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Dusty : The Celt of The Earth interview/ Ru Paul

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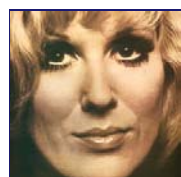
Topic

memphisinlondon

Where am I going?



Posted - 28/06/2008 : 15:03:20



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1285/is_n8_v25/ai_17149443/pg_1?tag=artBody;col1

As usual, I know many of you will have read Dusty's 1995 telephone interview with Ru Paul but for those who haven't here it is. Dusty has an immediate rapport with Ru and as a result this is a lovely open interview. 'A Very Fine Love' is creeping up my Dusty chart as a favourite album and Dusty explains why here.

Memphis
Ever since we met...

bobbie

I start counting

Posted - 28/06/2008 : 17:20:43

Couldn't access this...anyone have another way of displaying it???



USA
75 Posts

Hampson

I've got a good thing



Posted - 28/06/2008 : 22:37:18

There you go Bobbie



United Kingdom
4703 Posts

AT A TIME WHEN SO MANY PEOPLE SEEM TO BE LOOKING BACK TO THE GLORIOUS DAYS OF POP MUSIC'S PAST. DUSTY SPRINGFIELD IS A PERFECT SUBJECT. NOT ONLY INCREDIBLY INFLUENTIAL. SHE'S ALSO ONE OF THE FEW WHO'S SPRINGING AHEAD. REFUSING TO REST ON HER IMPRESSIVE LAURELS. THE '60s POP QUEEN WHO HAD A COMEBACK WITH "SON OF A PREACHER MAN" IN PULP FICTION WENT TO NASHVILLE TO RECORD HER MOST ACCOMPLISHED ALBUM IN YEARS. HERE. SHE TALKS ABOUT WHAT MATTERS WITH '90s POP QUEEN RuPAUL

As one of the distinctive voices of the '60s, Dusty Springfield seduced legions with her rich, smoky stylings. She gave elegant pop arrangements like the lavish "You Don't Have to Say You Love Me" and Burr Bacharach and Hal David's "Wishin' and Hopin'" a depth few other singers could even hint at. Born Mary O'Brien in 1939, the British singer's defining moment came in 1969 with Dusty in Memphis. Recorded with top American soul and blues session musicians, the album showcased her R&B and soul-flavored interpretations of pop material and made for some of her most riveting moments, including "Son of a Preacher Man." This classic, resurrected last year in Quentin Tarantino's Pulp Fiction, ushered in a Springfield revival, one of the many she's had throughout the past two decades. (In 1987, the Pet Shop Boys had brought her back into the pop spotlight with a duet on their single "What Have I Done to Deserve This," and they later produced a full album for her.) Having triumphed in her battle with breast cancer earlier this year, she's just released A Very Fine Love (Columbia Records), recorded in Nashville with guests like Mary

Chapin Carpenter and Daryl Hall. We asked her self-described biggest fan, RuPaul, whose autobiography, *Letting It All Hang Out* (Hyperion), has just been published, to spring some questions on Springfield.

DUSTY SPRINGFIELD: Hello, Ru!

RuPAUL: Hi, darlin'!

DS: Hold on. I'm half-dressed here. I was trying some clothes on in the bathroom.

R: Were you trying to get dressed up for me?

DS: Yes, of course. If you could see me now, dear God, you'd never speak to me again! [both laugh]

R: Oh my goodness! I am so happy to be talking with you. About five years ago, someone gave me a tape of your stuff, without your name on it, and I was like, "Wait a minute, I know this voice," but I couldn't place it. And then when they told me, I was like, "Of course!"

DS: That happens to me a lot. People either know the name but they can't think of what I sang, or they know the record, but they go, "Now who was it who sang that?" It's been my cross to bear in life.

R: Ever since I got that tape I have been your biggest fan. And when I try to describe you to people, I say, "Well, her name really describes the way she sounds." How did you get that name?

DS: Oh, the first part I have no idea - it grew up with me, and I can't pin it on anyone. The Springfield came from the group I was in. We had one huge hit in the States, "Silver Threads and Golden Needles." Nashville people thought we were a country act! And we didn't know how to sing country. We just happened to be bellowing away on that record. We landed up in Nashville with them under the impression that we could do an album. But my heart wasn't there at the time, so I didn't stay. [southern accent] I'd probably own a whole town by now!

R: [southern accent] And drive a big Cadillac!

DS: Yeah, and own a theme park and everything!

R: Was it easy to become another name?

DS: It was kind of strange. The Springfields used to play very posh places and sing folk songs while I was still in school. I was destined to become a librarian at that point - I had awful glasses, unstyled hair, and thick ankles, which I still have. And one day I went to Harrods and came back with this black dress on, and my hair had been done in French rolls, with endless pins in it. I just suddenly decided, in one afternoon, to be this other person who was going to make it.

R: WOW. Isn't it interesting how one can beckon the call of the universe? Now, what other singers do you listen to?

DS: I'm terrible about listening to music. I feel like this old fart who isn't clued in. But I often listen to jazz or classical; that's what I was raised on. And then I have a mad fit and dig out all my Motown records, or I dig back into the '70s funk bands like the Ohio Players, Rick James, and Bootsy's Rubber Band. But currently, the people who I think are really good are Dionne Farris and Roachford. I love Annie Lennox, Bonnie Raitt, and Terence Trent D'Arby. But my heart will always be with records like Boyz II Men, that wonderful, slushy, Chi-Lites sound. I absolutely melt.

R: How long did it take to do this new album?

DS: Far too long. Last year I had such a run of bad luck and bad health, and I got this infection when I got to Nashville to record the album. It was the coldest winter they'd had in I don't know how long. I got a cold, and I couldn't shake it. It was only afterward that I found out I had cancer, and now I realize why I couldn't get well when I was in Nashville. Obviously my body was busy elsewhere. But the cancer is all cleared up now; we're over that.

R: Are you spiritual at all?

DS: Yes. The spirit is an amazing thing. When I found out about the cancer, my spirit just protected me until I could deal with it. Then one day I looked at my beloved cat, and it hit me: I thought, Who's going to look after you if this kills me? And the only time I wept was for him, and I wept copious amounts of tears and rummaged around in the kitchen, not being able to cope. But it was just a little crisis, and I thought, No way is this going to get me. I'm a Celt! You don't do that to Celts. [RP laughs]

R: Tell me about your years in L.A.

DS: I lived there from '73 to '87. I've always had this romantic idea of America. I was raised on a diet of Twentieth Century Fox musicals, and it all eventually led me to L.A.

R: You know, English people traditionally love Los Angeles.

DS: I miss it very much. I miss the good friends I made there who were totally without any crap, which you have to wait a while to find. I didn't realize that there was so much betrayal. I got in with the wrong crowd, and I'm glad I did it all, because I learned so much. I firmly believe it was a really bad rehearsal for where I am in life. [both laugh]

R: Well, I tell you, the world won't change, but what can change is how you deal with situations.

DS: All you can do is change you, and I didn't know how to do that. And change comes with time. I backed off and let myself change. I avoided people who would drag me down and found people that were of true value in my life. It was stunning to me that there were people who actually cared about Mary O'Brien, and they used to hug me, and I'd think, Did they mean it? I've learned to hug people and give them some love and not expect anything back. And how the sh*t did we get into this? [laughs]

R: Somehow I always gravitate toward this. This is the part of life that no one likes to talk about, and this is what it's all about.

DS: Well, it is, because without it there's nothing, there's no career, and there's no substance. I had become a front, with nothing underneath except a very shy, afraid person. There was just this vacuum. And all of this stuff I went through, all of this I've learned, has now filled up that vacuum.

R: But it's interesting how your voice always reflected that there was something really deep there. Everyone else around you heard it, but you had to find it yourself.

DS: Yes. You're so right, I couldn't find it. I couldn't get back to the person I was. Life, as I knew it, was chaos. I didn't know how to deal with it. I was this frightened person, and I only drank and used drugs to get over it. I was a total, unadulterated, obnoxious idiot, and I had fun with it while it worked. But it turns on you. It didn't work for me anymore.

R: Speaking as a big Dusty fan, I think A Very Fine Love is a very fine album.

DS: Thank you. There are some things on it I'm truly proud of. The one thing the record's got is a kind of sound. And apart from the stuff I did with the Pet Shop Boys, which is a very different thing altogether that I'm glad I did, I really haven't found a continuity of sound or style since the Memphis one.

R: Why did you record this album in Nashville?

DS: When I wasn't doing anything for a couple of years, people were offering things like, "Come to Munich and we'll make you this diva." And I could pull it off once, but I've got to go out there and promote it, and that's crap. I'm not a dancer it's just not me. And I thought, Where can I feel most comfortable in my own skin, musically? And I started thinking how country music has changed a lot. There are all sorts of songwriters in Nashville now, and I wanted some place where I didn't have to be this diva. I didn't want to be singing songs where I'd sound like I was going to explode on the next chord. [laughs]

R: I love it. Now, which songs on the album are you very fond of?

DS: I like "Go Easy on Me." It's so sad.

R: That's vintage Dusty.

DS: That was the hardest song to sing on the album, because it requires that breathy stuff. That is a voice rearer-upper of the first magnitude. And I love "Where Is a Woman to Go." There's a line in there, [sings] "Sometimes your friends ain't always available/To pick you up when you're feeling down." And I went, "Ooooh! That's so true." There are times when you think, Let's be alone and get through it. That was almost the last thing I recorded. After that, I came back and found out about the cancer. This song, even though it's got nothing to do with that, it has that. It's very much a grown-up woman's song, and it means a lot to me. And "Roll Away" does, too, because of the line "Roll away, it's only time and the river."

R: Yes. I also love that one, because it says: After everything that's gone on in your life, here you are still standing. Everything else is just water under the bridge.

DS: Yes. And for the last year I'd been obsessed with going to the Shenandoah River. And I did it this year, in the snow. I don't know whether it was a previous life or whatever, but I had to be there. I stood there and wept. And I have no idea why. I felt so still, so happy. The tears were not sad at all. They were, I've done it. I'm here. This last year has been pure sh*t, but... I've done the record. The cancer is over. I've done it! That was a genuine spiritual experience, watching the water flow in utter silence.

R: Wow. Well, listen, I have enjoyed this so much. The thrill of this for me is that you sang to me over the phone.

DS: Oh God! Oh shoot. The stuff of blackmail! [both laugh]

R: I'm on cloud nine right now.

DS: You should see me - I'm grinning from ear to ear. And I have no top on. [both laugh] I didn't expect this phone call when it came through. Luckily I've got the blinds down in the office.

R: I love it!

DS: I read something recently. It sounds like you've been through a lot in your life, too, and this one phrase leapt out at me from the book *Damage* by Josephine Hart. It says, "Damaged people are dangerous. They know they can survive."

R: Ahhh! I love that!

DS: And that kind of sums me up. [laughs]

R: I'm gonna write that down. That's fabulous. I cannot wait to meet you, and I'm sending you love energy right now over the phone.

DS: Thank you. I shall take it and wrap it around me.

Wendy

Edited by - Hampson on 28/06/2008 22:47:25



Mads
Where am I going?
☆☆☆

Posted - 29/06/2008 : 03:28:56



Oh I love this!!!! I read it probably a year ago, didnt save it and have been looking for it ever since!



Australia
3323 Posts

memphisinlondon
Where am I going?
★★★

Thank you so much 😊

LOVE MADS.



Posted - 29/06/2008 : 11:08:28

I love it too.

Thanks very much to Wendy for taking the time to make this easier to access.

Memphis
Ever since we met...



United Kingdom
3565 Posts

bobbie
I start counting

Posted - 01/07/2008 : 03:56:08

Thank you so much!!! I hope printing this out wasn't too much trouble. I feel a bit left out when I can't access these treasures.



USA
75 Posts

Hampson
I've got a good thing
★★★★

Posted - 01/07/2008 : 09:23:12

quote:

Originally posted by bobbie

Thank you so much!!! I hope printing this out wasn't too much trouble. I feel a bit left out when I can't access these treasures.



United Kingdom
4703 Posts

Kathy
Wasn't born to follow
★★★★★

No trouble at all Bobbie, just a two minute cut and paste job.

Wendy



Posted - 01/07/2008 : 12:48:45

Thanks Memphis and Wendy. Dusty sounds so natural and easy to talk with in this interview. It's a lovely interview and in some ways very sad because we know the cancer came back, but Dusty's spirit shines through. I agree with her, my favourite song on AVFL is Go Easy On Me. Every day I set the alarm (not often these days 😊) it's the song that wakes me up. It's a wonderful and I think underrated song. 😊

XX
Kathy

"The images unwind..."



Australia
6508 Posts

Cas19
Wasn't born to follow
★★★★★

Posted - 01/07/2008 : 17:23:39

Thank you Memphis, I enjoyed reading this again, can't think where I saw it before, so its nice to have it.

Casx



'Something in your eyes'



misty
I'll try anything
★★

Posted - 02/07/2008 : 00:07:59



Thanks to Wendy and Memphis. I hadn't seen this interview before. Gives some insight into Dusty. Only sorry that the cancer did come back. One of my favorites on AVFL is 'Roll Away'.

misty



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