



KEYA VASWANI, CO-FOUNDER OF STORYLOOM FILMS TELLS BINDU GOPAL RAO HOW SHE IS ENSURING THAT INDIAN CRAFTS ARE IN THE LIMELIGHT THROUGH HER FILMS

Weaving stories

The rich cultural and traditional heritage of handloom weaves in India is seeing a revival in many ways. Keya Vaswani and her best friend and business partner Nidhi Kamath however are doing things differently by making films on India's crafts as a way to not only highlight, but also to preserve our culture.

Keya graduated as a craft product designer from the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design (IICD), Jaipur, where over the course of 4 years, she travelled to villages learning from craftsmen on ground. "For our graduation project we got the opportunity to work with renowned

textile historian, Padmashree Rahul Jain. Our first film, 'Threads of Banaras' was made after spending four months exploring the diverse culture of the city by meeting the craftsmen, businessmen and silk traders there," explains Keya. The time they spent there also opened the doors to some mind blowing facts. "After agriculture, the second largest occupation in India is its crafts! The industry employees nearly 69 lakh Indians who are practicing these beautiful crafts in approximately 360 craft clusters," she goes on to share.

Soon enough, Keya realized that Indian crafts are not about just the products – each one tells you a story

– of a place, a community and a culture. And it's the 70% of rural India that these products are coming out of. Thus began her journey with Storyloom Films. She wanted to share with the world rich stories from undiscovered India. And in 5 years, Keya and Nidhi have made 20 short films and one documentary 'Weaves of Maheshwar' which won the Rajat Kamal at the 63rd National Film Awards in 2016.

Storyloom Films is all about telling beautiful stories and crafting films with love. "We believe that when curiosity is combined with passion and love, the result is always meaningful. Our objective is to weave poignant and