



THREADS OF TIME

Celebrating Indian Textiles, Crafts and Fashion

Cover Photo:

The textile panel, from the *Vishwakarma* collection, features a *charbagh* layout with a gold sun medallion and 12 paisleys, showcasing the spread of culture.

In the collection of National Crafts Museum and Hastkala Academy

The presentation showcases the rich and diverse Indian textiles, crafts and fashion, through the work of eminent designers and our skilled craftspersons and weavers. Guided by the Hon'ble Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision for an integrated value chain for textiles that encompasses the 5 F- farm to fibre to factory to fashion and finally foreign, the Indian textile sector embraces modernity, technology and sustainability even while being rooted in its traditions.





Curatorial Note

India, one of the world's oldest civilizations, is known for its rich cultural heritage and opulent textiles and crafts. The ancient Sanskrit literature, the writings of historians who travelled to India and numerous temples, caves and sculptures like the painted frescoes of Ajanta caves, depict the intricate weaves and rich traditions of the past.

India has a very rich and diverse textile material culture having hundreds of handloom weaves and crafts spread across its states. Its brocades, Ikats, chintz, Banaras silks, tied and dyed fabrics continue to fascinate the world. The fashion presentation brings to life all 5 elements of the fashion eco system- from farm to fibre to factory to fashion and finally foreign. This is also a story of coming together of more than 20 ministries of Government of India, such as Agriculture, Rural Development, Textiles, Commerce, Trade, External Affairs, MSME and many more to put together a presentation that celebrates the Indian tradition interpreted in a modern idiom.

We celebrate the diverse tapestry of Indian textiles, weaving together tradition and innovation, heritage and sustainability, inclusivity and circularity as we showcase the work of leading Indian designers and the work of the skilled artisans who have successfully captured and preserved the timeless beauty of Indian fabrics and craftsmanship in their creations. Indian fabrics is more than a fine piece of cloth. It is an ode to timeless beauty and craftsmanship and it's entrepreneurship spirit.

This showcase is not just a celebration of Indian textiles but also a call to action for a more sustainable and ethical future. By intertwining tradition, innovation, inclusivity and responsibility, we hope to inspire individuals to embrace the beauty of Indian textiles while consciously contributing to a circular and fair fashion ecosystem.



01

Kasavu of Kerala

Kasavu, a timeless masterpiece from the enchanting state of Kerala, is a canvas of tradition, simplicity, and elegance. It weaves together the threads of heritage and craftsmanship into a sari that embodies the very essence of Kerala's cultural richness. The hallmark of the Kasavu Sari is its golden zari work. Like sunbeams glistening on water, the golden threads dance along the edges of the sari, weaving patterns of traditional motifs and temple designs. These intricate borders, often adorned with motifs like elephants and peacocks, narrate stories of Kerala's cultural heritage.

When draped, the Kasavu Sari becomes a living piece of art. Its elegance lies in its simplicity, its ability to transcend trends and stand as a testament to timeless beauty. It is a garment that can transform a woman into a vision of grace, capturing the radiance of Kerala's lush landscapes and serene backwaters.



Rajesh Pratap Singh

Rajesh Pratap Singh, an innovative designer hailing from Rajasthan, has left a lasting mark on the fashion world. Launching his line in 1997, he infuses Indian heritage into meticulously crafted garments, marked by clean lines and international silhouettes. His creations exhibit simplicity laced with intricate detailing, reflecting an understated design aesthetic that blends modernity with tradition. His iconic Ajrak prints and handloom weaves grace the archives of London's Victoria and Albert Museum, featured in the "Fabrics of India" Exhibit. His textile exploration spans Ikat weaves, indigos, chanderi, and Benares weaves, even extending to diverse sarees.



Two Grains of Golden Sand

*"I dream of rain. I dream of fire.
I wake in vain. I dream of forbidden change."*

A collection inspired from the Kasavu Handlooms of Kerala. Hand-spun and hand-woven off-white material juxtaposed with woven metallic yarns. The collection portrays poshak, a traditional attire of Rajasthani women, in its various avatars. Custom made jewellery and hand-made footwear with metallic elements accessorise the look.



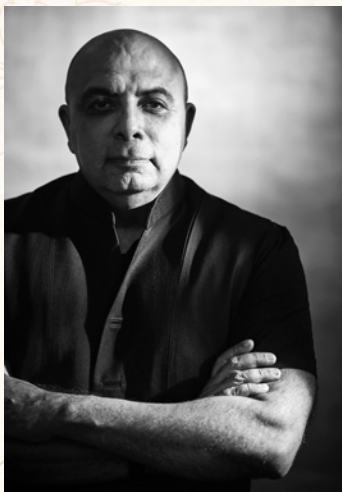


02

Chikankari of Uttar Pradesh

Chikankari, a captivating form of white on white embroidery, is an artistic masterpiece that weaves tales of elegance and craftsmanship onto a canvas of delicate fabric. It is one of the finest and most celebrated traditional embroidery styles from Lucknow, the capital city of Uttar Pradesh. Believed to have been started by the Mughals, this intricate, subtle, and delicate embroidery is known for its utterly simple patterns, fine stitches, and rich textures that would adorn both high-fashion luxury items and more

affordable clothing intended for both the Indian and international markets. It is not just a craft; it's poetry in motion, a harmonious dialogue between artisan and material. It captures the essence of time-honored tradition of India, passed down through generations, while evolving gracefully to embrace contemporary aesthetics. In the world of textiles, Chikankari as a timeless masterpiece, where the absence of color becomes a canvas for creativity, and the purity of white embodies the soul of this exquisite art form.



Tarun Tahiliani

Tarun Tahiliani's brand epitomizes "India Modern," skillfully blending contemporary flair with the nation's draped forms and artisanal legacies. Rooted in age-old craftsmanship, his creations gain global resonance through impeccable techniques, resonating with the philosophy of "all that we were and more". Since its inception in 1995, the Tarun Tahiliani Design Studio seamlessly fuses modern expertise with Indian artistry. Across Couture, Occasion Wear, Ready-to-Wear, and Menswear, Tahiliani's pieces embody the modern Indian woman, marrying historical splendor with current chic.



For Eternity

In the 'For Eternity' collection, ancient Mughal and Egyptian jaali motifs meet Mumbai's Art Deco trellises, blending tradition and modernity in hand-embroidered panels, over hand painted prints, and stitches. With over 90 bespoke looks and standout looks like the green onyx and real freshwater pearl blouse, the poetic tapestry unfolds with draped lehengas, kurtas, shararas, and saris, showcasing fluidity, feminine elegance and festive magic.





03

Neelamber- The Blue Sky

Ikat saris from Odisha using bamboo fibre from North East of India by **Madhu Jain**

Handspun handwoven Eri Silk saris and Mekhala from Assam by **Jahnabi Phookan**

Khadi saris from Gujarat by the **Centre of Excellence for Khadi for Khadi India**

Silk saris woven by the master weavers of Varanasi by **Akaaro**

Paithani Saris from Maharashtra by **Shruti Sancheti** and from the collection of Resource Center, NIFT.





Ikat of Odisha

Ikat, or yarn tie and dye, is a unique weaving technique used across India. Odisha's ikat, traditionally known as 'bandha', involves creating intricate patterns by using tie-dye or resist-dyeing methods. In Odisha, the single-ikat technique is common, i.e., either the weft or warp yarn is tie-dyed, resulting in patterns with hazy outlines unique to these textiles. The yarn is tightly bound in a pre-designed pattern before dyeing, yielding monochrome or multicoloured designs. Vibrant colours like red, maroon, green, and blue dominate, adorning an array of products that reflect the region's culture and artistic expressions.

Eri Silk of Assam

Assam is known for its long history of silk weaving and its significance in the state's cultural heritage. Muga silk, eri silk, and pat silk are the three indigenous varieties of silk found in Assam. Each of these silks has its own unique characteristics: muga silk is known for its natural golden colour and durability; eri silk for its warmth and comfort; and pat silk for its glossy texture. The weaving techniques and designs are associated with several ethnographic communities, each creating a diverse range of textile products like mekhela chador (traditional attire of Assamese women), saris, shawls, stoles, yardage, scarves, wraps, bedspreads, cushion covers, tablecloths, runners, etc.





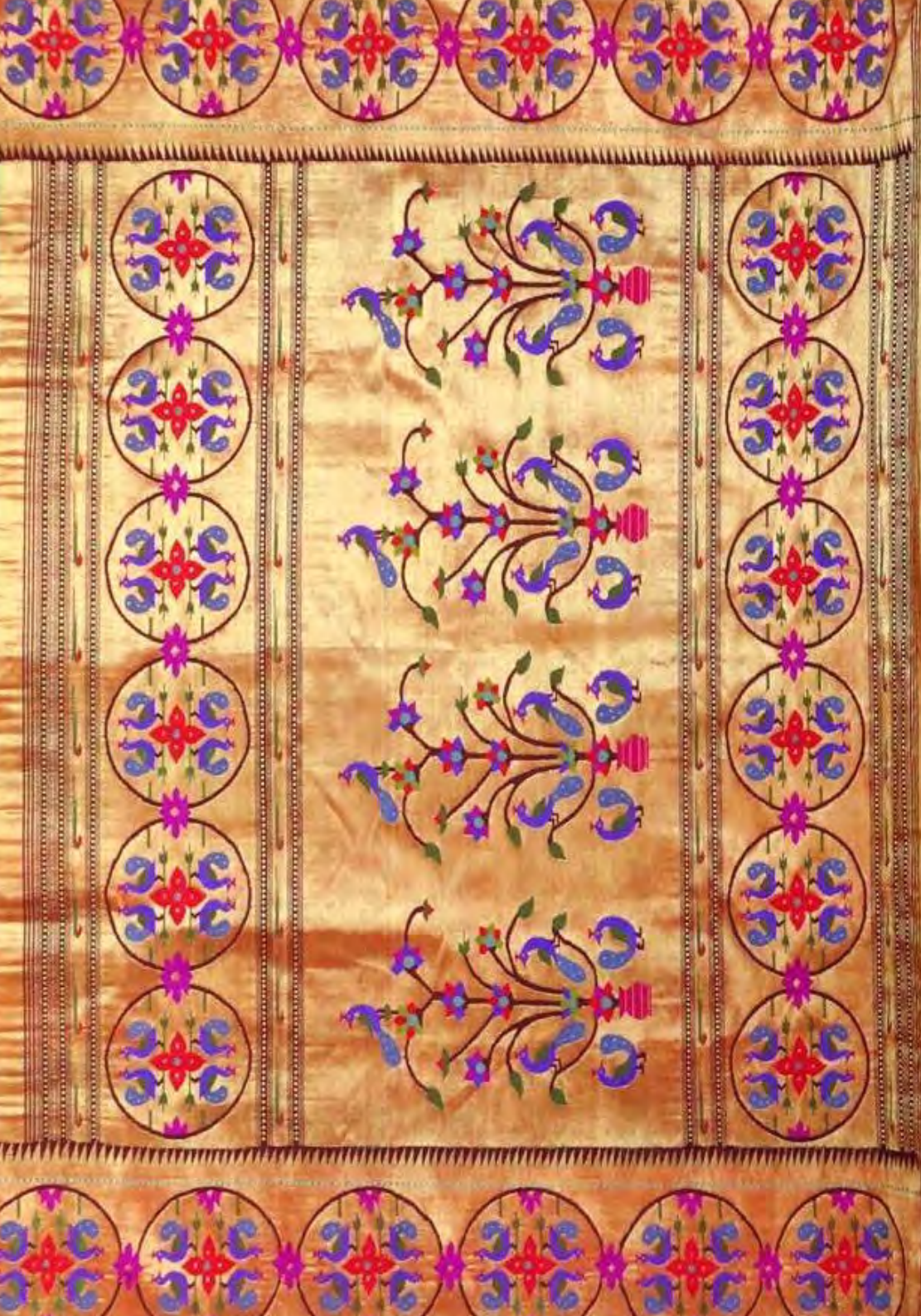
Khadi Saris of Gujarat

Khadi is the handspun handwoven fabric, which is the embodiment of the Swadeshi spirit and Gandhian values that were vehemently advocated at the peak of India's independence movement. The fabric and its subsequent sentiment that lives on today in the beautiful weaves of India is reflective of the holistic ethos that aims to encompass different spheres of life. Cotton, wool or silk can be handspun to create beautiful textures. Khadi fabric is developed in different regions of the country and varies from being coarse, thick, heavy and medium weight fabrics to the finest of the muslin.

Silk weaving of Varanasi

Varanasi has a long and rich history of producing intricate and luxurious brocade textiles that are highly valued for their craftsmanship and artistry. The range of silk brocades woven in Varanasi is extensive and diverse, encompassing various styles and designs. Besides traditional Indian motifs, the artistic richness of Varanasi brocades is further enriched by the incorporation of foreign influences over time. These include Persian 'shikargah' motifs, Turkish trellis patterns, Arabic 'mehrab' designs, French lace patterns, English foliage designs, and more. With its Geographical Indication protection, Varanasi's brocade weaving tradition continues to be preserved and promoted, attracting attention globally.





Paithani saris of Maharashtra

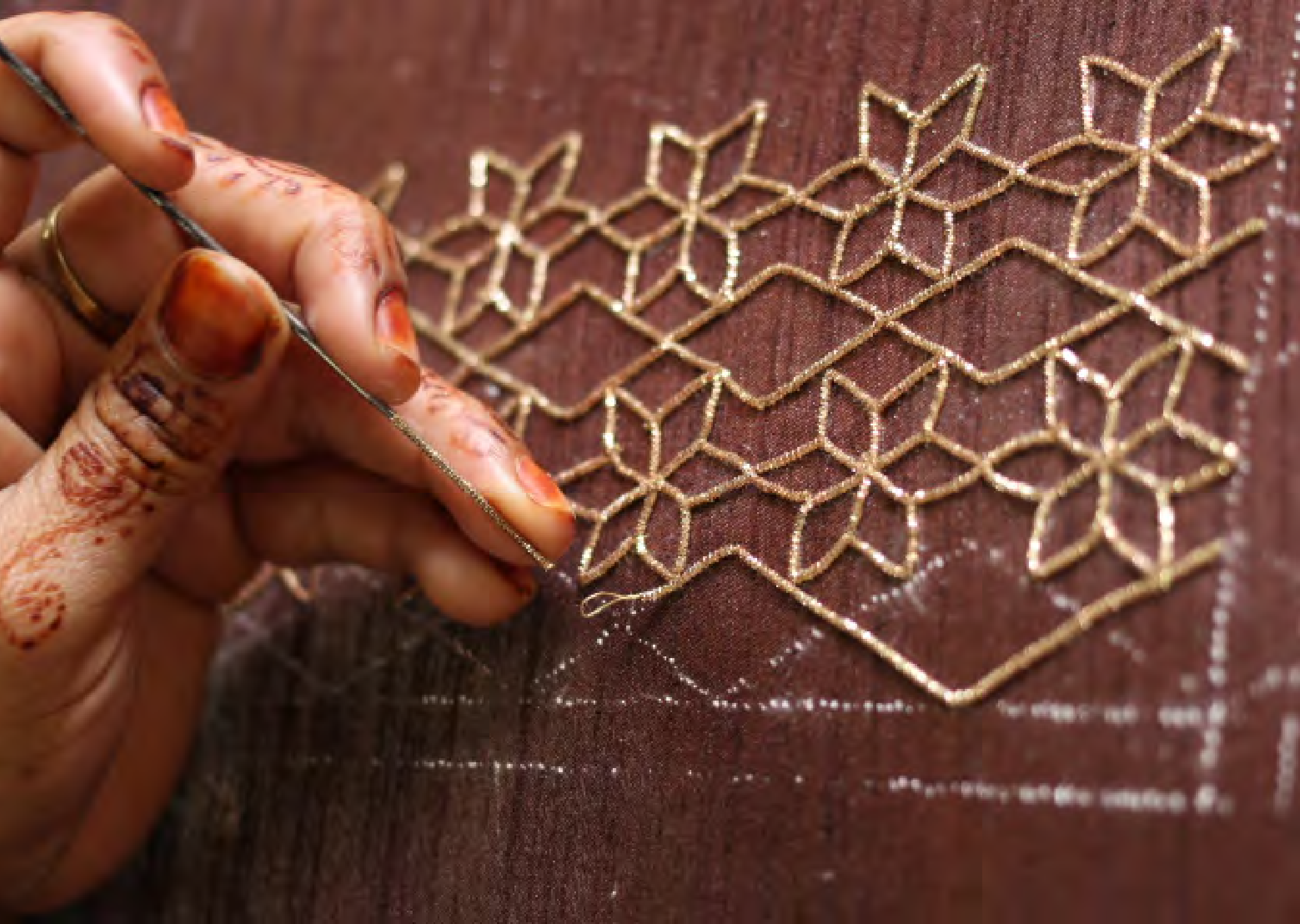
The paithani sari originates from the town of Paithan, situated along the banks of the River Godavari in Marathawada, Maharashtra. Paithani sari is renowned for its distinctive features: the rich tapestry weave and vibrant colours, often woven in pure silk and gold zari. The interplay of different shades of warp and weft yarns gives a unique shaded effect, enhancing the visual appeal of these rich fabrics. The standout feature of the paithani sari is the distinctive motifs used on the border and end piece, making it easily recognizable and culturally significant. Paithani saris, protected under the Geographical Indication of Goods Act, 1999, are an important part of a bride's trousseau and are coveted as family heirlooms.

Beadwork

Beadwork is a delicate and captivating art form that weaves together the vibrant colors, textures, and tiny treasures of beads into a tapestry of creativity and beauty. Like a symphony of minuscule jewels, beadwork transforms humble materials into intricate, dazzling works of art. The process of beadwork is a dance of precision and patience. With a steady hand and a keen eye, artisans thread these minuscule beads onto a canvas, creating intricate patterns and designs that range from geometric symmetry to the whimsical chaos of nature. Each

bead is placed with intention, building layer upon layer until the composition springs to life. When adorned, beadwork becomes a living testament to the skill and imagination of its creator. Whether as jewelry, clothing embellishments, or decorative pieces, beadwork has the power to transform the mundane into the extraordinary, elevating the human experience through the sheer beauty of its detail. It is an art form that transcends time, connecting cultures, and leaving a trail of enchantment in its wake.







Rahul Mishra

Rahul Mishra, the luminary behind the label, epitomizes the convergence of traditional Indian craftsmanship and contemporary fashion sensibilities. His influence extends beyond borders, earning him a spot on the 'BoF 500' list and GQ's '50 Most Influential Indians'. Mishra is not just a designer; he's a storyteller, breathing life into his designs with narratives of people, places, and processes. Rahul Mishra's enduring commitment to slow fashion and artisan empowerment makes him an invincible force in the industry.





Hum Log- We, The People

*"The finest creator,
God must be an embroiderer."*

With reality and imagination woven into its fabric, 'We, The People' strives to draw the enablers of couture, the artisans, to the face of its narrative. It envisions them as more than creators but, as the juncture where artistic expression meets age-old craft and technical prowess that allows them the god like ability to turn imagination into reality. We, The People is a work of wonderment that assumes if an embroiderer would really envision the adda (embroidery frame) turning into a lotus pond and if there is an instance when they feel themselves in the Sundarbans amidst its virgin forest, caressing a majestic tiger.



05

Zardozi of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Zardozi, often translated as 'gold embroidery', is a remarkable textile embellishment that is practised in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It gained prominence as court attire during the reign of Mohammad Tuglak. This royal patronage played a significant role in the development and preservation of the craft. The term zardozi, of Persian origin, involves embroidering fabrics on a rectangular frame. The embroidery is meticulously created using wires, beads and semi-precious stones. The variety of frames available allows for the creation of products of different sizes, from badges and purses to stoles, saris, and more.



JJ Valaya

JJ VALAYA is a pioneering Indian fashion house and was amongst the first fashion houses in the country, the ones who started it all for modern Indian fashion. The fashion house is known as the royal nomads with a penchant for Art Deco. The pieces showcase appreciation of history and find great magic in exploring the mysteries of various cultures to create something new. JJ Valaya has become synonymous with timeless elegance and regal aesthetics. His creative vision seamlessly blend elegance with edgy grandeur, embodying a larger-than-life approach to luxury, fashion, and lifestyle.





Alma

The collection explores JJ Valaya's signature themes of royal, nomad, and art deco. Travel has always been the designer's biggest inspiration and for this collection, he turned to the splendours of Spain. The 'Alma' collection showcases luxurious fabrics, elegant details, inspired prints, and the designer's timeless embroideries. The vibrant colours and contrasting prints make the collection simply stunning.

Credits

Mr. Sunil Sethi
Chairman- Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI)

Rajesh Pratap Singh
Tarun Tahiliani
Madhu Jain
Jahnabi Phookan
Centre of Excellence for Khadi for Khadi India
Akaaro
Shruti Sancheti
Rahul Mishra
JJ Valaya

Ministry of Textiles, Government of India
National Institute of Fashion Technology
Khadi and Village Industries Commission
Fashion Design Council of India CSF Trust



For more information on Indian Textiles and Crafts
visit <https://www.vastrashilpakosh.in/>

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