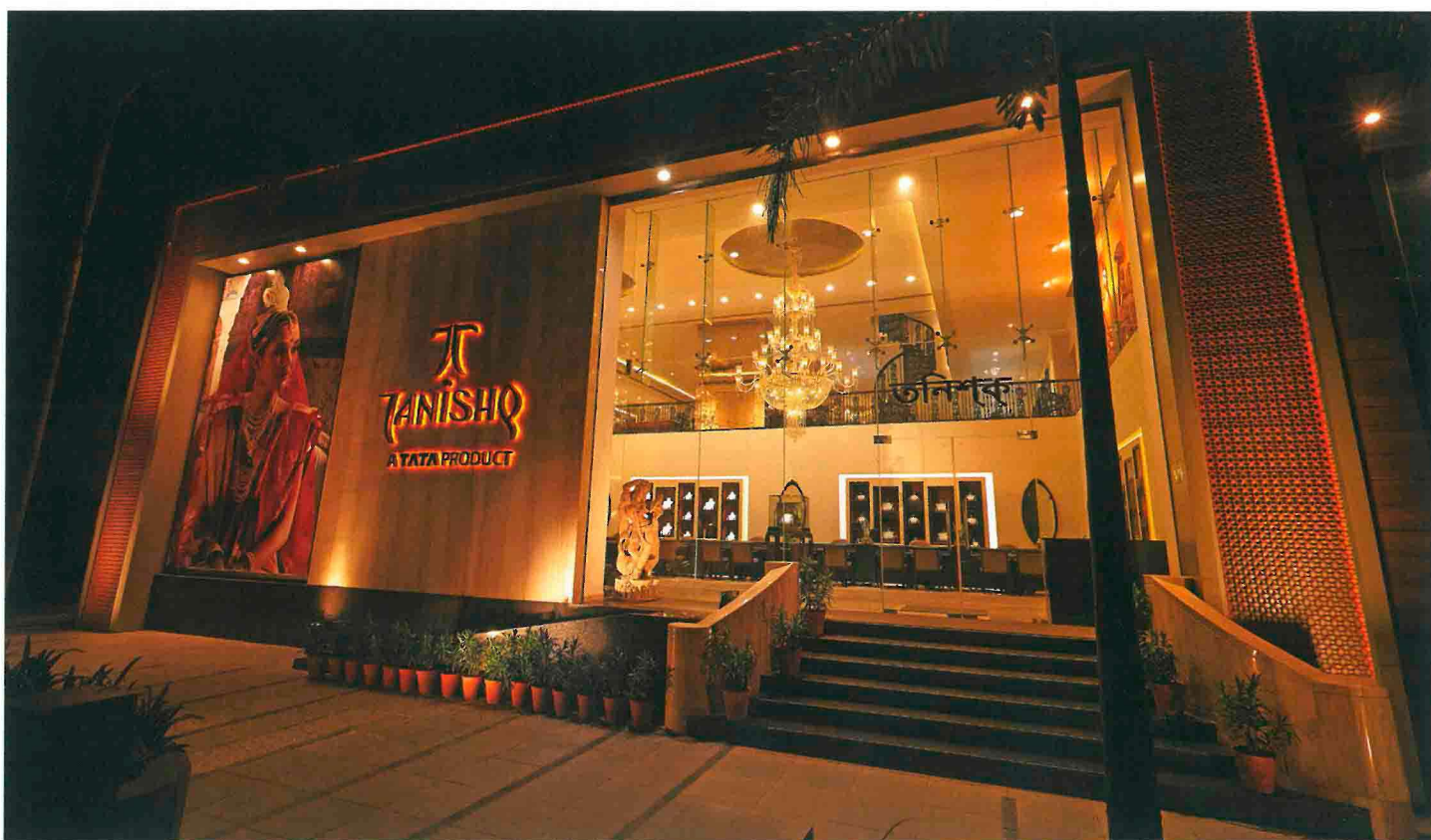


# Bejeweled With Bengal

Tanishq unveils yet another reimagined concept in its flagship store in Kolkata which, celebrates the rich heritage of handicrafts of the region by infusing exquisite real art installations that narrate traditional wedding stories through illustrations, materials and forms.



Tanishq re-launched its flagship at Camac Street, Kolkata in a new reimagined form with the objective of amplifying its positioning as a differentiated design centric brand. The 8000 sq. ft. showroom is inspired by the heritage of Bengal and is an ode to its rich art forms. Sharing the thought behind this new store concept, Chitti Babu Govindarajan, Head – Visual Design at Tanishq says, “Ever since its launch, the retail identity of Tanishq has been evolving to keep up with the times and in proportion to the growth of the brand. Having over 150 successful stores running, there is a rising need to reinvent the store design so as to be culturally relevant in different regional contexts. The brand also felt the responsibility to recognise the incredible Indian craft heritage to which we owe the jewellery design culture.” For

this new design, the Space Design and Visual Experience Studio at Tanishq had been working on concepts and exploring the avenues of creatively integrating craft heritage into the retail store space. The overarching intent of this venture was to communicate wedding stories in the store using the unexplored arts and crafts. “The new store at Camac Street proved to be a good opportunity for us to try this design intent. West Bengal has rich heritage of living arts, literature, and cultural heritage, which provided a wide array of crafts to choose and many cultural elements to depict.”

The store interior architecture has been carefully designed to reflect the grandeur of Kolkata’s colonial style. Chitti Babu adds, “It is Calcutta’s way of building, and we chose to reflect that in the store’s atrium. The large

walls which would have otherwise been clad with visuals were instead treated as a colonnade of carefully proportioned panels and arches extending across two sides, creating the grand ambience reminiscent of Kolkata’s bungalows.” Adding authenticity to the setting, the balustrades of the gently curving marble stairways as well as the cast metal spiral staircase were sourced from Bow Bazaar, the metal works hub of Kolkata. The lounge seating furniture and the ornate display pedestals have also been designed in the Victorian style, complete with cabriole legs, marble counter tops and velvet upholstery. Exquisitely carved wooden frames add a regal touch to the viewing mirrors and enhance the experience of viewing oneself in the mirror with Tanishq jewellery. One of the central pieces is a modified Palki, a cushioned seat complete





with the graceful arched wooden holder.

The center piece of the store is a wedding procession mural installation in terracotta. The Tanishq design team engaged directly with the artists of Kumartuli, the famed cradle of Durga Puja idols, to create this installation over a wall painting by a local artist. The mural is embellished in laddans and other trinkets from Burra Bazaar, a historic textile and fashion market of the city.

Talking about the art forms Chitti Babu says, "Tanishq logo and branding behind the cash desk is an integral part of every store, and over the past year, the team has been exploring the creation of this branding in different crafts, ranging from stone and wood carving to bidri metal casting, pushing the current design limitations of traditional crafts. In the Kolkata store, the tribal traditions of bell metal casting or dokra and the rich terracotta heritage of Bengal are featured in the two floors. Dokra products are an intrinsic part of Bengali domestic culture as well as festivities. The fine detailing has been replicated on to the form of the Tanishq logo and letters, resulting in the exquisite branding that one may see in the ground floor. On the second floor, we've used terracotta as the medium for branding, which showcases an adaptation of the elegant curves and the detailing on the Bankura or the Panchamura horse."

The store environment also features Kantha, an internationally acclaimed vivid style of embroidery practised in West Bengal and Bihar, famous for its unique stories and patterns. "As this is a craft that should be viewed at close quarters, we used it in the







lounge space, also next to the high value jewellery section. As the texture was an important aspect to be appreciated, we refrained from using glass to frame the pieces. Instead, the store staff shall get the fabrics cleaned regularly in case of any dust settling on them. The team had decided upon the colour palette for the kantha collage, and picked out an interesting combination of patterns from SHE (Self Help Enterprise). The feature panel, a composition of Bengali wedding scenes, has been commissioned to Sasha."

Babu concludes on the success of the initiative, "This initiative can be summed up as store design intent to incorporate traditional architecture of the identified region, to express wedding stories of the region using local arts and crafts, and provide due recognition to the artists and craftsmen while contributing to the evolution of design, scope and application of their craft." The concept's unique design and splendid execution has received very positive attention and acclaim since its launch, encouraging the brand to adopt this design approach for other flagship locations as well. ●

**Nabamita Chatterjee**

#### **Concept design:**

Chandni Rajendran, Chitti Babu, Balaji Natarajan  
Space Design and Visual Experience Studio,  
Tanishq

#### **Interns:**

Yashwanth Kashyap (Design Intern - IICD, Jaipur)  
Lalit Vishwakarma (Design Intern - IICD, Jaipur)

#### **Support:**

Anit Mukherjee - Project Manager  
Soma Bhattacharya - Regional Visual Merchandiser

#### **Store Design:**

Pugazhendi IRSG, Titan Company Ltd.  
Epsilon Architecture Interiors, Kolkata

#### **Artists/Craftspeople:**

Dokra Tanishq Branding Artisan  
Sikander  
Kondegaoan, Chattisgarh

Terracotta Tanishq Branding Artisan  
Siddharth dey ,

Terracotta Wedding Procession  
Chandan, Kolkata

Kantha Embroidery  
Self Help Enterprise - SHE. Kolkata

POP-Colonial arches and pillars artisan  
Imran, Kolkata

Colonial Wooden Furnitures / Carving  
Chaki Babu, Kolkata