FROM THE PAST

Pitbull



Armando Christian Pérez, popularly known by his stage name Pitbull, is an illustrious American singer cum rapper. He chose his stage name as Pitbull, after the dog species pitbull because according to him the dog species characterise basically everything that he stands for.



A still from one of Rani Khanam's performances

RALLYING TO MAKE KATHAK RELEVANT

Kathak exponent Rani Khanam talks about the Annual Kathak Dance Festival, titled *Antarang*

ANGELA PALJOR

It is her nimble-footed dance style and her elaborate expressions that keep you glued to her performances and this time Rani Khanam is all set to bring life into the 22nd Annual Kathak Dance Festival, titled *Antarang*, organised by Aamad Kathak Dance Center.

Amidst the last minute rehearsal, the maestro took out time to talk about the festival and what is in store for the ones who have been waiting for the D day.

"Antarang means the waves from within our soul. The festival of Antarang is a celebration of the young spirit while promoting the art of various Kathak dance forms," says Khanam, adding, "Our aim is also to promote the *Guru Shishya Prampara*, wherein the *Guru* and the *shishyas* are dancing together on the same platform."

Aamad Kathak dance group is dedicated to work towards Kathak classical dance performances and choreographic work, along with Sufiana Kathak productions. Elaborating further, she says, "Aamad dance centre has two different units, one is a training centre and the other is a dance unit. The dance team has been a part of various shows and festivals in different states. Keeping the concept of the show in mind we create various new productions. I, as a dancer, have done many Sufi productions. Therefore, we have created a Sufiana production that we perform at various platforms worldwide."

The main foundation of the festival is the *sadhana* (worship) of the Indian classical dance and music. "For the past 22 years we, at Aamad, are not only organising but also performing at this annual dance festival with our various associations," says she. Not just Guru Rani Khanam, but also the senior students who have pursued Kathak as a career are also participating in this festival.

The festival has been celebrated for a long time and a lot has changed over the years. Talking about the journey, Khanam says, "When this festival was organised for the first time it was executed at a small level with an even smaller group. With every year, our goal and our group have become stronger. The hard work and the dedication of all the people associated with this festival are the two main reasons behind our growth."



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Rani Khanam

A little about Aamad Kathak dance

Aamad Kathak dance group has been very active since its inception in 2001. At present the group consists of seven artists. The founder and director of Aamad, Rani Khanam has directed and choreographed numerous dance productions, which have won international acclamation. So far it is accredited with creating 25 marvellous choreographic works.

Beaming with love and adoration, the proud Guru goes on praising her students. "The *sadhana* and the focus of the students towards this form of art is incredible. It has become a food for their soul which is an achievement for us. And as we are growing, we have done many productions at various levels, both nationally and internationally," concludes Khanam. Not to forget, the festival also provides a platform to upcoming talents, hence creating an audience for them.

Be a part of the festival today at Shri Ram Centre Auditorium, Safadar Hashmi Marg. Gates will be open for all from 5 pm onwards.

Bringing maestros together again

EXPRESS FEATURES

THE four-day musical extravaganza Swami Haridas-Tansen Music Festival, held at Modern School, Barakhamba Road from Jan 10-13, once again brought together maestros of Hindustani classical music and dance on a single platform. It is an annual festival organised by the Bharatiya Sangeet Sadan and HCL Concerts with an aim to revive and enhance traditional Indian music and dance.

The fest began with the performance of Kathak maestro Padma Bhushan Dr Uma Sharma. She presented a three sequence dance drama based on the eternal love between Radha and Krishna in



Thumri style. Much to the delight of the audience, she also described her act.

"Musical vibrations can convey moods and emotions, and have the ability to mould and shape our consciousness. Different types of music can have different effects on the mind, both positive and negative. Our mind is like any living organism, it needs stimulation to grow. Music is one of the most important 'foods' for the intellect," said Amaan Ali Bangash.

Along with three other percussionists, Tabla player Bikram Ghosh performed Drums of India, the craft that has been very well received even by non-Hindustani audience the world over.

Later, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt performed along with his son Tantree Samrat Pt. Salil Bhatt. The event culminated with Ustad Amjad Ali Khan regaling the audience with tunes on sarod.



TREND CORNER

Silhouettes from the 1980s are making a comeback

EXPRESS FEATURES

COVER Story, a fashion brand for women by Future Style Lab, has unveiled its latest collection. The collection is designed at the company's creative headquarters in London. It consists of women's apparel and accessories, including bags and shoes, and is inspired by the best runway trends seen across the world. The collection features ready to wear styles that will give you the confidence to turn the streets into your own personal runway.

The collection is spread across nine stories which feature key 1980s silhouettes like big shoulders, bodycon and waist details — all outfits suitable for a colourful glittery evening.

Bold vibrant prints are a key statement, while the fabrics of the 80s make a comeback — think shimmer, glitter, metallics and sequins. Coloured animal print will be seen across the board – leopard print on a bright colour base such as fuschia and orange along with bright checks in various clashing colours.



Khadi: The upper echelon of fashion

AYESHA SINGH

FROM being weaved into India's social, and now fashion fabric, Gandhi's khadi has metamorphosed itself into a new-age material exploding the fashion landscape with its simplicity and versatility. Embodying the self-reliant, quintessentially Indian character of this handspun fabric, fashion designers today are introducing a new meaning to it. From deconstructed saris to bomber jackets to elaborate *lehengas*, khadhi has reached the high streets of contemporary fashion. We speak to some well-known designers who are trotting on khadhi's trendy trail.

Divya Kumar, Earthistic Produce

For Jaded urban eyes like mine, a rural weaving unit set under tiled roofs, cool red oxide floors, machinery that is not dependant on electricity, vegetal dyes derived from roots, barks, leaves and seeds of plants and trees around them, where rural youth, mostly women work motivatedly is spiritual and harmonious way of living. It's hard not to fall in love with what they do and notice the stark simplicity of their lives over ours. We enjoy making 'one size fits all' silhouettes that celebrate many body types and sizes.

Sounak Sen Barat, House of Three

Post-independence the first time the market opened up was in the 1990s. Those two decades saw a huge change in both the per capita income and the psychographic canvas of the average Indian. With more disposable income came more exposure and then more confidence and for the first time probably you saw Indians coming around with a sense of comfort and pride about their roots. The earlier sense of almost a dormant apologetic disposition got replaced by a sense of belonging and pride for their roots. No race, civilisation or country has used a textile so effectively and powerfully in their fight for freedom. That is the legacy of khadi.

Suket Dhir of SUKETDHIR

I think the change has come about because of the awareness amongst the design fraternity of how special the craft is. The whole process of spinning a yarn with *ambar charkha* or by hand and then using that yarn in the handloom to weave the fabric is a very soulful process. We have used handloom in our Nehru jackets and shirts which we pair with a beautiful mill made fabrics for bottom wear. It's about creating a synergy between the two schools of weaving because the times will always be of coexistence. The khadi *mulmul* is usually used in *dupattas* and tunics.

Purvi Doshi

Khadi has always been known as one of the most versatile fabrics to use and wear. Since it is a weather adaptive fabric, it has become very sought after in the fashion industry.

Anushree Reddy

Reinterpreting khadi to cut in modern silhouette has been great fun with its simple weave construction and sustainability to our label's classic hand embroidered *lehengas* and long fitted jackets. Its natural and organic quality provides it to breathe which is perfect for Indian brides.

Khadi has its own characteristics making it unique in its own textile nature.

Samant Chauhan

Our generation is seeing a lot of designers use khadi in their collection, I believe that this is mainly because we the new breed of designers are experimenting with the fabrics we use and are realising the value of khadi. 50 years back the attention was more on using fabrics which are durable or cheaper. Today, we are more conscious about our environment so it is vital to be more sustainable by using organic and eco-friendly fabrics.



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Purvi Doshi

INTERIOR DESIGN

Minimalism will rule homes and workplaces this year

SHILLPI A SINGH

IF last year was dominated by the idea of personalisation in interior design, with homes and workplaces becoming an extension of an individual, and involved integrating diverse elements and objects that reflected an individual's interests or aspirations into spatial design strategies, this year minimalism will be the dominant trait.



"Eclecticism was the reigning decor trend in 2018. There was use of a varied, and sometimes conflicting palette of materials, colours, patterns, furniture pieces, and products. The results were vibrant, dramatic, and an unapologetic celebration of extravagance," says Lakshmi Chand Singh, Founding Partner, design studio HomesbyDesign, adding, "With stories embedded in every design choice, these spaces were incredibly meaningful to their users, leading to an increased sense of belonging and engagement."



In complete contrast, this year will see a perceptible shift in the simplified approach to interior design with users and designers moving towards a more straightforward and cleaner aesthetic.

"Minimalism is not just an idea, it is a way of life that is distinguished by the desire for perfect order and impeccable organisation. It has become very popular now in certain groups of society and is especially favoured by creative minds who prefer the combination of simplicity, sophistication, beauty, and practicality. If what you require in your design are strictness and simplicity, then minimalism is what you need! Another characteristic of the minimalist style is open space; the key to being minimalist is the freedom of space," says Lakshmi. Here's her take on how to ace the design code.

Minimalism is not just an idea, it is a way of life that is distinguished by the desire for perfect order and impeccable organization.

Lakhshmi Chand Singh

Furniture

A subtle form should define the design and supported by an emphasis on function and aesthetic appeal.

A piece of furniture can be simple, but eye-catching; it should be in harmony with other elements in the room.

Walls

The finishing of the walls can be done with textured plaster, wide glossy tiles, paint or wallpaper. Other alternatives are minimalist, bare walls made of glass, concrete or natural stone with a relief.

Ceiling

The design should not bear the burden of the theme of the interior or in other words be bulky to overpower the space. Any complex design is a strict no-no. The best option remains to paint the ceiling in light and soothing colour.

Floor

A good option for the floor is to use natural colours and avoid the use of any kind of patterns. Several flooring options such as laminates, polymer coating, parquet, plain carpet, self-levelling floor and ceramic granite tiles etc. can be utilised to create distinct aesthetics in each room.