

Gunjan Gupta

One of India's designers quickly gaining a global reputation is Delhi-based Gunjan Gupta, who rose to fame with her Golden Throne line. In this collection, she wrapped chairs in thin sheets of gold and silver using *warq*, a traditional craft practised by artisans in Jaipur and Udaipur. Her recent collections make use of Indian street aesthetics including *bori* (jute sacks used to store grains) in a sofa seat and the *potli* (laundry bundle) in an overstuffed chair back. Then there is the *gadda* (mattress roll) that becomes a daybed. The Subodh Gupta-esque bartan chair uses differently-sized aluminium and brass cooking pots for a 'functional installation'. These will be part of a collection showcased in Milan in April and Art Basel in June 2014—another feather in the cap of the young designer who curated India's first Design Exhibition for the Experimenta Design Biennale in Lisbon in 2009.

Gunjan Gupta's *potli* chairs

Indian by design

Fusing contemporary relevance with traditional aesthetics, young designers are giving everyday furniture a quirky twist by using Indian motifs and craft techniques. **Gargi Gupta** takes a look at the luxury of the unusual

A chair is a chair, a table is a table...but in the hands of Ayush Kasliwal, Gunjan Gupta, Srishti Bajaj, Lekha Washington and Spruha Chokhani, they approximate works of art. This bunch of young Indian designers, trained at NID or at design schools abroad, look at furniture as more than purely functional objects. They inject it with quirkiness and playfulness, and use and fuse unusual materials to give a fresh twist and new vigour to commonplace objects. The five are also united by their clever use of Indian motifs and craft, not just to decorate or embellish objects but as an integral part of their creation. The result—their products stand out in the international market for being 'Made in India' and the artisans benefit too; these 'designer' products are tools of empowerment, opening up a world of new opportunities for crafts that have been dying for lack of a market.

Lekha Washington

This Mumbai-based actress also designs 'odds products' under the label Ajji. For now, the range includes one-off pieces that add a splash of colour and fun to a room. Ajji products are not just visually playful, they also have funky names such as the Pink Sink—a chair that does not look like one. It's

just a loop of moulded stainless steel covered in bright-pink stretched lycra, which most people think wouldn't support their weight, but it does and is comfortable too. The Dot looks like a circle of bright fabric mounted on the wall, but it is actually a wall-mounted chair.

The Drop, a dramatic piece shaped like a water drop suspended from the ceiling, again is a funky chair.

The Squair Chair



Srishti Bajaj

Delhi-based Srishti Bajaj feels that true design is not just about surface embellishments, but about aiding and simplifying the way we do things. For instance, one of her designs, called the 'half-pint glass', is meant for those who want to create the impression that they are drinking more than they actually are. Shaped like a semicircle, drinkers can hold the glass with its rounded surface away from them so that those facing them can see always full glasses. She has also come up with an entire range of sofas, side and dining tables, and a daybed that uses the frame of the *thela*—the humble pushcart on which vendors ply their trade. In tune with the chic street aesthetic, the seats and trays of the pieces are woven jute fibre—similar to the chairs in the government offices of yore. To create neat and intricate patterns Srishti had to look up an old artisan; one of the few who still practise the art.



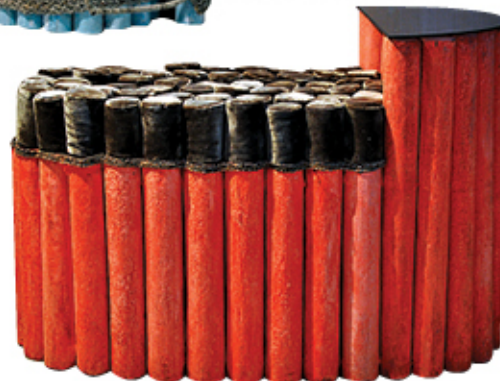
Above: Srishti's Chara Asana; Below: The Half Pint Glass



Lekha's Pink Sink

Spruha Chokhani

Papier mâché is a common raw material for craft. It's easily available, soft and malleable when wet, and quite strong when dry. These properties make it ideal for crafting furniture, as this Guwahati-based artist discovered. Chokhani, who runs a design house called Pulp Factory, makes everything from bookcases to stools, with brightly-coloured papier mâché shoes on their legs. The stools are made of papier mâché cylinders, covered in satin cloth in various colours, tied together in a stack and covered with a layer of foam—they are hard and soft at the same time.

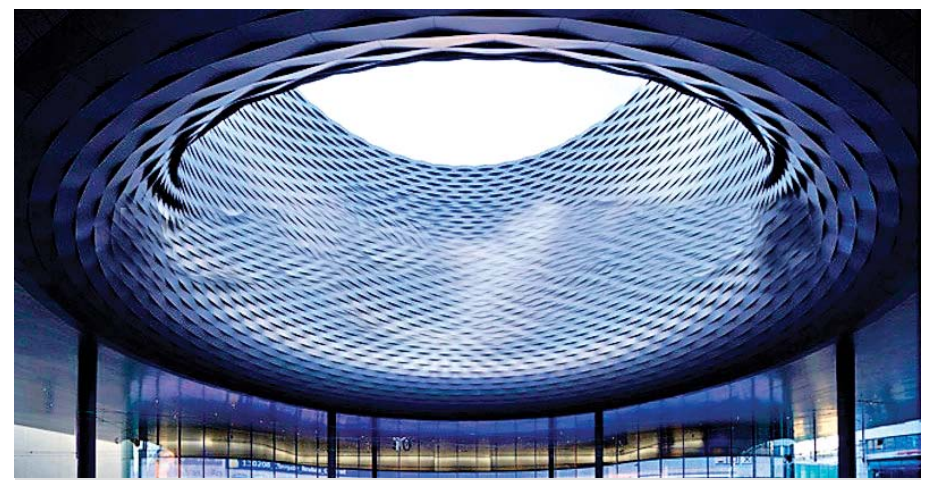


Ayush Kasliwal

Is it a table? Is it a jigsaw puzzle? The Extrusion Table by Jaipur-based Kasliwal is both. Showcased recently at the Made In...India show in New Delhi, the table is made of little aluminium pieces that fit together like a jigsaw puzzle and can be rearranged into different, funky shapes. The individual pieces are made of aluminium and fashioned in an industrial foundry. They are dyed and the top and sides are polished to a high sheen by artisans in Jaipur. The resultant sculpture is a work of art; a signature piece that will invariably spark conversation and is testimony to how industrial process and handcraft can be harmoniously combined. In just seven years, Kasliwal and his wife Geetanjali have acquired a global reputation for their furniture and lifestyle products, fashioned using craft techniques such as beaten brass, stone and wood carving and mirror work, giving new life by the choice of unusual materials and processes.



The Drop



Baselworld 2014 Little things go a long way

Factfile of the largest watch & jewellery exhibition that will have you go OMG!

- 1,400 exhibitors from 40 countries presented their new models and collections at the Baselworld Jewellery and Watch show, last year.
- More than 6,000,000 business cards are exchanged during this event each year.
- The most imposing stand at Baselworld 2013 had a surface area of 1,625m² – the smallest measured 6m².
- At this annual event, approximately 25,000 staff will occupy stands.

Inspiration has a new fairground to play on—it's at the watch and jewellery exhibitions such as Baselworld that trends are picked up. For the last decade, designers and marketing experts from a wide range of industries have been increasingly drawing inspiration from this globally unique event in Basel. Conversely, the ancillary fashion industry has found greater significance in being present and exhibiting its range at Baselworld. Another important trend is that brands no longer just build booths, but are architectural representations of renowned designers and architects. Another interesting pattern is that more and more global celebrities are making their presence felt in the vast and magnificent arena of Baselworld, which covers a distance of more than 30 kilometres.

What's in it for you? Watch this space for more news and updates on Baselworld 2014. www.baselworld.com



Introducing a new composition

Raymond Weil's newest offering 'toccata' pays tribute to the sensory nature of classical western music. A toccata (from the Italian *toccata*, which means 'to touch') is a musical composition, featuring fast-moving, lightly fingered sections, written to display the touch and technique of virtuosos of the keyboard or plucked string instruments. The quality finish and streamlined design of the toccata is reminiscent of a well-played piece of music.

Music has always been at the centre of the Raymond Weil universe, which is evident in the names of the brand's collections, taken from famous operas—*Nabucco* and *Parsifal*—or musical connotations such as *maestro* or *jasmine*. This year's collection follows in the footsteps of great composers. By celebrating the composer, it pays homage to the source of inspiration. Embodying the brand's boldness

and creativity and equipped with a quartz movement, toccata combines subtlety, accessibility and quality with models for both men and women. The beautifully rounded case is available in 29, 39 and 42mm diameters in steel or yellow gold with PVD coated steel. The refined case and its pure lines blend harmoniously with the rounded sapphire crystal and the dials display a simple, but precise musical score under the baton of the orchestra's conductor. The model features a black galvanic dial and matching leather strap or a steel bracelet, which exudes elegance. Classic, yet contemporary this all-steel model has a satin-sunray silver dial, punctuated with a smaller seconds dial at 6 o'clock. This collection celebrates the artistic spirit behind every creation, whether horological or musical. This launch marks Raymond Weil's development of the entry price segment of their collection, while maintaining production quality and precision.

The brand intends to promote its watchmaking know-how amongst a wider audience, respecting the tradition handed down from one generation to the next, within this family company.



Especially for Women

Lightweight, scratch-resistant, sleek and touch-controlled in full ceramic—Rado's Esenza Ceramic Touch, was unveiled by brand ambassador and guest of honour Lisa Ray on the occasion of International Women's Day in Delhi. As Lisa Ray puts it "This is a watch that suits any style and exudes femininity and beauty;" it is also easy to manipulate. Made exclusively for women, the time on this watch can be set, and reset, by the gentle press and sweep of the finger along the side of the case—left for hours and right for minutes. The stainless steel case back of the watch acts as a reference to the electronic circuit. It is essential for the watch to be worn on the wrist in order to be set. There are six models in this collection—three black and three white. The features of watch were presented by a 3D mapping sequence and models who flaunted its fashion quotient. Reflecting the watch's unique style, white dominated the launch decor.

