

r i c h a r d m a l o n e

26-03-21

Place - Time - Language - Nostalgia - Future

“Saol trí a mhíol mhór saol iomaire amháin, saol trí iomaire saol an domhain”

Three times the life of a whale is the lifespan of a ridge, and three times the life of a ridge is the lifespan of the world.

Wexford-born designer Richard Malone has been preoccupied by the notion of forgotten practises - artisanal traditions, lost language, erasure - and a distinct sense of *place*. ‘Place’ has meant many things: physical spaces, hometowns and heritage, and crucially the imagined boundaries that define territories. Queer spaces, female-led arenas, constructed identities, preconceptions of class and community. Malone’s belief is that craft, and making, is at the core of culture - from sourcing local dyes, to developing weaves, to dressmaking and sewing. Within cloth, within garments, lies history. History of migration, culture and language. Intergenerational skills and ability.

Two literary works have been vital points of reference: *32 Words For Field* by Manchán Magan, and *A Ghost in the Throat*, by Doireann Ní Ghríofa. Both works look directly at language as a kind of transient landscape; Malone has considered in detail the fact that the English language has significantly fewer words than Gaeilge, and often diminishes the skill and histories shared in female spaces. This is evident in the loss of records relating to female-specific language, as male scholars and colonisers sought to erase these histories.

Cé dhár díobh thú? (Who are you of?)

Hailing from a time before English was spoken in Malone’s native Ireland, two words - ***ceantar*** and ***alltear*** - communicate a belief in two worlds, the physical state and the ‘other.’ The Otherworld is considered the domain of nuanced female energy, of creativity and nurturing community spirit - as Malone would bill it, of “female graft.” The mother of all things (*Mother Nature*) and the ***Bó Bainne*** (*force of life*) are all female. A sense of something ancient permeates the collection; collars are sky-high or hyper-extended down to the waist, heavyweight knitted dresses - decadent and functional - are timeless, trend-less, permanent, moving between centuries. It’s the output of a team comprised entirely of female and queer voices; free of any constraints inflicted by the heteronormative gaze. There is an allowance for queer voices to be exceptional, new, daring, and create outside of existing stereotypes in an unrestricted world of newness, class-less-ness.

Whilst, arguably, every Richard Malone collection is an ardent celebration of women - fit and made to order, and meticulously explained and traced through the designer’s private communication (including private campaigns and books) - he considers this his most explicit homage yet to those who make vital contributions to his practise. Crucially,

the weavers and makers responsible for the incredible fabric development seen in this collection - those behind the regenerated textiles, recycled woven wools, plant-based dyed cloth and handmade knits.

Malone has embedded subtle celebrations of working-class codes within his clothes from the beginning. His goal is to profoundly elevate: respectfully nodding to every hand involved in the creation of each piece and refusing to self-fetishise his own backstory. This collection is no different. Deconstructed coats, meticulously tailored trousers feature delicate ties at the calf and detachable pannier-hip aprons; a rigorously belted dove-grey woolen coat looks to medical uniforms. Shoulders are extended, elevated and collapsed across hyper-constructed, abstract blazers. Skirts congregate volumes to the front, still allowing movement, sitting, working. Crisp white shirts appear in the Richard Malone armoury for the first time. Malone's sensitivity to colour, structure, volume and form was built not in the hallowed halls of university libraries or during his years within the ateliers of French luxury houses, but nurtured on building sites and observed in his grandmother's kitchen. During formative years moving between spaces where craft, and making, was placed centre stage. Where female voices have been the centre of home and work spaces: protective, educational, tolerant.

The collection is interpreted by multi-award-winning film director and photographer Isabel Garrett, a longstanding collaborator. Malone notes the importance of a female team, and particularly the female gaze - how so often the end product, photograph or document within fashion is decided and dictated by a straight, white male. He also notes the danger of nostalgia, steadfastly refusing to idolise or replicate zeitgeist time periods in fashion, wherein diverse voices were consistently omitted. The approach to creating, here, is about growing together, supporting, conversing, experimenting. Malone's wider team remains the same: consistent collaborators, growing horizontally and steadfastly supporting one another. Committing to a shared value system, to conscious change, and to the belief that being oneself is the ultimate act of defiance.

WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPLIERS:

A.W Hainsworth, UK

Hand-woven boucle wool - certified Merino using plant and organic dyes, biodegradable coral, rust and iron
Woven in Purdey, UK

Econyl, Aquafil, Italy

Regenerated polyester jersey and woven lining, certified Econyl created from discarded fishing nets and ocean waste
Made in Italy

Emblem Weavers, Wexford

Handwoven Irish linen from yarn sourced in the Mourne mountains
Recycled rouleaux binding
Made in Wexford, Ireland

Mourne Textiles, Newry, Co Down

Handwoven Irish wools

Made in Newry

Merino Wool Sport Knit, Woolmark, Australia

Deadstock merino wool sport yarn, certified from The Woolmark Company. Biodegradable yarns sourced in the UK,
dyed using organic and plant-based dyes

Hand-knitted in London

Collection made in our studio in Seven Sister, London, and in partnership with:

Canelle Design, Finsbury Park

S.A.M Creations, Lewisham

Nessa Ryan, Peckham

Each piece is part of a limited-edition, and is created with strict attention to our sustainability standards.

Every person in our supply chain is paid above a London Living Wage - £13 p/hour trainee and £24 p/hour for full time
staff.

CREATIVE DIRECTION

RICHARD MALONE

IMAGE-MAKING

ISABEL GARRETT

STYLING

NELL KALONJI

ASSISTED BY REBECCA PERLMUTAR

MAKE-UP

PABLO RODRIGUEZ

HAIR

SHUNSUKE MEGURO

CASTING

HOLLY CULLEN

SET DESIGN

THOMAS GARNON

COMMUNICATION

RAVEN

FOOTWEAR

RICHARD MALONE x MALONE SOULIERS

JEWELLERY

ALIGHIERI

SPECIAL THANKS

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