

# THE DRESDEN DOLLS

Photo by Anita Zvonar | Interview by Jodi Goulart | Hair & Makeup by Andrea Heldman | Location: Theatre Passe Muraille, Toronto

**WHAT THEY'RE WEARING:**

Amanda Palmer: Both the bustier and blue skirt were purchased on Newbury Street in Boston, Massachusetts; stockings from a shop in Madrid, Spain. Brian Viglione: Pin-stripe pants from Porta Classica in Boston.

**WHAT THEY WEAR ON STAGE:**

The Dolls have been wearing basically the same outfits since they started performing six years ago. Amanda sticks to her comfortable combo of stockings, pettipants and either a T-shirt or dress. Brian usually wears a suit. Often by the end of a rousing set, the duo's clothes and makeup have been shed. "There's a kind of beauty in the freedom to let your makeup slide off and to wear almost nothing on stage and let the performance speak for itself and have it transcend," says Palmer. "That serves the kind of music, too," adds Viglione. "By virtue of the nature of the music, and that intimate aspect, to show that kind of human element."

**STYLE PHILOSOPHY:**

Palmer describes the couple's image as a tool to express their music that's both "extremely important and also not at all." "There's no direct message," says Viglione. "What people who listen to [us] pick up on is to have the confidence to be yourself and to be able to have a good laugh at yourself as well." There is a message that Palmer is intentionally sending out to female fans, though. "I don't think a lot of women understand how sexy just simple self-confidence can be," she says. "But I

also love fucking with people and wearing fishnets and high heels with hairy armpits."

**FASHION VICES:**

"I'm into stockings and tights," says Palmer. "I can't pass a specialty stocking store without going in." Viglione is slowly building up a hat collection. So far he has six bowlers, two cowboy hats, a fedora and a couple of baseball caps. He also likes to collect what he describes as "gaudy, tight-fitting, *Golden Girls* nightmare show-pieces." His most recent acquisition is a dress of royal blue sequins that feels like a suit of armor.

**MOST TREASURED ITEM:**

For Viglione, it's his acid-washed jean jacket from fifth grade that's covered in Warrant and Slayer patches. The jacket's "crowning jewels" are its autographs by his drumming heroes, Tony Williams and Elvin Jones. Every time Palmer moves, she brings her green, sleeveless, *Alice In Wonderland*-type dress from high school with her, even though it's too worn to wear.

**STYLE INSPIRATION:**

Palmer likes the neo-romantic new wave look that musicians such as Adam Ant, Cyndi Lauper and Prince sported in the early '80s. When it comes to their stage wear, the Dolls draw from film noir and silent films. ◀



