

NICHOLAS DALEY

S/S 18 MENSWEAR COLLECTION 'MADRAS'

For Spring/Summer 18, British designer Nicholas Daley makes his London Fashion Week NEWGEN debut with the collection 'Madras'.

Since the label's genesis in 2015, Nicholas has researched and explored existing and new perceptions of multiculturalism, drawing upon his dual heritage and the diversity he finds in British society. An initial preoccupation with British youth subcultures has grown to emphasise a deep interest in cross-cultural exchange as well as the historically significant binary of music and style.

Through collaborations with a musical artist each season, Nicholas seeks to celebrate alternative British narratives, fused with the history of counterculture movements. For Spring/Summer 2018, musicians Nabihah Iqbal aka Throwing Shade (Ninja Tune, NTS) and Golu Singh Gaba will perform Raga Yaman on the sitar and tabla, sitting amidst and reflecting the concept of the collection.

Nicholas' personal history plays a key role in his exploration of both themes and the conception of a collection. Broadening the focus from his Jamaican heritage and the African diaspora, he has recently extended this to encompass his Scottish ancestry, investigating traditional textiles of both jute and tartan. Throughout the 19th century, with the prominence of the British textile industry, the cloths were traded across the Empire, particularly in South Asia, forming a relationship between these two very different locations.

Spring/Summer 18 investigates Madras check as an integral part of South Asian textiles and its impact upon cultural identity, and how this specific check material had travelled and been reinterpreted in a distant corner of the world.

Nicholas visited the extensive archives at the Victoria and Albert Museum, searching through many examples of Madras textiles dating back to 1855, many of which had been rarely seen. Supporting with his search were V&A curators Avalon Fotheringham and Anita Nathwani, both prominent researchers in South Asia and its textiles. This research into the cultural and historical relevance of textiles is at the heart of Nicholas Daley garments, and Spring/Summer 18 offers an alternative narrative to general interpretations of checked cloth in fashion, forming a collection of pieces which take on a new form and meaning in their menswear context.

Nicholas continues to draw upon his admiration for traditional British craft. In addition to sourcing his fabrics from a variety of historic mills across Britain, he has worked closely with established Scottish kilt-makers 'Glenisla' to develop a bespoke Nicholas Daley Kilt, influenced by his research at the V&A. The check is woven by one of Britain's finest Yorkshire mills, J.H. Clissold & Son, first established in 1910. The high-quality fabric intertwines the history of South Asian textiles with British craftsmanship; acting as a manifestation of the multiculturalism that Nicholas Daley sees and celebrates as part of Britain today.

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