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GOOD DESIGN CHANGES EVERYTHING

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MEET THE CRUSADERS OF CRAFT

*Curators of Clay
Jaipur Rugs
Lasvit
Nanimarquina
Studio Bordoloi
Sylvn Studio
Zikva*

KITCHEN GOALS

**Our Recipe for
the Perfect
Cooking Space**

Life is a Paradise!

**GET INSPIRED BY INTERIORS
AND STYLES THAT CHANNEL
THE GREAT OUTDOORS**



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MEET THE MAKERS

Take a peek behind the scenes as we salute the talent that brings raw materials to life...
after all, nothing quite matches the magic of handmade.

FEATURE **TASNEEM MERCHANT**

Since the last few years, the design industry has been booming with a revivalist sentiment centred around craft. That Indian craft comes from rich tradition and heritage is no secret. However, its decline in the era of machine goods and a stiff competition from imported products has sparked a growing concern. More and more designers, not only local but also international, are making a concerted effort to preserve, replenish and rejuvenate age-old techniques, perfected by craftsmen in secluded pockets of the country. In this exclusive, we shine a spotlight on designers and brands who work tirelessly with talented artisans who are equipped with knowledge often passed down through generations.



Bhairavi Naik and Rohit Kulkarni



"IT'S IMPERATIVE FOR CRAFTSPEOPLE TO STAY RELEVANT BY CHANGING IN TERMS OF DESIGN AND ADAPTING TO NEW FORMS AND AESTHETICS."

— Rohit Kulkarni, Co-founder, Curators of Clay

CURATORS OF CLAY

For Bhairavi Naik and Rohit Kulkarni, the founders of Curators of Clay, their work is a literal labour of love. In this rare instance, the owners are also the karigars, producing the wonderful glazed, high-fired products seen on their Instagram. Their 'alfresco office' above Bhugaon Hill, Pune serves as the epicentre of their creative trysts. "We'd love to work with other craftsmen, but in our limited experience we find that potters are a vanishing craftspeople. Traditional potters often do not want to experiment with contemporary design and quality — something that we are very passionate about," avers Rohit. On preserving this craft, he says, "It's imperative for artisans to stay relevant by changing in terms of design and adapting to new forms and aesthetics. That is the only way of staying true to the craft while ensuring it is not forgotten or loses its relevance in a mechanised society." ►





Kavita Chaudhary

Asha Chaudhary



JAIPUR RUGS

One of the country's largest producers of hand knotted carpets, Jaipur Rugs employs several artisans, men and women, to work on its looms to produce exquisite carpets. The label is not afraid to push its craftspeople into the limelight as it recognises their contribution to its growth. Kavita Chaudhary, Head of Design, Jaipur Rugs Co states, "The practice of our artisans translates into timeless, highest quality handmade carpets. Each rug is worked on by multiple hands and undergoes over 80 processes before it is transformed into a luxurious product." Weaving such magic on traditional looms is a practice in patience as every rug is laboured over for hours. "Mechanised mass production is endangering the timeless traditional craft forms by killing human creativity. Consequently, artisanal communities are forced to abandon ancient family traditions as they are deemed 'worthless'," elaborates Asha Chaudhary, CEO, Jaipur Rugs Co when asked about the impact of mechanisation on crafts.



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— Leon Jakimic,
Founder, Lasvit



LASVIT

The Czech Republic based lighting brand is well known for its unique and grandiose handblown glass chandeliers. Their creations grace several prestigious, luxury projects in the country — Park Hyatt, Hyderabad; JW Marriott, Mumbai; Hilton, Chennai and more. "Lasvit is built on several years of tradition. This craft has been in the region of Nový Bor since 1414 and the know-how is handed down from father to son. Glassmakers would tell you the heart of all the glasswork is the melting furnace, and the heart of Lasvit is in the glassworks," shares Leon Jakimic, founder, Lasvit. Though rooted in craft, Lasvit's creations stand at the intersection of technology and craft, with several of their products combining light and advanced algorithmic programming. Highlighting the importance of this marriage Leon says, "The craft without innovation would stay still and would not push any boundaries. Mechanisation without craft does not have the unique features of the human touch. For me, these two aspects are inseparable." ►



Leon Jakimic



**"CRAFTSMANSHIP HAS BEEN A KEY FACTOR FOR US IN BEING ABLE TO...
TRANSFORM TRADITIONAL CARPETS INTO CONTEMPORARY RUGS."**

— Nani Marquina, Founder, Nanimarquina



NANIMARQUINA

Many would be surprised to know that several of the Spanish rug brand's creations are handwoven in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Morocco. The time-honoured traditions and craft of hand sewing, weaving, tufting, looming and knotting come through in each of the unique floor coverings offered by the label. "Craftsmanship has been a key factor for us in being able to innovate and transform traditional carpets into contemporary rugs. It has allowed us to investigate unique techniques and materials, which are the basis of our design work," explains Nani Marquina, founder of the eponymous label. Their association with Indian artisans goes back several years. In fact, their 2008 Kala collection was co-designed by Nani and a Care & Fair School in India and completely produced here as well. The company donated a percentage of the profits from Kala's sale towards building a similar school in Badohi, Uttar Pradesh.



Nani Marquina



"I'VE ALWAYS HAD AN INTEREST IN TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP AND REALISED THE POTENTIAL OF USING THEM TO CREATE CONTEMPORARY PRODUCTS."

— Ranjan Bordoloi, Founder, Studio Bordoloi



Ranjan Bordoloi

STUDIO BORDOLOI

"I started working with a few local artisans from Assam as a design student at IIT Guwahati. It was a pragmatic decision, as even though we were studying industrial design, there was no industrial setup to learn from. I've always had an interest in traditional craftsmanship and realised the potential of using them to create contemporary products," elaborates Ranjan Bordoloi, founder of Studio Bordoloi on working with craftsmen to materialise products. The designer's works are influenced and informed by local Assamese imagery and this reflects in his creations ranging from the beaten brass Pitloi chair and stool to his Kaathfula chair. ►

"YOU CAN HAVE A PRODUCT MASS PRODUCED, BUT TO MAKE EACH OF THEM TRULY UNIQUE REQUIRES HUMAN INTERVENTION."

— Bandana Jain, Founder, Bandana Jain and Sylvn Studio

Bandana Jain



SYLVN STUDIO

You name it, and she's made it in cardboard — lights, sofas, bookshelves and even wall ornaments. There's almost nothing that Bandana Jain, founder of the eponymous label and Sylvn Studio, cannot coax out of cardboard. Her imaginative designs combined with the deft skills of her karigars, turn this rather plain material into a defining décor piece. "The craftsmen are one of the pillars in the business of creativity. I create the product with the help of the karigar as per the client's design brief. Had it not been for my expert team of craftsmen, bringing the designs to life would be a very lengthy process." So how does she see the mechanisation of craft affecting the industry? "India is home to a diverse set of karigars, who derive their identity through their craft. Mass produced objects may be perfect but come at the cost of customisation. You can have a product mass produced, but to make each of them truly unique requires human intervention."



"THERE IS A TREMENDOUS SCOPE AND CERTAINLY A MARKET FOR APPLICATION OF INNOVATIONS AS WELL...THERE IS A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN INNOVATION AND MANIPULATION."

— Vinayak Thanvi,
Founder, Zikwa



Vinayak Thanvi



ZIKWA

What started as an art project for autistic kids and juveniles for founder Vinayak Thanvi, quickly turned into a passion project involving ceramic art. From making plates and jars to sculptures and home accessories, the New Delhi based brand dabbles in various products — all handmade in ceramic. He focuses on not only working with Indian craftsmen, but also with artisans from "South East Asia, as far as in small villages in Java. Some of them are new age artisans and some who have been carrying the legacy of their forefathers." As far as evolution of craft goes, Vinayak strongly feels that "there is a tremendous scope and certainly a market for application of innovations as well. However, there is a delicate balance between innovation and manipulation and as long as we keep the craft and craftsman at the heart of it, craft can evolve in its true spirit." 