



## ABRAHAM & THAKORE'S NEW OFFICE IN NOIDA EMBODIES THEIR SIGNATURE SARTORIAL SENSIBILITY.

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**T**here's something about Abraham & Thakore's newly renovated Noida office that feels like they have conceived it in the same breath, and by the same sleight of hand, as one of their collections. It shares the same non-conforming bent, the same relaxed spirit, and a local sensitivity that balances a global sensibility. It is evident that the designers behind the space are no different from the designers behind the apparel. But as David Abraham and Rakesh Thakore, cofounders of the namesake label, point out, that is all subterfuge.

As they explain, the visual alchemy was achieved in collaboration with interior designers Sankalp Sahu, Siddhant Sahu and Kamal Kumar of o2JUNE Design Studios, who gave the brand's beatnik Weltanschauung a Bauhaus edge, but not before reconfiguring the light-starved layout to invite the sun deeper inside. Throughout, they echoed the brand's aesthetic lexicon, taming monochrome tones and orthogonal geometries with lime-plaster walls and delicate art. As for the façade, what began as a basic update soon turned into an exercise in multiple additions, with the original stone cladding receiving an overlay of sleek black frames

and Georgian bar grids that illuminate the exterior after sundown.

Amongst the noteworthy interventions is the architectural imagining of Abraham & Thakore's famed kantha stitch. It manifests variously throughout the space: on the floor as granite inlay, on the glass partitions and tussar silk chande-



TOP LEFT: THE MEETING ROOM, WHICH HOUSES DELICATE OBJETS D'ART. ABOVE: RAKESH THAKORE AND DAVID ABRAHAM IN THE DESIGN ROOM.



liers as laser-cut abstractions, and yet again, on the marble reception desk, in imitation of an embroidered fabric. Another case in point is the Kadappa-clad staircase, which rises to reveal a kantha-

inspired landing, emblazoned with black stone chips individually embedded in white cement. In the meeting and conference rooms, the designers softened their touch, skewing tactile with black-and-white carpets that reinterpret traditional themes from kantha embroidery.

Curiously, the crown jewel, per Abraham and Thakore, isn't any of the aforementioned spaces, but rather the specially designed archival room, where key pieces from collections over the years have been preserved for posterity. "These designs represent the design interventions initiated by the brand over the years, with experimental work done in collaboration with weavers in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, and other traditional craft clusters," says Abraham of the collections, many of which

have been exhibited in prominent exhibitions and leading museums around the world, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Peranakan Museum in Singapore.

Of course, the brand's artisanal legacy isn't limited to the archival room alone. It is writ large across the corridors and conference rooms in the way of specially commissioned textiles that tip their hat to traditional Indian crafts. There's a double ikat weave from Telangana here, a jamdani from Venkatagiri there, chikan embroidery from Lucknow by the entrance, brocade weaves from Varanasi at the back—each distinct, yet bound by a common leitmotif: a circle, or circles, in black and white, interpreted by hand. Meanwhile, Naga tribal sculptures animate the reception, magnifying the relationship between modernism and tribal art.

For a brand that started in fashion, and subsequently segued in and out of home-ware some 30 years ago, Abraham & Thakore's future involves turning back the clock. The brand's latest collection, for example, isn't one of apparel at all, but of home goods including cushion covers, bedspreads and tableware, informed by ikat, bandhani and traditional chain stitch techniques. The office pays ode to the past, yes, but it also steps out of the shadows of its predecessor, paving the way for a world full of possibilities. ▲



ABOVE: A SILK IKAT RAG-STITCH TEXTILE BY THE BRAND HANGS IN THE LOBBY. RIGHT: THE ARCHIVAL ROOM.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF ABRAHAM & THAKORE.