

Style files of Bagalore

Ayesha Aleem NA, September 29, 2011 | UPDATED 11:10 IST



Bangalore is making quite an impression on the fashion map. From classic to more experimental and cutting edge, designers in the city have something for everyone.

If you love what Nimirta Lalwani and Manoviraj Khosla are doing with fabric and colour, stop by Collage or Ffolio to accessorise your outfit.

Style divas like Harathi Reddy Rebello and Pallavi Foley have found a distinct flair of their own. Simply Bangalore explores the scene.

Jason and Anshu at their studio

Play land: Jason and Anshu

Graduates of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Delhi, husband and wife Jason Cheriyan and Anshu Arora work well together in so many ways. They've created a lifestyle that allows them to travel and interact with craftsmen. It gives them a chance to play with fabrics and space. Their designs are born of natural fabrics, where most work is done by hand, and are meant for people interested in artistically designed clothes. Their work also heavily focuses on colour. "India is about colour," says Jason. And it looks good on Indian skin tones, he adds.



The designers are known for their printed silk jackets and dresses in bright colours for women. Their work reflects in the way they have done up their store. Walk into Small Shop near Raintree in Bangalore, and you feel that you have entered a child's room.

The walls are painted bright, there are large colourful boxes on the floor that could double up as a jungle gym. And there is odd brica-brac like a smaller-than-usual ironing board and iron, which would keep a child curious for a while.

Inspiration comes from everywhere. Their last collection was based on everyday objects like a pair of scissors. A year ago they also started a children's line. "It gave us the space to do something fresh," says Anshu. The line even had interactive elements like puzzles for children.



Manoviraj Khosla at his studio

Posh punk: Manoviraj Khosla

Manoviraj Khosla grew up heavily influenced by the British punk revolution. "I have always had a great love for clothes and an outlandish sense of dressing," he says, "My mother also understood clothes well and had a great sense of design. She was very encouraging of my career choice." A graduate of American College in London, he started

his label in the city in 1990.

Khosla started with menswear and eventually ventured into women's wear. "The trend of a man 'dressing up' hasn't quite caught on yet like it has in the West." In his opinion, Saif Ali Khan and David Beckham have the concept down pat though. For his designs he experiments with stitch details; with techniques like texturising and pleating; and checks, stripes and plain colours. "I like to reinvent clothes," he says.

A dinner jacket doesn't necessarily have to be worn only one way, he explains. "It's not just formal wear. You can wear it on shorts, or on jeans. The jacket is the new shirt." For this he might just alter length of lapels, try new buttons, and make a jacket shorter or longer.

Khosla is someone you would call a fun designer. Or at least it is evident that this 44 year-old designer greatly enjoys his work. And when his designs are being showcased on the ramp, he finds it hard to stay in his seat, and prefers to groove with the models.

"You have to be careful of what you're designing and for whom. They should be able to carry it well," he says. Some of his favourite designers are Helmut Lang, Yohji Yamamoto and Rohit Bal; and Burberry, Prada and Gucci are among his preferred brands. He loves shopping in London because there's something for everyone there. "I don't always buy brands. It just has to be good stuff," he says.

Trendsetter: Harathi Reddy Rebello

Harathi Reddy Rebello manages to excel in the ruthless world of real estate while looking like she just stepped off the ramp. She does it amid a jet set schedule and on her own terms.

"Fashion is fun as long as you stay true to yourself," she says. For work, she usually picks a white shirt and dark trousers, many of which come from brands like Calvin Klein and Donna Karan New York.

Rebello swears by trousers, dresses and gowns by Rakesh Agarwal, and also flaunts outfits by Anamika Khanna, Rohit Bal and Namrata Joshipura. Among international brands, BCBG, LAMB by Gwen Stefani and dresses by Victoria Beckham's fashion line work for her- "Though there's nothing sexier than Herve Leger." The favourite outfit in her closet is an LBD by Jean Paul Gaultier. What's caught her fancy these days is a recently acquired black bag by Christian Dior.



Nimirta Lalwani at her studio

Silk route: Nimirta Lalwani

Nimirta Lalwani is bringing red carpet gowns to the Indian woman. A size zero herself, she says her designs are not meant only for super skinny women. Fits are altered to define best parts of the body, she says.

Largely using a muted palette- charcoals, blacks, navies, nudes-she creates dramatic flowing garments in silk. She is inspired by the classic designs of 20s to 40s. Lalwani turns to art deco, architecture of that time to translate into designs. She plays with embroidery and pleats, applique and flared fits.

But now she's trying something totally new for her label. She will launch her first Indian line in mid October this year. With creations in wool and thread work, this collection includes easy-to-wear silhouettes with layering.

Her own style essentials include a grey blue jumpsuit that she bought from a street shop in Hong Kong. "It works every time," she says. Otherwise, she's a very jeans and T-shirt person, she confesses being a big fan of Rohit Bal, Lanvin and the ready-to-wear collection by Vera Wang.

Earth connection: Deepika Govind

Deepika Govind is Bangalore's star designer for women's wear. She mostly works with earthy colours which means a plenty of greens, browns, blues and bursts of red. A mix of fun and sober, there is something for every age at her store. She enjoys mixing elements and fabrics so you will find patchwork and layering in her designs.

Govind is known for her bottom wear designs which have lots of fabric and pleats. They are inspired by the sari and dhoti. She's also a fan of textured fabrics. One of her notable collections were stoles made of Eri and Muga silk. This fabric has a natural gold colour and is rooted in Northeast Indian weaving traditions.



For Govind, designing is a science, which needs a lot of research. "I travel to different parts of the country," she says. "I spend time with weavers, discovering new fabrics and techniques." She wants to present heritage textile in a contemporary manner and believes in innovation and evolution on the canvas.



Swishmash: Vinita Chaitanya

An interior designer, Vinita Chaitanya loves to wear dresses for formal occasions. And if it's in the evening, she will almost always choose red, black or white. Her accessory collection ranges from clutches, bags by Prada and Louis Vuitton to footwear by Aldo, Nine West and Salvatore Ferragamo.

Her jewellery could be precious, semi precious or even junk, which she buys from anywhere between Colaba in Mumbai, Goa or Soho in New York. "It's just about how you put it together."

For work, which usually takes her on site visits, she opts for a pair of well-fitted trousers and a linen or silk blouse. Lately, she's been shopping for work at Plantation House, teaming wide legged trousers with long shift kurtas. Some of her favourite designers are Ralph Lauren, Armani and sometimes Reiss.

"I simply adore Tarun Tahiliani's creations and also like Anamika Khanna and Kimono by Kiran Uttam Ghosh." When she is not juggling between work and style, you will find her swimming or working out.

Raj Shroff at his workshop

Distressed fashion: Raj Shroff

Raj Shroff ditched chartered accountancy to become a fashion designer. He started in 2004 by selling belts and bags to fashion store Cinnamon before expanding to London, Milan, Colombo and now Hong Kong. Madhuri Dixit has worn his designs and Shobhaa De was his muse for two years.



This designer loves the distressed look on his creations. "It lends them an international appeal." Shroff loves to work with organic fibres like cottons, mulls, silks. And a major segment of his sales comes from the unlikely brides-to-be. "They may not choose my creation for their main day. But they'll wear a distressed creation for their pre-wedding function."

Currently, he is working on a cotton blend collection mixed with mull and silk to be showcased in Paris at the Marais Showroom on September 29 this year.



Brand addict: Dia Bhandary

Well-fitting clothes figure high for this luxury brand consultant. "Only when I am going casual, I prefer resort lines," says Dia Bhandary. But dresses remain her all time favourite. Hues of white, blue, and green dominate her wardrobe and when it comes to ethnic wear, she prefers red.

This Alexander McQueen fan loves indulging in shoes. "I recently got myself a pair of nude wedges by Jimmy Choo." Among international designers, she prefers Christian Louboutin for shoes, and Salvatore Ferragamo or Hermes for scarves. Closer home she likes Gaurav Gupta for his unconventional styles and Rakesh Agarwal for his glamorous clothes. It is important for her to have a right balance between accessories and the outfit. "

That is the key to look right."

She's got her favourite places to shop in each city like Kitsch at DLF Emporio, Delhi; Aza in Mumbai and the newly-opened Turquoise and Gold in Bangalore. "I also like high street fashion in London," she says.

Sanchita Ajjampur at her studio

Global desi: Sanchita Ajjampur

Global takes on a whole new meaning in Sanchita Ajjampur's designs. Ajjampur's father worked for the United Nations, so



while growing up she travelled a lot. So much so that now she calls herself a nomad and designs for the 'modern nomad'.

On a Wednesday afternoon, she's in her office, dressed in a mustard blouse, red jacket and peach jeans with shoes to match. This 42 year-old, a mother of two effortlessly looks like a model. Sanchita works with fluid, supple, 'second skin' silhouettes, with natural materials. "I don't do structured garments," she says, "And I like something that looks like it's been worn before. Like it had a life and was passed on to someone who would appreciate it."

Currently, she retails her products under the brand name 'Sanchita' in India as well as stores in Hong Kong, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. All of her creations are made in India.

Sanchita also branched out to menswear in 2010 and won the Most Creative Debutant Designer at Van Heusen Men's India Fashion Week for her menswear collection. She's a fan of Manish Arora. "We don't have too many of him." And of Yohji Yamamoto and Israeli fashion designer, Alber Elbaz.



Fashion junkie: Pallavi Foley

Pallavi Foley has all the essentials of a fashionista—a great sense of style, gorgeous skin, and a toned body. This award-winning jewellery designer believes "Jewellery is one of the most important ways through which a person can express themselves." Which is why she likes to keep her work modular so each piece can be worn in more than one way.

Foley mostly wears western clothes and loves white. "I don't own a single salwar kameez," she confesses. In her closet, you will find lots of dresses, florals prints and several pairs of jeans.

She gets most of her dresses from Zara, a brand that she loves for what she calls fashionable and affordable clothes. Of late, she's been flaunting a string of fresh water baroque pearls. Foley is also a fan of Japanese fashion designer Issey Miyake, and prefers Prada, for its minimalism.

Dimple Varma at her store

Gene cool: Dimple Varma

She inherited her mother Betty Mahindra's 17 year-old fashion business after her demise last year. However, Dimple Varma has her own approach. Turquoise and Gold retailing luxury resort wear for women at UB city is Varma's latest venture.

She uses silk, cotton, and crepe to design her clothes in simple straightforward silhouettes in vibrant floral prints and solid colours. They would take very little place in a suitcase, making them ideal for travel. "It's the kind of stuff I like to wear," she says.



"Turquoise and Gold clothes are meant to highlight the best parts of the body," she adds. For someone who has put much thought into her line, she says that fashion shouldn't be taken too seriously.

Her own look is effortless. She looks radiant in a black tunic and spotless white pants. Some of Dimple's favourite brands are Diane von Furstenberg, Calvin Klein, Donna Karan New York, and among designers Anamika Khanna and Sabyasachi Mukherjee.



Art of revival: Collage

From Amit and Richard's collection which uses Japanese tie-dye technique, itajime shibori to Raw Mango's handwoven textiles, dying crafts and forgotten fabric techniques are being preserved at Collage.

Collection of some of the big names in Indian designer wear like Meera and Muzzafar Ali, Nimita Rathod and Rajesh Pratap Singh also find space here. Accentuate your outfits with jewellery and accessories available at this store. Where: 21/1 Wood Street, Ashoknagar. Tel: 25566818/9; www.collage-style.com

First favourite: Ffolio

When fashion was at a very nascent stage, husband and wife team Yashodhara and Sanjay Shroff started designer store Ffolio in 1991. They have everything from ethnic to fusion and the creme de la crÃ´me shop here.



More than 100 designers share space at Ffolio including Anamika Khanna, Tarun Tahiliani, and Raghvendra Rathore. Think embellished Indian wear, bejewelled high heels and clutches to match. Where: 5, Vittal Mallya Road. Tel: 41246053 / 22218142.

Read more at: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/bagalore-jason-anshu-designers-fashion-manoviraj-khosla/1/152916.html>