

# NICHOLAS DALEY

## AW 21 MENSWEAR COLLECTION “FORGOTTEN FURY”

For Autumn/Winter 21, London designer Nicholas Daley examines the intersection of black culture and martial arts as expressed through '70s cinema and the soundtracks that defined the era.

Emerging against the backdrop of broadening black political activism, the black cinema revolution of the '70s plays key inspiration for this latest collection. Reaching its peak with a raft of highly stylised action-dramas, the genre's successful merging of high-octane combat, sharp wardrobe and irresistible score would become a successful formula. For the first time, loud and proud black heroes had found their way on to the big screen. For many, martial arts became their discipline of choice, drawn by its philosophy of self-empowerment and self-realisation.

Karate champions-turned-actors, Jim Kelly and Ron Van Clief embodied the era's cross-cultural spirit, Kelly's *Black Belt Jones* released the same year as Van Clief's *Black Dragon*. Combining the slick aesthetic of '70s Blaxploitation cinema with East Asian combat practices, these films were emblematic of the union between martial arts and the black diaspora.

For AW21, Nicholas turned to the black cinema soundtracks that would epitomise the decade, music continuing to play a pivotal role in the designer's work. From Curtis Mayfield's seminal score for *Superfly* to Isaac Hayes' career-defining *Shaft* and James Brown's commanding *Black Caesar*: funk and soul infuse *Forgotten Fury* with a purposeful energy and sharp momentum. With contemporary references including RZA and Wu-Tang, hip-hop via classic kung-fu cinema, Nicholas seeks to trace cultural exchange across the generations.

This rich source of reference finds voice through adapted martial arts silhouettes and graphics. Self-defense movements and motifs arrive courtesy of longtime collaborator Gaurab Thakali, decorating the season's extensive jersey program. Meanwhile, classic Nicholas Daley styles are reworked, emerging in fresh shades and fabric combinations, while trademark '70s cuts and workwear standards complete the line.

Natural Irish linens return, found across tie-fastening smocks and western shirts, while continuing partner Halley Stevenson contributes durable wax cottons used to create both strength and surface interest across garments.

A season standout, storied Sudbury silk weavers, Vanners, have developed a bespoke tiger stripe jacquard in marine blue and violet, a flowing form echoing Bruce Lee's "be like water" philosophy. Applied across a frog button jacket, waistcoat and workwear trouser, the fabric lends iridescence to utility cuts.

Japanese dye specialists introduce an incredible custom fabric to AW21. Found across continents, from Africa to Asia, Shibori fits seamlessly into Nicholas' wider storytelling, an eye-catching take on the technique decorating a kimono jacket and beach shirt.

Identity a recurring theme, Nicholas nods to his Scottish roots with a series of intricate tartans crafted by famed highland weaver Locharron. Bringing a three-dimensional finish to the fabric, mohair blurs traditional plaids in shades of burgundy, navy and black, while a curled twist wool check recalls vintage plaids.

Rounding off the collection, focus is placed once more on hand-knitted headwear and matching pouches, now brand signatures. Jute and cotton fibres are woven with silver and gold acrylic strands, a metallic shimmer paying subtle homage to familiar Chinese embroideries adorning decorative martial arts uniform.

## KEY STOCKIST LIST

### EUROPE:

GOODHOOD  
BROWNS  
MR PORTER  
SELFRIDGES

### ASIA:

DOVER STREET MARKET GINZA  
DOVER STREE MARKET SINGAPORE  
INTERNATIONAL GALLERY BEAMS  
OPENER

### NORTH AMERICA:

SSENSE  
UNION LA  
DOVER STREET MARKET LOS ANGELES  
DOVER STREET MARKET NEW YORK

## BIOGRAPHY

Nicholas Daley graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2013 and launched his eponymous label in 2015. Since the brand's genesis, Nicholas has continually explored his dual-ethnic heritage, being of Jamaican and Scottish descent: he widely questions and reflects the notion of multiculturalism within the British identity.

Placing great significance on craftsmanship with his production within the UK and Japan. Nicholas works with recognised artisans creating bespoke textiles and fabric finishes for every collection. The last six seasons Nicholas has been supported by The British Fashion Council's NEWGEN designer program showcasing his collections during London Fashion Week Men's. He was also the recipient of the 2019 International Woolmark Prize Semi Final award, presenting a custom collection titled 'Reggae Klub'. Nicholas Daley is currently a semi-finalist for the 2020 LVMH Prize for Young Fashion Designers.

He has collaborated with iconic brands such as Adidas and Fred Perry, continuing his creative narrative into new areas of the fashion market.