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CDNOW Interview

In 'Synk'

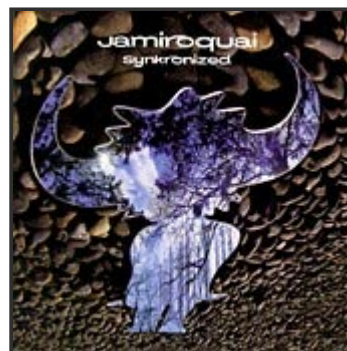
By Aidin Vaziri

There are some great contradictions going on in the mind of Jay Kay, the mouthpiece and motivation for British disco-dealer **Jamiroquai**. The 29-year-old singer has sold 11 million albums. He recently purchased an 11-bedroom manor, which stretches over 70 acres of natural land in the English countryside. He owns nearly a dozen expensive sports cars. And for several months, he has been dating, and presumably bedding, gorgeous British television personality Denise Van Outen.

So why is the frontman in such a bad mood just days after his band released its latest funk-fueled missive, *Synkronized*? Part of the reason might have to do with longtime bassist Stuart Zender's hasty departure from Jamiroquai midway through the recording of the album. As a result, Kay wrote and recorded a whole new batch of material to avoid any potential legal hurdles. But that was a small concession.



What's really got him steamed is all the press surrounding *Synkronized*. For some reason, the general public has taken a bigger interest in his bank account and sexual partners than his



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music, and Kay just can't seem to figure out why. CDNOW therapy is now in session ...

CDNOW: You've said "Canned Heat," the first single from *Synkronized*, is about anger. What have you got to be angry about?

Jay Kay: I think that song was to do with Stuart leaving the band and us having a lot of difficulties. It just put a whole new angle on making the new album. We had to write one [album], and we had to write another one after that, for obvious reasons.

"Everybody knows I drive Ferraris, and, yeah, I go out with a famous girl on television over here. I thought they knew all that. There's no point in them slagging me off for that, because that's common knowledge."

What exactly were those obvious reasons?

So there would be no arguments later about who had written what. I just felt that I didn't want to use anything we'd done with Stuart. Obviously, I had to throw a lot of singles out the window, and then I felt like I was really in this tight corner where I had to come up with a hit, something which was just current and good. I don't know, I was at a point where I felt a lot was working against me, and I had to turn that around.

I'm angry when I'm not doing what I want to do, when I'm not out on the stage and when I'm not performing. When I'm at the bottom of the pile, which is when I'm starting a whole new album again, [it's] really disheartening. I just thought, right, I'm really angry.


The funny thing is "Canned Heat" sounds more like a roller-skating jam.

I wanted to do a dance track that was up but underneath it all, the lyric was saying there's nothing else to turn to but your ability to go and boogie it out of yourself. I love it, it's really good. It got to number four here in England. All the chart positions are really good. Because we're an album band, to get really high singles is really happening. I think that's just one out of five or six tracks on the album.



Stylistically, you don't change that much, do you?

No, because good life music isn't a trend. It's just a fact of music, do you know what I mean? I'm into the stuff that's timeless, like Led

 Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, the Isley Brothers and what have you, good bands from the '70s. There's something timeless about them. They do what they do, and it's timeless. People still listen to them now. I wonder if people will listen to the stuff from the '80s in the 21st century. I'm not sure they will. Because there was a big exploration of sounds because of machines that were quickly outdated, I don't think anybody is going to be interested in that genre of music.

"Falling" is a sweet love song. Was it inspired by your new girlfriend?

Yeah, I love my girlfriend. What it was about was she was playing hard to get, and I wanted to stay at arms length.

Dating Denise Van Outen has turned you into a tabloid star. Now all the articles I read just talk about your house, cars, and girlfriend.

Funnily enough, I did an interview with a homeless magazine here called *The Big Issue*. That's the most scathing attack on me I've ever endured. The article came to the conclusion that no one should like me or what we do because I live in a big house and drive a Ferrari, and I've got a model girlfriend.

That sounds fair.

The point is, I've done *The Big Issue* before. Sure, I've done well for myself. I built a studio, and the house came with it. It wasn't even so much the house. Everybody knows I drive Ferraris, and, yeah, I go out with a famous girl on television over here. I thought they knew all that. There's no point in them slagging me off for that, because that's common knowledge. I wouldn't agree to do something for the homeless if I knew they were just going to slag me off for having a big house.

"It is a Capricorn thing. They are aspirers. They are people who want to climb. That's why they're goats."

Why does this upset you?

I find it all a bit one-sided. Yeah, I drive Ferraris, but nobody mentioned all the money I spent to put in a whole new water sewage system in the house. Nobody talks about the money I spent planting trees; the money I spent keeping the roads around where I live clean for everybody else.

What do you want me to do? Live in squalor? I've already done that. That kind of journalism is just so pointless. I can't understand it. I like something, the public seems to like it, and then there are those few people who seem to hate it. It's really

weird.

Perhaps you should have stayed homeless.

Should I turn down my wages from the record company? I mean, there was no mention of the gig I'm doing for a homeless charity later this year. No mention of money I've donated. No mention of the other stuff we do for good causes. Not that I want a medal for it, but do you know what I mean? Think of the cheek and the contradiction in it. You're asking me to go on the cover of your magazine, so you sell more copies, so the homeless people who sell it benefit more, but you're willing to make me a laughing stock to do that? How can that be? How can you call me all those things but ask me to sell you more copies of your magazine?

Capricorns do like the finest things in life. You're just instinctively doing quite well.

You're totally right. It is a Capricorn thing. They are aspirers. They are people who want to climb. That's why they're goats.

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