



Preppy with a Dose of Sex

Possibly one of the least pretentious designers in fashion, Calgary-based Haithem Elkadiki has a lot he could brag about. His resume boasts training at Toronto's International Academy of Design, showing numerous collections at L'Oréal Toronto Fashion Week, and participating at Premium, Berlin's international fashion trade show.

The Libyan-born designer has been creating masterfully tailored menswear for those in the know since 2001 under his label, KaaDiki. He designs for men with confidence, those who like to be noticed but not stand out. Currently working on his Fall 2010 collection, *Outlooks* caught up with Elkadiki this summer to talk fashion, grooming and Pierre Trudeau.

Outlooks: What inspires your designs?

Elkadiki: I love to travel and I'm constantly inspired by the way I see men dressing in other cities. For my next collection I've taken a lot of cues from the men of Rome. Italian men look put together but don't try too hard. They wear clothes that fit them perfectly and accessorize beautifully.

Outlooks: Who are your fashion icons?

Elkadiki: Right now I for men I think Nicolas Sarkozy is pretty interesting. He's such a stylish leader, you see pictures of him on the beach, wearing Ray Ban glasses and he looks so hip. I haven't seen a political figure with that much style since Pierre Trudeau.

Outlooks: You don't often hear 'Pierre Trudeau' and 'fashion icon' in the same breath, what made him so chic?

Elkadiki: I came across a book about him years ago and I was stunned at some of the fashion choices he made. While all the other leaders were in dark suits he would wear a light one. When he was surrounded by cowboy hats he wore a fedora. I even found a picture of him wearing a cape. He was always put together and dressed with purpose. I love it when men accessorize well and am hoping to come out with a few of my own next year.

Outlooks: What kinds of accessories make the man?

Elkadiki: Shoes and belts are always a must and I believe a nicely polished, classic black dress shoes can take a man anywhere. Too many men have the same pair of black leather shoes that they wear to everything and let get beat up. Once

your shoes are creased it's probably time to donate them.

Outlooks: How do you describe your own personal style?

Elkadiki: Preppy with a dose of sex.

Outlooks: Do you believe gay men dress better than straight men?

Elkadiki: A lot of people think that but it can go either way. There are pockets in every community of well-dressed men who understand fashion and know how to pull it together. There are lots of straight men that have amazing fashion sense. One thing I notice is with some gay men, bears for example, they think to be really

fashionable isn't masculine and in turn they wear overly casual clothes. I think you can be fashion-forward and still masculine.

Outlooks: Give us one fashion tip for *Outlooks* readers.

Elkadiki: Just be you and be nicely groomed-but don't overdo it. I think grooming can backfire when people start over-tanning, bleaching their teeth and tweezing excessively. An over processed look isn't necessary, just keep it simple and be real. Also, smile. Nothing completes an outfit better than a nice smile.

KaaDiki clothing can be found at Worth in Calgary and online at www.kaadiki.com. **O**

