

A Cut Above the Rest

When simplicity and sustainability merge with classic silhouettes and pure, high-quality materials, what you get is sheer luxury. Which is exactly what the House of Three is all about. What started as a pret label based on an aesthetics of a marriage of contrasts, drawing from anthropology, art, architecture, geometry, music and culture, has evolved to make sustainability its core value.

"We started working with various weaving clusters across India, combining contrasting tastes and cultures to create a language of acceptance, harmony and unity in diversity at a brand promise level. Our handloom weavers still weave on the same looms and the same techniques that were designed more than a thousand years ago. Their ways are sustainable, self-sufficient and mindful of the environment," explains Soumak Sen Barot, Creative Director and Founder.

The focus is on replacing fast fashion with slow by reviving old traditional handloom techniques and handcrafts. "We make it accessible and share the narrative of our processes and our vendor bases

House by Three is a sustainable luxury enterprise that merges high fashion with age-old traditions of weaving, and infuses it with contemporary cuts and colours

By BINDU GOPAL RAO

(Left, below) Director and Founder Soumak Sen Barot



for both our customers and fellow businesses alike where we identify and talk about the problems and the solution. We must move, sensitise, empathise and engage people with objective sustainable solutions borrowed from culture, inclusivity and unity through diversity. Whilst maintaining the niche through sustainable luxury in couture and interiors on one hand, we believe in democratising fashion and making it accessible through diffusion curation consultancies and CSR," says Anu Shyam Sundar, Business Director and Co-founder.

The brand's latest collection, Sattva, represents all of this. "We believe in creating fashion that is simple, easy and wearable over seasons. And Sattva is one of the three gunas (attributes) of existence, a philosophical and psychological

concept developed by the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy," says Shyam Sundar.

Apt for the current situation as it aims to soothe the mind, body and soul, this is a collection of Chanderi handloom and mercerised pure cottons as a base for the silhouettes in a palette of white. White has been chosen as it encompasses truth, purity, integrity, acceptance and balance, symbolising a fresh start. Khaki represents the tone of earth symbolising grounding and being connected to nature while Midnight blue is the colour of tranquility and a deep state of calm while red represents passion and love. The collection is a refined manifestation of sustainable clothing with a keen eye on giving back to the handloom weaving community, customers and the society at large.



Another of their outstanding collections includes Kalgi, launched in the beginning of the year. Kalgi, or the sarpech, is an ornament worn by Hindu, Muslim and Sikh grooms in India on their special days. With its origins in Persia, it came into India through Kashmir. "While maintaining the ethos of the brand and the story of the seasonal collection, we create products across couture and pret in similar techniques with variant applications. The couture products are rich and decadent in surface embellishments and usage of heritage fabrics. The pret collections use the same techniques of hand embroidery in more commercial interpretations," says Barot.

Interestingly for each season they work with weavers and handloom techniques from two different states. "For example, we worked with three handloom clusters and three master weavers in Kaina, Kanchipuram and Kumbakonam to develop Jaamdaans and Kanchivarams from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu for our Spring Summer 2020 collection. Kumarikandam, showcased on Sustainable Day at Lakme Fashion week. With Kalgi, we worked with award-winning weavers from Benaras to create lush heritage fabrics that were embroidered in Kashmiri ekaar, thread work and zardozi by our master embroiderers," says the duo.

Having consistently used handspun mulmuls from various weaving clusters in West Bengal, the team will now be developing future collections using vegetable and flower dyed handwoven cottons from Andhra Pradesh, as well as fabric made from organic corn, banana and hemp yarns. Considering that fashion is the fourth largest contributor to the global environmental crisis, this is certainly a step in the right direction.