



The Fabric Workshop
and Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New Performance Work by Brendan Fernandes to
Explore Queer Visibility and Embodied Resistance**

Presented June 6–8, 2025 alongside the exhibition, *Soft/Cover*



Brendan Fernandes: In Two, 2024. Live performance at Pulitzer Arts Foundation. Photo credit: Virginia Harold Photography. Courtesy of the Pulitzer Arts Foundation.

Philadelphia, PA, April 30, 2025—The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is pleased to announce *Noise See* and *In Two*, two new performance works by Chicago-based visual artist and choreographer Brendan Fernandes (b. 1979, Kenya). Coinciding with the exhibition, *Soft/Cover*, the series of performances takes place **Friday, June 6 through Sunday, June 8** in simultaneous presentations across FWM's second and eighth floor galleries.

Fernandes, who identifies as multinational and queer, has written these choreographic scores in exploration of the visibility and invisibility of queer bodies. Developed during the artist's FWM residency,

the new works feature dancers engaged in acts of hide and response and of bodily transformation through interaction with a set of curtains, soft sculptures, and costumes created with the FWM Studio team.

"My ongoing collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum is a deeply meaningful one," said Brendan Fernandes. "Working with their expert team has allowed me to expand my conceptual and material practice, pushing my performative work in new directions. In these uncertain times, the opportunity to make, reflect, and connect with the museum and greater Philadelphia community feels especially vital. There is real joy in these creative exchanges—something we need now more than ever."

"Brendan Fernandes is a dynamic artist whose sophisticated and compassionate work prompts us to better understand ourselves and our relationship to one another," said Kelly Shindler, FWM's Executive Director. "Our Studio team has greatly benefited from collaborating with him over the last year—first in creating curtains and sculpture for *In Two* and now developing garments for his new piece, *Noise See*. As an institution committed to creating new work with today's most vanguard artists, we're delighted to bring his performances to life in Philadelphia."

Schedule of Events

Friday, June 6

Premiere

Brendan Fernandes: *Noise See* and *In Two*

6:00–7:00 pm*

Free | Suggested \$5 donation

*This event includes extended hours for general admission.

Saturday, June 7–Sunday, June 8

Performances

Brendan Fernandes: *Noise See* and *In Two*

1:00–2:00 pm and 3:00–4:00 pm

Free | Included with general admission (suggested \$5 donation)

Noise See

Second Floor Gallery

In *Noise See*, Fernandes debuts a new live performance commissioned by The Fabric Workshop and Museum that investigates themes of visibility, protest, the legacy of empire, and embodied resistance. Central to the work are vibrant quilted tapestries crafted as costumes, made in collaboration with the

FWM Studio. These textiles of vivid red and blue plaid recall dress that is commonly associated with contemporary Maasai culture in Kenya yet rooted in British colonial influence.

Performed as a duet, two dancers engage in a choreographic dialogue—merging and separating, concealing and revealing—through their bodily interaction with one another and their own biomorphic form as they inhabit their costume. The performers activate the double-sided tapestries throughout the space, evoking their transformation into blankets, shields, protest banners, cloaks, second skins, and sculptural forms. These dynamic textiles become agents of action, shaping and being shaped by the dancers' movements.

Noise See reclaims a colonial textile legacy and transforms it into a site of protest, protection, and presence. Here, Fernandes insists that silence is not absence but a resonant and radical form of resistance.

In Two

Eighth Floor Gallery

Commissioned by the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in 2024, Fernandes collaborated with FWM's Studio team to create an installation of curtains and soft sculptures, designed to accompany an exhibition of the artist Scott Burton's work (1939–1989), which was on view at the Pulitzer from September 6, 2024, through February 2, 2025. In a series of duets titled *In Two*, Fernandes has written dance scores that take Burton's furniture sculptures as a point of departure to explore the duality of display and concealment in gay cruising culture—ideas that Burton had pursued throughout his career. Fernandes integrates specific gestures—"flip the wrist," "clasp arm to the breast"—directly from Burton's choreographic notes.

Taking inspiration from *Window Curtains*, a work in FWM's collection that Burton created during his own FWM residency in 1978, Fernandes worked with the FWM Studio to create a new set of curtains to be activated by his choreographed performances. Screenprinted on cotton muslin, the curtains feature flesh, steel gray, and blush-colored fingerprints left on a phone screen. For the artist, these smudges are suggestive of texting or swiping left or right in dating apps—a digital form of cruising.

Soft Touch I and *Soft Touch II*, a pair of soft sculptures designed by Fernandes to resemble polished stone, complement and contrast with Burton's hard materials. Using images of actual Burton benches, the FWM Studio team created the surface of these stuffed artworks through a digital printing process on cotton canvas.

In performances of *In Two*—first presented at the Pulitzer in 2024 and now making its East Coast debut at FWM—dancers use the curtains and sculpture as props as they oscillate between concealing themselves and seeking one another.

About Brendan Fernandes

Canadian, born 1979, Nairobi, Kenya. Lives and works in Chicago, IL.

Brendan Fernandes is an internationally recognized artist working at the intersection of dance and visual arts. His practice addresses issues of race, queer culture, migration, protest and other forms of collective movement. Seeking to create new spaces and forms of agency, his hybrid projects comprise part ballet, part queer dance party, part political protest and are always rooted in collaboration and foster solidarity. Fernandes is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program and a recipient of a Robert Rauschenberg Fellowship. He was shortlisted for the Sobey Art Award and is the recipient of a prestigious Canada Council New Chapters grant. Fernandes is also the recipient of a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation grant, the Artadia Award, a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, and the Platform Award. His projects have shown at the Whitney Biennial. New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; the Museum of Modern Art. New York, NY; The Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA; the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON; and MAC, Montreal, QC, among others. He is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Art Theory and Practice at Northwestern University and is represented by Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago and Susan Inglett Gallery in New York.

About The Fabric Workshop and Museum

The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art museum devoted to the creation, presentation, and preservation of innovative works of art. Its mission—*Collaborating with artists, revealing new possibilities*—embodies a 48-year commitment to helping artists experiment with the expressive possibilities of a broad spectrum of new materials and techniques. Through its renowned Artist-in-Residence Program, FWM provides artists at all stages of their careers with the opportunity to collaborate with its studio staff and take their work in fresh and often unexpected directions. FWM presents large-scale exhibitions, installations, and performative work, utilizing innovative fiber and other media including sculpture, installation, video, painting, photography, ceramics, and architecture. Founded in 1977, FWM brings this spirit of creative investigation and discovery to an eager audience, broadening access to art and advancing its role as a catalyst for innovation and social connection.

Museum Entry: General admission is free (suggested donation of \$5).

Hours: Visit us Wednesday–Friday, 12:00–6:00 pm; Saturday–Sunday, 12:00–5:00 pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Holidays: Closed for Juneteenth (Thursday June 19, 2025) and Independence Day (Friday, July 4, 2025).

Support

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