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The Button Masala for Khadi

Anuj Sharma, a reputed designer from India, is among those participating in the Khadi Festival, 2016, showcasing "button Masala"-- his exciting new technique for fabric joinery.

Sharma studied apparel design from NID, India and currently runs a fashion studio from Ahmadabad, dealing mostly in the development of new joinery systems for clothing. Button Masala is his unique ideation.

We asked this esteemed designer about the Khadi Festival, the outcome he expected and more about his exciting line of work with buttons.

The first thing we wanted to know was why he considered Khadi as fashionable attire, especially when many modernists could be considering it outdated.

"A fabric that is hand woven, hand spun and touched by so many lives can never be outdated! Khadi by itself has all the values that a fabric needs to be fashionable," he said. "Designers need to educate customers about the true value of Khadi. It has to be re-positioned in the market as a utility fabric rather than



riding on sentimental values. It is the people who can bring back Khadi to its deserved place in the society".

We have heard many elders say that Khadi felt cool in summer and warm in the winter giving the garb a magical feel, and Sharma agrees. "The Khadi weave is quite loose helping to create air pockets. These air pockets possibly help maintain the temperature by not letting external air meddle with the heat of the body."

We have seen politicians popularise the white and off-white variety of Khadi. Wishing to know whether there were more varieties available, Sharma said that khadi is now available in all colours. "There is a huge development in natural colours. We are seeing more and more colours in khadi, as years pass by. Personally, I love the off-white variant as it is raw and real".

Elaborating on this year's Khadi Festival, and Sharma's involvement as an international designer, he said, "Every human needs reassurance. Every material needs the same. Use of Khadi by people from different countries

asserts our faith in the material. Knowing that Khadi is equally popular in other countries and their designers are also using it in their every day collections, will make people across the world respect and admire it more."

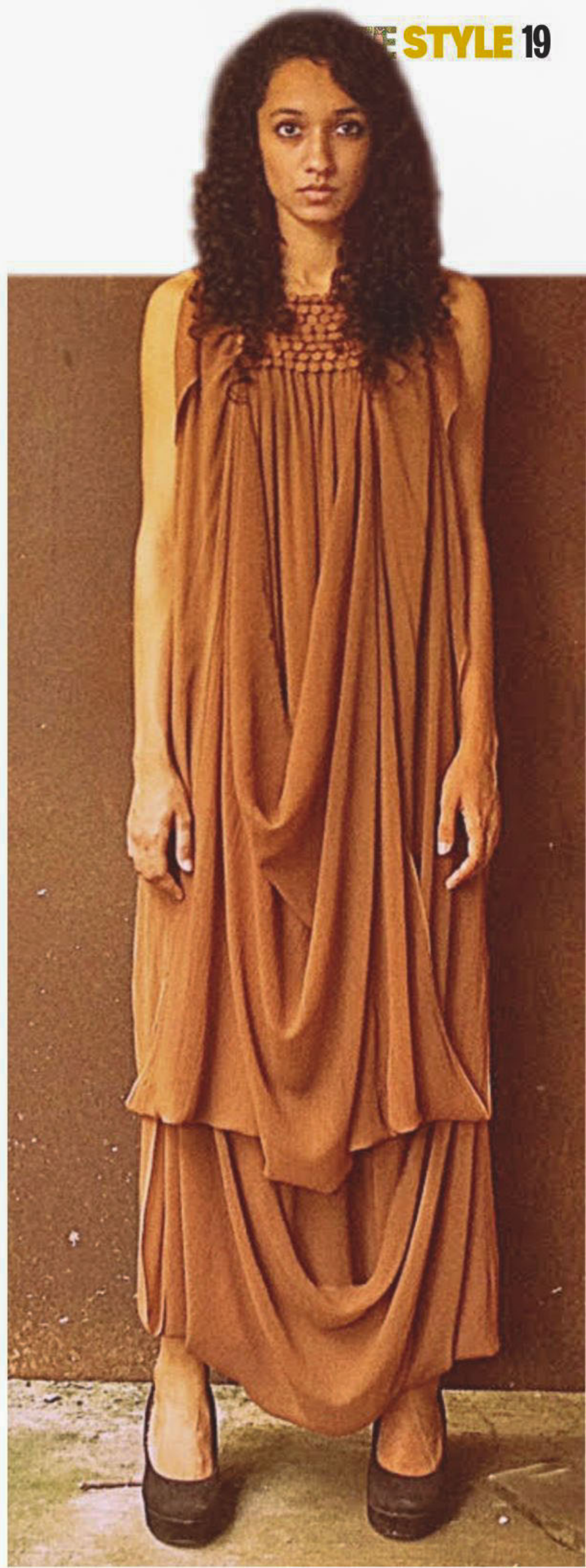
"I am working relentlessly towards making Khadi garments known to the world as the most sustainable and eco-friendly product in the world. I will be showcasing the 'button masala technique' for this year's collection at the Khadi Festival," the clothes artist said.

Finally, we wanted to know more about the unique 'Button Masala Technique' and his hopes for the future regarding the practice.

Sharma obliged by elaborating on his work. "Button masala is a simple joinery system that I had developed few years back. The system uses buttons and rubber bands instead of sewing. It makes the garment making process simpler and more sustainable. It is a system that does not involve any machine or tools and can very easily be taught to any body.

"The most interesting thing about the process is that the garments once made can be opened and restructured or re-sized to fit any one. The technique resolves all the problems that the current system of sewing garments presents. At Khadi Festival you will see garments and accessories made through this unique technique for the first time in Bangladesh. I also wish to teach the procedure to the Bangladeshi craftsmen if possible."

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo courtesy: Anuj Sharma
 The Khadi Festival is supported by Tresemme, Bengal, Green Delta, Square, City Bank, Sailor, BMW through shared vision with the FDCB



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