **Aquazzura:** London 0044-20-38280433, Paris 0033-1-48741768, New York 001-347-3280080 (www.aquazzura.com) (www.net-a-porter.com) **Ashish:** (ashish.co.uk) **Balmain:** Le Mill, Mumbai 022-22041925/26/27, Paris 0033-14720-5758, London 0044-203750-1241, New York 001-212-966-4200 (www.balmain.com) (www.farfetch.com) (www.modaoperandi.com) **Begum Khan:** (www.matchesfashion.com) **Bloni:** (www.bloni.in) **Bodice:** (www.bodice.co.in) **Bottega Veneta:** Mumbai 022-66152291, Delhi 011-46098272, Bengaluru 080-41738931, London 0044-20-78389394 (www.bottegabeneta.com) **Buna:** (www.bunastudio.com) **Charles & Keith:** Mumbai 022-24980106, Delhi 011-46160610 (www.charleskeith.com) **Cord Studio:** (www.cordstudio.in) **Creyons:** (www.creyonsbymansi.com) **Cult Gaia:** (www.cultgaia.com) (www.net-a-porter.com) (www.farfetch.com) **De Castro:** (www.shopdecastro.com) **Dhruv Kapoor:** Delhi 011-244235266 (www.ogaan.com) (www.aashniandco.com) **Dior:** Mumbai 022-67499091, Delhi 011-4600 5900, London 0044-20-77589280 (www.dior.com) **Ekà:** Le Mill, Mumbai 022-22041925 (www.eka.co) **Emilia Wickstead:** London 0044-20-72351104 (www.emiliawickstead.com) (www.matchesfashion.com) **Jewellery by Upasana:** (vanity.onlineshopping@gmail.com) **Good Earth:** (www.goodearth.in) **Gucci:** Mumbai 022-30277060, Delhi 011-146471111, London 0044-20-76292716 (www.gucci.com) **H&M:** Mumbai 022-43473123, Delhi 011-40870717 **Huemn:** (www.huemn.in) **Injiri:** (www.injiri.co.in) **Itoh:** (www.itoh.in) **Jaywalking:** (www.jaywalking.in) **Jimmy Choo:** Mumbai 022-66152293, Delhi 011-46609069, London 0044-20-74935858, New York 001-212-5930800, Paris 0033-1-47230339 (row.jimmychoo.com) **Kanika Goyal:** (www.kglabel.com) **Kassa:** (www.studiokassa.com) **Khaite:** (www.khaite.com) (www.farfetch.com) **Kshitij Jalori:** (www.aashniandco.com) **Kunal Rawal:** (www.kunalrawal.com) **Levi's:** Mumbai 022-67082029, Delhi 011-46548158 (www.levi.com) **Loewe:** (www.matchesfashion.com) (www.farfetch.com) **Louis Vuitton:** Mumbai 022-66644135, Delhi 011-46690000, London 0044-20-79986286, Paris 0033-1-977404077, New York 001-212-7588877 (www.louisvuitton.com) **Lovebirds:** Delhi 9354641606, Mumbai 9167552118 (www.lovebirds-studio.com) **Magda Butrym:** (www.magdabutrym.com) (www.net-a-porter.com)



com) **Maku Textiles:** Kolkata 033-40063782 (www.ogaan.com) **Manish Malhotra:** Mumbai 9833946835, Delhi 9818684859 (www.manishmalhotra.in) **Marks & Spencer:** Mumbai 022-61276333, Delhi 011-492238110 London 0044-20-79357954 (www.marksandspencer.com) **Naushad Ali:** Ensemble, Mumbai 022-40564800 (www.naushadali.in) (www.azafashions.com) **Nike:** Mumbai 022 26461994, Delhi 011-43465268, Bengaluru 080-41464087 (www.nike.com/in) **N°21:** (www.numeroventuno.com) **Outhouse:** Mumbai 7710008481, Delhi 011-26114042 (www.outhouse-jewellery.com) **Paco Rabanne:** (www.pacorabanne.com) **Péro:** Delhi 011-47553290 (www.pero.co.in) (www.ogaan.com) (www.lemillindia.com) **Raw Mango:** Mumbai 022-48931222 (www.rawmango.com) **Richana Khumanthem:** (www.khumanthem.in) **Saaksha & Kinni:** Mumbai 7738357565 (www.saakshakinni.com) (www.azafashion.com) **Silverline:** (www.silverlinejewellery.com) **Simone Rocha:** London 0044-2076296317 (www.simonerocha.com) **Suket Dhir:** New Delhi 8447656660 (www.suketdhir.com) **Sunaina Khera:** (www.sunainakhera.com) **Supriya Lele:** (www.farfetch.com) **Tanzire:** Jaipur 9950328200 (www.tanzire.co) **Tohum Design:** (www.tohumdesign.com) (www.net-a-porter.com) **Tulsi Silks:** (www.tulsisilks.co.in) **United Colors of Benetton:** Mumbai 022-62372182, Delhi 011- 40575085, Bengaluru 080-26641444 (www.world.benetton.com) **Ura Maku:** Mumbai, 8451808101 (www.uramaku.com) **Urvashi Kaur:** (www.urvashikaur.com) (www.perniaspopupshop.com) (www.ogaan.com) **Vipul Shah:** Udaipur 9950711198,

9166007722 (www.vipulshahbags.com) **Yavi:** Delhi 9811242178 (www.studiyavi.com) **Zara:** Mumbai 022-45421800, Delhi 011-41680854 (www.zara.com) **Zariin:** (www.zariin.com)

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BEAUTY

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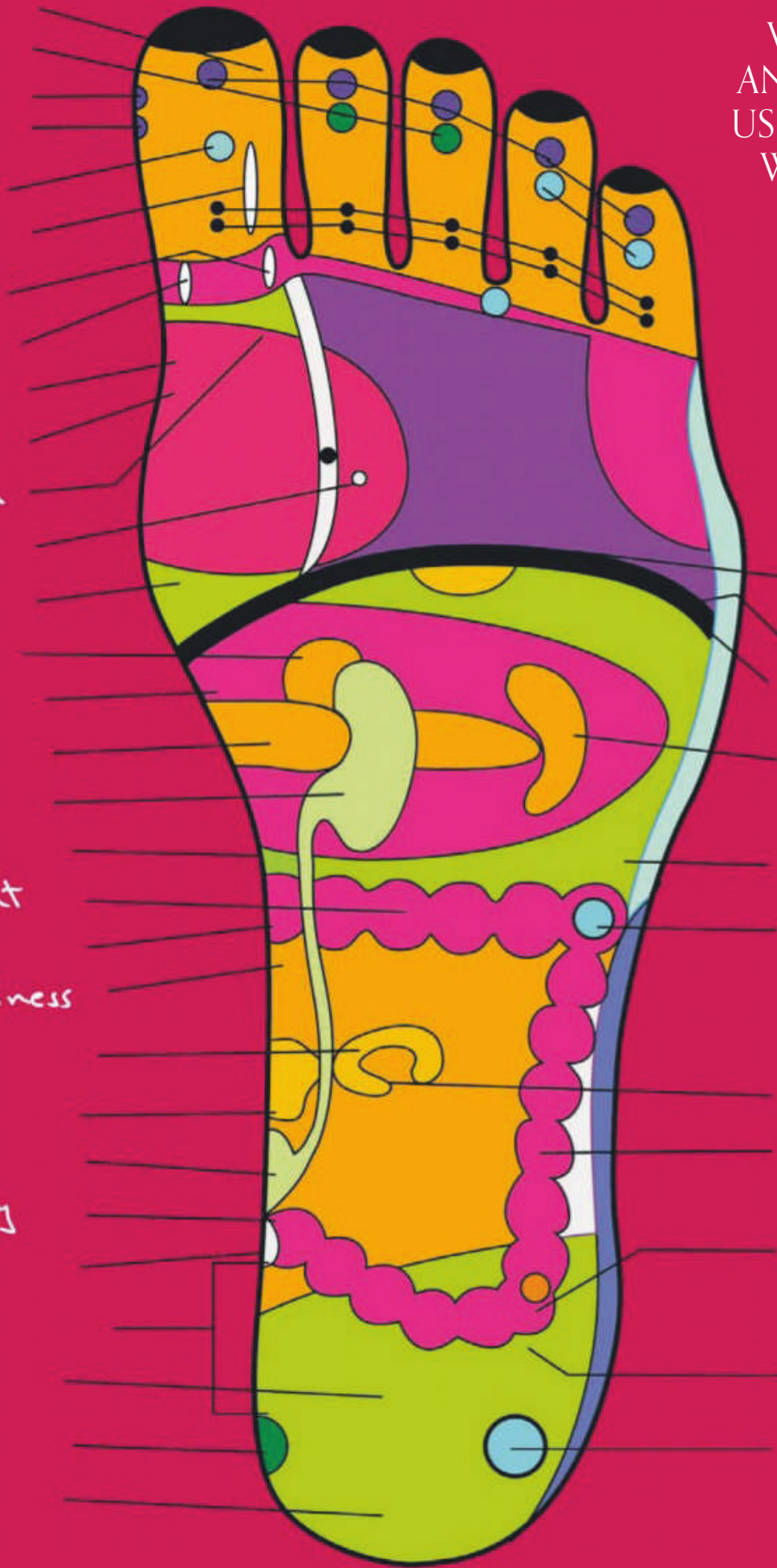


Kay Beauty: (www.nykaa.com) **Kiko Milano:** DLF Promenade, Delhi 011-46104466 **Kiehl's:** Palladium, Mumbai 022-66102119, Ambience, Delhi 011-40870067 **Lakmé:** Shoppers Stop, Mumbai 022-42492100, Delhi 011-40870400, Bengaluru 080-25548224 **Laneige:** (www.nykaa.com) **Make Up For Ever:** Sephora, Select Citywalk, Delhi 011-41349797 **M.A.C:** Palladium, Mumbai 022-43473771, DLF Promenade, Delhi 011-46696060, Bengaluru 080-41126844, Kolkata 033-22830869 **Maybelline New York:** Inorbit, Mumbai 022-32259100, Shoppers Stop, Delhi 011-40870400, Health & Glow, Bengaluru 080-32213197 **Neutrogena:** Chandralok chemist, Mumbai 022-23623364, New U, Delhi 011-46075432, Health and Glow, Bengaluru 080-32466467 **No7:** (www.no7beauty.com) **NYX Professional Makeup:** Sephora, Palladium, Mumbai 022-40045180 Sephora, Select Citywalk, Delhi 011-41349797 **Pure Cure + Co:** (www.purecureayurveda.com) **PAC:** (www.paccosmetics.com) **Ranavat Botanics:** (www.ranavatbotanics.com) **Shaz & Kiks:** (www.shazandkiks.com) **Setu:** (www.setu.in) **Sephora:** Palladium, Mumbai 022-40045180, Select Citywalk, Delhi 011-41349797 **Skinfood:** (www.theskinfood.us) **Stila:** (www.stilacosmetics.com) **Shiseido:** Parcos, Mumbai 011-23643685, Debenhams, Delhi 011-46010386, Health & Glow, Bengaluru 080-32466446 **Sahajan:** (www.sahajan.com) **Taza Ayurveda:** (www.tazaayurveda.com) **The Ordinary:** (www.theordinary.deciem.com) **Vichy:** Sterling Chemist, Mumbai 022-23517815, Guardian, Delhi 011-32639380, Health & Glow, Bengaluru, 080-32466596 **Wellbeing Nutrition:** (www.wellbeingnutrition.com)

MY INDIA IS YOU

WHATEVER EACH
AND EVERY ONE OF
US IS, IS WHAT INDIA
WILL BECOME. BY
FREDDY BIRDY

allure
triumph
magic
grace
lissomeness
elegance
balance
brevity
mercy
strength
imagination
beauty
rhythm
purity
quietude
restraint
kinship
acumen
enlightenment
serendipity
thoughtfulness
compassion
poise
wisdom
magnanimity
kindness
tranquility
fortitude
humanity
stardust



selfishness
grief
indifference
cruelty
umbrage
petulance
callousness
woe
misfortune
savagery
rancour

Freddy Birdy is a Delhi-based restaurant designer, adman, artist, writer and an accidental Instagram star. @freddy_birdy

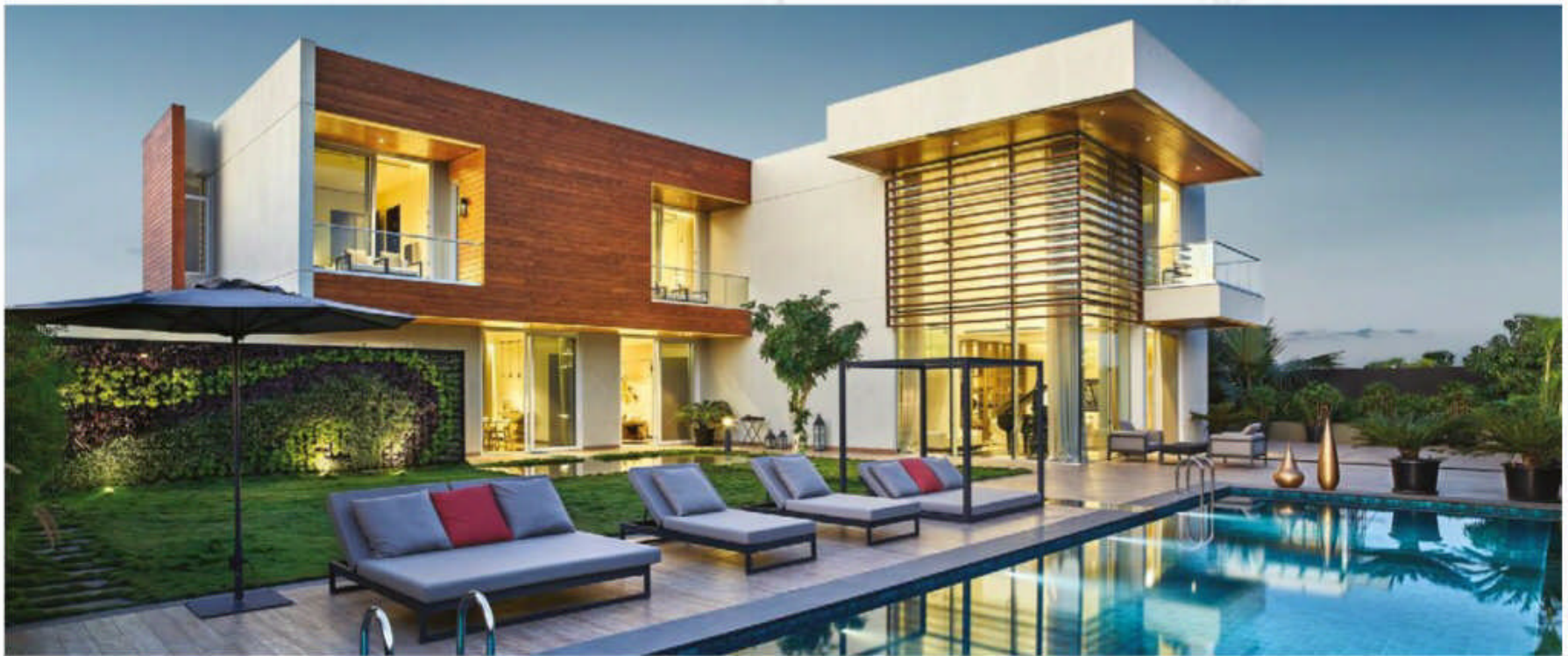
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YOO VILLAS, A PLUSH
GATED DEVELOPMENT
OFFERING THE BEST
IN DESIGNER LIVING

YOO Villas,
Styled by **Kelly Hoppen MBE**

Living Room in Sea Breeze Palette*



*Shot on Location in V2 type Villa

With a balance of simplicity and finesse, YOO Villas is crafted for those who wish to 'live in style'. Exclusive signature double height villas, created with Kelly Hoppen's 'east meets west' design philosophy. YOO Villas are distinctively curated to foster quintessential living at a scenic riverside location, and celebrate privacy amidst luxury and comfort

yoo villas

Project Financed by Standard Chartered Bank

CALL: +91 70309 45278 | SMS VILLA to 56263 | inderbir.hundal@panchshil.com | www.panchshil.com

DISCLAIMER: This advertisement is in respect of Villa Type V2 (Nos. 285 to 290) and Villa Type V3 (Nos. 109 to 117 & 122 to 151) only which have been completed before 1st May, 2017.

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