



Stitching the legacy

Payal's Way Of Designing Timeless Pieces

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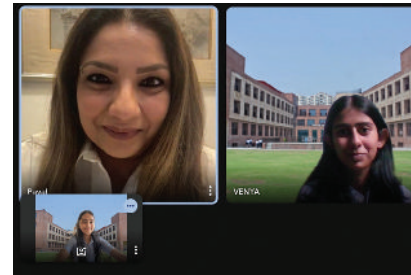
With her modern interpretation of traditional attire, renowned fashion designer Payal Singhal has established a niche for herself in the global fashion industry. Extremely popular among modern, fashionable women, elegant brides and Bollywood divas alike, Singhal is building a brand that is accessible, relevant, and forward thinking.

Making her own way

I was always surrounded by creativity because of my father's garments manufacturing business, but I got into fashion designing only by chance. I had entered a national fashion contest when I was just fifteen and won the 'Designer of the Year' award. This gave me the confidence to become an independent designer, and I started my eponymous label when I was only 21. Of course, it was challenging to make a mark initially, but I persisted because I had faith in my vision.

Changing face of fashion

When I launched my label in 1992, fashion was still an 'elitist' term. Only



GT reporters with Payal Singhal

the wealthy, or a privileged few, could afford 'designer' clothes. But now, fashion designers have begun to collaborate with high street brands, and that has made designer clothing accessible and affordable. In fact, the rise of social media has made fashion more inclusive and democratic, where the budding professionals have access to trends, proving that fashion is no longer reserved for a select audience. Also, the pandemic taught us to value versatility and functionality, which is why my collections emphasise separates that can be styled in multiple ways.

Blend of tradition & modernity

I believe that fashion must be timeless and beyond trends. I have always prioritised creating contemporary pieces rooted in traditional Indian crafts and fabrics. Gold zardozi embroidery, for instance, will always remain beautiful, regardless of trends. I love designing couture because it allows for creative experimentation and craftsmanship. Yet, I



also value the accessibility of ready-to-wear collections. Fashion should be for everyone, and I aim to make my label a dream within reach for as many people as possible.

Secret to success

I feel that success can only come to those who live by three rules - adaptation, persistence, and sincerity. The fashion industry is not just about glitz and glamour; it is fast-paced, demanding quick turn-arounds and relentless deadlines. However, it is all worthwhile when you witness a wedding that is looking stunning in one of your creations or a client expressing that your work gave them more self-assurance.

The way forward

India has the potential to shine in global fashion industry, but there is a lack of structure and support. Our industry is disorganised compared to its European and American counterparts. However, I feel that in ten years, more Indian designers will be able to create a greater international impact. As for my plans, I will continue to stay true to my roots while embracing the changes that happen. 🇮🇳



Payal Singhal, fashion designer

Scribbled memories

When School Furniture Is Replete With Stories

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Well, what did you first recall when you read the word 'school furniture'? Was it a flashback of the lyrics of your favourite song that you had scribbled on your school desk or perhaps the answers to your class tests? Maybe it was taking special care to spoil your desk only with a permanent marker, or wait, even better, a compass. After all, of what use was it during math class anyway? Most often than not, a proof of students' artistry is dis-

played on the blackboard after every lunch break, depicting the crafty masterpiece made by all 30 students of the class, which is worth replacing even da Vinci's Mona Lisa. No wonder the teachers never find enough chalk to teach. And do you remember that one chair that was always isolated because it had a nail poking out of it? Yet, everything is okay, until you mistakenly put your fingers beneath your desk and to your disgust, find a world of chewing gums. Have you ever dared to fiddle with the school cupboard? Don't! It's the teacher's dear treas-

ury, after all. It contains everything ranging from makeup equipment to extra chalks. Honestly, these non-living things come to life when kids make them a part of their school lives. All the furniture in a classroom holds a distinct memory. If that's not all, even walls get tampered with students' names on graduation day, because even if this antique furniture gets replaced, at least these walls won't. So, here ends our school furniture saga. But wait, you should know that someone had applied super-glue on the class door handle. Don't say you weren't warned. Stay safe!

