

TRENDS FOR SUMMER



The Lakmé Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2020 edition celebrated 20 years at BKC Mumbai from February 12 to 16. It was a colourful event with fabrics, crafts and embellishments taking centre stage. Designers experimented with various fabrics and embroidery to turn their collections into showstopping lines for both resortwear and destination bridalwear.

Meher Castelino reports.



AKHIL NAGPAL

Inspired by arresting features like tensile structures from tensile architecture, art installations, industrial equipment and man-made membranous objects, the designer used them for a visually dramatic line of garments. The hunting ground for the raw materials was the various fishing villages of Maharashtra from where the items were sourced along with the surplus fishing monofilament yarns. These, in turn, were treated with dyes and turned into yarns for embellishments. The experiments also included usage of industrial glass yarns, rayon and silk as well as cutting edge fabrics like latex and metallic foils.



EKA

Presenting a full-fledged winter collection, Rina Singh of Eka worked with independent clusters across Telangana—from the double and single ikat clusters of Kovalguddam to the thigh-reeled tussar saris from Mahadevpur, and from simple cotton textiles of Narayanpet to the wool, silk, ikat, stoles from Pochampally.



SHADES OF INDIA

The amazing quality of the collection was the result of hard work put in by 200 craftswomen of Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh, who created 5,000 metres of crochet lace and 50,000 crochet flowers in a chosen colour palette. So, there was a fabulous, pastel, colourful forest, in spring hues of coral pink, blue, teal, lime, grey and natural tones. These were further merged with laces in expert jaali work and floral motifs, which were added on soft organdie, chanderi and kota silk.



SHANIN MANNAN

The fabrics were selected with care, keeping maximum wearable options in mind. Jersey was an apt choice, while gabardine was ideal and had the crisp effect for coats. The jersey dresses along with the line of practical denim jackets and versatile pencil skirts completed the collection.



CHANDRIMA AGNIHOTRI

With an aim to preserve the cross-stitch style of embroidery from Kutch, the designer had jumpsuits with side embellishments or wide collars edged with the craft. Adding European hand cutwork lace it was noticeable that these further accentuated the beauty of the garments and gave them a striking visual appeal.



MANNAT SETHI AND HARSHNA KANDHARI

An Indian sweet 'kaju-katli' was the inspiration. Giving the theme a new age appeal, the pair re-used discarded rubber tyres and then reworked them into embellishments by painstakingly handcutting them into strips and shapes that were embroidered with zardosi handwork. The Indian sweets' colours, shapes and textures were recreated on the garments.



VAISHALI SHADUNGULE

This utterly romantic symphony of tapestry featured the beauty of the light as air chanderi with white lotus blossoms. The maheshwari silks' showcase was the perfect base for the Ashoka blooms, while the khunn or the khaan from Maharashtra featured the lush mango flowers. When it came to the gorgeous kanjivaram silks, it was fragrant jasmynes that offered a serene look. The ever-popular banarasi brocades, beloved of all brides, had a regal appeal.



SWAPNIL SHINDE

Staying perfectly on trend, the designer opted for lush velvet, the latest favourite plumetis, the full-bodied scuba, shimmering satin, sheer organza and slinky silk, as the basis of his many eye-catching silhouettes. Embellishments played a key role with exquisite Swarovski crystals, intricate pearl hand embroidery and some interesting faux leather 3D textures.



BUNA

There were cottons and cotton silks from West Bengal with Sanganer block prints that added to the charm of the collection. Embroidery was the focal point of the Buna brand, which was used in a subtle and refined manner. There was a discreet use of French knots, sequins and thread work that added to the beauty of the creations.



JAYATI GOENKA

The colour story was muted indigo and grey, which is the brand's distinct identity and dyed with kashish bhasma that is used in Ayurveda. The highlight of the creations was the hand-painted textiles and handblock prints in natural dyes that achieved a bespoke look for the garments. The vision of lines and ripples was cleverly achieved with the handprints that gave a unique appeal to the ensembles.



MALAI BY SUSMITH CHEMPODIL AND ZUZANA GOMBOVA

The pair was inspired by the beauty and purity of natural material and by the lifecycle and ecology of the coconut palm. They worked with local coconut farmers and processing units in South India to get their waste coconut water that was the primary resource for the growth of their bacterial cellulose, which was transformed into Malai, a vegan alternative leather. The duo also worked with local communities of suppliers whose ethical approach is transparent and verified. The brand used waste coconut water and banana fibre, so that the products were easy to recycle, compost and also improve the livelihoods of farmers and communities in the bargain. They were also the Circular Design Challenge winners.



HOUSE OF THREE

The brand brought on the ramp the glorious textiles of two states—West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, and displayed the expert weaves of three fabulous master weavers—Rajib Debnath's Tantajo label from West Bengal, Satya from Kanchipur, and Santaanam from Kumbakoram, Tamil Nadu. Debnath's label Tantajo supports the livelihood of 450 families of master weavers, dyers and spinners that create super fine muslin in 100–300 counts and reinvented it with indigo, yarn dyes, checks and prints. The weaves from Tamil Nadu revolved around the luxurious silk kanjivaram fabrics that were woven into geometric, graphic, checks and stripes and then appliquéd with jamdaani motifs. Temple borders kolum and alpona motifs were blended with prints and embroidery.



MEDIUM

An assortment of dots was the basis of apparel and arranged on the fabrics. Synchronised with the dots was the sudden appearance of shibori threads that added to the crafted concept of the clothes. The fabrics were hand-woven and often the ensembles were hand-stitched that aimed at minimum wastage, combined with responsible craft usage with innovative designs.



SADHNA, A WOMEN'S HANDICRAFT ENTERPRISE

Detailing was of prime importance as sheer and solids with mulmul, organdie and khadi brought hand and reverse appliqué techniques to the forefront. Simple geometrics like dots, dashes and lines were highlighted as embellishments and appliqués. The zero-waste policy was evident by piecing different fabric bits and embroidery to achieve items like stoles and saris.



RITU KUMAR

A new perspective on sustainability was unveiled for the environment-friendly collection 'Nature's Origami' with laid out prints in collaboration with Austrian fibre brand Lenzing's Ecovero.



JAJAABOR

Aviation airport initials were embroidered as motifs on the collars along with abstract leaf designs, polka dots and random words. Touches of embroidery with the prints also enhanced the visual appeal of the garments.



MISHRU

Some innovative exploration in marbling was done. The handmade marbling offered great chaotic beauty that finally ended in a line that was not only eye-catching but also stylish. Although, marbling was the focal point of the collection, there was a lavish profusion of hand embroidery with a mix of thread and zardosi work. The colours were a rich line up of basil green, charcoal, rosewood, ultra marine blue and dusty purple.



KOTWARA

The colour story was visually arresting, as shades of olive, pink, ivory and the eternal favourites black and white were highlighted with striking splashes of floral chikan work in contrasting hues. To add more excitement to the ensembles, the designers brought in appliqué and kaamdani work.



SHIVAN & NARRESH

The vibrant colours and beauty of the idyllic Korean peninsular countryside with its picturesque gardens, flora, culture, history and architecture appeared on the garments. The colours were strong, solid ones as rorange (mandarin orange), kebia from the Korean Caviar, the golden gym and the hibiscus for the local rose as well as cyan and ivory and a deep ruby from the omija berry, created a great palette. The fabrics were a perfect mix of rich velvet, lace, great taffeta, sheer organza, neoprene, foil and Italian jersey.



CHOLA

The peppy designs were curated with intriguing hand-painted textures on cotton, linen and khadi fabrics. With fluidity at its core, the collection was showcased in black, grey and white base colours with vibrant pops of yellow, green, red and blue. The stripes and checks gave an offbeat edge to the distinctive silhouettes.



VERANDAH

Maintaining its brand ethics of making a conscious effort to support post-consumer, zero waste and sustainability, the brand favoured upcycled denim, bespoke macramé, industrial waste, and had specially created blends like lyocell, viscose, modal and cotton in the past. For the 'Jaisalmar' collection, the brand used Tencel and Ecovero while eco-friendly textures were accentuated with intricate pleats.



RARA AVIS

Detailing techniques had beadwork in the forefront but with hints of metallic touches. Raffia and predominantly leather were cleverly woven along with Indian techniques like tapka and sali work.



PUNIT BALANA

Recreating the glory of a bygone era, the designer visualised the colours of leheriya, floral, peacock motifs and block prints all in natural dyes. An arresting line of hues like buttercup and blues were enhanced with delicate dori work and zardosi. The base fabrics were mulmul and cotton that offered a sense of comfort and ease to the wearer.



SVA

While the fabric choice had staples like silk, it was the addition of denim this season that took the ensembles many notches up the fashion ladder. The contemporary resortwear looks merged abstract textures with geometric prints and fluid florals. Prints from ancient Persian carpets were enhanced with bold strips to add a more engaging, complex design story.



KAVERI

The exotic African motifs, ancient tribal symbols and colours created a mélange of fashion poetry on the linen, sheer organza and mulmul along with flirty tassels and fringes. Fabric texturing was achieved with clever marbling, block printing, layered screen-printing, along with crochet and hand work.



PAYAL SINGHAL

The focus was on the translation of ethnic crafts into contemporary ensembles. Bandhani, abla, ikat, kantha, kashida and gota patti were revisited. Chanderi and organza in a colour palette spanned across classic black and white punctuated with grey, rose pink, powder blue and turmeric yellow.



PANKAJ & NIDHI

R | Elan infused new-age functionality and technology such as GreenGold, Kooltex, FeelFresh, SuperFeel and FreeFlow within its innovative fabric range to meet the growing demand for modern consumers, promising comfort with an aesthetic fashion statement. The collection brought to life painterly floral bouquets on diaphanous organza's and lustrous twills, and denim with iridescent embellishments along with fifties wallpaper patterns.



TISA

Keeping embellishments to a minimal, salis and sequins were used to create floral motifs, on linen and khadi for the menswear line.



AMAARE

The fabric choice was cotton silk, as well as wool blends for the variety of jackets, trousers, unconventionally styled suits, as well shirts.



GAURANG

Working with the handloom clusters of Kanchi from Tamil Nadu, Varanasi from Uttar Pradesh, Patan from Gujarat, Kota from Rajasthan, Puttapakka from Telangana, Uppada and Khadi from Andhra Pradesh, Paithani from Maharashtra, Jamdani from West Bengal, and Kani from Kashmir, the show had a variety of weaves for the saris and garments.



KUNAL RAWAL

The collection's intense experiments introduced the photosensitivity of sun on the apparel. The designer brought the innovation of combining designs with textiles that were capable of harnessing sun energy. This in turn offered creations that had the ability to change colours during sun exposure because of the photosensitivity to UV rays. Textures were combined with digital prints and embellishments for the menswear.



AMIT AGARWAL

Amit Aggarwal's finale collection—AXIL—was a perfect fit within this theme, as it was built around his vision of the future. He showcased his signature aesthetic of futuristic biomimicry and allowed the audience to journey into a multi-dimensional future that is empowered by juxtapositions. On the Grand Finale runway, the couture created had free-flowing designs, with razor sharp constructions, intricate patterns using unusual polymers woven into fabric—to create the ultimate 3D forms.



RAJDEEP RANAWAT

For this season, the vintage Indonesian textiles and the natural organic beauty of the ever-popular tropical flora and fauna of Ubud in Bali were the inspiration. A profusion of colourful foliage in the form of prints was seen on a fabric base that was ideal for them. Gorgeous silks, khadi, mulberry and tussar were used as the base. The print techniques were a mélange of traditional shibori, clamping and tie-dye, which were cleverly juxtaposed with contemporary printing techniques.**FF**