

The Movement Exchange

Speakers:

Bianca Saunders, fashion designer

Rahul Mishra, fashion designer

[Text on screen]

THE EXCHANGE

THE MOVEMENT EXCHANGE

Episode 3

CREATED BY

VOGUE and GQ with HSBC

Couture must adapt to stay relevant in fashion. We united a UK-based ready-to-wear designer with an Indian couturier, merging cultures and craftsmanship for a global audience.

LONDON

[Bianca]

Being from South London has been a big influence to me.

[Text on screen]

BIANCA SAUNDERS

FASHION DESIGNER

[Bianca]

The fast-paced mix of cultures. I really enjoy the idea around making art within clothing.

My name is Bianca Saunders and I'm a fashion designer. Being a ready-to-wear designer, I'm more focused on the figure and the silhouette and being able to cut fabric differently to something new that introduced feminine techniques within menswear.

[Rahul]

My name is Rahul Mishra and I'm a fashion designer.

[Text on screen]

RAHUL MISHRA

FASHION DESIGNER

I grew up in a very small village in India. My father, he never wanted [that] I should become a ladies' tailor. Literally I had to run away from home. Then after that, you know, of course I studied everywhere, kept travelling. We take deep inspirations from our travel. I like taking things which are away from fashion as simple as a flower growing in a garden, and creating these clothes, which are very unique.

[Bianca]

This is my studio. So you can see where the magic happens. Pretty exciting that we're able to work together for the first time. We're doing a menswear look and then a womenswear look.

Of course, I've never done couture. I mostly do ready-to-wear. So it would be good to kinda like merge those two ideas together.

[Rahul]

When you look at like for example all your signature textiles. These are like industrial or modern cities.

[Bianca]

Yeah

[Rahul]

And where all these lines are kind of roads.

[Bianca]

I think we both have like an interesting cultural background. I guess mine is more industrial, with the London side of things but of course the Jamaican can kinda come out a bit.

[Rahul]

My house faces a reserve forest.

[Bianca]

Yeah.

[Rahul]

And it's connected to, y'know, one of the largest tiger populations. While we drive, we can see tigers, sometimes elephants.

Actually, I've got something. This is one of the couture pieces, which takes inspiration from nature in India.

It's gonna be nice to integrate this. In couture we do a lot of pictorial things. A lot of painterly things. There's always a dialogue between natural and man-made.

[Bianca]

Me and Rahul are both international people.

With the two looks you wanted to show that essence.

[Rahul]

We both are very keen on looking at the city and the jungle. Merging two cultures together became a goal. So we have to first, for all of these, sketch the fabric artwork. So that it can be also done through embroidery. Transferring it on to jersey fabrics.

[Bianca]

Blending both of our cultures has really created a vibrancy within our work. And we want it to show how landscapes move and also move round the body.

[Rahul]

Everything was embroidered in multiple processes. Looking at the sequin work where we mix black, white and silver sequins put together in [the] right amount of proportions so that it enhances the whole tactile and three-dimensional feel.

We had a bit of playful time. Playing around with these ravens because there's beautiful poetry. They represent a medium between them and their ancestors.

We wanted to create something which truly represents the spirit of London and something which truly represents wildlife in Himalayan region.

That is where both of us worked together.

[Bianca]

Rahul, coming from India, he can drive past a tiger, and, whereas in London it's very much industrial. The closest thing probably are foxes and squirrels.

I wanted to kind of take elements of like your womenswear and have it mapped out and like move around the body using elements of the embroidery to kind of like piece in between.

So now that we've finished the design, it would be great to talk more about the shoot. This look hones into perspective so having like a brighter colour I think would bring out more and then we could add elements to like it being quite structured and surreal.

[Rahul]

Then came the most exciting part. To see two looks on the models.

[Photographer]

That's really good. Maybe just look down for me.

[Rahul]

When we started shooting, that beautiful red colour background.

[Photographer]

Yeah, that's great.

[Rahul]

Those black and white pieces, everybody excited in the room. For [the] menswear look, we wanted to create something very sporty, lots of movement so that we do not restrict the movement of body.

[Bianca]

I think it would be so nice to see your face a bit as well too.

With the womenswear look, we wanted to move it away from the body so that [we had] the aura around the garment as well as having something that's quite fitted.

[Rahul]

We have created an external skeleton and then embroidery on top of it.

[Bianca]

There's so much work that has gone into this and I'm just so impressed. It's more than what I imagined it would be.

The role of movement in these two looks really shows in the shaping of the lines. Each angle creates something different within the clothes and the body. It really created a good combination of us both. I think we've gotten it like just perfect.

[Rahul]

These two outfits are indication of where two aesthetics can kind of become one and at the same time retain our distinct identities.

With this collaboration also creates that opportunity, that network, that allows us to have a bigger reach. When we come together the learning is immense.

[Text on screen]

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