

Designers Forum

This edition of IHGF Delhi Fair housed a thoughtfully spread out Designers Forum, featuring accomplished young design professionals in the home, lifestyle, fashion and textiles sectors. For most, this was their maiden participation at the forum and they looked forward to their learning, networking and market connects through this rare platform.

Vardhan

Koyakal



Koyakal believes in empowering tribal communities by creating a sustainable environment for them. Said designer Vardhan, "I had been researching for about a year before I officially started this venture in October 2018. As a student of

National Institute of Design, I had an opportunity to travel with tribals, especially in the Southern and Deccan region of India, for improvement through design i.e., solving social problems through design. I found a material group which had been forgotten by Indians and has a great capability of entering into all the sectors. These are gourds and vegetables that have been in use for musical instruments through the ages." Vardhan has tuned this raw material

into artefacts and embellished them with tribal craft inspired designs. There is shaping, carving, cutting, painting, etc. Inspired by tribes and their culture, he has tried to depict near extinction tribal dance forms through his lamps. Through Koyakal craft Vardhan has an intent of not only protecting tribes and saving them from exploitation but also glorifying them and offering them gainful employment. "I buy the raw materials from them, train them produce the crafts and sell it to a customer base," he said. He already caters to stores in India.

Koyakal's concept is to build something pure, natural & completely unique for the modern day interiors. With a variety of handmade artifacts, that are an epitome of craftsmanship, they are rising as an alternative to inorganic, machine-made plastic products. They are representing the richness of tribal art forms through timeless pieces of art. The theme of the brand focuses to make people "Live with Art and Live with Nature". Their categories



include creative and unique clock cum lamps, desktop planters, table and floor lamps, hanging lamps & planters.

Jaya Kanwar

Anhad Craft

An NID alumni, Jaya Kanwar primarily works with khadi. "My concept is more about sustainability as well as conserving the traditional hand spun techniques of India. At the same time, we



should discover new techniques too," she said and added, "at Anhad, we use khadi, hand spun and hand woven, hand block and screen printed, and hand stitch our products. We make cushions, bed linen, table linen, fashion accessories, dog accessories, bags, purses, wallets and more." Organic kala cotton or old-world cotton, which is a low-maintenance crop that's perfectly suited for India's climate and has a coarse texture is finely hand spun into khadi, which is then handwoven using the handloom. The products are hand-made and the yarn itself has unique texture," she informs. The dominant indigo colour with an occasional madder describes this designer's fancy for the colour blue. "I am absolutely in love with the colour blue and that's why you'll see a lot of indigo in my products. Indigo has been evolving



incorporates the dye as surface texture through hand weaving, hand block printing, brushing and into structural textile through techniques such as kantha and stitch & slash. Among her displayed products at IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2019 were, bags, bed linen, cushions exhibiting dyeing techniques and surface effects, yoga mats, floor cushions that are favoured as meditation accessories. The filling can be polyfill or buckwheat that many of her buyers prefer.

Anhad Craft is a story of sustainability that identifies itself with Khadi, hand spun & hand woven, hand block & screen printed, and hand stitched home textiles. These products are fresh new stories from the wise age old timeless crafts. Each unique piece is like an icon that takes you to another place, another time, another story... Anhad believes in meticulous craft to create a truly unique feel. Each piece is individually hand crafted.

because of its distinctive colour palette of various blues," she adds. She finds indigo to be "seasonless and genderless" and

Vivek Verma

CuroCarte

CuroCarte sources, develops and collaborates to connect consumers to diverse artforms and the makers. Celebrating the legacy of Indian craftsmanship, they have embarked on a journey towards the contemporary and exquisite, history of which is largely unseen and unappreciated. Since 2015, CuroCarte, founded by Ananya Birla, has collaborated with craft communities across the



length and breadth of the country working with diverse artforms like Longpi pottery, Bidri inlay, Kansa and many more; materials such as clay, metal, etc. and various techniques and forms. They seek to commission, curate and provide a global platform for these traditional techniques for livelihoods to flourish. Each piece is distinct in its design redefining the role of

artisans in the creative industry. Their representatives at IHGF Delhi Fair-Spring 2019- Anushree and Vivek Verma informed, "we are into the hand-made sector and are trying to expand the profile of the hand-made products. We are trying to give a different edge to artisan made existing products with design interventions and

grooming. We also work on creating new products by blending raw materials and techniques from different regions/artisan bases." At this maiden participation at this fair, they displayed Longpi pottery, a Manipuri regional craft in the form of bowls, plates and even tiles. At CuroCarte, designers are trying to turn traditional things into something different, something new or innovative. "It is difficult to convince artisans to experiment but our team works with them and convinces them to go through the process and learning. The results are exhilarating for both parties," said Anushree. Added Vivek, "we want handicrafts to be valued. We want the artisans to stay with the craft, do it innovatively and earn more. We want to conserve these traditional art forms. The artisans have the freedom of separating from us after the training and work on their own units. It's open and empowering for them. Besides, we have contributed our bit." Another product they displayed were Kansa utensils, a traditional product from Assam tuned into interesting shapes and finishes, using every bit of the raw material. For instance, to give a different shape or slant to a traditional bowl, it is cut on one side and the cut portion is turned into a napkin ring.



Prerit Mansingh

Aayom

“We at Aayom Welfare Society primarily use banana fibre to make products like bags, coasters, mats, rugs, sarees, purse, shirt, wallets and more. Banana fibre is extracted out of the trunk of the



plant and turned into yarn. As an NGO and a business unit, we are trying to bring out revolution through our work and that is why we train and employ rural women, jail inmates and local artisans,” said their representative, Prerit Mansingh and added that after the training, these



artisans can either start their own training or work with Aayom.

Explaining the process of extracting banana fibre out of the trunk, he informed that the resultant water is very good as a fertilizer as well as for dyeing purposes whereas the pulp has got its own medicinal values. They are researching more on this. After extracting the fibre, the pulp and the water go through many processes and the resultant product is polypropylene which is a

natural plastic and is biodegradable as well as strong & sturdy. Right now they are working on bringing out bags made from polypropylene that can be used in lieu of plastic bags. Their clothing products made out of banana fibre are endowed with sweat absorbancy and other medicinal properties. Prerit further informed that they have helped people in setting up units and have trained them as well. They are running a campaign for menstrual hygiene since last two and a half years. Now we are trying to use the banana fibre and make biodegradable sanitary napkins. On their journey of evolution, Aayom has changed more than 29,000 lives.

Aayom brought in a representation of banana fiber products, made by rural women, jail inmates & local artisans, an initiative of this firm’s welfare society that works for health, education, environment, women empowerment and for employment. Here, the primary raw material-Banana fiber is used to make products of utility and decor.

