May2024

Press release for - Homecoming by Amesh Wijesekera in collaboration with Barefoot Gallery

Barefoot Gallery is pleased to present *Homecoming*, designer Amesh Wijesekera’s debut solo exhibition which explores his early relationships with textiles and technology, through his archival material of knitwear, photographs, and textile processing techniques.

Amesh Wijesekera is a celebrated figure in the world of fashion, renowned for his exquisite artisanal clothing brand, AMESH, which weaves together elements inspired by his childhood memories, queer culture, and the tropical landscapes of his native Sri Lanka.

*Homecoming* showcases Amesh's evolution as an artist through a vast array of sculptural canvases and photographic tapestries. Each piece is a fusion of artisanal craftsmanship and a personal journey, encapsulating the essence of his past collections while pushing the boundaries of textile artistry. The exhibit celebrates the intricate dialogue between textile craftsmanship and the traditional practices known to the island. As the title suggests, Amesh has returned to his roots to explore the next step in his artistic endeavour. The artist drew early inspiration from the renowned photographer Lionel Wendt and studied the male gaze through his photographs concerning unconventional beauty and gender-based social constructs, creating captivating gender-nonconforming art.. His creative process features studio waste material used for his past work, knit experiments, apparel industry surplus, crochet, and fabric process techniques such as acid-washing, dying, and sublimation printing.

Gracing international runways in the realm of fashion since journeying to his second home,

London, Amesh was honoured as a Graduate Fashion Week awardee and he was the first Sri Lankan nominee for the prestigious Paris LVMH prize. Since then, Amesh has garnered recognition from design platforms such as VOGUE, Conde Nast, and the Circular Design Challenge India. His collections persistently captivate the world, while he gently pursues his creative journey. His work was showcased at Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week across the world in Colombo, Berlin, and Tbilisi.

This exhibition serves as a renaissance of Amesh's creative journey, offering viewers a glimpse into the intricate layers of his artistic progression and the boundless possibilities of textiles and print as a medium of expression.

A series of public panel discussions will take place over the course of the exhibition.

The exhibition is curated by Vidhi Todi, with the Barefoot Gallery.

# Collaborators

Photographers: Cassie Machado, Tavish Gunasena, Ryan Wijayaratne, Gayathri

Sribalasuhaprimam

Talent: Kevin Fernando, Jineth Perera, Udara Kempitiya, Kavindu Sivaraj, Sonal Randeny,

Nothila Silva, Sihasara Karunaratne, Devin Waduge, Dinuka Piyadigama

Special thanks: Home knitters & crochet artisans, Jayatissa Silva, Kalpani Nandarathne,

Kasun Gunawardana, Michelle Ronelly and Neha Tennakoon, Nishantha Hettiarachchi and Sonya Rajendran, Pankaja Withanachchi and Roshan De Selfa, Priyantha Subasinghe, Tash, Thilini Perera.

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Special thanks: Priyantha Subasinghe, home knitters & crochet artisans.

Kasun Gunawardana , Kalpani Nandarathne