Outlook

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Home | Website | National | 27 April 2020

Column | Art-e-Fact

From The Unknown To The Art Of Permeating Across The Globe

Despite many odds, these three artists are part of a growing number of unknown artists whose work is finding space in an unexpected, global medium...leather handbags.

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Struggle of a Musician' by Rajkumar Sarde

Most of us may never heard of Shinali Jain, Rajkumar Sarde or Swapnil Jagtap. They belong to the large group of talented young people who hope to make a living out of their art. Each of these three, and many others like them, have learnt art formally and hold diplomas and degrees that have added formal rules, art history and techniques to their inborn talent, that makes them see images in ways different from the ordinary, and gives them the ability to express what they see in unique ways.

Chances are such artists, hailing from small towns, or modest backgrounds seldom find a godfather to promote them, and one in thousands strikes it lucky by being in the right place at the right time.

Despite these odds, these three are part of a growing number of unknown artists whose work is finding space in an unexpected, global medium...leather handbags.

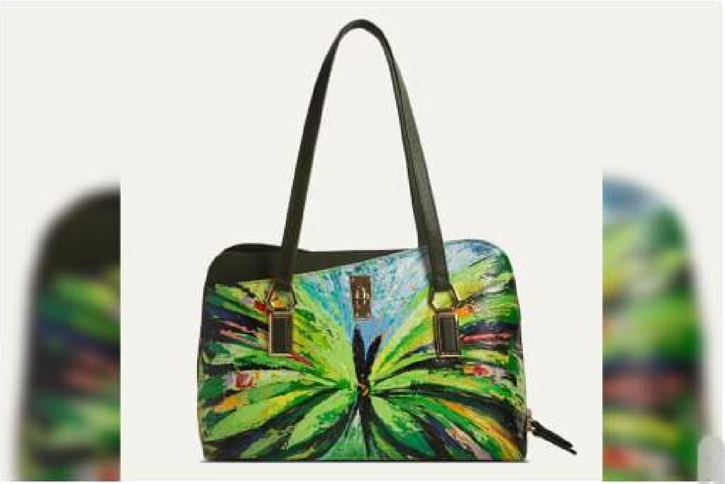
Paul Adams, which, despite its name, is a wholly Indian brand of leather bags, sources fine art from lesser-known artists to make limited edition bags that have found acceptance not just in India but bring in orders from stores in Dubai and Madrid, among other places.

Anshuman Singh, whose brainchild the brand is, feels the name makes the brand more acceptable internationally, and makes his vision more viable, of finding a new conduit for Indian art and giving the 'countless talented artists we have in this country a chance to sell their work'.

Scouting helped his team locate the three artists I mentioned earlier, as well as many others; and a process is in place to ensure each product is unique. Once a theme is decided upon, the artist is guided through its development by Singh's team of NIFT alumni who suggest ways to increase its global appeal. Orders could range from 10 to 20 or more pieces of each painting created on canvas by the artist, which is then processed and incorporated into the leather product keeping longevity and durability in mind. The artist is paid per piece created.

The themes range widely. Jabalpur-based Shinali Jain’s creations are evoked from Alice in Wonderland, and in her words, ‘Supersaturated, bright hues of bold colors with darker, muted tones are blended together. Pops of colours against grey and black tones, give the art a surreal magical feel - just like going through a portal.’

In 'Struggle of a Musician' by Rajkumar Sarde, who hails from a Maharashtrian farmer’s family, the artist uses the bull as a signature portrayal of his expressions. ‘ In this painting, the bull struggles to keep up with the rhythm of the guitar. The frenzied bull with multiple tails signifies his own difficulties. The stark geometric features of the bull are set beautifully in contrast with the surrealist theme of the inability to control one’s environment.’



And in Swapnil Jagtap's Garden of Life', the artist, who has grown up in a village uses his inspiration to create an 'interjection of the shape and freshness of leaves and the visual elegance of a butterfly. It is a conversation in contrasts between rooted firmness of plants and the ability of beings to take flight.'

Each creation comes from deep within the artist's psyche. And reaches out to the well-heeled who find in the painting a resonance. 'Not everybody can afford art for the walls, but it can be a part of one's lifestyle,' as Singh says. It's indeed a new way to take Indian art into homes across the globe.

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