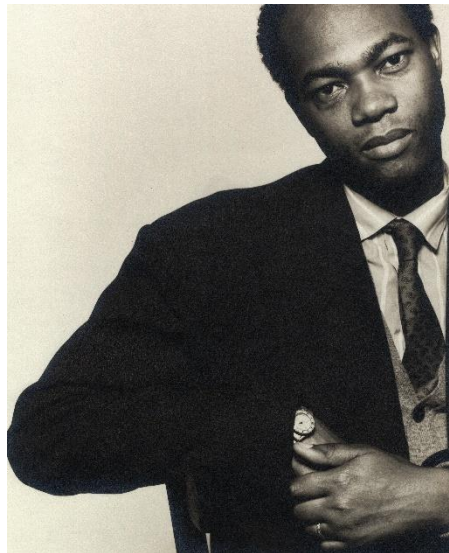




The Morgan Stanley Exhibition – The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS ANNOUNCED

PRESS RELEASE



Curated by the Black Orientated Legacy Development Agency (BOLD)

21 September 2023 – 07 January 2024

East Wing Galleries

General admission £12/Concessions (disabled, job seekers, seniors, NHS workers)

£9.50/25 and under £5.00

Inside the Exhibition

Shanti Bell: Signalling Free

A brand-new commission from multidisciplinary artist, fashion practitioner and furniture-maker **Shanti Bell** will welcome visitors to the exhibition. The commission, a sculpture formed of sheets of uniquely textured fabric adorning the entrance of the exhibition, conjures visions of flags caught in the wind. Flags feature prominently within the lives of Black Britons, and within the exhibition, signalling migration and diasporic identities.

Dr.Martens & Denim Tears

An exclusive new commission from the upcoming **Denim Tears x Dr.Martens** collection, created for the exhibition by **Tremaine Emory** and **Casely-Hayford**, featuring **Dennis Wilson**.

The Missing Thread Nail Bar

The Nightlife zone of the exhibition will celebrate the spaces that provided the freedom and opportunity, beyond the boundaries of mainstream cultural status quo, for Black creatives to meet, network and express individual and collective identity safely, from parties and clubs to gigs and raves. The zone will take the form of a nail bar, a space that holds meaning as the precursor to going out, symbolising the idea of self-love, adornment, and self-ideation that is at the heart of the nightlife culture explored in the exhibition. The nail bar has significance as a space that has functioned for black entrepreneurship, much like the hair salon, becoming an integral part of a community, a symbol of financial independence, cultural autonomy and self-expression. Nails are a huge part of the contemporary fashion and beauty industries, but it is rarely acknowledged that the artform grew out of styles pioneered by Black communities. By creating a nail bar at the heart of the exhibition, *The Missing Thread* spotlights another central contribution Black fashion and beauty has made to British style culture.

The GelBottle Inc™, who celebrate joy, education and self-expression through their vegan and cruelty-free gel nail varnishes, will activate the bar with two free pop-ups for visitors on the evening of **4 October** and during the day on **4 November**. Providing a menu of designs, visitors will be able to book in for free and enjoy an appointment within the exhibition.

Public Programme

Talks Programme

Saturday 15 October, Thursday 19 October, Saturday 28 October, Saturday 4 November, Thursday 7 December

Throughout the run of *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion*, Somerset House will host a programme of talks, workshops, film and more - from conversations with artists, designers and curators, to films exploring the history, lived experiences and legacies of Black British creatives. The programme delves deeper into the themes of the show, exploring the lesser heard voices of Black British culture.

Contributors include **Nate Agbetu, Harris Elliott, Peju Oshin, Andrew Ibi, Georgina Johnson** and more.

More information via the Somerset House website: <https://www.somersethouse.org.uk/whats-on/the-missing-thread>

Black Business Incubator Retail Pop-up

Wednesday 4 October, 10.00 - 21.00 / Thursday 5 October - Saturday 7 October, 10.00 - 18.00

East Wing Retail Space

In June 2023, the **Black Business Incubator at Somerset House** welcomed its fourth cohort of creative startups. The free 12-month programme, produced in partnership with **Does Ltd** and sponsored by **Morgan Stanley**, aims to help early-stage Black-led creative businesses unlock their full potential through expert-led workshops, mentorship from industry specialists and access to the Somerset House creative community.

To coincide with *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion*, thirteen of the twenty-five Black Businesses Incubator places on the fourth cohort have been awarded to fashion related enterprises. These include **ARTCHA SERIES**, a streetwear brand raising awareness of neurodiversity; **Byrogue**, a future focused, sustainable and ethical design house, and **HAFZA STUDIO**, which crafts scarves and bridal wear inspired by East Africa.

As part of the exhibition's events programme, from the **Wednesday 4 to Saturday 7 October 2023** a **Black Business Incubator** pop-up shop will open in Somerset House's East Wing showcasing products from a range of fashion businesses who've been on the programme since 2021.

Black Business Incubator is sponsored by Morgan Stanley and supported by M&C Saatchi Group.

Morgan Stanley Lates at Somerset House with The Courtauld

Wednesday 4 October 2023

Site-wide

18.00 - 22.00

Free

For ticket information visit somersethouse.org.uk

Morgan Stanley Lates will return for the third time in its 2023 series this October, with the doors of Somerset House and **The Courtauld** once again thrown open after-hours for an exclusive evening of performance and activities celebrating two headline exhibitions; *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion* at Somerset House, sponsored by *Morgan Stanley and Claudette Johnson: Presence at The Courtauld*.

The Missing Thread x Upgrade Yourself Takeover

Thursday 8 December 2023

The Missing Thread x Upgrade Yourself Takeover sees the return of Somerset House's after-hours exhibition access for young emerging and aspiring creatives. This free event, specifically designed for 18-30-year-olds looking to break into the creative industry, offers access to *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion* exhibition, interactive talks from exhibition contributors and opportunities to network with peers and professionals in a post-show social.

Upgrade Yourself Festival

Friday 17 - Saturday 18 November 2023

Lancaster and River Rooms

Free

For ticketing information sign up to the Upgrade Yourself Newsletter

somersethouse.org.uk/whats-on/upgrade-yourself-festival-jun-2023

Upgrade Yourself Festival returns in November across two days, empowering young people to pursue creative careers on their own terms. Connecting 16–24-year-olds aspiring to break into the creative industries with trailblazing industry experts, the festival will feature workshops and bespoke mentoring sessions, enabling attendees to navigate the creative sector with confidence. Guest speakers will share the tools, hacks and skills to help navigate the creative industries, such as financial literacy, DIY content creation, wellbeing and self-care. November's *Upgrade Yourself Festival* will also feature programming linked to the exhibition.

Generously supported by the Warburg Pincus Foundation, and part of the Culture and Community Programme funded by Westminster City Council.

Digital Programme

The Missing Thread: A Documentary

channel.somersethouse.org.uk

Alongside the exhibition, Somerset House will present a captivating new documentary film directed by **Andy Mundy-Castle**, that delves into the rich and often overlooked history of Black British fashion and how it influenced British and mainstream culture around the world. Through insightful interviews, archival footage, and vibrant visuals, the film explores the struggles, triumphs, and enduring creativity of Black fashion designers, models, and influencers who have left an indelible mark on the British fashion landscape.

Set around the themes mirroring that of the exhibition; Performance, Home, Nightlife, Tailoring, and **Joe Casely-Hayford**; each contributor featured will speak to their lived experience and career, navigating through stories often neglected by the mainstream. The film features curators **Jason Jules**, **Andrew Ibi** and **Harris Elliott (BOLD)**, as well as **Charlie Allen**, **Bianca Saunders**, **Ninivah Khomo**, **Eileen Perrier**, **Winn Austin**, **Monisola Omotoso** and **Pogus Caesar**.

The film premieres on **Somerset House's Channel**, a curated space for art, ideas and the artistic process, on **18 September**.

The Missing Thread: The Process

Subscribe via Apple / Spotify

channel.somersethouse.org.uk/podcasts

Somerset House's podcast, **The Process**, where each episode takes a deep dive into the artistic practice of artists and creatives, returns for a third season this Autumn. *The Missing Thread: Untold*

Stories of Black British Fashion co-curator, BOLD's **Andrew Ibi**, makes a special guest appearance, exploring the cultural significance of the Black cultural renaissance of the late 1980s in Britain.

Ticketing

Somerset House will be providing 1,000 free exhibition tickets to community partners across London through its **Community Partner Ticket Scheme**. The scheme provides free tickets to underrepresented groups, in particular Black community groups that face financial barriers when attending exhibitions. In addition, alongside concession tickets (£9.50 for students, disabled, job seekers, seniors, NHS workers), those aged 25 and under are eligible for £5 tickets to the exhibition.

Please contact engagement@somersethouse.org.uk to enquire about the *Community Partner Ticket Scheme*.

Somerset House is grateful to Morgan Stanley for making the Under 25s and Community Partner Ticket Scheme possible.

Shop and Catalogue

To accompany the exhibition, Somerset House will publish a catalogue, designed by **Paul Ayre** and edited by co-curator **Jason Jules**, looking afresh at Black British fashion's cultures and subcultures, its designers and icons, its famous and lesser-known figures. Featuring both brand new texts and photography as well as archival material from contributors including: **Dr Avis Charles, Maria Casely-Hayford, Caryn Franklin, Dean Ricketts, Andrew Ibi, Joe Casely-Hayford, Harris Elliott, Charlie Allen, Angela Philips, Bianca Saunders, Monisola Omotoso, Nicholas Daley, Saul Nash** and **Wayne Pinnock**, the catalogue provides exclusive insights into the making of the exhibition and the themes it explores.

The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion Shop will feature a curated selection of products by designers and creatives featured in the exhibition, alongside merchandise representative of the exhibition themes, with new and exclusive products dropping throughout the duration of the show. Featured brands include the official scent partner of the exhibition, **Better World Fragrance House [by Drake]**, which will infuse the exhibition with captivating scents to enhance the immersive experience, as well as **Le Tings, Art Comes First, Monisola Omotoso, Sabirah by Deborah Latouche** and **Uptown Yardie**, alongside a selection of books, prints, accessories, homewares, beauty and clothing.

The Morgan Stanley Exhibition - The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion is supported by:

Dr.Martens & Denim Tears
The GelBottle Inc
Better World Fragrance House [by Drake]

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www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse

Somerset House Twitter: @SomersetHouse

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Dates: 21 September 2023 - 7 January 2024

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Website: somerset-house.org.uk/whats-on/the-missing-thread

For press enquiries please contact: press@somerset-house.org.uk/ +44 (0)2078454624

ABOUT BOLD

Harris Elliott is an international interdisciplinary visual artist and Senior MA Lecturer in Fashion at the Royal College of Art, specialising in identity and culture.

Andrew Ibi is a designer, artist, DJ and educator. He is the Creative Director of E.Macbean, London, currently the programme leader for the BA Fashion: Design & Communication course at Liverpool John Moores University and Visiting Professor at Middlesex University.

Jason Jules is a multi-disciplinary creative interested in semiotics, culture and style. Co-founder of the legendary Watch-Men Agency, he is known for his collaborative fashion project Garmsville and as author of the 2021 best-selling book, *Black Ivy - A Revolt In Style*.

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE

As the home of cultural innovators, Somerset House is a site of origination, with a cultural programme offering alternative perspectives on the biggest issues of our time. We are a place of joy and discovery, where everyone is invited to Step Inside and Think Outside.

From our historic site in the heart of London, we work globally across art, creativity, business, and non-profit, nurturing new talent, methods and technologies. Our resident community of creative enterprises, arts organisations, artists and makers, makes us a centre of ideas, with most of our programme home-grown.

We sit at the meeting point of artistic and social innovation, bringing worlds and minds together to create surprising and often magical results. Our spirit of constant curiosity and counter perspective is integral to our history and key to our future.

ABOUT MORGAN STANLEY

Morgan Stanley (NYSE: MS) is a leading global financial services firm providing a wide range of investment banking, securities, wealth management and investment management services. With offices in 42 countries, the Firm's employees serve clients worldwide including corporations, governments, institutions and individuals. For further information about Morgan Stanley, please visit www.morganstanley.com.

Find out more about Somerset House and Morgan Stanley's partnership [here](#).

Image Credits

Nicholas Daley working on his commission for The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion at his Somerset House studio. Photo by Anne Tetzlaff

Joe Casely-Hayford, 1987 © Kevin Davies

Jennie Baptiste, Pinky, 2001 (Stylist Chinyere Eze, Make-up artist Brenda Cuffy)