



(Above) The Pixel collection of clothes and dishes displayed at Clove; (below) Kinni Kamat, Samyukta Nair, Rooshad Shroff and Saaksha Parekh at the store launch

Luxe for locals

A luxurious collaboration shows off abstract floral offerings in fashion and homeware

Tucked away in one of the by-lanes that branch out from Colaba Causeway, Clove gives a sense of warmth and exclusivity. The effect the store tries to achieve is one of daily luxury – not only aspirational, but somewhat achievable, says owner Samyukta Nair. On February 28, the shop was packed with eager customers as it launched a collaboration between fashion designers Saaksha & Kinni and designer Rooshad Shroff.

Called 'Pixel', the collection features a new line of clothes and dishes is named. Both Shroff's plates and Saaksha & Kinni's clothes are inspired by the idea of abstract florals.

"We thought that our similar approach to florals would be a perfect synergy," says Saaksha Parekh. "We use ikat and abstract florals and he also added linear patterns."

The result is a riot of colours that manage to complement each other on the silk cotton and organza used by the designer duo for the Spring-Summer collection. "I think silk-cotton is one of the most amazing Indian fabrics," says Parekh. "It's lightweight, flowy, has an amazing fall and appears quite formal as well. Organza is also perfect

for the weather."

While the clashing colours blend into each other in the clothes, Shroff's plates use black and white marble inlay in geometric patterns, along with semi-precious stones – dark reddish-brown of onyx, deep blues of lapis lazuli and the swirling greens of malachite. "Each of the plates are pixelated flowers that are distorted. These distortions help break the rigid geometry and adding fluidity," the designer elaborates.

The line – Shroff's third collection of plates for which he sourced the expertise of marble inlay workers near the Taj Mahal in Agra – happens to be his most intricate collaboration the artisans till date. "The difference is not so much in technique as in the scale and intricacy of the pieces," explains Shroff, who is known for his avant-garde furniture, light fixtures and plates.

The art form of marble inlay dates back generations in Agra (some artisans claiming to trace their craft all the way back to the building of the Taj Mahal itself). However, when more contemporary patterns come into the picture, imperfections tend to creep in. "Making them work with more geometric, contemporary designs was initially problematic because they are more used to their traditional motifs," explains Shroff. But this is exactly what pushed him to expand his horizons.

Will we be seeing a repeat of the dishes again? "Up to Clove," shrugs Shroff, signing off with a charming smile.

If the quickly selling out selection at the store launch is an indication, these one-of-a-kind designs are worth an encore.

– Dyuti Basu

