

Show Recap | Head of State A/W 2023 Runway Show

Tuesday, February 14 at 7pm - NYC

On Tuesday, February 14th at 7pm EST **Head of State** showcased its **Autumn/Winter 2023 Collection via a Runway Show** at **Spring Studios** in New York City. Full recap below.

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- Backstage / First Looks: [LINK](#) (Courtesy of Julius Frazier)
- Backstage / First Looks: [LINK](#) (Courtesy of Julia Khoroshilov)
- Backstage / Beauty: [LINK](#) (Courtesy of David Gannon)
- Backstage: [LINK](#) (Courtesy of Jack Buster)

Image Caption: Head of State A/W 2023 Runway Show (Please credit respective photographer and let us know of any usage)

For any additional press inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Best,
Lindsey, Alfonso and the GKC team



AUTUMN/WINTER 2023 RUNWAY SHOW



Head of State A/W 2023 Collection. Courtesy of Kerry Davis

New York, NY - On Tuesday, February 14th, Head of State showcased its **Autumn/Winter 2023 Ready-To-Wear Collection** at Spring Studios consisting of 34 looks.

In the early 2000s, my father Nureni Abijako embarked on a journey from Lagos, Nigeria to Spain. His plan involved crossing a desert and illegally sailing on a boat across, in search of a better future in the west. Along his journey he began having vivid dreams of home. He dreamt about his family, the air back home, the textures, conversations, and architecture. Because of these “memories of home,” he decided to end his journey in Libya, turning back, following the current of these dreams. A month after returning home, he won the American visa lottery. My father’s journey retraced and foreshadowed the journey that many refugees, displaced peoples and members of marginalized communities have made, are making, and will make this century. As the refugee crisis grows, it becomes more and more important to hold onto our memories of home, for they inevitably shape what is to come.

For his AW23 Collection titled *Memories of Home*, Taofeek Abijako gathers us here, in a circular formation reminiscent of the firepits in Lagos around which he sat as his grandmother spun a tale. He invites us to join him as he retraces his father’s journey to and from home, only to find that his path diverges as he arrives at his own understanding of the concept. For his father, home remains bound to the physicality of a place and the sensations laced into the laurels of its coordinates; but for Taofeek, ironically, it’s something he’s still roaming towards in an emotional odyssey rife with reckoning. While Taofeek was born in Lagos, he moved to Albany, a suburb in upstate New York at a young age. The voyage itself was formative but the cultural assimilation that would follow marked the real point of genesis for Taofeek’s ongoing homecoming as he occupied this middle ground.

In Lagos, Taofeek recalls the school trips taken from the “mainland” which was the marginalized part of Lagos, to “the island,” which was collectively referenced as “the other side” – a locus that represented privilege. The concept of the “other side” is something many immigrants and refugees can relate to as they navigate a whole new world – having to find new landmarks amidst a foreign landscape, new ways of seeing themselves, and new ways of speaking to not only be heard but understood. Taofeek sees his parents as a mirror and upon reflecting on the differences in their definitions of home he begins to accept their sacrifices not out of guilt but as the foundations of a new legacy. As he himself has recently become a father, he is passing down a new kind of generational wealth – the dream changes because it is allowed to.

Through this collection Taofeek seeks to give visual form to this language of the in-between, reflecting the many dualities present in the experience of leaving home and coming home – while adding in another dimension: *building* a home. Through garments he references the “twin house” style of architecture present in Lagos, the cracks in the walls, the blues of the ocean that he and his family have crossed, the swirling creams of the sand and the new beginnings - heralded in white as in his native Yoruba culture. Nodding subtly to West African silhouettes and their exaggerated “A-Frames” while playing with deftly modern proportions, Taofeek reveals the interiority of his world, inviting us home.

WHEN: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 7PM

WHERE: Spring Studios, 6 St Johns Ln, New York, NY 10013

SHOW CREDITS:

Creative Director: Taofeek Abijako

Art Direction: Emma Moore

Event Production: Berlin Nicholas, Donna Gibson for THISBRANDHASNONAME

Brand Director: Ruja

Styling: Ian McRae, Ani Hovhannisyan, Ruja

In House Production: Vivian Luo, Alicia Corradini, Federika Sotohay, Matthew Beeston

Shoes: Nike, Viron, Military Bunny Boots

Jewelry: Lady Grey, La Manso, Steff Eleoff, Wolf Circus

Casting: Brent Chua

Hair: Oribe

Makeup: Kento Utsubo

Nails: Chidiebube Udeh

Dressing: Behind The Rack

Operations + Finance: Reggie Narcisse

Set Design: Daniel Prosky, Izabella Garcia

Choreography: Raymond Pinto, Jerome AB

Show Caller: Mia Manning

Audio: Donis, ADI Worldwide

Lighting: Florian Schreiter Lichtdesign

PR: Gia Kuan Consulting

Location: Spring Studios

Capture: BFA, Grade Solomon

Special Thanks to Our Main Sponsors:

Amazon: In collaboration with Amazon Luxury Stores

Nike: Taking action to create bigger change where sport meets culture, Nike is supporting and empowering up-and-coming BIPOC designers as they grow their presence and craft in the fashion industry.

Additionally, special thanks to : Afterpay, IMG, The Gallery at Spring Studios, Oribe, NYFW The Shows, Shiko Beauty

ABOUT HEAD OF STATE

Founded in 2016 by Taofeek Abijako at the ripe age of 17, HEAD OF STATE (HOS) is a representation of postcolonial youth culture today. It operates as both an homage to this diverse space and a critique of the effects western imposition has had on it. HOS is born from this unique clashing intersectionality and thrives on it, aiming to provoke and further a dialogue about the past, current and future state of marginalized spaces.

Its sales provide funding for a variety of “initiatives” that are dedicated to helping underserved communities in the South End of Albany and Lagos, Nigeria, to build sustainable futures through innovation in the education, infrastructure and sanitation sectors. Head of State’s current long term goals include the building of South End Studios, a developmental center for creatives to collaborate, ideate and thrive while simultaneously nurturing a budding ecosystem between artists and entrepreneurs while creating jobs for the community; and Schools for a Sustainable Future, an initiative in Sepeteri, Nigeria that will improve education through design. HOS has conceived of a school building adapted to local climate conditions to improve learning conditions. All involved in the project will be village locals underlining core principles of sustainability, education and infrastructure that lead to tangible opportunities.

ABOUT TAOFEEK ABIJAKO

Nigerian-born Taofeek Abijako is a multidisciplinary artist recognized for his ability to express social and political commentary through the marriage of personal narratives, material study and historical contexts. From an early age, Abijako was introduced to fashion by tagging along with his father to his studio back in Lagos, Nigeria, leading to Abijako’s fascination in the intersection between art and everyday social relationships in marginalized spaces. In 2018, Abijako presented his S/S '19 collection for HOS at NYFW: Men’s, making him the youngest designer to show at the event. Recognized by the Forbes 30 Under 30 list for class of 2019, Abijako has received press coverage with renowned platforms like the New York Times, BOF and i-D Magazine. Furthermore, Abijako was included in the 2022 CFDA Vogue Fashion Fund Emerging designers class. Following his Vogue Fashion Fund inclusion, Abijako was granted the opportunity to create met gala looks for both Danai Gurira and Evan Mock. Abijako has followed this up with events like “In Moonlight We Turn Blue” in collaboration with Strada, highlighting art from various continents to compliment his own work. www.headofstateny.com | [@headofstate_](https://www.instagram.com/headofstate_)

PRESS CONTACT

Gia Kuan | gia@giakuan.com | 917.445.0194

Lindsey Okubo | lindsey@giakuan.com | 808.352.8843

Alfonso Badillo | alfonso@giakuan.com | 281.886.9823