

FASHION

IT'S RAINING FASHION AT THE LOFT IN QUEST. HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Tarun Tahiliani will be back at The Loft that launched this March with his showing. Ahead of his trunk show at the multi-utility space on the sixth floor of the Syed Amir Ali Avenue mall, Tarun told t2 why he loves The Loft and Calcutta.



What are you coming to Quest with this time?
We are coming back with fall/winter! We like showing at The Loft. I thought it was a big space. I don't have a problem that it is on top of a shopping mall. A mall is where people go to shop. They have a good infrastructure. Shivika is very good to work with, she is young and hungry. That's the kind of partner I want. There will be heavy georgettes, lovely Chanderis... there is a bit of brocade... all our wonderful printing... that's one of our specialties... we design our own prints... Chikankari, the *gota* work... may be a bit of menswear... It's nice to come back and reconnect.

Do you like coming back to Calcutta?
I want to come here and spend two-three days for antique shopping... I like coming back. I feel Calcutta still has an old-world charm. It doesn't feel so nouveau to me and I like that. I don't love the traffic. I have lovely friends here. You all are Bengalis... you all are still rooted... the problem with Bengalis may be that they are too rooted.

If you had The Loft for yourself, what would you do with it?
I would do a lot of screens and panels in the prints to create like *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (a 1956 film starring Marlon Brando), a theatrical screen... you can see through but you don't see it fully... there is that mystical element... sort of looking at a naked woman under a veil... more interesting, no?

Who is a TT woman?
I have always liked quirky, exotic women... so, I'll say Minal Modi. She is always a bit gaga and I like that. So she'll suddenly show up in a kimono wrapped in South Sea pearls in which she can barely walk... Then she'll say, 'Come to dinner'... the garden is lit with candles and the tables are covered in jasmine and then under the banyan tree... under a chandelier... she is sitting there... and then there will be caviar in giant shells. How can you not love that? I like Laila Tyabji. I also spend a lot of time with my sister (Tina Tahiliani Parikh), but she normally gives me a migraine! She asks the same question 20 times! But she is definitely steadfast! I like women who do what they have to do. Just get on with it. You don't have to be glamorous or beautiful. But if you are exotic, it's fine. Exotic is a state of mind. It's not like you have to be rich. People with intellect and a point of view are much more interesting.

Do your sons (Anand, 29 and Jahan, 27) work with you?
As of few days back, both were working with me. One apparently quit. The HR told me! Even if I look at their rooms, I get a headache.

Are you a strict dad?
I never was a strict dad. I just said do what you want to do in front of me. They actually complained that I came home drunk one night and I rolled in the garden... they said, 'Dad you cannot behave like this'... I said I am so sorry... I was full of remorse... can you imagine? (*Laughs out loud*) And, if I tell you what all I found them doing...!

Reading: David Brooks' *The Road to Character*. I feel we are all in a spiritual and moral crisis... how we treat the world and what our value systems are.

Listening to: The problem is I never listen to new music... I am still stuck in the past. I am liking DJ Solomun... but I am still obsessed by Aretha Franklin. I love her. I like classical music. It's soothing... violin.

I am dying to watch: In Paris... they have decided to try the *Swan Lake* with real swans! (*LOL*) We love ballet and theatre. We like to weep. A good weepathon is always good.



What: Tarun Tahiliani @ The Loft
When: September 1 & 2
11am-7pm
(Tarun will be available for private consultations on September 1)



Shivika Goenka, vice-president, special projects, Quest, chatted with t2 on the upcoming twin fashion-festive edits at The Loft.

So, you have designers Tarun Tahiliani and Varun Bahl just ahead of the festive season...
With the festive period round the corner, The Loft wanted to bring in these two great designers. I have looked at the whole lookbook. I told them the ones I liked. There is a lot of excitement in the city... a lot of things to look forward to. We thought it was a great time to bring these designers. Also, the wedding season is coming up. Tarun and Varun will be there personally to help the shoppers. Both the designers have different sensibilities. Tarun's will also see some models showcase his collection... more of an interactive session. Come see!

Have you started festive shopping?
Not yet! I am hoping that I am going to shop at The Loft. I really liked one of Varun's coat-lehengas. It comes in different shades. One of Tarun's pieces had 3D flowers and some interesting threadwork and French knots.

What are your usual festive buys like?
Anarkalis and a lot of different silhouettes. May be for Diwali, an Anarkali or a cool dhoti outfit... there are lots of these winter parties or Diwali parties that happen.

What about colours?
It depends on what catches my eye. I am more into whites, ivories and pinks, but I do like blue too... navy blue. I enjoy red too.

What about pandal-hopping this time?
I really want to! I missed it last year because we were travelling. I haven't seen Durga Puja yet. I have heard it's beautiful. I am looking forward to it and hope I can pack in some pandal-hopping. I have heard the skill and the craft is really something to look out for.

Shivika Goenka at Quest on Monday. Picture: Rashbehari Das



What: Varun Bahl @ The Loft
When: September 5 & 6
11am-7pm
(Varun will be available for private consultations on September 5)



"I am coming back to Calcutta after a couple of years... I am excited! I am getting my current couture 2017 collection called Dream Nouveau. It's basically inspired by the art nouveau period with little hints here and there from the art deco period. I was also inspired by an artist called Alphonse Mucha... his paintings. I am getting occasion wear, more bridal, clothes related to bridal wear and also lots more that's targeted at the Pujas. My memories of Durga Puja are those of larger-than-life pandals... I love Calcutta as a city. I have got a couple of days' work and am planning to stay another day or so to just be there. I drive around the city and I have a couple of very nice friends. I like going to Flurys!" — VARUN BAHL

Text: Saione Chakraborty