

Fashion Feature > **SLOW. useless.** 08dec11

Today, our fingers and hands do more of this – typing words onto screens, hailing taxis, raising toasts, holding files, carrying shopping bags – and less of this – folding paper to make planes, digging through mud to sow a seed, sewing a button, threading a needle to darn a tear. The process of making is ebbing from urban lives and with it, perhaps a sense of what our hands are capable of creating.

Padmaja Krishnan (NIFT Delhi) opens her installation and sale of hand-crafted clothes at the Artisan Gallery today. In form, her clothes are contemporary; in content, they bring together skills and traditions from the past. She terms them slow and useless. Slow because the pieces are hand-sewn, cared for and given time to take form. Useless since she revives rags and castaways and houses them in new ways.

Wearing something handmade and knowing what went into the process makes that particular piece of clothing radiate with character. It is then difficult to not feel cherished while wearing it. Padmaja's decision to take time making what she makes is bound to affect the character of her garment and that in turn is bound to affect the wearer. Perhaps a sense of slow will permeate and the wearer will stop to appreciate the seams and threads and colours and then perhaps it might become a reason to be aware of everything around them. All because someone choose to take time and go slow.

Spend some time in her slow and useless world and if you choose, bring it back into yours.



(https://indianbydesign.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/img_0098-copy.jpg)



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< *In conversation with Padmaja* >

Indian By Design: What do you seek to convey with the words 'slow' and 'useless'?

Padmaja: Slow, is an attitude, a way of living. Slow, is usually introspective, conscientious, responsible, meditative and hence liberating. Slow, respects tradition, community, and sustainability and yet moves forward with contemporary innovation. Slow, means to work with more time, without haste, with love, with integrity, with precision, and with an eye for detail.

'Useful' or 'Useless' is not a reality but a perception. Useless objects are often random and cannot be found or recreated in the same shape/size or textural quality and hence are unique. Things that are discarded as being useless are like little seeds, hiding within them the potential to one day become a huge blooming tree if identified and nourished. To quote Mahatma Gandhi – 'waste is a resource in the wrong place'.

Indian By Design: What is your making process like?

Padmaja: The approach to design is intellectually reductive, re-examining and reducing details to produce unpretentious simplicity. The making process is simple, spontaneous, random, and experimental. I generally work with the hand without the use of complicated machinery or tools. This by itself simplifies any process and brings in a beauty that is unique, raw, irregular, and playful, that can never be duplicated even by me. Adopting processes that are non-mass manufacture kind is liberating to the soul and the senses of the maker as well as the final user. Each process is unique to the situation it was born in, something that is not very pre-planned but evolves over my drafting table.

Indian By Design: What/Who have your inspirations been?

Padmaja: 'The inspiration comes from the unexpected, from looking at the environment around with insatiable eyes, experimenting with office tools, daydreaming and a wish to hide the limitations of the techniques used when making clothes' – Koromo by Jurgen Lehl

Indian By Design: Where can one buy your products post the exhibition?

Padmaja : I sell largely through exhibitions only in India as well as abroad. To view my work and for enquiries visit: <http://www.transitdesign.in/blog> (<http://www.transitdesign.in/blog>). For personal/retail orders one can visit Row house no.4, royal palms estate, Aarey milk colony, Goregaon-east, Mumbai-400065 [through appointment].

The event > An installation cum trunk sale of hand crafted, contemporary clothes for men and women by textile/fashion designer, Padmaja Krishnan. 8-10 December 2011, 11am-7pm @ the Artisans Gallery, 52-56, Dr. V B Gandhi Marg, Kala Ghoda, Mumbai 400 001 . Expect 'wild silks: khadi linens: malkha cottons: kosa saris redefined as asymmetric tunics: kaantha scraps: hand sewn techniques: rags: deconstructed skirts, seamless jackets, classic kurtas, hand woven men's pants.'

About Padmaja > Padmaja is an alumnus from National Institute of fashion Technology, New Delhi. She has had solo as well as group exhibits of her work in several countries including UK, Japan, USA, Hong Kong and Portugal. Selected to showcase her clothes at zero-waste: fashion re-patterned, a special exhibition of selected international designers at the A + D gallery, Chicago, March 2011, she has also exhibited at Ecochic Asia, October 2010, Hong Kong the first dedicated fashion show ever held that exclusively celebrated Asian designers' contributions towards improved environmental and/or social conditions within the fashion industry. She was featured along with renowned international textile artists/designers in an exhibition of fashion clothes titled "Transformation: Material . Magic . Memory", at Hong Kong Polytech University, March 2010. She was selected to represent India at Experimenta Design, Lisbon, September 2009, an international biennale dedicated to design, architecture and contemporary culture. An India finalist at the 2008 IYFEY entrepreneur search by British Council, her clothes was showcased as a

part of New World design at the London Design Festival in 2007. Her contemporary take on kaantha embroidery art of Bengal, has won her the best textile creation – grand Prix at the International quilt festival, Birmingham in 2007.

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6 Responses to “Fashion Feature> **SLOW.** useless.”

Feed for this Entry

1 **Riti** on April 27, 2012 said:

So beautiful & exotic ! I loved it

2 **AM** on March 21, 2012 said:

Her work is beautiful and eclectic.

This has a slight echo of Ma Ke’s Wuyong (Useless) – she is a Chinese designer.

3 **harika puvvadi** on January 6, 2012 said:

i like the ideas sure want to visit

4 **azmi** on December 14, 2011 said:

I would say eclectic

5 **wlittletings** on December 14, 2011 said:

Love that the pieces are made by hand. So true, too, that inspiration comes from the unexpected. What beautiful pictures of beautiful pieces!

-Courtney

<http://www.wlittlethings.etsy.com>

6 **Purvi Sanghvi** on December 8, 2011 said:

So raw but so so beautiful. Love it !

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