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When it comes to the craft of luxury carpet making in India, one name shines bright: Jaipur Rugs. Transforming every thread into a piece of art, Jaipur Rugs has consistently pushed the boundaries of luxury rugs in India. Going a step further, the brand also put India's craft in the international spotlight at the recently held Salone De Mobile in Milan, and their collaborations with international names further strengthen their case. This time, the brand decided to look inwards and join hands with an Indian artist, Gurjeet Singh, to launch a collection titled *Dreamers*.

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Image: Jaipur Rugs

This collection stands out from all others because of its strong narrative. It beautifully combines art and storytelling, reflecting the voices from India's villages that often go unheard. The designs delve into significant topics such as identity, caste, gender, and personal struggles, and they do so in a creative and impactful manner, using bold colours, unique patterns, and abstract shapes. Inspired by the lives of artisans from small villages in Rajasthan and the Jaipur Jail, each rug is handmade using traditional techniques. What truly makes Dreamers unique is how it acknowledges the artisans as artists. One of the most poignant elements of the collection is the sculptural heads created from old, fire-damaged rugs. Rather than discarding these materials, Jaipur Rugs has given them new life by incorporating beads, buttons, and folk designs. Luxebook spoke to artist Gurjeet Singh to get a deeper insight into the collection Dreamers.

What inspired you to create the Dreamers collection?

I was invited by Jaipur Rugs for a residency. Once I went there, I began to understand the history and art of carpet making, and I was keen to explore how I could work with this medium and expand my artistic practice. I also met with the artisans who work with Jaipur rugs and realized we all have a lot in common – a consistent theme in my work has been around the areas of identity, freedom, hope, ambition, and the courage to dream freely, without the pressures of society, patriarchy and traditions that have been passed down from generations.

Why the name Dreamers? What does it mean to you?

Through personal conversations, shared meals, and intimate encounters, I witnessed emotional undercurrents and unspoken realities of the artisan's life. The themes that strongly stood out were the intersections of gender, class, and culture, and how these influences shape not only their art but also their daily lives. The emotions that spoke the loudest to me were those of a deep sense of yearning, freedom, hope, ambition, and the desire for self-expression. Through this body of work, I wanted to bring to life the unspoken dreams and hopes that have been harboured by the artisans over the years, and to honour their rightful place in the cultural narrative.

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Image: Jaipur Rugs

Were there any personal stories or memories that shaped this collection?

My memories and daily experiences growing up have significantly shaped me as an artist, and this influence is evident in all my work. Each piece I create reflects a combination of my early life experiences and my current feelings. For instance, in the artwork titled "I Want to Go Home," I depict two male figures embracing one another, which serves as a direct reference to the ongoing challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community.

Can you tell us about the colours and patterns you used and why you chose them?

The colours and patterns for this collection have been selected collaboratively by both the artisan community and me. The artisans intuitively chose the colours and design motifs that resonate with them. I have always appreciated the freedom of creativity and wanted them to have the same experience while working on this collection.

Jaipur Rugs always celebrates the artisan. How does this collection highlight their work?

This collection not only showcases the artisans' work but also reflects their lives, complexities, and journeys. It serves as a tribute to the artisans' contributions. The entire body of work results from a collaborative partnership between the artisans and me. Every element, from the design and colour palette to the actual production, involved significant contributions from the artisans. The artisans who collaborated with me on this collection include Godhi, Boogli, Meera Devi, Gajanand, Pinki, Pushpa, Jahir, Nishrat, Satish, Imran, Vijay Sharma, and Rais.

What do you hope people feel when they see or buy a rug from Dreamers?

This collection invites viewers to reflect on the universal longing for recognition and the freedom to define one's own identity. It is an invitation to honour not just the artistry of these individuals, but also their humanity – their quiet aspirations, and their unvoiced dreams. I want people to feel moved by the stories of the artisans and to feel inspired to share these stories with others.

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