



VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION

A Queer History of Fashion
From the Closet to the Catwalk

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Video length: 3:58 | This video is online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=HK-7uz0p3zo

I had always been interested in music and style and especially anything that came from the UK ever since I was very young, but I wasn't really expressing it with my own dress sense. I was a bit preppy, and I didn't really know how to go about doing it. There were a lot of new style fashion magazines that were coming from the UK; in particular it was *Blitz*, *ID*, and *The Face*. I would say probably about 1984 there were a series of editorials and those magazines that featured men in skirts. And whilst I thought the look was really great, it was something that I thought I would never really be able to pull off. Some of my friends were actually wearing skirts already so with a little bit of convincing and some styling tips I decided to take the plunge.

The dressing-up climate of the early 80s was a really great opportunity for me to express my otherness by basically eschewing anything that I saw as being normal or ordinary and embracing what I thought was exotic, or glamorous, or even strange. Those magazines from the UK were really lifelines to me, and they were a window to another world which I thought I should have been a part of. Back in 1985 Jean Paul Gaultier did skirts for men, which were really great. I think he was one of the first designers to actually push that look. There was the 90s where some of the Japanese designers did it off-and-on but mostly there was this sort of Belgian influence that happened, which was really directed towards women; but I found the look so exciting that it was something that I adopted for myself. In the 2000s Yohji Yamamoto did a beautiful collection in spring/summer 2004 for men; almost all of them were wearing skirts of some sort. At the very end of the 2000s there was a *Comme des Garçons* collection for men, spring/summer '09, which also featured a lot of skirts for men.

Generally speaking I think things like skirts and wraps and dresses are genuinely beyond gender especially when you go outside the West. I try to keep a global picture on the way things look and see if whether or not it is something that would be both applicable both to myself as well as to my business. I like this idea that men can have more options available to them just like women can. I think there's a real addressing the gender balance by offering the same things that one would offer to a woman. I don't think that one necessarily has to be queer to wear a skirt if one is a man, but it helps (chuckle). ▼