

WALES BONNER

Spring Summer 2024

Marathon

Reflections of a long distance runner: the silent messenger, the unwavering spirit striding, soaring.

Words of upliftment arrive from the legendary runners of Ethiopia and Kenya. With eyes fixed on the horizon and legs carried by belief, Gebreselassie, Dibaba, and Kipchoge issue a call to continue and never stray. Following in their footsteps, the Spring Summer collection becomes an ode to long journeys and life missions. A celebration of soulful pursuits and inspired movement.

Holistic commitment is felt throughout the collection with hand-making techniques honed over generations. Precious time is imbued in Tibebe fabric woven by artisans in Addis Ababa. Raffia is hand-embroidered on skirts and vests in a disrupted animal print motif, while intricate stud and bead stripes detail womenswear tailoring. Macrame net vests and skirts made from beads in Ghanaian artisanal glass and sonorous silver echo the calabash instrument. The sounds reverberate until consistent practice creates an unconscious rhythm—the point where mantras repeat without effort, where routine transcends to a tranquil flow.

Passages over the hills are imagined in silhouettes between shepherd and equestrian: check outerwear, rawhide skirts, bouclé knitwear, and calfskin riding boots made in partnership with Himco in Italy. Telluric wonders continue with cheetah printed cowhide and tailoring in horsehair canvas. This season, sheepskin-lined loafers from UGG round out an offering for restful interludes.

The codes of Wales Bonner remain steadfast: signature shirting is issued in gradient stripes, while hybrid tailoring in earthen brown wool is enlivened by radiant blue satin and sportswear finishes. Meanwhile, the ongoing partnership with adidas Originals yields a sporty fluorescence and futurity in harmony with Mac coats and British checks. Special tribute is paid to Haile Gebreselassie's winning run at the Berlin Marathon in 2008,

with a replica of his adidas Neftegra shoe signed with the world-record breaking time.

At the 1960 Olympics in Rome, animated crowds rejoice in Abebe Bikila's moonlit triumph. Victory celebrations see Savile Row tailoring, produced in partnership with Anderson and Sheppard, accentuated by raw silk and woven gold buttons. Celebrations of Africa's first medalist, storied evenings in draped satin dresses, ceremonial necklaces in semi-precious carnelian and jade stone: for courage, serenity, and balance.

"That's the long distance runner, the quietness is loud too"
- David Hammons, 1994.

Mastery and commitment are again celebrated in the musical programme. The soundtrack is produced by James William Blades and Grace Wales Bonner, featuring Ethiopian artist Haddinqo performing live on the traditional Masingo stringed instrument. The show music also includes a contribution from Hama, a multi-instrumentalist from Niger signed to the Sahel Sounds record label. His expansive synthesizer compositions accompany a set from Kenyan artist DJ Boboss, a sound system pioneer with pure eclecticism and a singular craft. An array of sounds—ancestral groove, future visions—dancing together.

HAMA

Hama is a multi-instrumentalist and electronic synthesizer composer from the Republic of Niger. His music has enjoyed wide acclaim throughout the country through his underground releases of unlabeled digital recordings on memory cards. Creating at the convergence of disparate influences, such as North African instrumental synth, Tuareg tishoumaren, 90s Nigerien Hip Hop and second wave Detroit techno, Hama composes music that is futuristic and rooted in tradition, transmitting Tuareg guitar into the 21st Century.

SAHEL SOUNDS

Sahel Sounds is a project focused on culture in the West African Sahel. Sahel Sounds began as a blog by label founder Christopher Kirkley in 2009 to share field recordings. Today, it is a record label, artist collective, film production house, and arts organization. We work directly with artists that we represent and aim to have input and on artistic endeavours and help our artists build careers.

Credits

Creative Direction ISSTUDIO
Styling TOM GUINNESS
Show Production GW+
Local Production KITTY EVENTS
Casting ESTABLISHMENT
Lighting Design LIGHTLAB
Movement Direction MJ HARPER
Music Director and Music Production
JAMES WILLIAM BLADES at Interlude Sounds
Film TITRE PROVISoire
Film Edit PARALLAX
Makeup LAUREN PARSONS
at Art Partner using Sisley Paris
Hair CYNDIA HARVEY
at Art Partner using Hair Rituel by Sisley

WALES BONNER mainline footwear produced in
partnership with HIMCO

With Gratitude to

adidas Originals, Ahmed Amjad, Aisling Connell,
Akihiro Mochizuki, Akiko Ito, Albert Kingsley-Meek,
Almudena Roca de Togores, Amina Rab, Anaëlle Piovesan,
Anda Rowland, Anderson & Sheppard, Anita Bitton,
Anna-Sofia Eve, Archie Grant, Aurélie Nedjar, Cara Cano,
Chiara Arrigo, Chloe Hunt, Christin Ott, Christine
d'Ornano, Christopher Kirkley, Christos Anayiotides,
Chukwuma Nwebube, Claire Burman, Cleopatra Thompson,
Clubhouse Studio, Cyndia Harvey, Daniel Mason, David
Alaba, Dee Patel, Deiwght Peters, Eden Loweth, Emma
Jethwa, Fabian Frimpong, Fédération de la Haute Couture
et de la Mode, Finlay Macaulay, Fred Lamb, Gainsbury
& Whiting, Haile Gebrselassie, Huguette Tchiapi Kameni,
Imogen Snell, Inès Manai, ISSTUDIO, Iza Boussif, Jack
Hornsey, James Nisbet, James William Blades, Jamie Salvin,
Jessica Hamenyimana, Jonny Lu, Jordan Potter, Junsei
Nakahama, Lauren Parsons, Leá Allary, LEDE Company,
Liam Sangmuah, LightLab, Lucy Hunt, Ly Mai, Martin
Sulzbacher, Mathieu Meyer, Megan Dore, MJ Harper,
Nathalie Ours, Nerea Echebarria, Nick Murphy, Olivia
Fernandez-Marin, Pablo di Prima, Paul Rogers, Paula
Loweth, Parallax, Peter Miles Studio, PR Consulting Paris,
Riccardo Castano, Ritchie Charlton, Saint Models Jamaica,
Serge Carreira, Sian Rowe, Tamirat Tola Abera, Tammy
Yanagisawa, Tegan Taylor, Titre Provisoire, Tom Guinness,
Tom Tosseyn, Torben Schumacher, Tung Walsh, Will Taylor,
William Kohler-Nudelmont, Yomif Kejelcha Atomsa, Young,
Zinzi Wilkinson

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