



## Press Release

### International Designers Announced for Fashion Open Studio 2021

Fashion Open Studio, the global fashion showcasing and mentoring initiative of Fashion Revolution, is delighted to announce the 2021 cohort of international designers who will be opening up their studios and their practice to the public during Fashion Revolution Week April 19-25, and sharing their solutions to the urgent challenges facing the fashion industry.

This year 33 designers from 20 countries across Europe, Africa, Asia and South America will share a single showcasing platform which will highlight sustainable innovation, indigenous craftsmanship, local cultural heritage, regenerative and equitable business models and new technology.

Fashion Open Studio celebrates the designers, both emerging and established who are proudly building businesses with values that align with Fashion Revolution's theme for 2021: Rights, Relationships and Revolution. The programme aims to demonstrate how the Fashion Revolution manifesto works in practice – for an industry that protects the planet and its resources and respects the artisans and the people who make our clothes. The designers will show not just who made your clothes but how they are made, and the materials they use.

From Dhaka, Bangladesh, **Chol** will host a workshop to demonstrate Kantha embroidery techniques with conversations with their team of artisans, to explore their mission to preserve and push cultural boundaries; meanwhile, **Rahemur Rahman**, who works between Bangladesh and UK will create a natural dye T-shirt workshop from his kitchen in conversation with the fair trade craft and lifestyle brand. They are dedicated to establishing the commercial viability of eco-friendly products as well as creating new opportunities for artisans and economically disadvantaged women. **Aranya** specialises in making natural dyes made from leaves and flowers, and by products of natural waste. Participants who register will be sent a natural dye home kit to join in the workshop.

From Chile, the **Munay Sisters** will present a video documenting their material sourcing and product development, demonstrating the impact these materials have on people's lives and the environment. They will share their step by step work methodology with a focus on the organic cotton fields and the different types of cotton such as Pima, Tanguis and Pakucho which is of ancestral origin. In Kampala, Uganda, we will connect with streetwear label **IGC Uganda** who are inspired by African heritage, nature and culture and will be exploring the

past, present and future cultural and practical possibilities of indigenous bark cloth. In complete contrast, the 40 year-old couture house, **Maison Faliakos** in Athens will be opening up its doors to explain the value of craftsmanship.

From Iran, we are pleased to welcome back a multi-designer format with **Foje, Leyla Kashani, Toktam Hemmati** and **A2ByMatin** in partnership with the Tehran-based retail concept space AASSTIIN.

As always there will be a strong focus on regenerative techniques, and we welcome the variety of perspectives and techniques. In Khartoum in Sudan, we will join social enterprise **Sobajo** in a workshop that teaches local women tailoring and beading skills alongside reuse and recycling techniques valuable to us all. **NKWO** in Abuja, Nigeria will take part in the Woven Threads: Moving in Circles programme during Lagos Fashion Week, an interactive group project exploring a circular fashion economy. And from Kyrgyzstan, **Cut a Dash** will host a masterclass on the Kyrgyz traditional technique *kurak*, an ancient process of patchwork and mosaic sewing which they say is a great opportunity to save our traditions and the best way to give life to even tiny leftovers.

This is a unique, curated programme of digital and physical events. The designers were selected for submission by Fashion Revolution's country coordinators. 28 countries and 66 designers applied to take part this year and were shortlisted by the Fashion Open Studio team according to a six-point criteria.

Niamh Tuft, Fashion Revolution Global Network Manager said: "The Fashion Open Studio international programme opens up the studios of designers from all over the world to a global audience - bringing their cultural heritage, contemporary context and innovative solutions for a fair, safe, clean and equitable fashion industry to a new audience. In the lead up to Fashion Open Studio and during the week's programme this community of designers have the opportunity to exchange, learn and share from each other in a collaborative and mutually supportive cohort. We're particularly excited to welcome designers from countries that are hosting their first Fashion Open Studio event to pioneer the format in their fashion system - Gaia from Uruguay, Chol from Bangladesh, IGC Fashion and Njola from Uganda and About a Worker from France - are just a few."

Orsola de Castro, Global Creative Director, Fashion Revolution, and creative director, Fashion Open Studio said: "Fashion Open Studio is a microcosm of brilliance, courage and resilience, bringing together committed individuals, creative souls and relentless changemakers all who use their creativity for the good of many. We challenge the mainstream and champion the radicals."

## Notes to Editors

Fashion Revolution's Country Coordinators and designers are available for interview on request. For press enquiries, interviews or images, or more information on the Fashion Open Studio criteria and Advisory Board, please contact [press@fashionrevolution.org](mailto:press@fashionrevolution.org)

## International Fashion Open Studio 2021 designers:

Bangladesh: Chol x Shama Kun; Rahemur Rahman  
Chile: Munay Sisters  
Denmark: Maja Brix  
Ecuador: All Pamamas  
Ethiopia: Enzi Footwear; Yefikir; Mafi Mafi  
France: About a Worker  
Ghana: Chiip O'Neal  
Greece: Maison Faliakos  
Hong Kong: Jesse Lee  
India: Iro Iro, Ka Sha, Oshadi x Christy Dawn  
Iran: Foje; Leyla Kashani; Toktam Hemmati; A2bymatin  
Italy: Blue of a Kind; Chiara Catalano; Flavia La Rocca  
Japan: Atelier MA  
Kyrgyzstan: Cut A Dash  
Madagascar: Zouzoudago  
Nigeria: BLOKE; NKWO  
Slovakia: Modrotlač Rabada and Pavol Dendis  
Sudan: Sobajo  
Uganda: IGC Fashion  
Uruguay: Gaia  
Zimbabwe: Vimbai Natasha Naomi; Rungano Rwedu; Patch Maokoe Zimbabwe

The UK designer programme will be announced in March.

### **About Fashion Open Studio**

Now in its fifth year, Fashion Open Studio is a Fashion Revolution initiative. As a showcasing platform, the purpose is to shine a spotlight on best practice and innovation being led by fashion and textile designers, biotech start-ups and retail disruptors. As well as radical new start-ups, FOS has attracted some of the industry's biggest names to collaborate, including Vivienne Westwood, Bethany Williams and Christopher Raeburn. The designers are selected for their commitment to a clearly defined criteria of responsible design and systemic innovation. During Fashion Revolution Week, 19-25 April 2021, designers share best practice in a transparent and open manner, in a way that offers access and stimulates discussion and questions.

### **About Fashion Revolution**

Fashion Revolution is the world's largest fashion activism movement, formed after the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh in 2013 which killed over 1,100 people. Fashion Revolution believes in a global fashion industry that conserves and restores the environment and values people over growth and profit. In order to achieve this goal, the organisation conducts research that shines a light on the fashion industry's practices and impacts, highlights where brands and retailers are moving too slowly and incentivises and promotes transparency and accountability across the supply chain.

The theme for 2021 is Rights, Relationships and Revolution. Human rights and the rights of nature are interconnected and interdependent; we need a revolution in our relationships with each other, within fashion supply chains, and with the natural world, for our own prosperity and wellbeing, and the health of our earth and our oceans.

Fashion Revolution Week 2021 will take place 19-25 April 2021.