



Varnam infuses traditional craft with a unique functional design sense. Based in Channapatna, Karnataka, and founded by Karthik Vaidyanathan the venture started in 2011 and has already made waves internationally.

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DO THE CRAFT

Craft has already captivated many. But it doesn't have to be merely sit on a table or a showcase.

Inspired by traditional craftwork from Channapatna, Karnataka, Varnam brings together design and functionality to transfigure craft into an everyday functional element. Here, Karthik talks more about his enlightening journey.



Craft is a medium waiting to be explored.

India's craft is intriguing and its artisans equally talented. If one walks down the narrow roads of cities and towns, like Mysore and Jaipur, it's nothing less than an exhibition of inspiration, roots and culture. For designers, there is potential to reinterpret such craft and take it to whole different pedestal. For example, toys can be taken beyond to serve various functional purposes to create distinctively quirky and contemporary designs.

Don't be afraid to listen to your inner voice.

Sometimes, great ideas lie in the smallest of things and it's easy to miss them in our everyday life. Ask any designer and they'll tell you the same thing that there's nothing gives more joy than doing what you truly please. You could be a media specialist and design craft or a copywriter with a penchant for digital art, the joy of doing simple things in an extraordinary way is unbeatable. Many a time people get into a comfort zone and do not wish to shake themselves out of it. Every single person has a talent, one simply needs to dig deep enough to find it.



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01 04 THE JIMBO-JUMBOS. These are available as a set of 4 napkin rings in natural, bright colours typical of Channapatna.

02 05 06 07 08 THE GYAANI GOOBEZ. The Gyaani Goobez is designed to transform from a stacking toy to a night lamp, a 6-coaster set and salt-n-pepper shaker set.

03 THE OINKSTON TABLEWARE - SALT N PEPPER SHAKER. The classic piggy bank toy has been modified into a functional table accessory, serving as salt and pepper shakers.



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Coming up with an idea is one thing, investing in it is another.

For all those self-funded bootstrapped enterprises, having a good understanding of investment is a must. You're not just creating work, but you're launching yourself as a brand. In other words, you're setting up shop! And that's why, understanding the flow of money is critical. For instance, for Varnam, the proceeds from the sale of its products fund the salaries of female artisan trainees. Word of mouth is key as well, where, before you know it, people are talking of your work on digital media and featuring you in blogs.

When you're different, people take notice.

The worlds becoming smaller, we all know that. Designers and audiences all around the world are recognising the underdogs. And it's great to see, Indian designers making waves in the overseas market as well. For instance, Varnam has already started being established in the international market. There have been a few independent stores from the UK, Canada and Dubai that have taken its creations to global shores ←