

Vastrabharana 2025 Dazzles Bengaluru

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The 33rd edition of **Vastrabharana**, the much-loved annual exhibition and sale of handcrafted textiles and jewellery hosted by the **Crafts Council of Karnataka**, opened in Bengaluru on **September 3, 2025**, at the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath. Across five immersive days, this event brings together visionary artisans whose work blurs the lines between craftsmanship, storytelling, and fantasy. Fans of Indian textile traditions will find this year's theme—**"Illusion & Fantasy"**—both enchanting and inspiring.

A Curatorial Canvas of Imagination

"Visitors will witness fantastical flowers, talismanic motifs, and surreal details," shares **Padmaja Sakhamuri**, the event's convenor. Artisans have been encouraged to challenge conventional design boundaries by featuring mythical creatures, layered motifs, dreamlike landscapes, and optical illusions in their creations. From glowing hand-painted kalamkari scenes of the *Ramayana* to double ikat sarees, this year's line-up explores the intersection of reality and dream.

With the theme of Illusion & Fantasy, the curation goes beyond traditional techniques and introduces playful narratives through sensory **design—crafted to spark awe rather than just admiration.**

Celebrating a Spectrum of Textiles

The exhibition showcases a broad range of regional techniques, demonstrating how heritage processes can deliver fantastical aesthetics. Expect to find:

- **Jamdani sarees** with motifs of imagined flora and fauna
- **Hand-painted or embroidered saris** that tell surreal tales and highlight craftsmanship
- **Bandhani, Eco-prints, and Shibori** techniques adapted to express dreamlike landscapes
- Indigenous silks like **muga, eri, and kosa**, shimmering with artisanal sheen
- Revivalist motifs from **Benarasi** and **Chanderi** traditions brought back with a touch of imaginative twist

Artisans from Across India

Over 50 craftspeople and designers from across India are contributing to this creative tapestry, including:

- **Alankrit** (chikankari),
- **Bidisha Bhaduri** (kantha & batik),

- **Ereena** (ikat eri silk),
- **Vriksh Designs** (Odisha ikat & jala),
- **Ssaha** (khadi jamdani),
- **Murali Sari Emporium** (Pochampally Telia Rumal),
- **Sheikh Patola Art** (Patan Patola),
- **Kubsa** (Khun & Ilkal),
- **Vankar Vishrambhai Valji** (Bhujodi),
- **Padmaja** (Tangaliya),
- **Kosala Livelihood Foundation** (Kosa silk), and more.

They're joined by masters of printing and dyeing traditions such as **Sufiyan Khatri** (Ajrakh), **Mohammed Aarif Khatri** (Bagh prints), **2Up2Down Textiles** (Shibori), **Studio Syu** (block prints), and **Econic** (eco-printing). On the jewellery front, attendees can explore the work of **Aham** (contemporary silver), **Flames of the Forest** (sculptural silver), **Madad Ali** (lac bangles), and **Kailash Patwa** (thread jewellery). Heritage and Fantasy – What distinguishes Vastrabharana from other exhibitions is its strong curatorial approach—each curator-elected artisan must demonstrate not only top-tier craftsmanship but also an interpretive vision aligned with the yearly theme. This ensures a well-balanced showcase that is both rooted and visionary, offering masterful tradition alongside creative reinterpretation

Event Logistics & Visitor Experience

Free and open to the public, the exhibition runs daily from **10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.** until **September 7**, hosted at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath on Kumarakrupa Road in Bengaluru. This inclusive approach invites designers, buyers, enthusiasts, and casual visitors to dive into the magic of Indian craft.

Weaving Stories Through Craft

At its best, Vastrabharana transcends mere display—it is a narrative platform. Be it a shimmering silk sari capturing the flicker of myth, a block print carved with surreal patterns, or a jewelled piece that echoes folklore, each artifact weaving an imaginative tale through form and substance.

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