

# MENSWHERE

## A LOST HISTORY OF THE MILITANT GUILD OF RURAL TAILORS

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Pitti Uomo is providing a dedicated exhibition platform for MENSWHERE, a Lost History of the Militant Guild of Rural Tailors as part of the event's 106th edition.

### **A SPECIAL EXHIBITION**

Photography, artefacts, artwork and specimen-garments will all be on view at the Construzioni Lorensi, 1st floor at the Fortezza da Basso in Florence, Italy from June 11th to 14th. The concept's author and creator Liam Maher will be in attendance to discuss the lost history of the militant guild of rural tailors and talk about the exhibit with visitors within the 14th century Fortress of Saint John the Baptist.

### **AN ALTERNATE HISTORY OF TAILORING**

The narrative is premised on the possibility that a clandestine community of tailors may have been active during the industrial revolution whose activities included symbolic rites, rituals and the advancement of specific design and craft standards. Since the story first emerged online in 2004, it has been referenced in books as well as international magazines and websites. The original research site was visited by corporations from Louis Vuitton to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox and went on to inspire a tight community of contemporary creatives from the UK, Europe, Africa, Japan, and the USA who came to regard themselves as modern members of the guild and could be found behind the labels, Art Comes First, A Child of the Jago, Cottweiler, Wemplex, The Brooklyn Circus, Norwegian Rain, London Cloth and others. Over time, these creatives changed the focus of the narrative, morphing it from the ethics of garment making to a broader exploration of what it means to represent oneself as a man rooted to questions of "*Where I Come From*", "*Where I Belong*" and "*Where I Hope to Go*".

### **A STORY FROM THE PAST AND A LENS ON THE FUTURE**

20 years after it first emerged, the story takes on added dimension at a time when long held values such as mystery, memory, quality, craftsmanship, cultural authenticity, originality, and established frameworks for cultivating individual identity itself are under threat from the byte-sizing and dumbing down of storytelling, the flattening effect of influencer culture, AI's impact on authorship and the fracturing of self within social media and the metaverse.

### **INCLUDED IN THE WORLD'S BEST FASHION UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES**

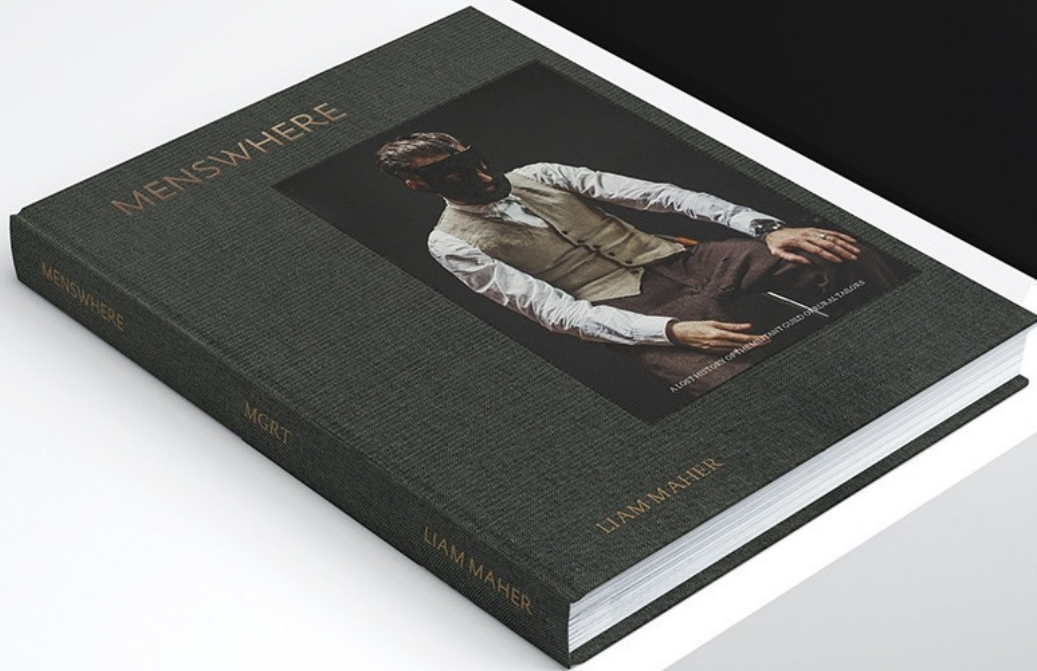
Pre-release copies of the book have been included in several leading university libraries including Bunka Fashion College in Tokyo, Institut Francais de la Mode in Paris, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, AMFI in Amsterdam, F.I.T. and Parsons in New York, Shih Chien College of Design in Taipei and Central Saint Martins in London where it has been discussed in a Masters in Fashion Communication class. It will also be the subject of a short presentation at the Locating Menswear Forum in Manchester in July.

### **ABOUT THE CREATOR**

Great grandson of both an Irish tailor and Welsh weaver, Liam Maher is a tri-national (UK/IE/US) living in Denmark. He attended the Massachusetts College of Art and the Harvard Extension Program and began his career as a technician in professional theaters. He went on to direct creative for Timberland, Burton Snowboard, Denham, and Ecco. His Young Meagher project won a GenArt Prize and his consulting clients have included Ozwald Boateng, Visvim, Combat Motorcycles, and many others. His non-commercial exhibitions have been featured at Pitti Uomo in Florence, Salone del Mobile in Milan, Liberty Fairs in New York, D&A in Los Angeles, and ClFF in Copenhagen.

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THE REVIEWS

## Early Reactions

"I can't get over the beauty and hauntedness..."

— Susan Orlean, author of *The Orchid Thief* and *The Library Book*

"Why am I not in this book? I should be in it!"

— Mihara Yasuhiro, Fashion Designer

"It's a really beautiful book, witness to a rare savoir-faire,"

— Anna Parodi, Library Director, Institut Français de la Mode

"Beautiful and compelling,"

— Mark Parker, Chairman of the Board, The Disney Company, Executive Chairman, Nike Inc.

"The book is permanently in my bag getting suitably road-worn as I perv over all the amazing artisans"

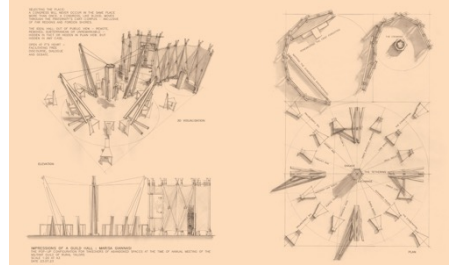
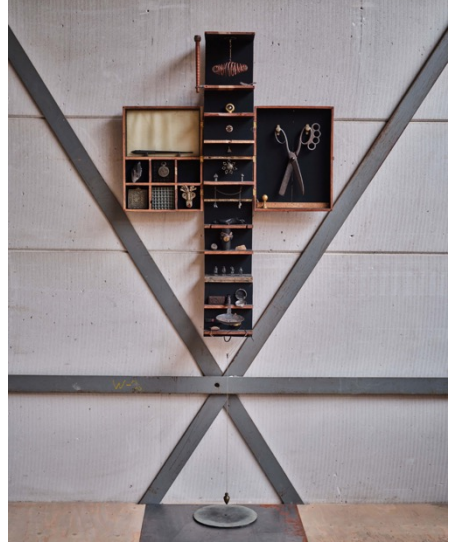
— Fin Greenhal, Musician (Fink).

"A treat from start to finish — creators and the creative process celebrated in beguiling, seductive style."

— Roger Tredre, Course Leader, MA Fashion Communication, Central Saint Martins

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