

Six yards of verse: The bridal saree inspired by BANALATA SEN



She was never solely confined to the yellowing pages of a poetry anthology. Ever since its publication, Banalata Sen stepped out from Jibanananda Das's verses to claim her place in every Bengali's heart. Her presence now lingers beyond the quiet gatherings of literature enthusiasts, and lives in the imagination of lovers and dreamers.

In the 1990s, sarees first began to be treated as artists' canvases, where poetry and calligraphy were fused to create magic in wearable form. At first, the idea was novel. However, over the years the concept took root and soon became the perfect garb for soirees, literary gatherings, and poetry recitals.

Gradually, visual poetry woven and painted onto fabric began to step into more

glamorous arenas. No saree exhibition or fashion runway today feels complete without these bold, contemporary style statements.

In the latest design of Afsana Ferdousi, the immortal words of Banalata Sen find an unexpected new canvas: the folds of wedding couture. Ferdousi is celebrated for blending sustainability with a seamless fusion of modernity and tradition, and has reimagined Banalata Sen on the six-yard drape. This time, at the special request of a bride-to-be.

In the poem, Jibanananda Das uses the image of a weary, long-travelled sailor as a central metaphor. The narrator describes himself as having wandered through the seas for "a thousand years," crossing ancient oceans and lands — from the "darkness of Ceylon" to "the seas of Malaya" — before finding peace in the quiet gaze of Banalata Sen.

In Ferdousi's hands, the saree's zamin and anchal become the sailor's final destination. The central motif of the poem is brought to life as the wanderer's quest meets the artist's muse.

Alongside her painted figure, fragments of Jibanananda Das's verse flow across the fabric. With its hand-painted anchal, flowing calligraphy, and meticulous detailing, Ferdousi's creation elevates the bridal saree into a work of art. The bridal wear is a testament to the designer's ability to blend heritage with contemporary designs, crafting a piece that speaks as much of personal style as it does of timeless tradition.

LS Desk

Photography : Reminiscence

Photography

Bride: Ariana Haque

Wardrobe by Designer Afsana Ferdousi

