

## NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR

Mae arddangosfa arolygol Liaqat Rasul, "NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR," (9924 yn Wrddw), yn nodi dychweliad teimladwy mewn mwy nag un ffordd. Yn wreiddiol o Wrecsam, mae'r artist yn dychwelyd i'w fan geni, yn ogystal â darnau nas gwelwyd ers bron i bymtheg mlynedd.

Arferai fod yn ddylunydd ffasiwn, a dechreuodd gyrfa Rasul pan brynodd Liberty London ei gasgliad graddio, a sefydlodd ei label enwog, Ghulam Sakina, ym 1999. Dyma fan cychwyn gwaith yr arddangosfa hon, ac ysbrydoliaeth y teitl.

Enwyd y brand ar ôl rhieni Rasul, ac mae'n ffurfio conglfaen ein harddangosfa yn ogystal â chyflwyno gwylwyr i hanfod ymarfer creadigol Rasul. Mae graffig y label, wedi'i symboleiddio gan dâp casét, yn dathlu trosglwyddiad gwybodaeth ar draws cenedlaethau trwy dechnoleg analog. Mae cydnawsedd Rasul â chreffftwaith wedi'i wehyddu â llaw yn amlwg; mae label gwëedig y brand yn cydnabod masgynhyrchu, tra bod yr argraffnod bloc â llaw yn dynodi celfwaith wedi'i wneud â llaw-deuoliaeth sy'n adlewyrchu persbectif cytbwys Rasul ar ffasiwn, lle mae elfennau goddrychol a gwrthrychol yn ymgysgu. Wrth i'r brandio ddisodli lleoliad dinesig safonol, mae Rasul yn defnyddio'r gair "KHIRKEE," y gair Wrddw کھڑکی sy'n golygu ffenestr, a ddewiswyd i ddynodi ei hoffter o edrych ar y byd trwy lens wahanol. Gosodir hyn ochr yn ochr â rhifolion Rhufeinig ar gyfer pennu maint, gan arddangos ei ymrwymiad i integreiddio dylanwadau amlddiwylliannol mewn iaith deilwraidd ffres.

Ac eto, mae'r arddangosfa yn mynd y tu hwnt i dalu gwrogaeth i orffennol teilwraidd Rasul. Gan ddefnyddio'i atgofion cynharaf, mae dyluniad yr arddangosfa yn adleisio blynyddoedd ffurfiannol Rasul fel 'addurnwr ffenestri' yn siop fach ei deulu, Guys N Dolls, ac fel masnachwr ym marchnadoedd prysur Wrecsam, gan gynnwys y 'Beast Market', y Farchnad Lysiau, a Marchnad y Cigyddion. Cafodd angerdd Rasul am ffabrig a dylunio ei gynnu mewn byd ymhell i ffwrdd o'r snobyddiaeth sy'n gysylltiedig â'r ffasiwn uchaf; roedd wrth ei fodd yn siarad â chwsmeriaid ac yn

dangos amrywiaeth eang o opsiynau iddynt. Mae hefyd yn gyfeiriad parchus i gefndir egniol Tŷ Pawb, hunaniaeth Wrecsam fel tref farchnad a chysylltiad Rasul â'r ddinas: yn gymdeithasol ac yn uchel, ond hefyd yn hynod bersonol.

Yn erbyn cefndir stondinau marchnad moel, mae Rasul wedi crefftio gludweithiau safle-benodol wedi'u hysbrydoli gan dreftadaeth Pwnjabaid ei deulu. Mae'r ddau waith celf wedi'u fframio "Panj" (5) ac "Aab" (Afon), yn ffurfio'r gair "Pwnjab" yn greadigol, Mae pob ffrâm yn cynrychioli lliwiau baner, egni a hanes y Pwnjab yn India a Phacistan. Mae'r ddwy ffrâm ar do'r stondin farchnad yn cyfeirio at raniad y Pwnjab fel rhan o raniad ehangach India a chreu Dwyrain a Gorllewin Pacistan ac India newydd ym 1947.

Wedi'i annog i symud i'r DU i lenwi prinder o ran llafur, symudodd tad yr artist i Newcastle, yna Lerpwl lle ymunodd mam Liaqat, cyn ymgartrefu yn Wrecsam, lle maent wedi byw ers hynny. Mae gwaith Rasul yn anrhydeddu ei achau, yn ogystal â'n hatgoffa o bwysigrwydd mewnfudo ac effeithiau cadarnhaol hyn ar y ddinas, y wlad a'r byd. Er ei fod yn cydnabod nad oedd breichiau agored yn cyfarch cyrhaeddiad ei rieni bob amser, mae'r ddinas bellach yn brolio amlieithrwydd y 38 iaith a siaredir, ac mae angen dathlu hyn. Saif Wrecsam yn dyst i dapestri esblygol Prydain, naratif y mae'n ei groesawu'n falch.

Gan gydweithio â'r dylunydd graffeg Fraser Muggerbridge, mae Rasul eisiau "croesawu" pob un ohonom i'r ddinas a'i arddangosfa trwy'r gwahoddiad, sy'n arddangos "Croeso" tairieithog yn y Gymraeg, Wrddw, a Saesneg, ieithoedd a ffurfiodd ffabrig ei blentyndod, gan ddwyn i gof draddodiad Pacistanaid lletygarwch, lle mae te a samosas bob amser yn cael eu cynnig i westeion.

Yng ngeiriau Rasul ei hun, mae'r arddangosfa hon yn adlewyrchiad teimladwy o'i dreftadaeth a'i fywyd, portread diffuant sy'n ceisio dadorchuddio mosaig cymhleth o hunaniaethau — Pacistanaid, Mwslimaidd, Indiaidd, Dwyrain Llundain, a Chymreig — sy'n siapiro ei fodolaeth. Efallai ei fod yn hunanbortread wedi'i rendro mewn arlliwiau rhyngtoriadol diwylliannol.

Yn ganolog i'r portread hwn y mae gweithiau hynod bersonol fel "Parasol," sy'n deillio o ymgysylltiad agos Rasul ag iechyd meddwl, wedi'i ymsolido gan ei gydweithrediad â Hospital Rooms, sy'n gweithio â chleifion iechyd meddwl, ac elusennau. Gan gydnabod ei frwydrau ei hun ag iselder yn agored, mae Rasul yn ystyried y cwnsela y mae wedi ymgymryd ag ef dros ddau ddegawd fel achubiaeth. Trwy "Parasol," mae Rasul yn ymdrechu i chwyddleisio'r drafodaeth ynghylch iechyd meddwl, gan annog deialog a dealltwriaeth barhaus.

Mae "Memory" (2015), darn arloesol yng ngyrfa Rasul, yn dod i'r amlwg fel tyst i wytnwch a mewnwediad. Wedi'i lunio yn dilyn cau ei frand ffasiwn, roedd y gwaith hwn yn fynegiant therapiwtig, pan oedd yr artist yn anghyflogadwy yn ei faes ac roedd angen llais arno. Ei angerdd am gelf a'i hachubodd. Wedi'i ysbrydoli gan yr arddangosfeydd y byddai'n mynychu i lenwi ei amser a'i feddwl, mae "Memory" wedi'i lunio o'r deunyddiau bob dydd ond dwys y gallai gael gafael arnynt-derbynebaw a gasglwyd o'i gyfnod yn gweithio mewn tafarn leol, pren mesur, styffylwr a phinnau ffelt .

Daeth 'Togetherness' yn waith allweddol i Rasul. Fe'i cyflwynwyd yn wreiddiol i 'Grayson Perry's Art Club' ar Channel 4. Datblygodd y gwaith hwn yn gyfres o wynebaw symudol, gweddau etheraidd sy'n mynd y tu hwnt i bortreadu yn unig, gan ddal egni cymhleth hunaniaethau amrywiol wrth i'r pendiliau hyn symud o 2D i 3D, a rhwng agweddau cadarnhaol a negyddol ar amlddiwylliannedd ac iechyd meddwl. Yn ei gelf, mae Rasul yn canfod harddwch, nid mewn integreiddiad di-dor, ond yng nghymhlethdod amrwd, anhidledig bodolaeth ddynol.

Yn "NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR," mae Liaqat Rasul yn ein gwahodd ar daith o fewnsyllu ac archwilio diwylliannol, gan ein hannog i wynebu tapestri amlochrog ein hunaniaethau ein hunain. Trwy ei gelf, mae Rasul yn ein hatgoffa bod gwir brydferthwch ym mosaig ein gwahaniaethau, wedi'i blethu â'i gilydd i ffurfio ffabrig cyfoethog dynoliaeth.

## NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR

Liaqat Rasul's retrospective, "NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR", (Urdu for 9924), marks a poignant homecoming in more ways than one. Originally from Wrexham, the artist returns not only to his birthplace but also to pieces unseen for nearly fifteen years.

A former fashion designer, Rasul's career began when Liberty London bought his graduating collection, and he established his renowned label, Ghulam Sakina, in 1999. This is the starting point of this exhibition's works and the inspiration for the title.

The brand, named after Rasul's parents, not only forms the cornerstone of our exhibition but also introduces viewers to the essence of Rasul's creative practice. The label's graphic, symbolised by a cassette tape, celebrates the transmission of knowledge across generations via analogue technology. Rasul's affinity for handwoven craftsmanship is evident; the brand's woven label acknowledges mass production while the handblock imprint signifies handmade artistry—a dichotomy that mirrors Rasul's balanced perspective on fashion, where subjective and objective elements coalesce. The branding replacing a standard city location, Rasul uses the word "KHIRKEE," the Urdu word کھڑکی meaning window, chosen to signify his penchant for viewing the world through a different lens. This is juxtaposed with Roman numerals for sizing, showcasing his commitment to integrating multicultural influences into a fresh sartorial language.

Yet, the exhibition transcends homage to Rasul's sartorial past. Drawing from his earliest memories, the exhibition design echoes Rasul's formative years as a 'window dresser' at his family's small boutique, Guys N Dolls, and as a trader in Wrexham's bustling markets, including the Beast Market, Vegetable Market, and Butchers Market. Rasul's passion for fabric and design was kindled in a world far away from the snobbery associated with high fashion; he loved talking to customers and showing them a wide variety of options. It is also a reverent nod to Ty Pawb's vibrant backdrop, Wrexham's identity as a market town and Rasul's connection with the city: sociable and loud, but also deeply personal.

Against the backdrop of stripped-back market stalls, Rasul has meticulously crafted site-specific collages inspired by his family's Punjabi heritage. The two framed artworks "Panj" (5) and "Aab" (River), creatively form the word "Punjab," Each frame represents the flag colours, energy, and history of Punjab in both India and Pakistan. The two frames on the roof of the market stall allude to the partition of Punjab as part of the wider partition of India and the creation of East and West Pakistan and a new India in 1947.

Encouraged to move to the UK to fill labour shortages, the artist's father relocated to Newcastle, then Liverpool where Liaqat's mother joined before settling in Wrexham, where they have lived ever since. Rasul's work is not only an honouring of his ancestry but a reminder of the importance of immigration and the positive effects that this has had on the city, country and world. Though he acknowledges that the arrival of his parents was not always met with open arms, the city now boasts the multilingualism of the 38 languages spoken and this needs to be celebrated. Wrexham stands as a testament to the evolving tapestry of Britain, a narrative he proudly embraces.

Collaborating with graphic designer Fraser Mugerbridge, Rasul wants to "welcome" us all to the city and his exhibition through the invitation, which displays a trilingual "Welcome" in Welsh, Urdu, and English, languages that formed the fabric of his childhood, evoking the Pakistani tradition of hospitality, where tea and samosas are always on offer to guests.

In Rasul's own words, this exhibition is a poignant reflection of his heritage and life, a candid portrayal that seeks to unveil the intricate mosaic of identities—Pakistani, Muslim, Indian, East London, and Welsh—that shape his being. It is, perhaps, a self-portrait rendered in the hues of cultural intersectionality.

Central to this portrait are deeply personal works like "Parasol," borne from Rasul's intimate engagement with mental health, solidified by his collaboration with Hospital Rooms, who work with mental health patients, and charities. Openly acknowledging his own struggles with depression, Rasul regards

the counselling he's undergone over two decades as a lifeline. Through "Parasol," Rasul endeavours to amplify the discourse around mental health, urging sustained dialogue and understanding.

"Memory" (2015), a seminal piece in Rasul's career, emerges as a testament to resilience and introspection. Conceived in the aftermath of closing his fashion brand, this work served as a therapeutic outlet, when the artist found himself unemployable in his field and in need of a voice. It was his passion for art that saved him. Inspired by the exhibitions he would frequent to fill his time and mind, "Memory" is fashioned from the everyday yet profound materials he could access —receipts collected from his time working at a local pub, a ruler, a stapler and felt-tip pens.

'Togetherness' became a pivotal work for Rasul. It was originally submitted to Grayson Perry's Art Club on Channel 4. This work developed into a series of mobile faces, ethereal visages which transcend mere portraiture, capturing the complex energy of diverse identities as these pendulums move from 2D to 3D, and between the positive and negative aspects of multiculturalism and mental health. In his art, Rasul finds beauty not in seamless integration but in human existence's raw, unfiltered complexity.

In "NAU, NAU, DOH, CHAAR," Liaqat Rasul invites us on a journey of introspection and cultural exploration, beckoning us to confront the multifaceted tapestry of our own identities. Through his art, Rasul reminds us that true beauty lies in the mosaic of our differences, woven together to form the rich fabric of humanity.

