

# I Am Dandy: The Return of the Elegant Gentleman

By Nathaniel Adams



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The dandy is back! Gone are the days of arbitrary fashion, casual sportswear, and slick metrosexuals. Today, more men are discovering dandyism and giving it their own contemporary look. Even today, men who devote themselves to the finer things in life ?especially when it comes to fashion ?mostly arouse suspicion. Vanity is frowned upon and lavish grooming is generally deemed superficial or unmanly. Fortunately, a small but tenacious movement has been defying these social dictates for more than 200 years. Its adherents indulge in their love of quality clothing and accessories not only privately, but also very publicly. Photographer Rose Callahan and writer Nathaniel Adams have spent years exploring the fascinating phenomenon of dandyism. They visit contemporary dandies in their homes to document their impeccably designed lives in both words and images. Well-kempt to the tips of their beards and wearing three-piece suits with flawlessly folded pocket handkerchiefs and supple kid gloves, their protagonists revive the charm of the past and reveal that cultivated idleness can be incredibly hard work. These gallant beaus first came on the scene in eighteenth-century London and Paris, where they supported the livelihoods of many a local tailor, today's dandies continue to propagate a look characterized by trimmed beards, pomade, velvet slippers, and even a touch of make-up as a shield to mask the darker sides of life. Yet in their carefully composed portraits, Callahan and Adams reveal the cracks in this façade. They describe the sacrifices that many fulltime dandies need to make while pursuing their personal aesthetic ideals. A refuge for eccentrics, dandyism has seen a revival in the Anglo-American realm over the last several years. For example, today's distinguished gentlemen can ride their vintage bikes around London during the tweed Run to show off their authentic outfits or attend the Jazz Age Lawn Party on new York City's Governor's Island to bring the era of the Great Gatsby back to life, if only for a few hours. Now, the phenomenon is again going more international. Known for their Dandy Portraits, the spiffy duo of Callahan and Adams approaches their topic ?and their protagonists?with a keen, yet empathic eye. In this book, they successfully capture the styles, attitudes, and philosophies of contemporary dandyism in all its nuances.

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#### I Am Dandy: The Return of the Elegant Gentleman By Nathaniel Adams Bibliography

• Sales Rank: #244154 in Books

• Brand: imusti

Published on: 2013-09-13Released on: 2013-09-13Original language: English

• Number of items: 1

• Dimensions: 12.00" h x 9.75" w x 1.25" l, .0 pounds

• Binding: Hardcover

• 256 pages

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"This is a beautifully rich and magnetic book that will be perused time and time again by those interested in the world's most rakish gentlemen."

—Gentleman's Gazette

#### From the Inside Flap

The dandy is back! Gone are the days of arbitrary fashion, casual sportswear, and slick metrosexuals. Today, more men are discovering dandyism and giving it their own contemporary look.

#### About the Author

Rose Callahan is a photographer and filmmaker based in Brooklyn, New York. Originally from San Francisco, California, Rose made her way to the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn in 1999 to pursue photography. In 2008, she began The Dandy Portraits: The Lives of Exquisite Gentlemen Today (which became a blog in 2010) as a personal project to tell the nuanced story of extreme masculine elegance alive today. Rose found that the dandies of today are not a cohesive subculture or creed; rather, each man is a fiercely independent arbiter of what it means to be a gentleman and to live with style.

Nathaniel "Natty" Adams is a New York-based writer and manager of the Against Nature menswear atelier. His NYU undergraduate thesis was on 20th Century Dandyism and, as a student at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, he wrote a book proposal on the history of Dandyism, for which he won the prestigious Lynton Fellowship. Adams used the grant money to travel through America, Europe, and Africa meeting and interviewing the best-dressed men in the world.

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#### Jerry Day:

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#### **Theodore Mullis:**

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#### Mary Adam:

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