



femininity



▶ THE
NORMALIZATION
OF FEMININE MALE
FASHION allows
men to break free
from the gender
binary of fashion.

attitude of the wearer that has changed,” Zu Grau said. “Prominent men wearing atypical outfits confidently in public is inspiring. Those clothes might not be particularly feminine but, feature little, gender non-conforming touches that make us look twice, and that keeps us engaged. The confidence of presenting this, not just on the red carpet but in daily life as well, is what I see as a shift in recent years and what keeps me hoping for a more all-inclusive fashion future.”

One great way of mixing up your style is to start thrifting. Zu Grau was raised in communist East Germany and recalls wearing donated women’s clothing, as more women’s clothes were donated than men’s. Without even realizing, these stereotypically feminine garments began to bring Zu Grau confidence and joy. Zu Grau posits that the increasing popularity of thrift stores may encourage more men to incorporate feminine pieces into their wardrobes.

“Secondhand clothing stores are particularly great for that. It is often impossible to segregate clothing strictly into men’s and women’s, and therefore one gets exposed to a broad variety of styles,” said Zu Grau. “The positive environmental aspect of reusing clothes instead of buying new is a plus.”


Mainstream brands like Zara and Urban Outfitters steer in the direction of gender fluidity with their menswear. Tight tanks, textured vests and flashy accessories allow men to test out different looks to see what makes them most confident.

It’s 2023 after all, meaning social media definitely holds the lead role in why this trend has grown so immensely. Social media users have shared their personal journeys with wardrobe experimentation and have allowed men’s femininity to become more normalized. Freshman architecture student at University of Miami, Christian Ramos, noticed that before people had begun posting feminine fashion content, men didn’t feel they could be as free with the way they dress.

“I think it’s cool because it’s allowing men to be more comfortable in their own skin, and experiment with their own styles, different materials, different fabrics, colors,” Ramos said. “Now we are giving a man a different look, a different definition.”

A great amount of influence stems from ‘70s musicians like Freddie Mercury, David Bowie and Elton John, who were pioneers in the emergence of this style and continue to influence this generation’s style choices. Who doesn’t love a giant pair of sunglasses? 2023 UM alum Jaden Kim has noticed the influence of both Western and Eastern musicians on the feminine-male fashion movement.

“You look at stuff like K-Pop and it’s feminine, but it’s still very cool,” Kim said. “It’s not like a weak feminine, it’s like a very comfortable, strong [and] cool beauty.”

Men of all sexualities are now breaking down the typical gender binary of fashion and are embracing this shift in culture. The feminization of male fashion opens many doors for men to experiment with style, without feeling the pressure to dress a certain way and to even take a stand against the boundaries of gender. The shift from “macho-masculine” to “fem-masculine” really brings forth the versatility of gender, not only in clothes but also in confidence and the perception of beauty. 

► **WHEN IN DOUBT, stick to black and white or all black for a sleek look. Additionally, a simple button-up shirt can create a sexy “old money” look.**



Male fashion is quickly evolving. Today, it's not uncommon to see men wear **pearl necklaces**, softer tones and cohesive outfits as they stray from the typical gender binary. For some, that may mean **frills and lace**, and for others, it might mean using different patterns and accessories. From your favorite movie stars to the everyday college student, **feminine male fashion** is taking over, and Distraction says it's here to stay.

words_victoria_fondeur. photo_sharron_lou. design_lizzite_kristal.



▶ PEARLS ARE A GREAT TOUCH to make any outfit more feminine. They simultaneously class-up and soften any look.

It's not just smaller companies that are embracing femininity. Even huge fashion houses like Prada truly take this to heart when creating lines such as the summer 2023 menswear line. Through mixing rigid suit patterns with more delicate striped patterns and bright colors, as well as pairing garments with heeled boots, they've have shown that even they're getting the memo. A manager for Christian Dior, who asked to be identified as Nicole for this article, has worked in the luxury retail business for over 18 years with various brands. She argues feminine male fashion has taken off because the industry has historically embraced risk when creating new collections.

"Fashion is always evolving, so you do have to keep up with what people want," said Nicole. "Fashion takes those risks, maybe something that they thought would work didn't, and they [had to] try something else."

Many luxury brands are a prominent source of inspiration for the budding feminine male fashion movement. More and more celebrities have been rocking feminine Gucci looks since actor Jared Leto starred in the 2021 film "House of Gucci." Since the '80s, Gucci has often played around with mens fashion. The fall 1995 ready-to-wear line included fitted velvet mens suits that did not shy away from color, and other shows throughout the decade



▶ PATTERNED SHIRTS ARE A PLAYFUL and fun addition to your closet. They spice up an otherwise plain outfit while expressing individuality.

blended flare-fitted pants with large bowties. Nicole credits Gucci as one of the first luxury fashion brands to enter the feminine male fashion space.

"I would say Gucci [has been the most influential to this shift]. [When] Alessandro [Michele] took over Gucci and did something different for the house, they were open to it," said Nicole. "[Consumers] were buying the things [that] were made, both men and women."

Pop star Harry Styles' Vogue cover shoot in 2020 arguably put feminine male fashion at the center of pop culture. With a huge fan base, Styles made himself a modern-day trailblazer in fashion, expression and sexuality. Through the Met Gala and other star-studded events, other male celebrities have followed suit. From Evan Mocks' 19th-century inspired corseted suit to Pedro Pascal's bright red trench coat, Hollywood's biggest stars are embracing this revolution in many ways.

Fashion designer Fñde Zu Grau entered the luxury fashion industry when he first appeared on the reality show "Project Runway" for season 13 and subsequently "Project Runway All-Stars" for season five. Zu Grau feels that celebrities like Billy Porter, Timothée Chalamet and Harry Styles are important to continue this progression in men's fashion that currently combats a lot of negativity.

"I think it is not a particular piece of clothing but the



▶ MEN WITH PURSES ARE STYLE ICONS — breaking gender stereotypes, incorporating convenience and accessorizing to elevate an outfit.