

Harper's BAZAAR

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SECRET
TO DEWY
SKIN



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(From top) **Chanel** Classic Flap in Pink Python Medium, So Black Jumbo, Green Patent Mini, all in PurseBop-designed frocks, and an **Hermès** Birkin 30 in Gris Mouette by the beach.

IT'S IN THE BAG

A charming, whimsical space to share your love of bags and a smart stopover for making the right investments, PurseBop spotlights the object, not the people who covet it

MONIKA ARORA HAS HAD A LIFE-LONG LOVE AFFAIR WITH BAGS. “My earliest memory is of me sitting in a stroller, with my *thela* in hand. When we were children, even our snowman, with its two branches for arms, always carried a purse. When my mother stitched a dress for me, she made me a matching bag to go with it,” she recalls. After spending nine years designing and manufacturing a high-end line of denim, Chicago-based Arora decided to create a global community blog for bag lovers as her new project. PurseBop started six years ago, and today it has over half a million loyal readers [Google Analytics] and 1,86,000 Instagram followers.

At a time when influencers’ faces cram our social media feeds, at PurseBop the bag is the face, and the heart of the narrative. The anonymity is refreshing. “Blogs are usually so driven by a person showcased in every photo, but I wanted

to create a community without the identity of an individual. So I created the character of PurseBop,” says Arora, who has a flair for storytelling. For instance, one post shows a Birkin by the side of a pool, with a wide brimmed hat, and a pastel-pink silk frock thrown lightly over it.

PurseBop’s content connects with its audience in an endearing, emotional manner but Arora also means business. The

website is a one-stop destination for luxury bag trends, financial news that might affect your purchase, style guides, price alerts, and trivia such as which piece to buy when you’re travelling to a specific city, and advice on how to maintain and travel with bags. A steady stream of contributors from all over the world send in their stories, with beautifully-shot, natural photographs. “The diversity is lovely. I didn’t realise that women in the Middle East and African countries are such discerning collectors. What has also been interesting is how women from different cultures experience their bags differently. Our contributors don’t have to necessarily show who they are, so it’s not about race, size or skin colour. All of a sudden the uniting thread for all these women is the passion for bags. Simple.” ■

By Komal Sharma