

#FASHION &amp; BEAUTY

# Lipi Khandker's Signature at Fashion Week

Ringling in tolls of power, dynamics and liberation, Lipi Khandker's designer label, Signature, left crowds overturned on their heels at the Aspara Fashion Week, 2021. Streamed live from Taraz, Kazakhstan, Lipi Khandker was one of the 11 Bangladeshi fashion designers featured at the international platform, an opportunity she grabbed by the horns and just ran with.

Khandker is a proud exalter of Bengal's heritage, preservation and sustainability  $\frac{3}{4}$  beliefs that stole the limelight at Aspara for even global fashion experts to laud and appreciate. Khandker has already championed heritage fabrics in her previous collections, but for Aspara, the designer takes it one step further with Shape of Freedom, a dramatic concept adapted sartorially with historic nods to our past.

Khandker achieves true mastery with Bengal's woven treasures as her sense of patriotism sings through her newest collection. Glorified like never before are Cumilla's khadi and Tangail taant, these fabrics acting as Bengal's distinct insignias, chanting hymns of old cultures dying to be revived.

Sticking to ivory hues and minimalist emblems, Khandker creates her signature soft looks that are dominated by asymmetry. And it is this mismatch of lines that elevates her designs.

You do not have to be like everyone else, especially if you are clad in Signature by LK. Her designs strike balance between an ever-changing world and a fixed position as elegance bumps into asymmetry and newness sets camp in classicality. Every line, you will find, takes you in a different direction and every destination excites rather than bores. Put all the discrepancies together and you will have discovered a freedom in expression that needs no justification.

Khandker delivers such feats with fashion, by stitching fabrics to create garments that are unmistakably Eastern with modern twists stealing your eye every now and then. Khadi t-shirts for sari blouses, admiral blues for screen prints and tie-dyes for mesmerising swirls  $\frac{3}{4}$  LK designs are youthful and fresh. Dhuti trousers or skirt pants flowing free under box-cut kameezes and sleeveless dresses to win against blazing suns, Khandker does not just stop there.

She goes on to keep things structured with tiers, pleats, flounces and ripples, a literal contradiction but a sartorial achievement accredited to only Khandker. Finally, with strategic placements and patterns of silver sequins, she ceases with mirrored illusions that serve glamour like legal notices: with blinding bluntness.

Moving onto styling, Khandker punctuates her designs with a white-smoke-coloured bangle here or a few layers of necklaces there, and, in some special, show-stopping cases, even gold circles of jewellery that start off as a chain at the neck but unexpectedly extend down your chest to bind your waist in a bracelet.

If you have come this far, you might as well finish off the look with a dangling potli to store your essentials, 'cause anything that connects us to our roots is an instant hit and a cannot-live-without pair of nude pumps, 'cause we still believe in pragmatism.

What you are left with is an original ensemble by Signature LK, envisioned by Lipi Khandker herself for Aspara Fashion Week. The runway closes, Bengal's history is restored.

**By Ramisa Haque**

**Photo: Uturn Production**

**Model: Maria, Hira, Mili, Tania, Efa, Nazia**

**Wardrobe: Lipi Khandker**

**Make-up: Orko**

**Co-ordination: Sonia Yeasmin Isha**