

TITLE: Concert fashion is on the rise – what does it reveal about your psychology?

STANDFIRST: *Dazed speaks to our readers and psychologists to get to the bottom of this emerging fashion trend.*

Feather boas, pink cowboy hats and plenty of sparkles is the official blueprint for Harry Styles' *Love on Tour* outfits (HSL0T). Switch to a silver space-cowboy aesthetic and you've landed at Beyonce's *Renaissance* tour. Dominating TikTok, concert fashion has become its own entity and nowadays what you wear to a concert demonstrates the level of fan you are. A quick TikTok search reveals the staggering popularity, with #LoveOnTourOutfits amassing 158.5 million views and #RenaissanceOutfit gathering 46.1 million views. Concert fashion is being redefined as its own sub-genre.

Why do we mimic our favourite artists though? And what does it reveal about yourself and your psyche? Dr Carolyn Mair, Cognitive Psychologist and Fashion Business Consultant, author of the *Psychology of Fashion* explains, "from a psychological perspective, humans have a fundamental need for social connection and belonging. Dressing like their favourite artist enables fans to identify themselves as part of the artist's community." Connecting with other fans helps to build a sense of belonging and validates their emotional connections with artists. "This can generate positive emotions and a sense of fulfilment through feeling connected to something they deeply appreciate and find inspiring," says Mair. "It can also be a form of escapism in which the fan subconsciously believes they are embodying the artist's characteristics and even their lifestyle."

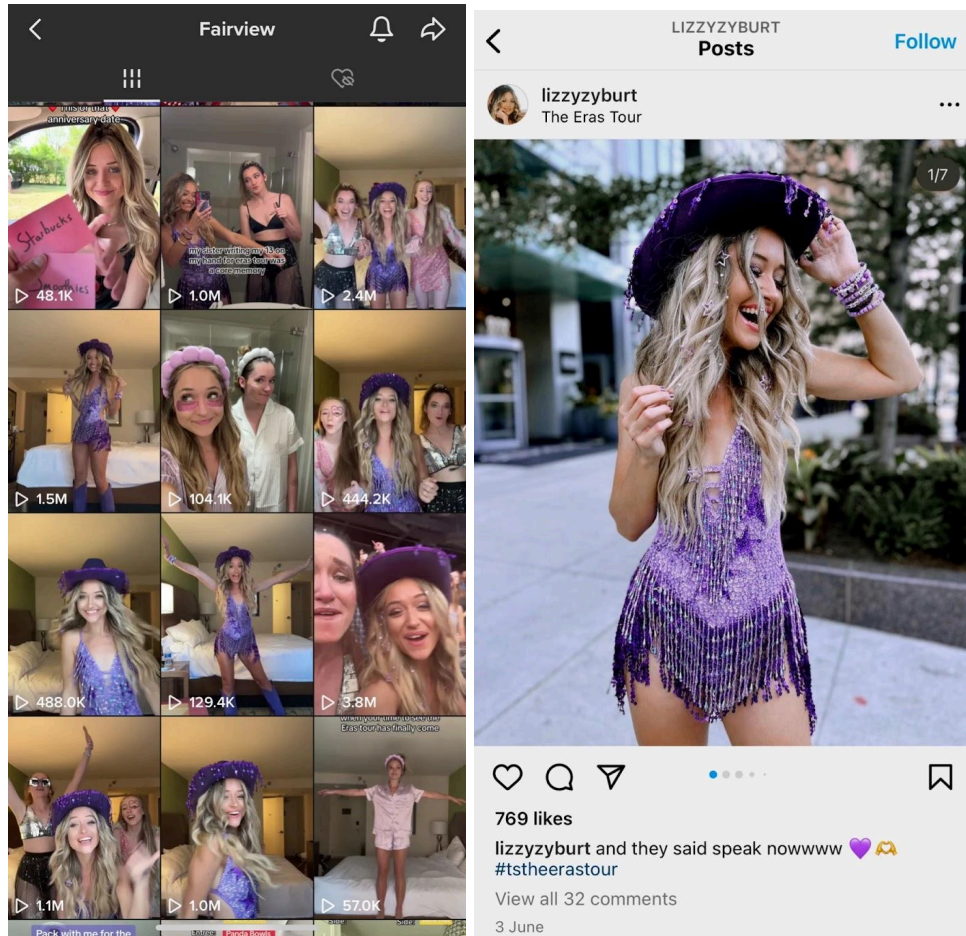
After depending on escapism during Covid lockdowns where concerts were banned, it makes sense that escapism has taken on a new form in concert fashion. Fashion psychologist, Dr Dion Terrelonge, points out the ritualistic elements that are comforting to fans when they dress like their idols. "A concert is much like another ritual; it is a time for celebration and coming together around a central tenet i.e. the performing artist and the socially agreed traits of their fans," she says. "Dressing up allows you to be a part of something bigger than yourself - you are no longer just you, you are one of the Harries, one of the BeeHive or a Swifty."

"It reveals that the performative fandom is still very much alive," says Dr Terrelonge. Despite the availability of online fan forums, unprecedented access to the lives of artists via social media,

fans still value tangibly demonstrating their affiliation much as they did in the mid to late 19th century.”

One artist with a notably dedicated fandom is Taylor Swift, whose Eras Tour is on track to be one of the highest-grossing of all time – and the best dressed. Fans flock to the stadium in outfits inspired by one of Swift’s albums. Lizzy Zyburt, 28, from Florida is one half of pop country duo Fairview and recently went viral on TikTok after creating her own *Speak Now* inspired outfit for the tour. Amassing over 3.8 million views and over 737,000 likes on her ‘get ready with me’ video, with a combined view of over 15 million on all her videos displaying her outfit, Lizzy reveals her inspiration.

“*Speak Now* has always been one of my favourite albums, and purple is my favourite colour. I saw this Australian company called @shopeasytiger on Instagram back in early November 2022 before I even had tickets to the tour and I remember saying, if I get to go I am wearing that,” she says. “My boyfriend got me the bodysuit for Christmas! It came and it was the prettiest, sparkliest thing in the world.”



Lizzy customised the suit and created separate pieces to go with her outfit. “I ended up sewing more sequins around the skirt, painting a cowboy hat, and making cowboy boots to match,” she says. “I’ve always loved crafts. This is probably my favourite yet - a sparkly, purple dream!”

The atmosphere of the concert was a judgement free zone full of compliments and support. “Post-pandemic, people are taking concert culture to the next level,” she says. “We were stuck inside with sweatpants, and now it’s time to wear boas, cowboy boots, bedazzle a jacket and feel like you’re on top of the world.”

Dressing like your idol for a concert does not only evoke a sense of belonging, but it also inadvertently boosts your confidence. *Dazed* asked psychotherapist Dr Farah Naz to analyse what our readers wore to concerts revealed about not only themselves, but concert fashion in general. She explains: “psychological experiments indicate that the colour, comfort, fit and style

of our clothes can directly affect our confidence levels with more than 96 per cent of people reporting a change in their emotional state with a change in their style of dressing.”

The long-term effects of dressing in this way can lead to personality changes as they embark on a transformative journey of identification with their chosen idol. “This process is a gradual one, wherein the fan progressively assimilates the traits, values, and experiences of their beloved figure,” she says. “Eventually the connection between the fan and the idol grows so profound that the fan starts to perceive that any event or occurrence in their idol’s life has a direct and personal impact on their own existence.”

Harry Styles’ fans, nicknamed ‘Harries’ are notoriously invested in the singer’s life as many of them grew up alongside him. “HSL0T is a concert that gathers two types of generations: the 1D fans back in the 2010s and a younger generation who are fans of Harry Styles now,” says 23-year-old Camille Rodot from Paris, who recently attended one of Styles’ shows. “Being an older 1D fan, I wanted to differentiate myself from a younger ‘teen’ audience and dress more maturely.”



“I wanted to both reflect my own clothing style and adapt it to Harry Styles’,” says Rodot. “I had a black skirt from *The Kooples* with fishnet opening and big Doc Martens boots; a more grungy look as well as a bright pink handbag to add colour and fit the joyous vibe of the concert.”

Her skirt was inspired by a look that Harry Styles wore for *US Vogue* in 2020. “I thought it matched the vibe of this look and it could actually be a skirt that he would wear himself,” she explains.



Dazed asked Dr Naz to share her thoughts on what this reveals about Rodot's psyche. "Here we have someone saying I adore my idol in my unique, free, independent way. Although I adore him I am also free like he is," she says.

Carly Amax, 21, a music business student from New Jersey is also a Harry Styles superfan, and has seen him in concert nine times. What is it that keeps her coming back? "The environment he has created for his shows is so full of happiness and acceptance that it makes it hard to stay away," she reveals. "The joy of dancing amongst a sea of fans is a memory that I'll hold onto forever."

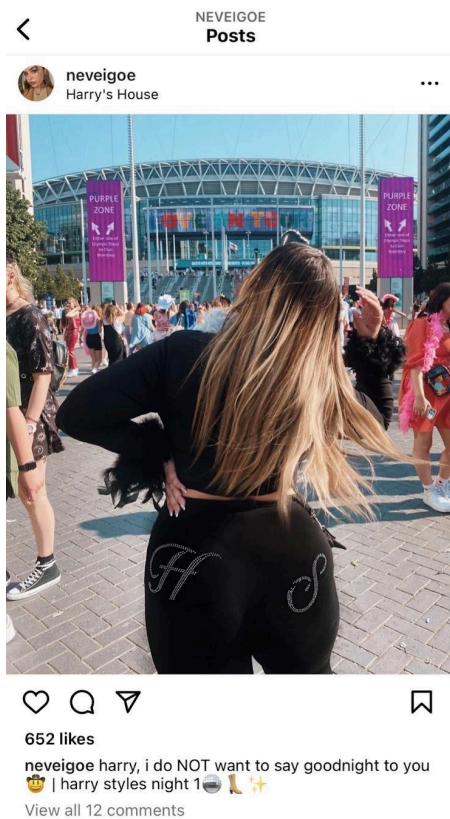


Amax put her own unique spin and created two outfits for HSL0T. Inspired by Styles' Gucci Ha Ha Ha collection, Amax gathered her friends to create their outfits together. The denim corset dress with teddy bear detailing pays homage to Styles while Amax explains she incorporated the Love On Tour logo so she would have a piece of it with her forever.

“Love on Tour was a safe space for fans to dress in a way that they wouldn’t normally; from feather boas to Elton John glasses, Love On Tour was always full of fashion moments that will be remembered forever,” she says. Feather boas became synonymous with ‘Harries’, with Australian supermarket Big W reporting a 114 per cent increase in sales in the weeks leading up to Styles’ concert.

Both of Amax's outfits fit Styles' aesthetic, but what does it reveal about her? Dr Naz shares her thoughts. "Here we see someone who has created their own outfit to support their idol. They are showing their love in an adoring, childlike way with cuddling teddy bears, love hearts and polka dots all indicating innocence and purity but at the same time sexy, lively and energetic," she says. "There is clearly a perception that this is the persona of the idol." For her second outfit, Dr Naz has a slightly different take. "Here we have someone sending a message to their idol and others that they will be dutiful, loyal and fun," she says.

London-based concert fan Neve Igoe, 23, also decided to put her own unique spin on her outfit for HSL0T. "I've seen a few outfits from Harry's shows where he has his initials 'HS' printed on the back of his trousers and instantly thought I must recreate so I decided to bedazzle them on my own," she says. "As for the feather cuffs on my top, we all know that is something heavily coded with Harry concerts, so I decided to incorporate the two together, finishing the look with diamante accessories and silver, glittery makeup." Dr Naz reveals, "this is someone saying I am fun, and sexy like my idol." Igoe exudes confidence bringing her own twist to Styles' aesthetic.



Another Harry Styles concert veteran, Igoe has seen him a total of six times, including most recently two nights at Wembley back to back. “His concerts are an outlet to express yourself, wear what you want and be what you want, which is exactly what I felt by wearing something so flamboyant and fun which is what Harry feels to me,” she says. Though each concert has the same setlist, the experience is different each time. Igoe shares that her favourite moment was forming possibly the longest conga line in the world. “It was a night of being yourself and having fun with complete strangers, yet it felt like home,” she explains.

HSL0T was one of the defining tours of this year, however Beyoncé’s *Renaissance* tour dominates ticket sales and Instagram feeds worldwide. A love letter to the Black, queer roots of disco-house in memory of her late Uncle Johnny, who died from complications caused by HIV.

Harvie Lyons, 22, from Manchester attended one of her shows in London in May. Lyons explains his vision behind his cowboy look was inspired by the tease visuals for the *Renaissance* album. “Obviously still waiting for the actual visuals as mother moves at her own pace,” he jokes.

He created his own unique hat which was popular with members of the ‘BeyHive’ - what Beyoncé’s unwavering legion of fans call themselves. To buy a handmade disco hat costs upwards of £100 on sites like Etsy, so Lyons looked to DIY. “The hat was a project, I spent at least twelve hours sticking each of the disco tiles to it,” he says. “Me and my flatmate spent evenings making them whilst watching Beyoncé’s Netflix special.” The end result was a glittery, disco ball hat, however sadly Lyons didn’t get to wear it as the hat was too heavy. Instead he proudly displays it in his flat as a reminder of an unforgettable evening.



“I felt like this was a true event rather than a usual gig - it was an opportunity to go all out,” he says. “The second I had my tickets, my first thought was what should I wear?” The concert had a long-lasting impact on Lyons’ style as he reveals he has since incorporated silver into his wardrobe. “I did purchase a load of merch - the *Renaissance* will be continuing for months in my wardrobe,” he laughs.

Dr Naz reveals her psychoanalysis of Lyons’ outfit. “Here we have someone who follows a designer brand and shows off their wealth, and sense of importance in the way they dress, but he also his rigidity in his choice of simple colours,” she says.

A monochromatic look with a designer twist was also the inspiration for 23-year-old Chloe Pavlou, podcast host of *The Girlies Group Chat*. Pavlou saw Harry Styles earlier in the week and noted the drastic difference in theme for SZA’s concert. Swiping through Instagram posts to see what fans wore to SZA’s previous concerts, she was able to find an outfit from her wardrobe that matched the aesthetic. “SZA’s music is quite chilled so I wanted my outfit to reflect that but still be in my style,” she explains.



Curating the perfect outfit and playing ‘dress up’ is one of Pavlou’s passions. “I feel like live music gives such a rush which I similarly experience when I wear a glitzy or extravagant outfit,” she says. “Fashion is so amazing, especially when used as a self-expressive art form. It really does help when everyone in the same venue has the same vibe as you, so you don’t feel overdressed or out of place.”

This trend of embodying the aesthetic of an artist shows no sign of slowing down, and hints towards a new normal for concert goers. Gone are the days of throwing on a merch tee bought prior to the show over an everyday outfit. For Lizzy Zyburt, she has started to see this happen in shows that she plays. Often wearing her hair half up, half down with a little bun at the top for her shows, Zyburt recalls the first time seeing a fan mimic her. “A lot of people have called it the ‘Lizzy bun’ and I’ll never forget the time a mum and her daughter came to our show and she was wearing her hair half up half down in a little bun,” she says. “The mum told me she wanted

to wear a 'Lizzy bun'. Having people do something the way you do is just such a cool thing – I don't think I'll ever get over it."