

MOOD BOARD

TODD SNYDER

Rhapsody's *monthly look at what's currently inspiring a top designer*

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AS NEWLYWEDS, my wife would find me making a shirt while watching football and drinking a beer," says New York menswear designer Todd Snyder. "She'd say, 'I don't know where you came from.'"

That would be Ames, Iowa, where Snyder fought boredom with vintage military movies and teaching himself to sew. "I read a Ralph Lauren book in the '80s and decided that's what I wanted to become," he says. "That's all I wanted to be after high school, but I didn't know you could do it."

Luckily, Snyder, whose Dutch surname fittingly translates to "one who makes outer-garments," received some good advice from his family: "My dad said, 'To be the best, you must work for the best.'" And that's precisely what he did, with tenures at Gap, J. Crew and, of course, Polo Ralph Lauren.

"I knew no one could ever work harder than me," Snyder remembers of those early years. "That was my advantage." Since he launched his eponymous line in 2011, Snyder's tireless work ethic hasn't gone unnoticed. In the past three years, he has earned three nominations for the Council of Fashion Designers of America Swarovski Award for Menswear, been a CFDA/*Vogue* Fashion Fund finalist (2013), collaborated with venerable athletic label Champion and opened his first New York store, City Gym.



1 ON MILITARY VINTAGE:

This one is a mood board from Todd Snyder + Champion for fall 2015. The mood was really based around military naval, which we called "cadet." I'm inspired by military vintage, but I like to mix it up with luxury pieces.

2 ON JAMES DEAN:

That's a shot of James Dean in a double-breasted military coat. It's cool, casual, elegant but rugged. I've always liked the tension between sophisticated and rebellious sides in people. People would be very boring if they were all one or the other.

3 ON HIS UNIFORM:

I'm a sport-coat-and-jeans guy. Jeans are my go-to item. I probably have three or four pairs, and I've always rolled the cuffs. It's a look I adopted from the movie *The Outsiders*. Back in the '50s, they were practical: As you'd grow, you'd unroll.



4 ON THE SPORTS PHOTOS:

A lot of these are from old military stock photos we found. It's the whole active vibe, the cadets. I liked the feeling in the push-up photo that everyone's doing everything in unison. It all plays back to the athletic theme.

5 ON HIS SHOWROOM:

It all has athletic influences, especially cadets and people in training. This is an old gymnasium chair, for example. Every piece is thought out and fits into the concept. This is our showroom we sell from, so it all has to go together.

6 ON FINDING INSPIRATION:

I'm always ripping out magazine pages at airports. Also, I use Pinterest. It's my new obsession. I pin things and always have a digital record. I'm constantly gathering ideas. Books are also really important to my process.

7 ON CINEMATIC FASHION:

I think of a story or movie and put together a costume for it, thinking of the circumstances the person would be in. For this collection, it would be James Dean as a young cadet rising through the ranks, when he falls in love.

8 ON THE LOCKERS:

I used to shop in the markets for inspiration. I've always been a collector of vintage items. Whether I'm shopping in LA or London, I'm looking for the one-of-a-kind, something new and different. The more rare, the better.