

TALE OF BLUE RIVER

A love letter to Bangladesh's rivers

Afsana Ferdousi, the Bangladeshi fashion designer renowned for incorporating sustainability while fusing modernity and tradition in her designs, has come forward with her new collection. Titled "Tale of Blue River," it is an ode to the riverine majesty of Bangladesh and a wake-up call for our society to work towards preserving and protecting these vital natural resources. Star Lifestyle recently spoke with her to discuss her creativity, and the thought process behind her designs and her latest collection.

Tale of Blue River

The collection features an array of saris, jumpsuits, jackets, midi dresses for women and shirts, shorts, and trousers for men. All the garments were created using silk, endi silk, handloom cotton, and linen.

One of the standout features of the collection is the use of sustainable, eco-friendly, and natural indigo dye to impart the various shades of blue. These shades reflect the hues of the river as it meets the sky at the horizon.

The pieces have been adorned with motifs of fishes, birds, boats, water lilies, flowing water, and the riverbed. These motifs are brought to life with the pride of our local heritage, and a signature of Afsana's design aesthetic, the Nakshi Kantha stitch. Almost 90 per cent of the embroidery of these motifs comprises Nakshi Kantha stitch done by hand, while the remaining 10 per cent of the stitches consist of satin stitch, chain stitch, and running stitch.

Inspiration behind the collection

Afsana wanted to pay homage to the rivers she grew up next to. To bring her inspiration to life, she researched the history and cultural significance of rivers. As part of her design process, after researching the concept, she then went on to sketch looks and create mood boards for the collection. She ensured that her team brought in their perspectives and expertise in the process. Together, they chose materials and experimented with various techniques to ensure that the resulting collection is wearable, comfortable, and sustainable, and maintains a unique aesthetic and message throughout.

"I worked with my team to translate my ideas into designs that capture the movement, texture, and colours of the river. I drew upon the imagery of flowing water, riverbeds, and aquatic life, and translated these into intricate Nakshi Katha stitches," said Afsana.

Message of the collection

Afsana has once again shown that fashion is an art and a form of storytelling. This collection is her homage to the 700 rivers of our motherland, our heritage, history, and culture. Each piece of the collection is a story in motion, a story of aquatic life and its connection to humanity and our Bengali identity.

She wanted to instil and inspire a deep respect and appreciation

for the artistry and skills of our local craftsmen and artisans. The indigo dye and the Nakshi Kantha embroidery serve as a testament to the rich diversity and beauty of the heritage of Bangladeshi textiles. Each of the Nakshi Kantha stitches is a tribute to the beauty and vitality of our rivers. Moreover, the natural indigo dye also serves to remind us of the importance of environmentally conscious and eco-friendly practices in industry known for its pollution and heavy waste.

"We hope that by wearing these pieces, people will be reminded of the importance of preserving Bangladesh's rivers and natural resources," stated Afsana.

The "Tale of Blue River" collection strives to forge a connection between local consumers and their surrounding natural environment, with pride, respect, and admiration.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan

Photo: Salek Bin Taher

Models: Lucky, Elias, Alexandra

Wardrobe: Afsana Ferdousi

