



## Black LGBT+ fashion icons



# The LGBT+ community and fashion

- For most people personal style is a really important way of expressing ourselves, sharing who we are with the world
- For LGBT+ folks this can be even more true
- For many LGBT+ folks the clothes and accessories they choose to wear lie at the heart of expressing their identity; for many dressing in a way which goes against the grain is an act of rebellion



# What even *is* fashion?

The fashion industry includes loads of different jobs, here are a few:

- Fashion designers
- Fashion photographers
- Models
- Garment technologists (who make clothes)
- Fashion journalists
- Fashion illustrators
- And many more!



# 'Gender neutral' fashion

- Many 'gender neutral' clothes are intended to be androgynous (neither traditionally masculine or feminine)
- This often means boxy, shapeless clothes in neutral colours
- This is not what everyone who wants to challenge gender wants to wear!
- Androgyny is not the same as gender neutral and gender-fluid!



# Black LGBT+ folks in fashion

Fashion has historically been very dominated by white folks, some of whom are LGBT+. Often this has been cis gay white men (for example Yves Saint Laurent, Calvin Klein and Versace). The world of fashion often excludes Black folks (as well as groups from the global majority).

- Why do you think this may be?
- Can you name Black folks in fashion (LGBT+ or not)?
- What about folks who are also marginalised by their gender identity?



# Black LGBT+ folks in fashion

- This is starting to change!  
There are more and more Black and Brown folks in all areas of the fashion industry, including some important figures at the top who are pushing for change
- Why is representation in the fashion industry so important?



# Black LGBT+ fashion icons

The next slides will introduce you to some fashion icons from all across the industry. Think about:

- What you **like/don't like** about their work?
- The **impact** this person is having on the industry
- How they **celebrate their identity** through their work
- How they **challenge ideas of gender and/or race** through their work



# Fashion journalist: Edward Enninfu





# Who is Edward Enninful?

- Edward Enninful is the current Editor in Chief of British Vogue
- He is the first man, first gay man and first black person to be Editor in Chief
- His career began when he was just 18 when he became fashion director of the magazine i-D
- He was Born in Ghana and raised in West London in a working-class household
- He is a proud gay man and married his long-term partner this year on his 50th Birthday



# Edward Enninful at Vogue

- Enninful is keen to challenge the whiteness of the fashion industry by bringing Black folks to the forefront of his work
- He champions Black voices and speaks out against racism in the industry and in society more generally
- This February he spearheaded the first Black African cover of Vogue (right)



# Edward Enninful at Vogue

- Enninful has spoken out about the racism he has experienced in the industry, particularly of racial profiling
- In September 2019 he led on the Forces for Change Issue, co-edited with Meghan Markle, which foregrounded Black voices
- In September 2020 a similar issue, focusing on activism was released



# Edward Enninful: in his own words

- [Watch this short interview about his journey and his mission for inclusivity](#)
- [Watch Edward interview his first cover girl, Adwoa Aboah about diversity in fashion](#)
- [Watch this longer interview for a more in-depth view of him](#)



# Fashion Designers



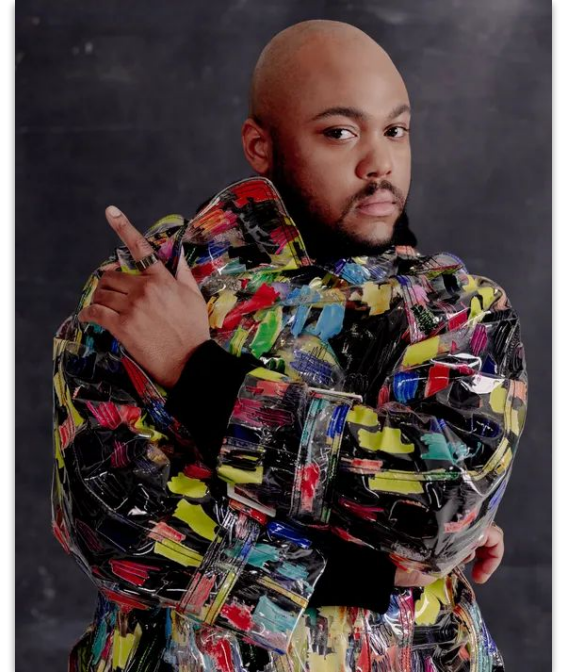
# Willi Smith - paving the way

- Willi Smith was a fashion designer who is often regarded as the most successful Black designer in fashion
- He was openly gay
- He died from AIDS-related causes in 1987
- He was famous for introducing 'streetwear' to the runway



# Christopher John Rogers

- Christopher John Rogers is one of the most celebrated designers in fashion right now
- His work is very theatrical, using lots of bright colours and shapes
- The boldness of his work is designed to make folks stand out in the way that he wanted to, growing up gay, but felt he couldn't





# Christopher John Rogers





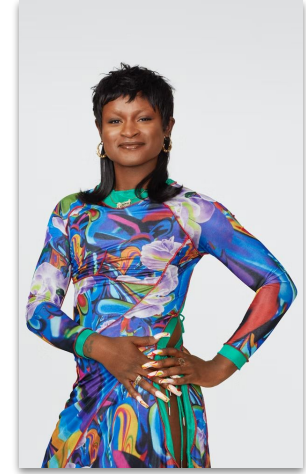
# Adebayo Oke-Lawal

- Adebayo Oke-Lawal is a gay Nigerian fashion designer
- He challenges stereotypes, particularly of gender and toxic masculinity through his work
- His work celebrates Nigerian cultures in a non-traditional form
- [Watch this short video](#) where Adebayo talks about using fashion as a force of change



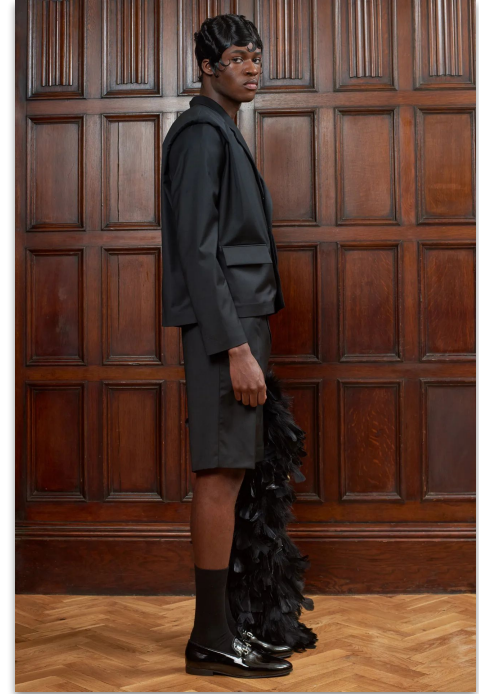
# Pierre Davis

- Pierre Davis was the first trans woman to showcase at New York Fashion Week
- Her brand, No Sesso is a genderless fashion label
- Her brand is centred around community and inclusivity



# Bianca Saunders

- Born and raised in South-East London, Bianca Saunders' designs celebrate Caribbean and London cultures
- Her designs challenge ideas of masculinity
- [Watch this trailer for her Spring/Summer 2021 collection](#)
- What different references can you spot?
- How does she use clothing to play with gender and sexuality?



# Fashion Models



# Aaron Philip

- Aaron Philip is a trans Black model
- She was the first model using a wheelchair to walk for a major luxury fashion brand, for Moschino in 2022
- She was featured as part of Beyonce's 'This is Black History' series
- [See her talk about disability, race, transness and more in this short video](#)



# Ama Elsessar

- Ama Elsessar is a non-binary model
- They have modelled for Fenty
- They starred in Calvin Klein's Pride Campaign
- Their goal is to “create space for more marginalised queer people of colour”





# Aweng Ade-Chuol

- Aweng Ade-Chuol is a Sudanese born model
- She and her wife, Lexy, were picture on the front of Elle magazine kissing
- She has spoken openly about the homophobic abuse she has suffered and the impact this had on her mental health



# Iconic looks





# Billy Porter

Billy Porter is known for breaking boundaries of gender and race with his clothing. Here are some of his most iconic looks!



**Get creative!**



# Express who YOU are

Fashion is about being who you are, sharing who you are with the world and feeling pride in your identity. Here are some ideas for activities you can do as a group.



# Activity 1

Use the templates provided (resource 1) to design your own outfit/clothing range which celebrates who you are, challenges expectations and binaries and plays with what 'should' or 'shouldn't be worn by certain people. Watch the videos below for some fashion illustration tips

- [Drawing from scratch with Black fashion illustrator Yelen Ayé](#)
- [Draw onto the templates provided](#)

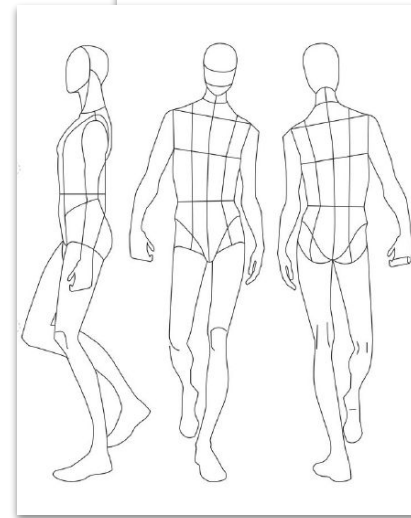


## Black LGBT+ fashion icons: resource 1

Below are lots of body outlines for your activities this session. These are just there as a guide, folks can draw their own too! Use the videos on the slide show to help you learn how to draw onto these kinds of figures

**Activity 1:** Design an outfit (or a whole clothing line) which celebrates your identity. Look at the slide deck for some inspiration and think outside the box!

**Activity 2:** Design some genderful clothing (not genderless) which breaks free from the idea the androgyny of many gender neutral clothes.



# Activity 2

Use the same templates resource 1) to design your own gender neutral (or genderful!) clothing. Think about what the world would be like if we were all free from the binaries of gender and sexuality in our clothing!



# Activity 3

Design your own Vogue front cover!  
Think about how Edward Enninful  
has used this front cover to  
challenge society and stereotypes.  
How can you use your cover to  
celebrate LGBT+ folks who aren't  
traditionally visible in fashion? Use  
resource 2.



**Activity: Create your own front cover for a magazine!** This could focus on Black LGBT+ fashion models, designers or figures or celebrate outfits you really like (in collage) or outfits you've designed and drawn. It's really up to you!

Below are some examples for inspiration (these are also on the slides)! You could:

- a) Cut out or trace the logos for Vogue below and make your cover by hand
- b) Make your cover digitally
- c) Make up your own magazine

VOGUE

VOGUE



# More ideas

- Find pictures of LGBT+ icons on the runway and **collage your own runway looks**
- **Use materials such as newspapers to make your own clothes!**  
(Try having a theme such as 'autumn outfits' and putting a timer to see which group can make the best outfit the quickest)
- **Put on your own catwalk!** Make a runway in the room you have your Pride Group in and





## **LGBT+ resources for schools:**

[www.facebook.com/groups/lgbtinschools](https://www.facebook.com/groups/lgbtinschools)

[www.justlikeus.org](http://www.justlikeus.org) | [@JustLikeUsUK](https://twitter.com/JustLikeUsUK)

