

## **Pattenmakers Speech – Martin Shobo**

### ***Master, Wardens, fellow Pattenmakers and guests.***

It's a true honour to be here with you tonight—to be in a room filled with people who've spent their careers shaping not just what we wear, but how we move through the world.

Tonight, we celebrate Excellence. Innovation. Passion. But above all, we celebrate legacy.

Because that's what this industry is about, at its core: Legacy in Every Footprint.

Not just the shoes we create—but the impact of the mark we leave behind.

Legacy isn't something you build overnight. It's not flashy. It's not always loud.

Legacy is quiet. It's valiant. It's the result of showing up day after day, year after year—with care, with vision, and with heart.

In this industry, legacy might look like a pattern passed down through generations of artisans.

It might be the revival of a silhouette once thought lost to time.

It might be mentoring the next great designer or innovator who will carry the torch forward.

Legacy means knowing that what you create or contribute today—however small—can echo through someone else's future.

There's something deeply poetic about a footprint.

It's evidence that you were here. That you moved. That you made progress.

Everyone in this room has left a footprint—on this industry, on this culture. Your work has inspired confidence. Its offered comfort. Shaping trends, broken molds and told stories.

I feel deeply privileged to have been inspired by two incredible women in this room tonight - Annette Cove and Jane Wilson, whose remarkable footprints have shaped my own journey.

They inspired me with their unwavering confidence, contribution and resilience – qualities that influence the way I charter myself today.

Through their dedication and leadership in this industry, they haven't just built careers – they have impacted stories, opened doors, setting standards and have made opportunities that continues to move us all forward, including myself.

That's the kind of legacy that doesn't fade. That's the kind of legacy which inspires me. To you both, I thank you.

For me, legacy is about more than the roles I've held – it's those values which I've carried through. Its about leaving behind more than great products – its about leaving behind empowered teams, bold ideas and a culture of excellence.

Every role I've held – from Hush Puppies to Timberland, Adidas Originals to Birkenstock – its been another step on a path built with a form of purpose. I've walked through product creation, merchandising, consumer engagement and global strategy, always asking the same question: ***what are we trying to say and what are we trying to leave?***

It's never been just about curating the best shoes, its really been about understanding the people who wear them, building stories, teams and experiences that connect deeply.

Now as I look back, the footprints that truly matter aren't in Product Lines or P&L's. And whilst I'm proud of the global strategies I've led, the collections I've curated and the commercial successes along the way – the legacy I'm most invested in is this:

They're in the people I've mentored. The teams I've built. The cultures that I've helped shape.

Creating space for others to rise, to feel seen, especially those who have traditionally been left at the edges. Championing creativity without compromise. Building teams that believe in the power of collaboration, representation and purpose. And being about a leadership that listens

And tonight, we shine a light on those whose footprints have been bold—tonight's award recipients.

To each of you being honoured: thank you.

Thank you for leading with creativity, for daring to take risks, for caring about the details that only you can see. Your work reminds us all that excellence isn't about popularity—it's about consistency. It's about impact.

Standing here tonight my mind drifts back to 2012, when I was humbled to be recognised by the pattenmakers. That moment planted a seed of ambition within me – a quiet certainty that I was capable of something.

It gave me the encouragement to explore, make mistakes. Thirteen years later, that ambition does not waiver. I now have the pleasure of being able to celebrate my past experience and still be excited about the future. I get to leave a path to those who want to follow but can maybe inspire them to be even braver in the steps I took.

But this evening isn't just about the awardees or me.

It's about everyone in this room—because legacy is never built alone.

From the designers to the factory floor, from marketing to merchandising, from retail to research—every role matters. Every step counts.

We all contribute to the footprint we leave as an industry. And we all share the responsibility to make that journey meaningful.

Let it be a journey that leads forward, not back.

One that includes, uplifts, innovates—and remembers.

So tonight, let us celebrate not just what we've done—but what we're building.

Because the greatest legacies are not written in stone.

They are written in motion.

In passion.

In purpose.

In every single footprint.

Thank you for your attention and time and with that;

I would now like to propose a toast - to the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers and to the Master David Miller.

The Worshipful Company of Patternmakers.