

Raw Mango's "Once Upon a River" Weaves a Tale of Unions, Ornamentation, and Modern Craft

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Arriving just in time for the festive season, **Raw Mango's latest collection**, *Once Upon a River*, is a lyrical meditation on **unions—of craft, emotion, and celebration**. Designer **Sanjay Garg** once again showcases his mastery of textile storytelling, creating garments that feel both rooted in tradition and alive with contemporary imagination.

The Art of Layered Ornamentation

At the heart of *Once Upon a River* lies a technical and aesthetic innovation — the seamless integration of **weaving (bunai)** and **hand embroidery (kadhai)**, two crafts that have historically existed independently. *"This season, we wanted the weave itself to become part of the ornamentation,"* says Garg. *"The challenge was ensuring the brocade could support embroidery and vice versa — creating textiles that are richly detailed yet incredibly light."*

Threads of real zari ripple across the surface of silk and brocade, evoking reflections of water and the fluidity of memory. Each piece, Garg explains, is *"an invitation for brides, grooms, and their families to express themselves in their own unique form."*

Symbolism and Innovation

Much like its title, *Once Upon a River* flows through layers of symbolism. *"Every Raw Mango collection begins with an exploration of technique,"* says Garg. *"For craft to thrive, it must evolve — design intervention must come from within the craft itself."*

In this collection, ornamentation takes on a more tactile and narrative role. The garments balance the **weightlessness of brocade** with the **dimension of embroidery**, creating pieces that shimmer with understated grandeur. The results are textiles that feel timeless yet forward-looking — a continuation of Garg's belief that Raw Mango is not about reviving old crafts, but about **imagining the future of textile design**.

A Broader Conversation on Luxury

When asked about how the concept of "luxury" has evolved, Garg's perspective is refreshingly introspective. *"Luxury today lies in experience and individuality. It's not about material or price — it's about meaning. A simple dress made of paper, worn once, can be more luxurious than the heaviest embroidery if it connects to who you are."*

This belief resonates through *Once Upon a River* — where every motif, every shimmer, feels intentional. It's luxury defined by emotion, context, and craftsmanship, rather than excess.

Beyond the Loom: The Spirit of Raw Mango

Over the years, Sanjay Garg has continued to push the boundaries of traditional Indian textiles through experimentation. From **Laheriya’s layered turbans** to **Ikat Mashru outerwear** and even **Varanasi brocade woven with lycra**, each Raw Mango collection redefines what handloom can be.

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